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All Show... No Go!

Well that's the Dirt Bike Show over and done with for another year. According to the show organisers' PR people, nearly 21,000 visitors attended during the four days in November this year - though I suspect from what I saw with my own eyes, that that figure may be just slightly on the optimistic side. If so, it wouldn't be the first time that a show attendance figure had been 'rounded-up' by a few thousand people. Then again who can blame 'em? In an industry where everyone exaggerates their sales figures (yes, including magazines) to help make them look good, they're only guilty of playing by the same rules as everybody else.

And if the actual number of people through the door was nearer, oh I don't know... say, 15,000-16,000 paying punters, then that prompts the question: where were all the other off-road enthusiasts that day? Or perhaps more importantly, if you are an off-road enthusiast then why wouldn't you want to go to the only off-road show in town?

Certainly it can't have helped that it clashed with the last round of the British Enduro Championship. But then again, I suspect that the answer is slightly more obvious than that. A quick trawl of the TBM Forum reveals a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the costs involved in attending the show (both in terms of the cost of entry for a family, and the sky-high prices charged for food and drink at these venues). On the other hand, the cost of hiring a place like the NAC isn't cheap and in order for the show to succeed and prosper, then those costs have to be met somewhere along the line.

Certainly the cost of entry for the paying public was an important issue to TBM; to such an extent

that as a magazine we didn't agree to sign up for this year's show until we'd received (personal) confirmation from the top man himself that entry fees would be frozen at last year's prices. Wonder how many other magazine editors did that?

So does the industry really need a show all of its own? Yes I believe it does. Because without collective representation we are nothing more than a small number of individuals, each of us pulling in a different direction. And we already know what happens when our disparate voices get ignored. What the show does is to unite the industry (in as much as that's ever possible), and give it a communal face (and voice) and collectively greater political clout.

I realise that cost is important to you guys - though clearly not as important as it was to the bloke who stood at our stand and declared proudly that he never bought his own copy of TBM, he simply shared his mates' ones. Let's hope he doesn't do the same when it comes to buying underpants. But tight-asses aside, how much would you pay

to secure the future of dirt biking in the UK? Because those of you who failed to attend the show this year for reasons of parsimony should now ask yourselves whether you want to have a dirt bike industry in this country in the next ten years? Or whether you want a future for dirt biking at all? Indeed whether you want to be able to read about dirt bikes and dirt biking in a magazine like TBM, come to that. Because without the industry and the punters who support it, the whole thing's got the whiff of a pair of borrowed boxer shorts...

SI MELBER



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The inaugural Red Bull Last Man Standing enduro...

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We profile trials legend Mary Driver...



As the NERC Bill becomes
law, we suspect that
there are likely to be a
whole lot more dusk-time
trail rides going on...

Pic: Si Melber

PERSPECTIVE

This pic perfectly sums up exactly what the sport of enduro is all about. Ivan Cervantes splashes through a Greek stream. Pic: Jonty Edmunds



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New KTM950 Super Enduro launched

Aus Twin Powers



990 has more power, with a 999cc LC8 engine, plus electric fuel injection and ABS. The reworked motor also claims to offer significantly improved torque and smoother power delivery.

The 990 is available as either the sporty option KTM 990 Adventure S, with longer suspension travel and new 'Dakar-Design' blue design, while the standard model is a little lower than the S model and comes in either a orange-grey or black-grey paint scheme.

The KTM 950SE is also derived from the popular 950 Adventure, utilising the same compact LC8 lump. The SE benefits from improved handling and stiffer WP suspension set-up, with the travel increasing from 250 to 255mm. There's also a new front fender, new headlight, one-piece 14L tank and a narrower profile seat, along with a stronger aluminium bashplate that provides additional protection for the newly placed oil tank.

Launch test coming soon...



KTM have added two big-hitters to their adventure sport and enduro ranges with the launch of the new KTM 990 Adventure and the KTM 950 Super Enduro R twin-cylinder models.

The 990 will be a strong contender for the BMW 1200GS's crown. A natural progression of the 950 launched three years ago, the

BETA THAN EVER

The new 2006 Beta Rev-3 trials iron comes with a £3395 price tag - £100 cheaper than last year's model - making it the UK's cheapest 250cc trials bike.

This year's Rev-3 came top of our five bike trials shoot-out back in May, and refinements to the 2006 model include a modified cylinder that should improve the carburetion and the bike's 'feel' at low speeds.

A new shock with revised settings plus a new steering head angle provide increased traction and stability to an already well-balanced bike. The lower footrest positioning should also help with rider balance and feel.

On the looks front there's fresh matt black/fluorescent red graphics, new decals (to try and prevent frame/swinging arm wear) and a newly designed headlight and rear fender.

The Rev-3's available now - call Beta UK on 01535 655970. Watch out for a test in the near future...



Not Good Lord..!

Originally scheduled to take place on 22 November, due to pressure of parliamentary business the Committee Stage of the NERC Bill in the House of Lords has been moved back to 12 December.

Despite several of their Lordships favouring backdating the cut-off date for byway upgrade claims to 19 May 2005, the TRF and LARA are nevertheless continuing to fight for a 12-month window from the date the Bill becomes law, as proposed by DEFRA in their original consultation document in December 2003.

LARA are quoting Rural Minister Jim Knight who during the second reading of the NERC Bill in the Commons this June said, 'I do not believe that the problems (re claims) are large enough to justify the use of retrospective law - and I do not know that we can get away with it. That is the bottom

line. I am not sure that the courts would think that those problems were large enough.'

However, having already failed to get the amendments agreed with the off-road vehicle user groups accepted in the third Commons reading, it's debatable whether Knight's words will have any currency in the Lords, but trailriders are still being urged to contact any sitting Lord and putting our case.

So, please all of you - contact your MPs (to put pressure on their Lordships), and also any peer you may know of or is relevant to your area. If you're unsure whether a Peer sits in the House of Lords or not, contact the Lords Information Office on 020 7219 3107 or look on the web at parliament.uk/directories/house_of_lords_information_office/alphabetical_list_of_members.cfm.

If you're still in any doubt about the points to make - and in your own

words so we aren't accused of 'form' letter writing - try these:

The Government must reverse its proposal to make the NERC legislation retrospective by disallowing any BOAT claims (other than for private access) made since 19 May 2005.

The Government must provide a realistic period of time for ROW records to be sorted out.

The Government should accept LARA's proposal of introducing a sustainability assessment before any BOAT can be recorded.

Any further comments about the denial of human rights, the already tiny number of byways open to vehicles that are being further reduced (with the consequent implications for over-use), the impossibility of policing rogue elements, and the falsehoods parlayed by GLEAM and the Ramblers Association regarding a backlog of DMMO claims (most of which are to do with access to property, not ROW upgrades), could be useful.

Do it now, while there's still time..!

RAZZER BLADE



Following our T-6 GoBlade review in last month's TBM, a brand new XT3 model has just been announced which should hopefully sort out the limited runtime and price issues, and provide more power.

Available from March/April 2006, the XT3 (Xtended Time) will be the first ever production motorcycle to use Lithium-Ion battery technology, resulting in a claimed three-fold increase in runtime over the current T6 model.

Test rides have shown the new Blade will provide about an hour's worth of intensive motocross type performance or up to three hours of 'normal' use such as trail riding. Power output has also been boost-

ed, with the new 60-volt, 50-amp system and 21.2k motor producing a claimed 28.3 bhp, about 10 percent more than the T-6.

The suspension has been changed to Marzocchi 35mm forks and WP rear shock although the Ohlins suspension as used on the T-6 will still be available as an option.

Standard battery re-charging times are slightly improved but the packs will still take upwards of 30 minutes to fully juice up.

The price will be a more wallet-friendly £3,400 plus VAT, around £600 less than the current model.

For more info call Stuart Rutter on 07973 363309 or email him on info@GoBlade.co.uk.

Miniature Heroes

Calling all Dakar fans... twice motorcycle Dakar winner Hubert Auriol has organised a Paris-Dakar rally team race for Yam XT500s.

The Heroes Legends Classic Ride is a rally not just focused on speed but on navigation - the main objective is to finish without injury to either person or bike. Entry is open to 50 teams, each consisting of up to three riders, one XT500 and one 4x4 support vehicle. The race will include timed liaison sections and special stages, just like the real Dakar Rally.

It starts in Paris on 18 February and finishes in Dakar on 4 March. Entry fees are 10,000 euros per team, with the mandatory IriTrack tracking system rental 600 euros and 1950 euros for transport costs.

A nice touch is the introduction of a John Deacon Award that will reward the achievements of the rider/team that is most helpful to fellow participants en-route. The inaugural Paris-Dakar rally was won on a Yamaha XT500 and Auriol also entered his first rally on one. For more info log onto heroeslegends.com.



SNIPPETS

SCRAMBLE IT

Wirral Off Road has just announced their 2006 GB Hare Scramble six-round series dates. There will be revised classes this year with races open to pro, championship, expert, clubman, veteran, sportsman and junior riders.

Dates are:

11 February
11/12 March
8/9 April
20/21 May
3/4 June
22/23 July
2/3 September

For more details and the full WOR 2006 events calendar check out wirraloffroad.com

100 PER-CENT

Thanks to everyone who supported the British ISDE team and bought a raffle ticket to win a stunning Husqvarna TE510 Centennial Enduro bike, worth £13,995.

Unfortunately there could only be one winner and that was Steve Holbrow, vice-chairman of the Wiltshire TRF whose name was drawn out of the hat on the last day of the Dirt Bike Show.

BACK IN BLACK

A rather sexy limited edition black stack system from Teng Tools is now available at almost half the normal list price. The 100 specially made 16-drawer systems are made up of a seven-drawer roller cabinet, six-drawer top box and three-drawer middle box and will fit in over 60 tool trays. £646.19 is the special offer price instead of the usual £1280.75 - call Toolstars on 01525 711500 for more info...



WYN OR LOSE

Former BEC and ISDE competitor Wyn Hughes is running another of his popular enduro training schools on Friday 30 December, at Larkhill near Salisbury. Call Wyn on 01686 430455 to book.

TEXAS MASSACRE

Newly crowned WEC champion David Knight showed yet again why he is the world's best enduro racer by winning the inaugural Red Bull Last Man Standing race in Texas last month, netting \$10,000 prize money in the process.

Knighter won the invitation-only one-off extreme enduro with a staggering 10 minutes to spare, with Nathan Kanney and Michael Lafferty claiming second and third places respectively.

The 88-rider elimination-style event consisted of 160 miles (4x40 mile laps) of extremely technical going. The 2500-acre venue included near vertical rocky climbs, creek beds strewn with felled trees and fast top gear open trails.

The field was eventually whittled down to 18 finalists who then had to ride the last two laps at night, with only 14 actually crossing the finish line. Check out page 122 for the full SP...

BREAK THE BANK

Paul Edmondson wrapped up the 2005 British Enduro Championship after taking victory at this year's John Banks enduro in Thetford Forest, Norfolk.

The Diss MCC organised event was the final round of the Motul British Enduro Championship and despite being hounded every step of the way by eventual runner-up Chris Hay and third placed Daryl Bolter, Eddy secured victory in the freezing conditions.

This is the fifth time Eddy's won the John Banks and it's also his sixth British Championship. David Knight who had been leading the championship chase was away competing in the USA.

CHRISTMAS CALCULATIONS

Latest figures show overall motorcycle sales are holding steady for the festive season, still one percent ahead of this time last year.

The buoyant Adventure/Sport category is still up 32 percent from Oct '04, with the big 1200 Beemer shifting another 102 units - 26 more than the new Yamaha R1..!

It's more of the same in the Trail/Enduro class, with sales figures identical to this time last year. After its return to the fold last month Yamaha's WR450F has held onto fifth place with another 26 bikes sold, with the unstoppable Honda XR125L way out in front, up a further 55 units.

ADVENTURE SPORT

1	BMW R1200GS	1769
2	Honda XL125V	619
3	Suzuki G50 V-Strom	545
4	Triumph 955 Tiger	518
5	BMW T150GS	381

TRAIL/ENDURO

1	Honda XR125L	644
2	Suzuki RV125	494
3	Yamaha DT125	414
4	KTM 450EXC	326
5	Yamaha WR450F	307



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RIGHT TO RIDE

As the trailriding community attempts to come to terms with the post-NERC consequences, TBM asks what can you do *now* to enjoy your riding...?



Make a Splash: Overseas trail riding holidays are one way of getting your off-road kicks. Lots of tour companies now run them...



Truly we should've known you can never trust a politician. But as the smoke clears post-NERC we've decided to take a look at ways that you can still enjoy your trail riding in Blair's Britain. And we look at some of the more ingenious ways of getting round the Government's draconian new laws, or enjoying what we have left, in the best possible manner.

The problem with bad legislation is that it undermines the principles of just and fair jurisdiction on which the democracy of Britain prides itself. And when politicians use the power of the law to persecute minorities, they can expect trouble. So what are the options now open to trail riders, and what can we do to make our sport more enjoyable in future?

Well first of all we'd like to make it absolutely clear that TBM is in *no way* encouraging riders to break the law. However we feel it only fair to point out to the lawmakers and

enforcers that illegal riding (which has always existed in the UK), is likely to become even more prolific now, as riders who quite justifiably feel let down by 'bad' legislation, question the logic behind the partial criminalisation of what has hitherto been a perfectly legitimate pastime. In other words - in many people's minds, what was once a road, will remain a road in their eyes. And just because some ephemeral politician dictates

that some track is no longer a legal carriageway... well that won't necessarily stop them from riding it.

Okay, so what has changed? Well, as this article is having to be penned before the NERC Bill becomes law (because of publishing deadlines), you'll excuse us if we are still slightly vague on the subject. However as we understand it the new law will effectively remove vehicular Rights of Way from all Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPs) which are still classified as such on the definitive map and have not had a claim submitted for upgrading (a DMMO)



'In many people's minds, what was once a road, will remain a road in their eyes... Even if some ephemeral politician dictates that it's no longer a legal carriageway...'

prior to 19 May this year (the date at which the Government began work on the new Bill). The law also gives greater power to various authorities such as those charged with maintaining National Parks to impose bans (TROs) on vehicular use of any lane which they deem is either being damaged, or (in their eyes) is simply unfit for the purpose - without having to refer the matter upwards to County Council level.

As you might imagine, not only will this drastically cut the number of lanes we can 'legally' ride, but it's also likely to see certain main arterial routes closed, for no good reason other than the fact that they can be.

So what lanes *can* you ride? Well as things stand, Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS), some Unclassified County Roads (UCRs), and certain other minor routes which aren't currently subjected to a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) remain open to powered vehicles - as such there are still approximately 4000 miles of untarmaced 'trails' waiting to be explored in the UK.

And here are our some of suggestions for the best ways of doing just that...

Go Elsewhere

Instead of riding the same old trails in the most obvious parts of the country (Wales, SW peninsular, Derbyshire etc), get together with some mates and make a weekend of exploring trails in the less well known parts of the UK. Or if you haven't already tried it, how about sampling one of the many off-road holidays advertised in this very mag. We're not suggesting this as a regular viable alternative to riding in the UK, merely treat it as an excuse to escape the doom and gloom of dreary old Nanny State Britain for the warmer climes (and climbs) of somewhere rather more tolerant.

Go Large

Fancy a new challenge? Then think about getting yourself a big-trailie (600cc+). Bikes like the R1200GS or KTM Adventure (or even the old Yamaha XTZ SuperTen for that matter), may not



Lighten Up: Smaller, lighter trailies leave fewer marks of their passing and are usually much stealthier to boot...

seem like the obvious first choice for off-roading, but actually with the right set of tyres and an enthusiastic pilot in the saddle, they are more than capable of tackling most green lanes. And not only will they increase the challenge, but they'll also make the roads in between the lanes much more enjoyable. And you'll be able to cover a lot more ground (on tarmac) in a lot less time.

Go Light

Small, lightweight bikes (like the Gas Gas Pampera, Scorpa Long Ride, or old Honda TLR250R) make far less impact on the ground (thanks to a larger, softer footprint), generally make less noise (thanks to softer, less racy

Go Large: Big trail bikes turn an easy ride into a proper adventure...



RIGHT TO RIDE

Watts Up: Get yourself some extra illumination and head out onto the trails after dark...



engines tuned for torque) and are far less likely to offend. As a bonus they can get you to places a regular trail bike can't (such as lanes near to houses where the occupants come running out as soon as they hear a motor). Of course, they can also take you off the beaten track to explore areas not previously open to you (obviously we're talking about private land with the landowner's permission, and not bridleways, footpaths or nearby woodland!).

Go Dark

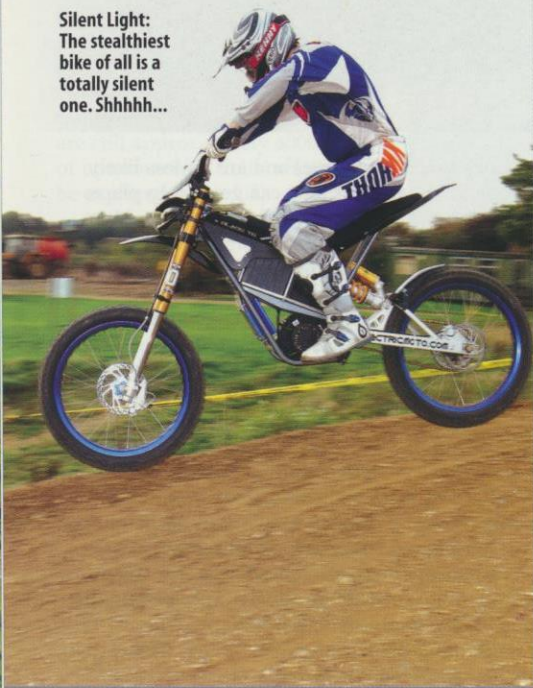
If you've never ridden at night before, then you won't know just how incredible it feels to be going headlong through the dark in the countryside, since even the easiest trail becomes a serious challenge when you can't easily see where you're going. And speeds of just a few mph seem multiplied when Roamin' in the Gloamin'. Plus branches, moths and all-sorts of other nasties spring out of the dark at you. We predict a rush for big aftermarket lights, head-torches and bikes like the Honda Baja in future. And if you don't fancy riding in the dark then how about a late-afternoon/early evening ride. The countryside is arguably at its most glorious just as the sun is setting and you're far less likely to encounter other trail users - wherever you ride.

Racer Light: Why not try your hand at racing? It may open up a whole new world of riding possibilities...



RIGHT TO RIDE

Silent Light: The stealthiest bike of all is a totally silent one. Shhhhh...



Go Blade

And now for something completely different. As tested in last month's TBM, the electric dirtbike is totally silent and amazingly stealthy. No-one will know you're riding at all, even if it *does* run out of power all too soon.

Go Racing

Don't sell your 450 KTM or 300 Gasser just yet. Instead use it for what it was intended for - take it racing. There are many hundreds of events up and down the UK (and abroad) where you can still ride cross country for a number of miles. And if you've never even thought about racing before, the new challenge will do you good. See elsewhere in this issue for a feature on how to get started in racing.

Go Figure

A word of warning though. Should you be thinking of modifying your numberplate so that (for instance) a rambler with a camera-phone can't take an identifying picture of your bike on a trail, it's worth knowing that it is an offence under s23 of the Vehicle Excise & Registration Act for altering, misrepresenting or rearranging the letters or numbers which can result in a fine of up to £1000.

Though it should be noted that if you happen to be out trail riding and your numberplate becomes detached during a ride - perhaps it breaks off during a tumble, or somehow becomes obscured with mud for instance (both of which are not uncommon in our experience), then these offences are normally dealt with by fixed penalty notices, or occasionally the Vehicle Defect Registration Scheme (VDRS) - fines range from £20-40 and this offence is not endorsable, ie points are not added to your licence.

Go Ahead...

...And enjoy your riding. And don't let them catch you where you shouldn't be, eh..?



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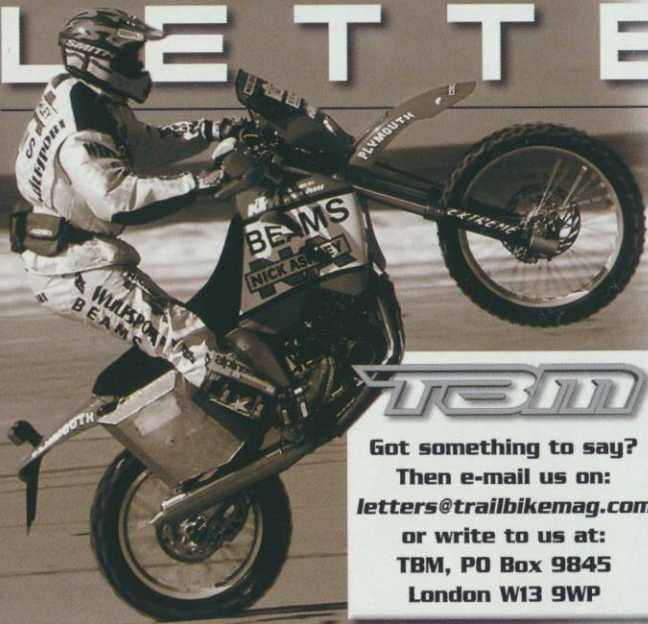
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LETTERS



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or write to us at:
TBM, PO Box 9845
London W13 9WP**

Sub Contract

Dear TBM

I have just got the latest issue of TBM and I'm a bit gutted that I cannot enter the garagetastic competition that you guys have got going. I have been getting the magazine for the last two years on order at my local newsagents and it's the daddy of magazines (blah blah).

But I don't think that a loyal reader should *have* to subscribe to enter the best competition you have ever had. If your readers buy their magazines in local newsagents it will encourage more newsagents to stock the mag, therefore putting



it in front of more people, raising awareness of the publication and obviously increasing sales and circulation.

I understand that subscription is no bad thing - I just want to stand up for some rights... and stuff!

Your loyal purchaser
Ed Pye, via email

Fair play Ed, except that this was a *subscription* promotion, to try and encourage more people to subscribe. Wouldn't really have worked if you didn't have to subscribe...

NERC OFF

Dear TBM

Well, where do we go from here? Not very far with the new super strength NERC bill!

Is it true that once the Bill is passed through the House of Lords all the lanes below BOAT status will be no longer legal to ride? 95 percent of the lanes I

use in North Wales are good hard tracks but I can't find any that are BOAT status. Will they all be closed overnight? Will we all end up in jail for carrying on with our pastime?

TBM is a great magazine but for how long after the NERC Bill? My wife asked if I wanted another year's subscription of TBM at Christmas - what should I say? Does anyone know what to do with a six-week old KTM 200EXC - I don't really fancy competition riding.

Phil Kirk, Merseyside
via email

Go on Phil, give racing a go, you might surprise yourself. See our Right to Ride piece in this issue for our suggestions. Of course I couldn't possibly suggest that you go on riding the lanes you have enjoyed up till now...

Acting Up

Dear TBM

I am trying to clarify the current situation over trail riding after the Government NERC Act. I am totally shocked. Am I right in thinking that the Act has come into force already?

This Act seems to be totally way off the mark, as all it will do is penalise the responsible trail riders who only ride on legal rights of way. It will not deter the people who currently ride in illegal areas - in fact I think that this act will actually lead to an increase in illegal riding.

If people have paid out £4-5000 for a bike they are not just going to let it sit in the shed or face a large loss when they sell it - they will ride somewhere.

Can you imagine what will happen to the value of second-hand trail bikes, if there is nowhere to use them? They will drop like a stone, leaving thousands of law abiding trail riders seriously out of pocket through no fault of their own - how unjust is that Mr Blair? Will any compensation be made available?

I live in rural north Shropshire and work in agriculture, so I see the implications of other government countryside policies first-hand. For example, the way in which the single farm payment scheme is to be run will mean that land owners will not have a real say in *how* they farm their own land, they will only be 'managers'.

Although nothing makes me cringe more than seeing where bikes have made a mess on a grass field or on a piece of moor/common land, I think the Government's planned solution is crazy.

Philip Rodenhurst
via email

You and thousands of others
mate...

French Revolution

Dear TBM

Who's next? Ah, this week it's trailriders! Last week it was horse riders, hang gliders, Microlite pilots and foxhunters. Next week, barbaric pursuits like shooting and fishing are definitely for the chop.

Smokers and drinkers, your days are numbered. Antisocial jet-skiers, everyone engaged in motorsport (two and four wheel), bonfire burners, Leylandii hedge growers,

French Revolution: France may only be 22 miles away from Britain but it's a million miles off in terms of attitude...

smelly muck-producing farmers - you've all had it.

Britain will be the envy of Europe - the perfect place to live. Quiet, antiseptic, non-threatening, everyone living in perfect urban harmony either locked inside their car or house for safety with occasional forays into Teletubby countryside or mindless shopping malls.

Tell me, where did it all go wrong?

No easy solutions here, but here's a few observations from over the ditch here in France. My family decided to move over to France several years ago to opt out of the increasingly pressured UK life-style. We live in south central Limousin, an area not dissimilar in appearance to the Welsh borders.

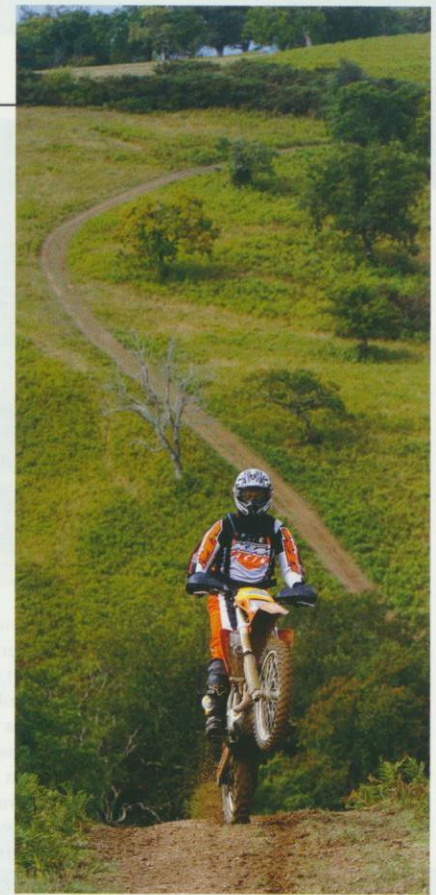
My 25 years of dirtbike activities were abruptly curtailed in 1994 by a near fatal car accident in the Peak District where we had lived for 18 years. A brief flirtation with classic cars and motorcycle road racing was swept away by a chance day's trail riding with a French buddy who showed me trail riding Nirvana over here in France. Hundreds of miles of deserted, well maintained (and marked) woodland trails, magnificent scenery, fantastic climate and friendly locals.

Following similar reactions from visiting friends and relatives we decided to launch our own trail riding company. So

far we are pleased with our progress and can only prosper from the curtailment of UK trail riding. Good for us maybe but how sad.

The situation here in France is very different from the UK in some respects. There is still a strong rural identity and sympathy with the environment. Town dwellers here work in the towns and keep their urban attitudes in town, unlike their UK counterparts where they seek to replace rural ways with their urban middle class professional views.

The biggest single difference between the two cultures is the French Republican attitude - the right of the individual. They respect their neighbours' rights



LETTERS

to pursue their legal lifestyle and interests.

The trails we use are shared equally with horse riders, mountain bikers, huntsmen, rambles, mushroom pickers etc. The French jealously guard the right of everyone to share this access. Rights of way exist for everyone, not just for one influential minority group at everyone else's expense.

Maybe it's too late for biking in the UK but why not meet your neighbour and support him in his battle for his endangered hobby? The English love to scoff at blockading Channel ports, jamming motorways to drive down petrol prices etc but the fact is that it works. People power does triumph - eventually...

Peter Cheetham
Cussac, France

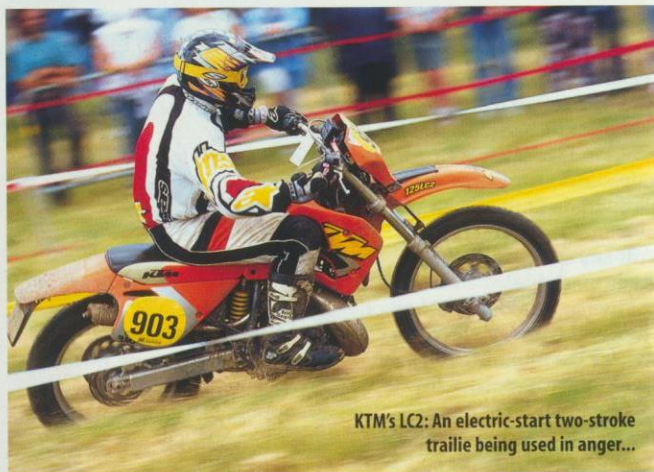
At Any Cost?

Dear TBM

I may be getting old as fatigue plays a big part of my enduro routine now. But I have the following problem, which I suspect that many others might also have.

I have owned a four-stroke in the past few years, one of the big reasons being the ease of the leccy start as every time I have to kickstart a bike it's at the wrong time, like halfway up a muddy hill on a special test!

My problem is the sheer maintenance cost for thumpers. I have just spent several hundred pounds to have the top-end rebuilt on a bike less than 15 months old, which I



KTM's LC2: An electric-start two-stroke trailie being used in anger...

think is a bit rich. I'm sure most dirt riders can handle engine work on a two-stroke but four-stroke maintenance is largely a black art.

I know you have raised the question (through a number of columnists) that the demise of the two-stroke is a little premature, as its simplicity, low weight, low cost and ease of maintenance are huge advantages.

So... has anyone ever put an electric-start on a two-stroke? I am sure that history must have examples. Has anyone ever thought of offering a conversion kit? A KTM 200EXC with an electric boot would be a brilliant option and one that I would happily part with my hard earned money for, in the knowledge that I won't have another £1000 bill this time next year.

John Plumpton, Epsom
via email

The simple answer is yes John, they have put an electric-boot on two-strokes but only on trail bikes, road bikes and scooters

(not enduro bikes - or none that I'm aware of). The new Yamaha DT125R is electric-start as is the Yamaha DT230 Lanza (both of which have been tested in TBM during the past 24 months). KTM actually had their own 125 two-stroke trailie called the LC2 (back in about 1997 if I remember correctly). The thing about two-stroke enduro bikes is that they're generally not all that hard to start (unlike a hot four-stroke) so the added cost, complexity and weight of a starter and battery probably wouldn't appeal to everyone.

That said however, there's certainly a market for them (Mel here has mentioned about owning a leccy-start two-stroke enduro bike), so my guess is that if one of the manufacturers eventually offers one, others will surely follow suit...

Miracle Worker

Dear TBM

I never used to believe in miracles. However, after seeing an mpg figure quoted in TBM122 (page 70) I'm now a believer!

Husqvarna



The 2006 Husqvarna TE250 featuring a host of technical revisions, designed to improve the rideability and power delivery of this already successful machine, is now available at the following authorised Husqvarna dealers, along with the rest of the updated 2006 range. **Husqvarna - Play Different.**

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For further information visit www.husqvarna-moto.co.uk

LETTERS

I know mpg figures are a fairly inexact science, being dependent on riding style, terrain etc but I'd still like to see more of them please as I can't be the only one who has to buy my own petrol. Great mag by the way.

Thomas Gillo
via email

PS What's the mpg for a CRF230?

Depends how you ride Thomas, but I'd be surprised if you didn't get at least 40-50mpg on the trail. We'll try and take more note of mpg in future - however not all enduro bikes have odometers which obviously makes calculating mpg figures all but impossible. But it's something we'll look into...

African Adventure

Dear TBM

I was wondering if you can advise me as to which bike might be best suited for a two-up, two-to-three week trip to Morocco over the Christmas period. I have only got a budget of about £2000 (including bike) to get kitted out for the trip so a bike I don't have to do much to, will be an advantage.

I would also like to have a bit of off-road fun too. I have been looking at the Yamaha XTZ660, but I used to have the XTZ600 'dakar style' and am not sure about it.

We will be travelling with another couple on a KTM640 Adventure who have been round the world, so any advice

would be great.

Gus, via email

Two-grand should be enough to get you an old TT-600R or XTZ660 Gus, both of which are perfect for the task. Or you could try tracking down an old 600 KTM LC4 with a big tank - that way there'll be some commonality of parts between yours and your friends' bike...

Which Bike?

Dear TBM

My girlfriend has finally decided if you can't beat 'em join 'em. She's been nagging me as my collection of bikes (two road and two off-road), are all single seat and she wants me to get a bike with a dual seat.

As you can imagine, this needed some serious action to try and resolve the problem. I hit on the idea of trying to make her decide that it wasn't all I've cracked it up to be when justifying another 'can't miss' purchase.

Obviously that didn't really

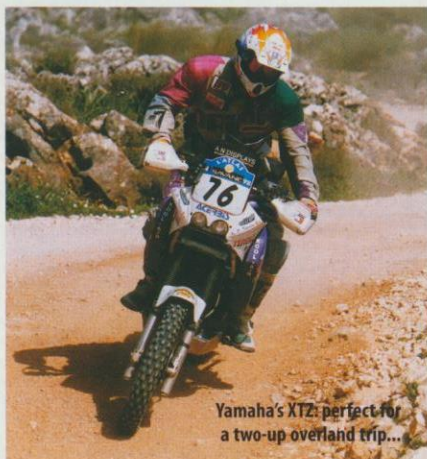
work so I remembered that the 2001 Husky TE400 I have come with a bag of normally unused bits like indicators, mirrors and a set of rear footpegs. So, I suggested that I could fit them to that bike and we could see if she liked riding pillion.

My mindset here was that the razor-like solid saddle on the TE would put her off for life after half an hour. So one sunny Saturday afternoon we fitted the footpegs, which was not too difficult once you worked out where they went and which way up they went, (although they did foul the kickstart slightly).

We then set off to the petrol station to pump the tyres up and fill up with fuel, although if everything went to plan, it would not be necessary as we would be back in a short time and I could take the pegs off and forget the whole idea.

When we left the petrol station I was in two minds whether to stick to the roads or to head off on the gentle trails around Cheltenham. I liked the idea of the trails but not having ever ridden two-up off-road before was a little apprehensive. I decided as it was dry we would have a go and see what happened.

The first trail went uneventfully and the bike felt very stable two-up even with the seated position I adopted, as I wasn't sure how my bottom waving around in my girlfriend's face as we bounced along the trail would be received. After the first couple of trails



Yamaha's XTZ: perfect for a two-up overland trip...



Yamaha's TTR125. Small... Low... Light...

I stopped to see how she was doing and the broad grin across her face said it all.

Anyway, to cut a long story short she has decided that she is going to do her bike test and join me on the trails. We have tried a number of bikes and due to her 29in inside leg and lack of strength, have found the preferred 125 trail bikes too tall and as a result not exactly confidence-inspiring.

But we have found that the Yamaha XT125 in supermotard trim was fine for height but a little heavy. Also we would have had to put small motocross tyres on it and we're not sure if there are any road legal ones. Another possibility is a TTR125L. My girlfriend has also tried one for size and loved it straight away as it was the right height, leccy start, learner friendly and has off-road tyres. Oh, and it's a nice colour!

The problem is that it has no road kit. Can you advise if there is a lighting kit and speedo available for this bike and also how we would go about getting it registered? Do you think this would make a good first ever bike to do the road test on and light green laning?

Mike O'Connor
via email

Mike, the Yammie TTR125L is perfectly adequate for a novice green lane bike and yes, there are lighting kits etc available to make all dirt bikes road legal. You could also register it but I suspect it might be a lot of hassle simply because the TTR125L was never

really intended for road legality.

Some other bikes to consider would be the Yamaha XT225 Serow or Honda CRF230, as both are great on the trail and decent enough on the road, plus they are fully road legal. Or how about the Scorpa Long Ride as tested in this month's mag. There's a 125cc version available for £2699, it's Yamaha powered, extremely low and it's the right colour!



Reader David Nicholas is looking for an imported Japanese-spec Honda XR250R to use as a commuter bike. This machine differs from the UK bike by dint of its electric-start motor, upside-down forks, CRF styling and road-legal kit. Not quite as powerful either...

Power Of Dreams

Dear TBM

Just found out about your website and all I can say is fantastic! Anyway, I'm coming to the end of my term riding a Yamaha DT125R and want to move up in capacity class.

I am not an off-road rider and will just use the bike to commute. I would like it to be a four-stroke, reliable, with digital instruments if possible plus look good. I've seen a picture of a Honda XR250 - it looked ideal but I think it can only be imported. I have about £4000 to spend. What do you think would be my best option?

David Nicholas, via email

The imported electric-start XR250 would be fine David and they look pretty good too...

LETTERS

In Your Corner

Dear TBM

Imagine my surprise as when reading the letters section in Bike magazine's October issue, the first letter was about an article they did on the best cornering bikes of all time.

The reader was saying how pleased he was with the choices, which included some supermoto bikes. Well, blow me down if it wasn't from our very own Si Melber!

Oh, and please pass on my congratulations to David Knight on his outstanding effort and all his wins. His column also makes for good reading and your mag is the only way I can follow his progress. Thank you for such a good read.

Jonathan Pickles
via email

Total Domination

Dear TBM

First like to say how much I enjoy your scribbles each month. Keep up the good work.

In answer to Nathan's question about trail riding in the Dominican Republic in issue 122 (October), when I was there last year I spotted a flyer in a window to trail ride with what looked to be a very good set-up over there - new KTM's and all the kit available.

Unfortunately due to the local anomaly of 'Dominica Time' the shop I spotted the flyer in never re-opened in the last five days of my holiday. I guess the sign on the door

26 TBM



Makes 'backing it in' MotoGP-style seem a bit lame, doesn't it?

Heater Downing

Super supermotos

Glad to see a number of supermotos made it into your *Top 50 Cornering Bikes* feature in the last issue. Anybody who has ever ridden one will realise the insane angles of lean and bonkers foot-out type cornering of which these bikes are capable. And just to prove the point, here's young British rider Sam Warren letting it all hang out in style (on his Husaberg 650) at the Rockingham round of the British Supermoto Championship. Hope it makes you smile. *Si Melber, Supermoto Magazine* Show off. Can't even get his knee down. Yes, we're all extremely jealous.

your holiday and why not write a review when you get back and make me kick myself more for missing out. Happy riding.

Mike O'Connor
Gloucester

Fork Up

Dear TBM

After reading the letter about fork legs getting worn out by guards in your October issue, a really cheap and easy fix for this is to put a large zip tie with the fastener sticking toward the guard on the bottom of the stanchion.

That will keep the guard away from the good stuff - you can fix several up the fork. I've done it myself and it works.

Carl, via email

Cheers for that, Carl!

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LETTERS

You can now ride the tarmac all the way to Erg Chebbi in Morocco



One For The Road

Dear TBM

In last month's issue Kenny was asking about getting a couple of big trailies out from Erfoud to Erg Chebbi in Morocco. There is now a new tarmac road that runs right out to within a mile of the big dunes at Erg Chebbi. The last mile of track is dead easy - we took an Africa Twin, an R1 and a Ducati along it recently.

However, the old piste from Erfoud (the one Mel used on her Moroccan trip) is still relatively easy even on large trail bikes and should pose no problems. Hope this helps.

Shaun Merrick
via email

Getting Sarky

Dear TBM

Took me a lot of effort to write to you in the August issue - I mean, who has time to write when you can be having a life (or a wife). Anyway, I was on holiday in sunny Sark when I wrote to you and some crossed wires led to you printing my

address as Sark, Jersey at the bottom of my letter, 'Jack The Tripper'.

Sark is of course part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey and they do indeed have *no* vehicles there except tractors. So in response to Dave Taylor's 'Dirtbike Dementia' letter in October's issue - get a life and write your own story instead!

Yours in sunny bliss, thousands of miles away from Scotland, Jack Wilkinson, Jersey

PS A cracked wrist led me to cancel my planned Chris Evan's Pyrenees tour - lucky really as he wanted me to share with a certain editor Melber...

PPS 'Mel' Dolls aren't in production yet, so how about a 'Mel' calendar - I could do the photography - no film etc...

Second To None

Dear TBM

Strange coincidence. You print my letter, titled 'Dirty Convert', in last month's issue about how much I've enjoyed getting into enduro racing and in the same

issue you print an article about the EC250 being a good second-hand racer. Totally spot on - I bought a 2001 model having read your earlier reviews. I paid £1600 for it and spent a little more on tidying it up.

I've raced it all year and it's never missed a beat - it really looks after me during the race and it's a much better bike than I am a rider. TBM really keeps its finger on the pulse!

Paul Chandler
via email

We try our best Paul...

What A Gas

Dear TBM

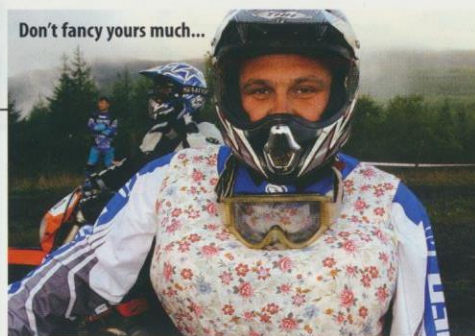
Just thought I'd like to say thanks for the excellent reviews of the Gassers recently. I have made my mind up now, I *will* get one (even though I'm a poor student - guess I'll have to work more at my part time job).

Well anyway, I liked the mag enough that I thought I'd get a subscription this year. I have also decided to enter my first enduro soon, although I have seen some (unofficial) race action. I understand Mel was



Gasser EC250: As good as we claim apparently...

Don't fancy yours much...



a fairly new starter last year, so what's it like officially competing with the big guns?

Also which Gas Gas do you think would be better, the 250/300/350? I want a bike that I won't grow out of in a few years time.

John Crebo
via email

PS Who is the fine example of a lady in Issue 121 (D2D review) I gotta' get me one of them!

PPS Big-up to Alan Sainsbury who managed to gift wrap my mate's bike in an entire roll of industrial heat shrink cling-film. Nice one!

Very tempted by the sound of the 350 John, but as Gas Gas don't yet *make* one, we'd have to recommend you stick with the 250...

Cold Comfort

Dear TBM

I have to say I'm a bit disappointed with the amount of water my new Alpinestars Tech 4s let in so I decided to write to Alpinestars to see if they could offer any advice.

I'm using my YZ450 for a 10 min journey to work at the moment and found the 'Stars were letting in more water than I thought they should do on light rainy days. Anyway, here's what they replied...

'...Our only suggestion as to using Tech 4 boots in rainy weather conditions is not to use them. We would like you to know that these boots can be used in bad weather conditions but this should be an exception. Using them continuously day after day in this manner will cause damage to them, a faster wear out and worst of all, cold feet'.

Anyway, cheers for the great mag, which I read with Supermoto Magazine every month (when it finally appears in WH Smiths). The tips on riding style have been great and have helped no end on the roundabouts to work. Keep up the good stuff!

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LETTERS

Piers, Norwich
Via email

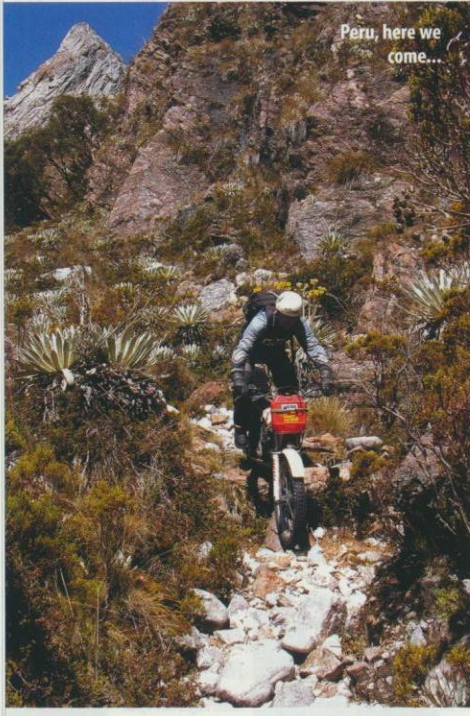
I guess you'll remember that advice next time you come to buy a set of boots, eh Piers...

Shod Off

Dear TBM

What a bummer. The powers that be of this so-called free country have taken away a large part of my livelihood by imposing a hunting ban (I am a farrier) and now they have taken away my hobby!

Oh well, there's always fishing... or is there? Maybe



I'll emigrate to Peru after reading the trials article in issue 117 with those fantastic trails. And who knows, there might even be a few mules out there that need shoeing...

Bob Creedy
Taunton, Somerset

The Enemy Within?

Dear TBM

While competing in the recent Downland Trial held around the Ridgeway, it once again highlighted that the biggest threat to off-road motorcycling in this country is probably from ourselves.

The 80-odd strong entry covered a 30-mile loop that took in several lanes adjacent to the historic path. Although the entrants know the score about respecting other countryside users, there were several 'spectators' who chose to follow the trial on bikes.

Now there's nothing wrong with that but when I go on to explain that there were a good handful of guys on full-blown enduro bikes riding round in one group you will begin to see where this is leading.

The bikes were nearly all fitted with loud race pipes that could be heard a long way off. Their riding 'standards' were inappropriate for the area, with several groups of

walkers taking in the 'show' - Stefan Everts would have been proud with the shower of rooster tails of mud going everywhere.

The crowning glory of all this madness was the one associate who was on a road-legal quad. He managed to outdo all his mates in terms of noise, speed and earth re-distribution! When a brave ACU or club official - not sure which - chatted to them afterwards, all our heroes could say was that that's the way they always rode, had done for years and they were not doing any harm!

I for one am sick of seeing all the efforts that the TRF and other groups go to in order to keep the countryside open, being threatened by idiots like these who come along and jeopardise everyone's future enjoyment. They seem to be immune to any form of criticism about their actions and are clueless to the damage (political and environmental) that they are causing.

I know it's an ongoing subject that won't curl up in a corner and disappear and I have no idea how to educate these people. Of course, these people will still be out there even after the Government officially bans trailriding. But what about the rest of us?

I am still annoyed about what I witnessed, even though the event was a week ago I just had to have a rant to someone who is part of the fight.

Thank you, I feel a whole lot better now!

Mick Metcalfe, Banbury
via email

Mick, you're absolutely right. Sort it out boys...



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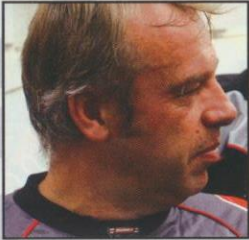
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DIRTY



B

efore I get into the nut roast of this month's column I have exciting news concerning the literary APB ('Book him Danno, Murder One') I put out on a certain Paul Blizzard, previously in the gainful employ of this august organ.

A little over a month ago I received a text from a friend working in the press office of the NEC Bike Show saying she

COUCH POTATO CHRIS 'DOES-IT-LIKE-THEY-DO-ON- THE-DISCOVERY-CHANNEL...

had just meet someone called Blez who claimed to know me. I of course immediately dashed off a reply urging her, and I quote, 'to avoid him like the plague'. Tragically it was too late and before she'd had time to clear the area, he had, like a modern day Thomas Moore, removed his many layers of highly toxic waterproof over-garments to the considerable distress of all those within the immediate vicinity.

Safely on the other side of the Channel I was confident I would escape the fall-out, but of course I wasn't counting on the Blizzard's mastery of electronic messaging and file attachments. Before you could say 'free buffet' I found myself inadvertently embroiled in an exhausting round of electronic ping-pong (happily more ping than pong) that left me marveling at the amounts of free time he has at his disposal.

Anyway, to cut a very long story short, here's a potted update of everything the Blezard has been up to since his mysterious disappearance from these pages. It seems that he has:

- Bought himself a BMW trailie

- Bought himself a KTM EXC
- Bought himself a girlfriend (sorry, attracted a mate - that was a joke)
- Lost a lot of weight

And before you ask, I don't know if the weight loss is due to hauling the Beemer around or the girlfriend. Nor do I know if she's receiving a care in the community grant for her trouble.

Whether or not the two things are related is anybody's guess, but since my brief flurry of communication with Blizzard I have become completely obsessed by all those anoraky rebuild programmes on the Discovery Channel. The choice is simply astounding. There's a bloke clipping together a Cobra kit car, somebody else knocking up a motorcycle engined racecar and hoards of hairy geezers with tats, welding up choppers with no ground clearance whatsoever.

Living as I do in something of a cultural bubble where UK satellite TV is concerned (France to those of you who don't know) I have no idea if you lot have all been watching these programmes for years or if I'm the only person in the English speaking world who tunes in. Whatever, this is my kind of 'wrenching' - as they say on the chopper programmes.

You can just lie there on your sofa nursing a cold beer and marvel at the sheer talent of these people. Not for them two whole days to fit a steering damper, more like five seconds as in breezy tones they announce 'job done' before standing back to admire their handiwork with a smug 'I'm really happy with that.'

But despite three channels' worth of almost uninterrupted broadcasting from men in sheds, nobody as yet seems to be doing anything with dirtbikes. Now, I happen to know Blizzard is good in front of a camera, 'cos I've seen the video, and

'THE WAY IT IS GOING AT THE MOMENT, WATCHING PEOPLE FIDDLE WITH FOSSIL FUEL POWERED VEHICLES ON TV COULD SHORTLY BE AS CLOSE AS WE GET TO THEM...'

now that he's slimmed down I think he could be perfect for a Ray Mears-style off-road survival programme I am thinking of flogging to a TV production company like Endemol. In it he could find things to eat from along the trails (a la Bush-Tucker Man) while simultaneously fixing his bike using endless rolls of duct-tape. CUT!

You may laugh - in fact if you don't I'll get the sack - but the way things are going at the moment, watching people fiddling with fossil-fuel powered vehicles on TV could shortly be as close as we get to them. Currently it is de-rigueur for motoring journo's from Jeremy Clarkson down (or should that be up) to give the impression that the environment is the unique concern of a lunatic fringe.

Personally I have a feeling that it will only take a few more hurricanes, a bit more flooding and no more snow in the Alps during the ski season before we all start to get a bit fidgety.

Which would perhaps explain the series of emotions I experienced on reading through last month's 'alternative power edition' of TBM. My first reaction was, 'oh I don't want to read about these electric bikes 'cos I don't want to ride one'. This was eventually followed by an 'okay, I suppose it could be quite good fun,' before it started to slowly dawn on me that these things will probably end up being our saviour.

Having demolished a very substantial looking garden wall during an all-too-brief stint as a milkman, I can certainly vouch for the vast reserves of torque that electric powered vehicles possess (and no, that's not something that could be easily put right with a couple of pints of free gold-top, I can assure you). So providing that they get the range problem sorted, I am sure they have a future.

My main concern as far as using them on my trailbike holidays is working out how I'm going to avoid startling horses that don't hear them coming.

Perhaps I could employ an idiot with an open-piped four-stroke to ride ahead, rather like they used to get a bloke with a red flag to walk ahead of the first horseless carriages. Ah, progress - you can't beat it, can you...



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- Normandie 19/20/21 Apr
- Morvan 10/11/12 May
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COMPLETELY RUTTED



There's a dark mood about right now, and I don't think I'm the only one experiencing it. It feels to a lot of us rather as it must've felt to the average Iraqi in those few grim months prior to Blair 'n' Bush's attack on Saddam: knowing that life was going to change dramatically... and dramatically for the worse, but being frustratingly impotent to do anything about it.

MARK WILLIAMS ASKS IF THERE'S LIFE AFTER TRAIL RIDING?

Sure, it's facile to compare a war in which tens of thousands of your fellow countrymen are going to die and a bit of legislation which means your hobby is sooner or later effectively going to end, but the psychological consequences are not dissimilar. Something to do with the loss of a way of life and in our case, certainly the loss of long-held freedoms.

Now an awful lot of rhetoric has appeared in print since the NERC Bill passed through the Commons, some of it scribbled by me, but not much attention has been paid to the effect the decline of trailriding will have on the rural landscape. I don't mean the inevitable overgrowth of many RuPPs that will occur as a result of being less trafficked nor, conversely, the minimal reduction in surface wear-and-tear on certain softer tracks, but something far more profound.

In denying us and our 4x4 driving brethren (or 'foes', as I sometimes think of them) the right to use thousands of miles of RuPPs and possibly UCRs in

the future, the cultural life of the countryside will surely change, and for the poorer. Trailriders are part of the fabric of life beyond the urban sprawl. We contribute to the rural economy in a small but significant way, keeping specialist motorcycle businesses going and adding to the income of filling stations, B&Bs, cafes, pubs and mini-marts. More importantly perhaps, just as equestrians and mountain bikers and, yes, hikers are an accepted part of the social patchwork of rural life, off-road bikers have a role to play in the diverse humanity that characterises the British. Not perhaps a big or important role, but a role nonetheless.

And what we have seen with the (albeit somewhat ineffectual) outlawing of hunting with hounds and attempts to end MX and trials and car rallying earlier this year, is an effort on the part of intolerant, single-issue interest groups to diminish that vital diversity.

As their efforts become more concerted and better-funded, they will become more effective because they have the ear of a government that is less interested in personal freedoms than it is in acquiescing to those with the loudest voices and the deepest pockets.

As a consequence, the countryside will gradually become some kind of sterile, neatly-kempt theme park, with signs telling you where you can and can't go and plenty of designated picnic spots for our MPVs. The NIMBYs will be delighted, and the Ramblers, who use more fuel and create more pollution in their Volvos and Toyotas just getting to the walks they wish to take than we ever do, will set their sights on other recreational groups they selfishly feel

MARK WILLIAMS

'I AM STUBBORNLY DISINCLINED TO BE TOLD WHAT TO DO WITH MY SPARE TIME BY POLITICIANS, PARTICULARLY POLITICIANS WHO HEED ONLY THE LOUDEST, MOST POWERFUL VOICES...'

upset their right-to-roam in peace, just about anywhere they damn well want. Model aircraft flyers, MXers, game bird shooters... the list is almost endless and will be extended by those who want to see such ancient country sports as falconry and even angling outlawed.

And it's this spiteful targeting of others who must share the same open spaces in what is admittedly a crowded island, that fuels my gloom. I was similarly despondent with the government's bellicose and now patently fraudulent justification for going to war with Iraq, and I was one who wrote letters and marched along with hundreds of thousands more to protest against it. But then, as now, the politicians ignored us and used bogus arguments and statistics to justify their intentions, and as a consequence the quality of life in Britain has changed for the worse: the country has become more paranoid and politicians have become less trusted. And as I hope I've illustrated above, it will change for the worse, albeit on a smaller scale, as a consequence of NERC being passed un-amended by the Lords.

It's lamentable that the motorcycle trade didn't see this coming - heaven knows they were warned enough - and didn't use their influence to lobby government in the way they did when DEFRA threatened to put an end to off-road motorsport last spring.

But as well as us losing our freedom to ride, *they* will suffer as small importers of bikes, parts and clothing go out of business. And thus the economic fabric of life in Britain will be diminished, too.

As I write this the outcome of NERC in the House of Lords is still unclear, but will almost certainly be known by the time you read it. So for the moment I haven't made my mind up whether I'll give up trailriding or not. The arguments for doing so aren't quite as defeatist as you might think, but I am stubbornly disinclined to be told what to do

with my spare time by politicians, particularly politicians who heed only the loudest, most powerful voices and I'd therefore rather take up some other pursuit where this isn't - yet - the case.

There's also the inevitable reality that deprived of RuPPs (and some UCRs?) to ride legally, we'll spend most of our time on tarmac travelling between the BOATs that remain open to us. Perhaps then waiting in line behind large groups of dirtbikers and 4x4 drivers to ride up tracks that the councils will then, with smug justification, TRO and downgrade to Restricted Byways due to over-use. And that just won't be any fun.

Some of you I know plan to continue riding the RuPPs that'll soon become illegal for MPV use, and that is certainly tempting. But it sets a bad example to those who ride illegally anyway and makes it much easier for the forces of darkness to catch both us and them. And rest assured the

Ramblers, suitably emboldened by their success with NERC, will be photographing and taking down registration numbers and forwarding them to the cops, which is the sort of mean-spirited behaviour that smacks of the totalitarian society we are becoming,

and one that frankly I don't want any part of.

But in any case the decision to keep riding or not may be taken away from me on economic grounds, for whilst out scurrying along a UCR dappled by bright autumnal sun this Sunday morning, I managed to lose the TTR's front end in a two-foot deep puddle spread evenly across dual ruts. Consequently the bike tipped over and sucked several pints of gloopy water into the engine, thus inevitably auguring a re-build of some degree, the cost of which may just incline me to pack it in anyway. Poetic justice, perhaps, for getting into things far too deeply, or maybe my darlin' Yamaha had seen the writing in the mud...

'IN DENYING US THE RIGHT TO USE THOUSANDS OF MILES OF RUPPS AND POSSIBLY UCRS IN THE FUTURE, THE CULTURAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL SURELY CHANGE, AND FOR THE WORSE...'



I

t's late November at the time of writing this month's column. Which means several things - as far as the high street's concerned, Christmas is getting serious, as is the weather. Also, the road bikes have all but disappeared (apart from a few foolhardy wrong-way-round-replica GS types about to troll and slither through a first winter on their giant steeds. They'll learn...). And the trail riding season is well and truly here. If, of course given the doom, gloom and uncertainty surrounding our hobby, we've anywhere left to ride.

ALEX'S BRAND NEW DIRTBIKE HAS FINALLY ARRIVED...

The whole subject of which, I must say, I'm a little confused about. From what I can gather these new rules just mean that everybody that did ride legally and politely will now be forced to ride illegally and extremely impolitely; 'you'll never take me alive copper, eat my ROOST!' I'm joking, of course...

Anyway, I'm digressing. Last week I went to the Milan bike show. This, unlike the NEC bike show (which can at times verge on being a jumble sale), is an exhibition of new product, bikes and otherwise for the following model year. The Milan show is massive, about six times bigger than the NEC and all the manufacturers (especially the Italians) take it extremely seriously.

This year there were plenty of dirtbikes on display, though as the off-road model year seems to kick off earlier (for autumn/winter rather than spring/summer of the following year) you tend not to get any surprise launches and I didn't see anything that particularly spun my crank. Though there was a saucy range of enduro-converted Kwak four-strokes that looked very *factory*, in the style of HM Racing's Honda CRFs and CRs, providing an alternative to the armies of regulation orange/red/blue/yellow dirtbikes on display from the usual suspects.

Now as a motorcycle journalist of reasonable tenure it's easy to get a little cynical as each advancing model year replaces the existing one. Next year's bikes are always that little bit lighter, shinier, faster, more powerful, er, shinier and that bit more desirable. Obviously this is how the manufacturers (and magazines of course) stay in business, but the reality these days is (mostly) that last year's bikes were pretty good, as are this year's, never mind next.

There's a slight fly in the dirtbike ointment now though, in the form of the high-performance four-stroke engine. Y'see a used 2004 250/450cc thumper is probably only *marginally* inferior to a 2006 bike (therefore unnoticeable to most riders, including me), but unless it comes with a certificate of loving care and has been owned by an arthritic nun who's used it solely for running to and from the convent gates (it's the

vibes apparently) would you invest a fair sum into it? I certainly wouldn't. I'd buy a new-un.

One engine meltdown and you'd be leaving you're not quite so shiny and brand new four-stroke dirtbike at the bottom of a Welsh bog and claiming on the insurance; 'I last saw it somewhere near the Monks' Trod, it made an odd gurgling sound then disappeared...' (only joking, once again... no, honest).

Planned obsolescence aside, which we all have to ignore (especially journalists, mortgages to pay etc) as we're all essentially consumers what do I care? Because this very day, at 12.55pm I took delivery of my brand new 2006 two-stroke-non-orange motorcycle of European manufacture. Before you start, I've had to put my money where my mouth is. This bike is mine, not on extended loan.

The irony of course is that it comes from a manufacturer that I've only ever been unlucky with in the past. I've either broken their bikes or crashed them. The funniest off (for the photographer that is) was a rolling stoppie that ended up with the bike on top of me. Luckily, the both of us landing on my ego prevented any serious damage to man or machine.

My brand new Husqvarna WR250 sits downstairs then, waiting for my attentions. It's got that look about it; you know the purposeful, slightly intimidating and very, very saucy demeanour that only brand new dirtbikes have. And after my previous ramblings about turning over a new off-road-riding leaf, I'm determined to keep it that way.

Mind you, I'll wear out the Michelins that

'AT THE MOMENT MY HUSKY'S WEARING A NUMBERPLATE THE SIZE OF A BARN DOOR, VISIBLE BY THE NAKED EYE FROM THE SPACE SHUTTLE I'D WAGER. ITS POST-NERC REPLACEMENT IS THE SIZE OF A POSTAGE STAMP...'

come with it before I replace the OE tubes with mousses or notch the rims to stop tyre creep (Ady Smith showed me that one, I could only look on with a mixture of bewilderment and awe). But I will fit some frame protectors before I wear away the paint that's on it now, rather than just prior to selling the bike.

Likewise the expansion chamber - it's begging for some sort of protective thing. You know, that armadillo-type device you strap on that looks cool but does nowt else. A bashplate,

***THE VIEWS IN THIS COLUMN, ESPECIALLY THE END BIT, IN NO WAY REPRESENT TBM OR THE VAST MAJORITY OF DECENT TAX-PAYING, LAW ABIDING PEOPLE WHO HAPPEN TO LIKE RIDING A DIRTBIKE NOW AND AGAIN, AND FEEL COMPLETELY SHAFTEd BY RECENT LOONY LEGISLATION. BUT COME THE REVOLUTION...'**

obviously is important for trapping mud and impeding access to the gearbox drainplug and, as I'll be changing the oil much more regularly from now on, it's a vital piece of equipment.

Handguards too are needed before it topples over and snaps off a lever in the mud because my legs are too short.

I've got the owner's manual here, next to me that I'll read in the bath once and spend the usual amount of time trying to work out the correct fuel/oil ratio then still add a dollop of really expensive Silkolene for 'good luck'. Of course it'll then foul plugs forever.

But more important than anything else is the numberplate - at the moment it's wearing something the size of a barn door, visible by the naked eye from the space shuttle I'd wager. Its replacement is the size of a postage stamp and easily obscured by mud, unfortunately. Which will be very handy once I've fully prepped the beast for the post-NERC Autumn/Winter trail riding season this year. Bring it on...

Er... Only joking, of course.*



Scorpa Long Ride makes a mockery of even the most slippery of sections. So how come we didn't clean all of the sections then? Er... cos we're a bunch of numpties...

MOOR OR LESS?

It's half-three in the morning and I'm wide awake. Outside it sounds like the apocalypse is upon us, as rain lashes the windows of the hotel room, thunder reverberates around the West Country hillsides and lightning illuminates the inhospitable landscape of Bodmin Moor. In five hours we're supposed to be riding Camel Vale MCC's Wintery Road Trial and it seems the event is easily going to live up to its name..!

Come daybreak the deluge had all but subsided, though it was clear that water was going to play a big part in the day's proceedings. A quick call to organiser Nick Moore and we'd ascertained that the event was still on, though the course had been slightly altered to avoid the need for scuba gear. And by eight o'clock we were gathered at the start with a hundred-or-so other eager dirtbikers ready to start the 'trial.

Moor Info

If you're wondering just what a 'road trial' is, you may know them by their other title - 'Long Distance Trials' or LDTs. If you're still none the wiser, they're kinda like competitive green laning... kinda. The competition side, however, comes not in speed or racing but rather, as the word 'trials' suggests, in getting around sections feet-up.

Courses generally measure around 70 miles, comprising metalled roads, green lanes and private land, and are normally navigated by roadbook with the sections themselves on the more technical lanes (or on the private land). As trails go, these lanes are generally the trickiest you're likely to find and for the most part see very little in the way of foot traffic - two-legged or four-. Hillclimbs, rock-steps, ultra-tight turns and stream rides are all regular features of the bizarrely-named sections, with 'Sheepdip', 'Dunns Downfall' and the curiously monikered 'Pink Panther' all featuring on the Wintery course.

Scores are recorded in exactly the same way as a trials event - one mark is lost for each dab, up until three marks for footing along, and five marks are given for stopping, crashing or failing to make it through a section.

Rear trials tyres are de rigueur, though you can sometimes get away with a trail tyre, and with the mix of trails and technical sections, bikes like Gas Gas' Pampera and Beta's 200cc Alp seem built for the job. Though as you'd expect of modern off-road competition, there's usually a good number of enduro bikes entered, and a few classics can normally be found chugging their way around.



It's a four-stroke trialler with a bigger tank and a comfy seat...

Moor Power

After a brief flirtation with the idea of riding the Wintery' on old British iron, Team TBM instead opted for three very different trail bikes, each with their own distinct character and obvious strengths, and weaknesses, for tackling an LDT.

First up, we had a 'new in '05' Scorpa TY-S175F Long Ride. The blue and white French machine looks to all intents and purposes, like an air-chilled four-stroke trials bike with a small seat bolted on, which isn't too surprising as that's essentially what it is. Okay, so there are different forks, a larger tank, a full set of lights and a few other alterations, but it's as close to a trials bike as you can get... without actually being a trials bike!

At the other end of the scale, we took along a 2005 Suzuki DR-Z400S. As a 'conventional' dirtbike, the chunky Suzook towers above the diminutive, hybrid Scorpa, carrying far more weight about it than the simple trail/trialler. A dealer demo bike, our ZS came without its usual comprehensive digi speedo (swapped for an analogue part) and the rear light and plastics were also non-standard fittings, though neither mod was to

have much influence on the bike's performance.

In between the Scorpa and the Suzuki, in both physical size and displacement, we picked a late '90s Kawasaki Super Sherpa. This rare little grey import twofifty was Kwaka's answer to the ubiquitous, or simply downright common (!), XT225 Serow, and is actually a far prettier machine than the old Yamaha. With its low and comfy perch, tight turning circle, and civilised road manners, the Sherpa looks to take the best elements from the other two machines, and should prove a handy LDT tool.

We'll see...

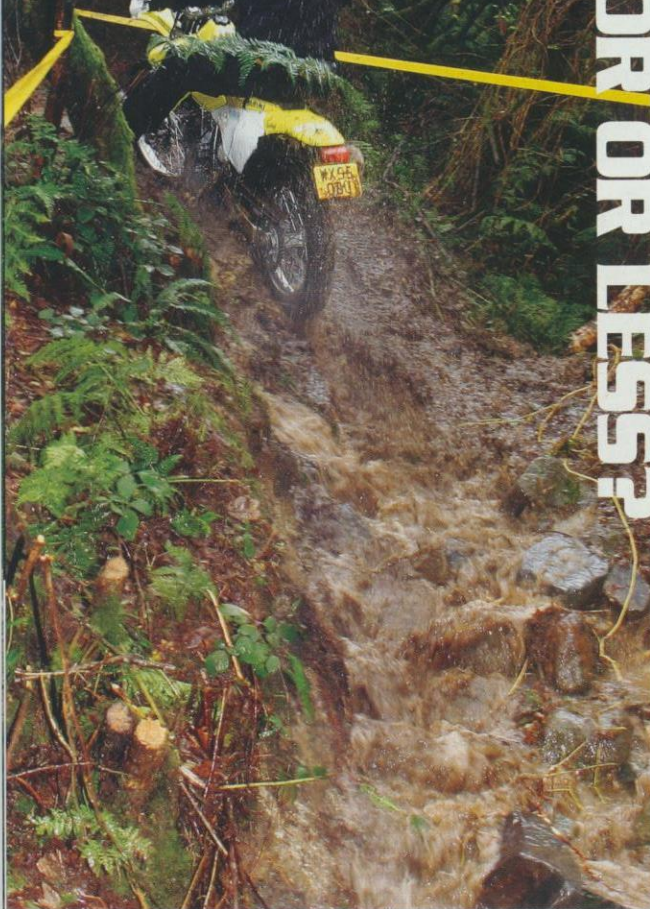
And There's Moor...

Having attached a roadbook holder to the bars of the Sherpa we awaited our start time, before heading off onto the wet Cornish tarmac for the first couple of miles, only to take a wrong turn at the first opportunity - setting a bit of a trend for the day ahead! A quick spin around and we were back on track, weaving through the narrow country lanes before arriving at the first section just as the heavens opened.

A single track climbed the side of a



Thanks to an ultra-grippy trials tyre and a willing motor the DR-Z clambered to the top of all the sections. Eventually...



MOOR OR LESS?

and the torquey DOHC lump grunted its way up the hill. Opting for 'damage limitation' rather than trying to go 'clean', I slid my foot around the rutted turn and all was looking good for dropping just a single point - right until the point when the DR-Z cough-stalled on the rocks. Darn it...

Likewise, Mel scored a 'five' on the first section, but we weren't too dismayed with over a dozen more sections to attempt, and we trundled off on the tarmac to the first of two 'special tests'.

To split riders finishing on the same score, Camel Vale used two timed specials' around grassy fields, the first of which seemed to be causing a few problems.

The marker tapes led down a small hill, before immediately turning back on themselves and running up the hill, then back down, then up... In the dry it would have been a cinch, but with a fresh watering it was bordering on treacherous. At least you could watch other riders and choose your line as you waited at the start.

The quicker riders, many of whom were aboard enduro strokers, blasted round in a flurry of revs and roost, and in a slightly less spectacular fashion I trickled the 400 along, eking out grip rather than ripping through the soggy surface. Still aboard the Long Ride, His Melbership seemed to float around the test, the lightweight Scorpa barely disturbing a blade of grass, though the trail-tyred Kawasaki simply sat and spun on the wet grass.

No Moor Heroes

Having felt perfectly at home on the DR-Z, after the following two sections we played musical chairs and I swapped onto the Super Sherpa for a few miles of road work. Whilst the S-model Suzuki had felt *fairly* smooth on the asphalt, the Kwaka felt downright silky. Its air-cooled DOHC motor is clearly no match for the larger, more modern liquid-cooled DR-Z lump in terms of outright oomph, but it delivers its power in a beautifully vibe-free manner. A full road kit and easy-to-read digi speedo further enhance the Sherpa's on-road demeanour and with little in the way of all-up weight (somewhere around 120 kilos - we did weigh 'em) and a low centre of gravity, the handling bordered on the enjoyable.

hill, before momentarily disappearing out of sight. Riders making their way back down from the section talked of a rutted corner, loose rocks, and the need to keep momentum, whilst the waiting throng sat in anticipation and shivered.

Obviously keen to build an early lead (within the three of us, anyway) the Ed had bagged the Scorpa and breezed up the hill, though footing his way over the rocks scored him a 'three'.

By now the rain was coming down in sheets, so I dropped the Suzi's rear tyre pressure as low as it'd safely go and lined up at the base of the hill. With the course clear I set of in first, short-shifted to second and then gunned the motor. The rear tyre momentarily spun before gripping hard,



Big, strong, heavy and very yellow, the DR-Z is a fine trailbike but something lighter is preferable for this sort of event...

Sadly, my smile turned to a frown at the first sign of mud. We'd not had time to lever a trials hoop onto the rear rim, and both wheels were still wearing cat's paw trail tyres, which immediately clogged with mud. As did the front of my crash helmet when the front-end washed out and the Sherpa dumped me headfirst into the slop - much to the amusement of Mel, who was right behind me at the time.

Things didn't get any better at the next section - a short climb up a mud 'n' roots hill through some woods - where the rear tyre simply refused to hook up and I was left stuck halfway up the hill, barely able to stay on my feet, whilst the others looked on and told me to 'stop messing about'. Harrumph.

Further on, the next section looked far more fun. Two metres wide, a gently flowing stream bisected the woodland and the section dropped down into the freezing water, before heading upstream. Negotiating the rock-strewn stream bottom wasn't the hard part, rather the rock-step

just yards from the end proved the real obstacle.

With little run-up I approached the climb, sized it up and went for the gas and a flick of the clutch... at exactly the same time as catching a footpeg on the rocks. Having extricated my head from a water vole burrow, I took another go, and the little Kwaka clambered over without worry.

Suffice to say, this wasn't a display of beautifully controlled riding and it highlighted a real problem with running one of these low-seat trailies. The shorter seat necessitates less ground clearance, which in turn means low-set pegs. These then catch on ruts, debris and awkwardly placed rocks, often resulting in unplanned excursions into the boonies.

Thankfully, should you tip off a Super Sherpa, you'll find that they crash pretty well. As on Yamaha's Serow, the indicators are tucked right in out of harm's way (the handy grab rails protecting the rear blinkers), and



The Super Sherpa was a pleasant surprise on the rocky trails...



MOOR OR LESS?

Less is Moor

We were well through the day when I got my first ride on the Scorpa, and things actually started out a little weird as were those first few miles on the road. So whilst the Long Ride is tolerable on tarmac it's not a particularly comfortable ride. The lusty little (kick-start only) Yamaha 143cc four-stroke motor (yup that's right, the 175 moniker is a *HUGE* exaggeration) will just about pull 55mph on the flat (on our non-stock, slightly shorter gearing), and the long gear-lever requires you to shift cogs with your heel. The lower four ratios are close together, with fifth acting as an overdrive for road use. Oh, and the low, hard seat is really only for 'occasional use', meaning you have the choice of riding with your knees up by your goggle strap, or standing up as you scoot down the High Street.

Get the TY-S on a nadgery lane however, and what a revelation! Unsurprisingly, it performs exactly like a trialler and can be coaxed up, over and around almost anything - simply select a gear and go. Despite the old-tech lump's lowly displacement, on the dirt the Scorpa never really felt underpowered, instead making the most of its modest output. Rearward mounted pegs, which when seated, force you into a slightly awkward position, really help maximise traction, and in the wet and slippery conditions was a real boon.

Much as you'd expect of a trials-derived machine, the Scorpa's suspension is particularly plush, giving great feedback right until you start to pick up the pace. Take a few faster

hits on bumpy lanes and things become a touch unsettled, though it's only what you'd expect of such a nimble machine with an all up weight of around 85 kilos and this clearly isn't what the bike is designed for.

In much the same way, the DR-Z isn't really the tool for pottering around at walking pace, with the bars turned on full-lock. Compared to the TY-S, the Suzook has the turning circle of a stretched Hummer and feels a similar weight (142kg). Nadgery sections necessitated plenty of forward planning to pick the right line and fairly abrupt throttle response off the bottom didn't help. Where the DR-Z did excel was grunting up the climbs, utilising that strong mid-range, and

the whole package seems sturdily bolted together.

It took a few more minutes to make the climb out of the ultra-slippery woods, whereupon we swapped around again - the Ed now on the Kwaka, Mel still on the Scorpa and myself back on the DR-Z - before crossing into a similarly treacherous field. It was Si's first spin on the Sherpa, almost literally as he discovered just how ineffectual the trail tyres were.

To further reinforce the point, the second special test was another short looping course on the side of a grassy hill, with stricken bikes pointing in all directions. It was hard enough on the DR-Z, but Si resorted to pushing the Sherpa up one hill, such was the lack of grip.



The grey imported Kawasaki Super Sherpa is a stylish alternative to a Yamaha Serow...

Second Opinion: Mel Falconer

Starting off on the Super Sherpa, its 250cc four-stroke engine produced an easily usable range of power that translated into comfortable road manners. Off-road sadly it was a different story - if the little Kwacker had had decent tyres fitted then it would've been the ideal balance between the uncompromising Scorpa and heavy Suzook.

As it was, at the merest whiff of the brown stuff, the Sherpa was just an old stick-in-the-mud and as the two special tests were laid out across churned-up fields two DNFs was the only realistic outcome.

However, the wieldy 250 did manage to scramble up most of the slippery rocky sections, albeit with a few dabs when the low seat height was pretty handy. And whilst the others found the footpegs too low I didn't have a problem, maybe down to the fact that I weigh a little less than the average trail rider and don't compress the suspension as much.

I spent the least amount of time aboard the Suzuki DR-Z but this suited me just fine as in the deep squelchy single track ruts it was a bit of a handful, with the front end wanting to wander. The DR-Z may be the popular trail bike of choice but I think its heaviness (and

therefore difficulty in picking it up after a spill) may hinder smaller riders, especially in muddy conditions.

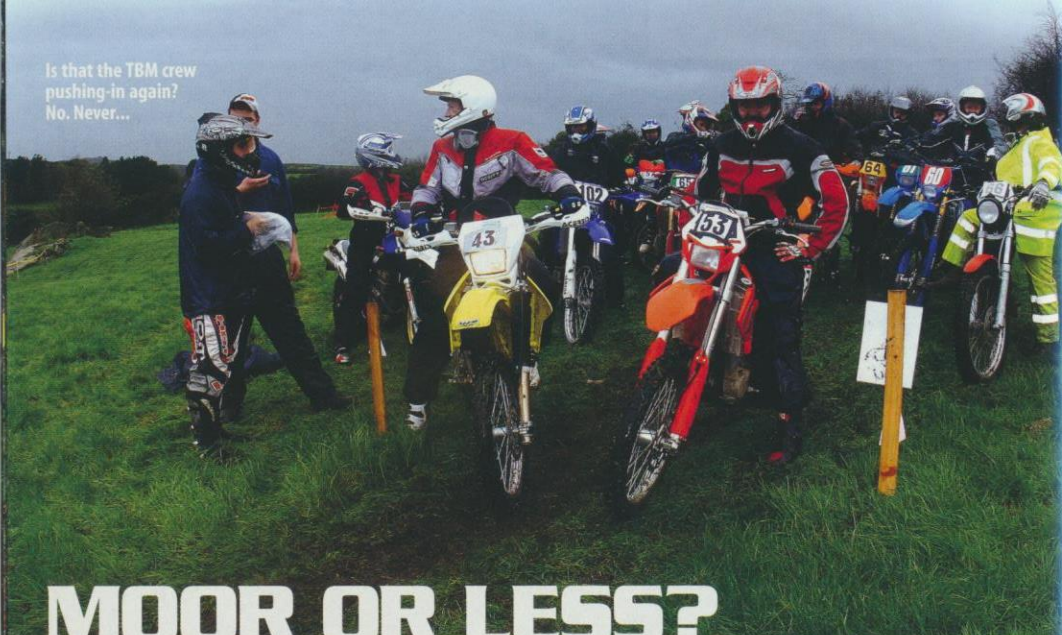
What I did like was the grunty 400 lump and the way it pulled effortlessly up the steep sections, plus it was definitely the best bike to blast down the numerous short 'n' sharp green lanes.

The sleek Scorpa SY175F Long Ride was by far the most suited to an LDT, but the wooden seat and cramped sit-down riding position became quite painful even after a short while on the tarmac.

But nothing could hold a candle to it up any of the sections (as you would expect) and even with me as a pilot it cleaned three sections - my only cleans of the day. But where I was really impressed was in the ruts - the Long Ride hustled along confidently and was a lot easier to handle than the lumbering DR-Z.

The comparative lack of ponies was only noticeable on the road where it did struggle to keep up with the other two bikes at times and there was a chasm between the top two gears. Despite this, if I was competing regularly in LDTs and wanted a good result I would probably opt for the Scorpa just because it's so ideally focused for this type of event.

Is that the TBM crew
pushing-in again?
No. Never...



MOOR OR LESS?

using the momentum to 'flatten' everything in its way. Charging up one rocky climb, keen to keep this momentum I didn't even see the 'section start' sign, and flew straight through, having to walk back down the trail to give my number to the observers...!

Again, the Super Sherpa occupied a middle ground between the other two machines. On the drier rocky lanes the trail tyres and soft suspension gave reasonable grip, and the linear power delivery made it all the more controllable. Throw in a fairly tight turning circle and you have all the makings of a reasonable LDT bike - it's really just those low pegs which let it down.

Make a Splash

Throughout the day, Team TBM trundled through the beautiful Cornish countryside, laughing at each other's mishaps and trying, but failing miserably, not to get lost. Despite vast puddles littering the landscape, no-one managed to go for a swim, with Mel probably coming the closest as she caught the bars of the Sherpa on the (single) handrail of a bridge and teetered on the edge before grabbing onto the woodwork for dear life.

But water really played a bigger part on how the bikes ran. The Scorpa proved faultless all day, the Sherpa developed an occasional splutter, and the Suzuki had clearly sipped some of the wet stuff. Water in the carb meant that the bike would momentarily cut out on bumpy going, almost launching me over the bars on virtually every occasion (thanks to a high compression ratio).

Try as we might, we couldn't sort it out and I

was just thankful the problem never arose on a section - particularly the last one of the day...

As the sun sank below the hills and the light began to fade, we reached the infamous 'Pink Panther'. An innocuous muddy trail led to the bottom of a hill and the start of the section, whereupon it turned straight up the gradient and the mud turned to loose slippery rock. Round a slight bend, a cambered rock slab and narrow gulley proved the biggest challenge, with just one line available on the wet granite.

Many of those we saw on enduro bikes seemed to be using a gung-ho, high speed approach. Those on more nimble trailies - Pamperas and their ilk - employed a slower, more considered method. And Team TBM? Well let's just say it wasn't pretty but we got up it... in the end.

Moor's the Pity

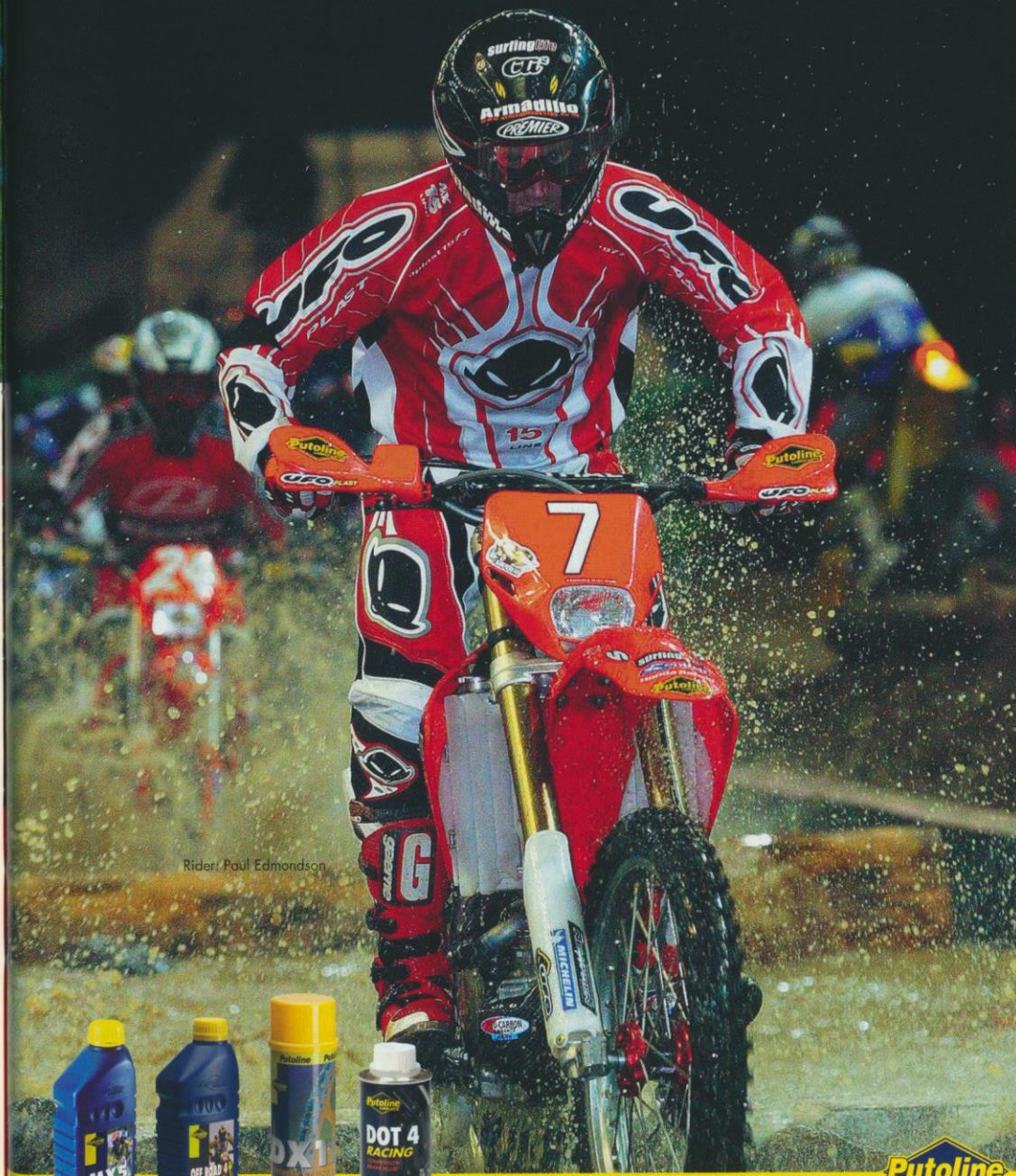
Arriving back at the paddock under cover of darkness, it was time for a pastie, a cuppa, and a look back over the day. Despite a thorough soaking, we'd had a blinding event, seen some beautiful scenery and ridden some cracking trails - the likes of which you simply don't get to tackle in the south east.

Of the bikes, the Scorpa was clearly the hot ticket for tackling the sections, but less appealing on the bits inbetween. The bike really only makes sense on the more technical lanes and it's clearly aimed at those who live in the hills or ride particularly nadjery trails and want somewhere to rest their behind between tackling rock steps.

As with the other bikes in the Scorpa range, the

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Rider: Paul Edmondson



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MOOR OR LESS?

TY-S has some neat detailing and funky styling. It feels robust, despite us managing to give the front rim a whopping ding, and should take plenty of abuse. If you're looking to win LDTs there's probably no finer machine - it's so good it's almost cheating! But if you live in middle England and want a trail all-rounder, this probably isn't the bike for you.

Looking past its nasty trail tyres, the Kawasaki actually turned out to be quite an enjoyable ride. The smooth power and well-mannered chassis made it easy to pilot, though it has to be said it felt best on the gentle lanes and the tarmac, where there was little work for the basic suspension. The Sherpa certainly has potential to be a great little bike, but it needs a few little tweaks, like higher pegs.

Of the three it was the DR-Z which performed the best on the muddy trails. That strong motor made short work of the climbs, and despite the fact that we always criticise its heavy front-end in other tests, in this company I found it the most predictable - though the others didn't agree with me. Being an S-model, it was perfectly civilised on the road too, but on the sections the Suzuki felt very unwieldy. And although the DR-ZS can easily handle the odd knock and scrape, I was always wary of denting its steel tank.

Yep, the DR-Z400S is a real jack-of-all-trades,

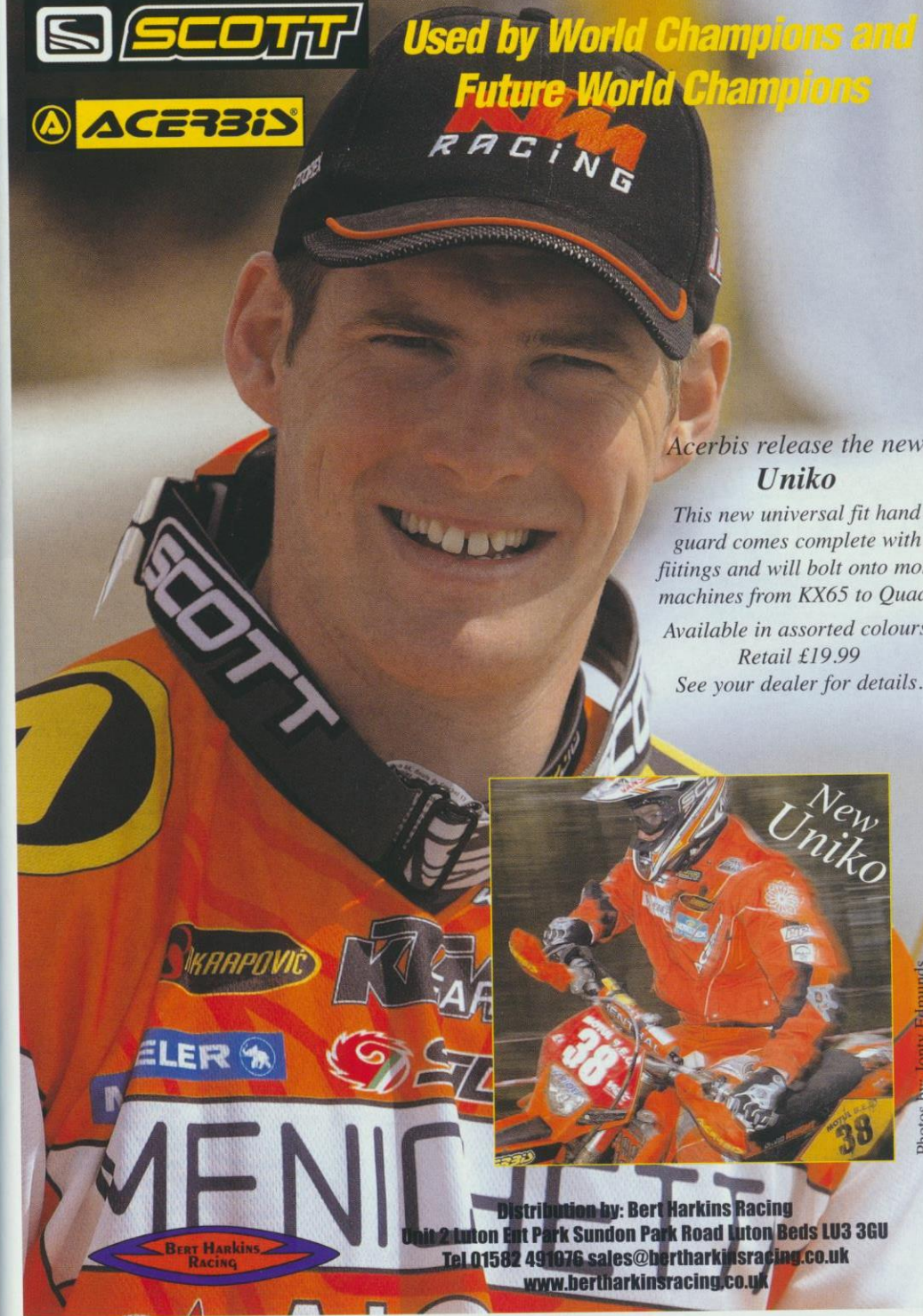
but mastering trials sections is not one of its specialities. With three distinctly different bikes, we never set out to perform a shoot-out test, and as such there is no real winner here. If you're ultra competitive it's clear you'd pick the Scorpa, but if you're simply looking for an enjoyable ride in the countryside any of the three would bring a smile to your face. And that's the great thing about road trials. With such varied riding and scenery to enjoy whilst competing alongside amiable, like-minded souls, you'll have fun whatever bike you choose.

A big thank you to:

Nigel Birkett at Scorpa importers Birkett Motorsport (01229 716806) for the loan of the brand new Scorpa. Buckinghamshire grey importers Bikerster, for sorting out the Kawasaki Super Sherpa KL250 at short notice. Bikerster have a range of import trailies available and you can reach them on 01442 862277. Taylor Racing (01249 657575) in Chippenham, Wiltshire, for letting us take out their demo DR-ZS. Taylor's are official Suzuki dealers, and hugely knowledgeable about off-road Suzukis. Nick Moore at Camel Vale Motorcycle Club (camel-valemcc.net) for inviting us down to a great event. The friendly club runs trials, road trials and enduro events around mid-Cornwall. And special thanks to Andy Skelton for filling in the hole in the Ed's navigational skills..!



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How do you like your trailies:
small, medium, or large...?



MOOR OR LESS?

Second Opinion: Si Melber

Sexy! There's simply no other way to describe the lithe beauty of the gracefully-crafted Scorpa Long Ride. Sensuous, curvy and exquisite, it slowly revealed itself as we removed it from its packing case, bringing new meaning to the term French Made.

The ride (ahem), was just as astonishing providing you were off-tarmac. On the road it seemed a bit short of speed and slightly cramped - forcing you to either sit at the back of the seat or else raise your knees into the 'ditching at sea' position. But you soon forgot about that once the wheels got dirty. The Long Ride is the modern-day equivalent of the original Pampera: odd, beautiful and strangely balletic on the trails, it'll make a mockery of even the toughest section - providing there's a willing rider on board. It's seat height is so low that only an oompa loompa would complain; its handling and power-delivery simple to master. That it managed approximately 50 miles on its single gallon of fuel was no surprise (not so long-a-ride then), nor was the fact that it performed faultlessly all day. In fact the only surprise was the price - less than three grand seems like a bargain in this day and age.

I've got to say I also really enjoyed riding the Kawasaki KL250 Super Sherpa, despite

struggling all day to make it go in a straight line. On the road it was simply the best - smooth, stable and incredibly comfortable. It's also well equipped (big, easy-to-read digital dials, flexi mini-indicators, grab handles), and the liquid-cooled DOHC engine is a real gem. The pegs are a bit low and it could do with an inch or two more ground clearance (easily sorted with some modest suspension work), and I kept secretly eyeing up the Kwacka with a view to building another TBM project bike. If you can find one (at the right price - ours was a sensible £1199), the Super Sherpa would - providing it was fitted with decent rubber - make a really nice trailie for someone of modest build. I liked it.

Sadly the same couldn't be said of the DRZ-S. Yes it's got that stonking motor, half-decent suspension and it's equally at home on the blacktop as it is devouring a green lane. But it's also a heavy, bulky and rather tall piece of kit which compared with the others here makes it seem like you're piloting a small block of flats. It's quick, yes, reliable certainly, and also the only one here capable of being raced which extends its versatility if it's your only bike. But you can't help feeling that the EXC400 can do the same job only better. I like the DR-Z400S, I just don't like it quite enough...



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HARRING

Getting Started:
Hare & Hounds



AROUND

Now that there are less trails to ride you could always try racing your dirt bike...

HARE & HOUNDS AROUND



Go on, admit it... You've thought about competing on your dirt bike. But you're not really sure what it involves, what it costs, where to start, what you need to take with you and whether or not you'll simply end up embarrassing yourself. Of course you will but that's half the fun - everyone has to start somewhere. This article aims to guide you through the steps involved in entering, preparing for, and competing in your first Hare & Hounds Enduro, including choosing an event, getting a licence, preparing your bike, what kit to take, what to do when you get there, riding the race and hopefully coming home again in one piece...

What is a Hare & Hounds?

Enduros come in many different formats but for the purpose of simplification we'll divide them into two distinct types: Timecard enduros (the sort that comprise the British Enduro Championship and WEC), and the far simpler Hare & Hounds Enduros. Here we'll only be dealing with the latter since they are more numerous, far cheaper to enter and considerably easier to ride and finish.

As you'd imagine from the name, enduros are all about endurance - in other words there's an element of distance and duration involved. They're similar but distinct from a motocross in



that enduros generally involve riding for a far longer period of time (typically two to four hours) around an (unseen/unpractised) course laid out on farmland utilising much more natural terrain (woodlands, stream crossings, hills, open fields, quarries etc). The typical H&H course is frequently 3-5 miles long though occasionally they can be much longer, and a typical lap time might be anywhere between 15-40mins.

The term Hare & Hounds is really a misnomer. Essentially what happens is that everyone races for a fixed period of time: usually two, three or four hours (or occasionally in a two-by-2hr format with an hour long break for lunch), and

the winner is the rider who completes the most number of laps within the time (if there's a tie, it's the rider who is first across the finish line after the time is completed with the most laps - that is the winner).

The race begins either with a mass start (MX style - usually in class order) or more frequently in an enduro fashion - with small groups of riders setting off, five or ten at a time (depending on how the club arranges it), with a minute gap between each of the groups. If there's a mass start then the start time is the same for everyone and so is the finish time - say three hours later.

If however it's a staggered start, then obviously your race begins when you set off from the start line (at your appointed start time) and ends (say) three hours later. There will be a *time-clock* located at the start, and the pre-event regulations (regs) will tell you which type of start it'll be.

How good do you need to be?

That really depends upon the event you are entering. As a general rule of thumb the more 'local' the event (and the smaller the organising club), the easier it'll be to ride. Of course there are exceptions but in general if you enter a national event (like a Fast Eddy or WOR) you can expect to encounter good riders and fairly tough conditions (in the main event). Whereas if you enter your local enduro club's non-publicised event, it's likely to be much less arduous.

But the bottom line is that you don't need to be a particularly good rider to enter - or even be experienced off-road. Most clubs are well aware of the fact that they constantly need to attract new members - some even run events specifically for beginners and novices. In any case, all events will have a complete range of abilities taking part, from beginners to fast experts, and a number of travelling marshals who circulate the course with the aim of helping riders who have got into difficulty. If you let the organisers know that this is your first H&H they'll probably tell you about various parts of the course to watch out for, and give you some advice about riding their event.

Do I need a competition licence?

The simple answer to that is no. Many of the clubs organising H&Hs do *not* require you to have any form of competition licence - most will allow you to ride on a day licence, but this should be stated in the regs. If however the club is ACU affiliated you *may* need an ACU licence in order to compete. An annual ACU licence costs £40 (and entitles you to compete in all ACU backed H&Hs, timecard enduros, trials, and MX).

HARING AROUND



The licence runs from Jan-Dec and is available by contacting the ACU on 01788 566400 or downloading an application form off the web at www.acu.org.uk.

However in order to qualify for an ACU licence you must first be a member of an affiliated club. So you need to ring up an enduro club and join. Then fill out a licence form and send it off to your club who will sign it to confirm your membership and return it to the ACU - from whom you'll receive your licence a few weeks later. Alternatively some ACU clubs run a day licence system (which usually costs a tenner on the day). However if the organising club is affiliated to either ORPA or AMCA (and many of them are), then you won't need an annual licence to compete (though you can buy an annual ORPA licence from any affiliated ORPA club for £10 - the same goes for an annual AMCA licence). Most people however buy a day licence at these events and it costs just £3. Note however that ORPA and AMCA don't offer the same level of rider insurance as the ACU (you can purchase additional cover from the AMCA for an annual fee of £36.50).

1 Step 1: Apply for some Regs

Okay, best place to start is the web. Check out our site trailbikemag.com and then look under 'events' - this gives a list of various events on a month by month basis or keep an eye out on our forum where there's regular discussions on numerous events that people are considering. If you don't see anything there you like, try enduronews.com and again look under events, or else log onto the sites listed at the end of this article (ACU etc) and there you'll find details of your nearest local club. If you're not web-savvy keep an eye on the snippets column in the *News* pages of TBM, or get hold of a copy of *Trials & Motocross News* and look in the back. Once you have found a likely event in your area, send off for, or download the regs, fill them in (making sure you enter as a Novice/Beginner/Sportsman) and send them back with your entry fee (usually between £25-45). It's best to do this at least three or four weeks prior to the event in order to give yourself time to get your act together and also because many races fill up fast. Okay, now you're committed to going racing...



Make sure your bike is properly prepped before the race...

2 Step 2: Prepare your Bike

Right you've got your entry in for your first H&H, now it's time to prep your bike for the race. The very minimum you need to complete a race is a reliable and well maintained bike. Most clubs will let you ride more or less anything, but a few exclude MX bikes or machines with modified pipes because of noise, so be sure to check the regs first.

Now, take a look at your dirt bike. Is it reliable? Do you change the oil regularly, is the air-filter clean, are the brake pads less than half worn, is the chain correctly adjusted and relatively new, and most importantly of all is it fairly quiet? If you can answer *yes* to all these questions you're well on the way to going racing. If not then sort these things out first.

Hare & Hounds events take place on closed courses so there's no need for your bike to be road legal (or even have lights) and you don't have to ride an enduro bike - most clubs will accept a quiet MXer or a trailie (like a DT/DR-Z/XR/TT-R etc). If however, you currently ride an R1200GS or XT660R, then perhaps it's time to think about getting another bike for racing on.

Okay, there's a few things you need to do to your bike beforehand. Start by giving it a once-over with the T-bars just to make sure that everything is done up tightly - especially things like wheels, handlebars, spokes, silencer, seat etc. Most clubs check the bike's condition before letting you race (this is called *scrutineering* - see sidebar) and if your bike is 'hanging' they won't let you ride for your own safety. Don't worry, it

HARING

AROUND



doesn't matter how old your bike is, providing it's been satisfactorily maintained.

If your bike hasn't got a set of handguards fitted, now's the time to invest in some and make sure they're done up nice and tightly, whereas your clutch and front brake lever need to be loosened-off ever so slightly so that they twist and don't break in a fall. And while you're at it, make sure you lockwire your bike's grips (see this month's Trade Secrets), and fit a bar-pad.

Next thing to think about is tyres. Check the regs - do they specify a certain type of tyre to be used (trials tyre, FIM enduro tyre etc)? If not then it's just a matter of using something with a good knobbly profile (front and rear) and setting the pressures. At this time of year 10-12psi in the front and 8-10psi in the rear will do fine unless you're riding somewhere particularly rocky - in which case go up about 3psi front and rear, or fit some mousses. And make sure it's got rim-locks.

Finally check the regs relating to the colour of the backgrounds needed on your racing numberboards: many clubs insist on yellow backgrounds, then apply your numbers and your bike's all ready to go...

3

Step 3: Kitted Up

If you've never raced before, you'll be amazed at how hot you get during an event, so choosing the correct kit to go racing in is a vital part of your preparation for any race. Pay attention to the weather forecast leading up to the event as it'll affect what you wear on the day. But essentially you can assume that whatever the weather you'll be warmer than you imagine, so remember keep the kit to a minimum.

While you can probably get away with wearing a pair of jeans and a rugby shirt if you're so inclined, ideally you should wear typical off-road race kit: MX pants, jersey(s), gloves, knee-pads, MX boots and a helmet and goggles, together with a lightweight showerproof enduro jacket if it's raining or freezing cold - otherwise you can dispense with the jacket. Not only are all these items *made* for the job, but you'll also avoid the trap of looking like 'Spud' from Bob the Builder on your first outing.

Avoid wearing warm and bulky padded (armoured) jackets or army surplus gear like

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When it comes to refuelling you don't have to have all the kit - though it helps...



HARING AROUND

over-trousers/waterproofs/sou'westers etc unless it's truly monsoon conditions. The bottom-line is that in winter you're going to get wet and muddy and probably soaked to the skin, so trying to stay dry will most likely end up with you sweating half to death. Accept that getting covered from head to toe is all part of the fun, and you won't go far wrong.

If you don't already own some body armour, invest in a set - either MX style or one of the more close-fitting zip-up types (either will do). The MX type of armour is generally worn above or below a race shirt (or occasionally sandwiched in between two race shirts in cold conditions), whereas the close fitting stuff is almost always worn under your riding shirt.

Another worthwhile investment is a hydration pack of some sort - because even in the coldest conditions you lose a lot of moisture through sweating - most riders wear one of these. Many riders also carry a small bumbag with the barest minimum of tools - a plugspanner, multitool etc, though for a H&H this is by no means essential.

Ideally you should wear an MX-style helmet and goggles as helmets with visors tend to steam up too rapidly. For best results invest in a new set of double-glazed (clear) lenses for your goggles (preferably with roll-offs) and you won't suffer from misting up or poor vision. Throw an extra



Body armour is essential when you're considering competing for the first time...

pair of gloves and a spare pair of goggles into your kitbag in case the weather turns really nasty. Other things to consider are dirtbike socks and/or waterproof socks to keep your feet dry, some sweat-wicking underwear, and perhaps a set of elbow guards.

Okay in addition to your riding kit you'll need to take along the following: a Jerrycan of fuel and a smaller (5-10L) canister to decant it into; your toolbox; some high energy food like bananas, cereal bars (choccie bars at a push) and some (high-energy) drink; not forgetting a couple of rags; an old towel; a fat marker pen; some light-coloured gaffer tape and a cheap digital watch. You'll see why in a minute.

If you've got room, then chucking-in a push-up stand and a few spares (like a clutch or brake lever and/or a spare inner-tube etc) is always worthwhile so that your day isn't ruined for the sake of a silly tumble or flat tyre. And a simple first aid kit is always worth having. Okay, you're now all ready. Let's go racing...

4 Step 4 On the Day

Set your alarm clock good and early and eat a hearty breakfast, it's going to be a long day. Assuming you've got the transport of your bike taken care of (pick-up, bike-rack, trailer or clubbing together with a couple of mates and hiring a van), then aim to get to the event about 1.5-2hrs before the due start time. This will give you plenty of time to get kitted up, sign-on, get your bike scrutineered, make any last minute adjustments and visit the porta-loos a few times!

The first thing you should do upon arrival is to go and sign-on. This usually takes place in the organiser's marquee and is literally a record that you have turned up, paid all your entry fees and signed a disclaimer, allowing you to ride. This is also where you'll probably get given either a wristband transponder or perhaps a little plastic tag and a zip-tie. This needs to be attached to the bike's handlebars and each time you complete a lap one of the marshals will use a hole-punch to record your tally. If you get given a wrist transponder then put it on your right wrist immediately so you don't forget.

The next thing to do is to get kitted up in your riding gear (except for your helmet and hydration pack), making sure everything feels comfortable. If you haven't already done so, fill up your hydration pack with water and energy powder and mix well. Some riders put a loop of tape around each of their thumbs and a sprinkling of talcum powder into their gloves to prevent blisters - because although you can stop at any time during a H&H, the idea is to keep riding for the full time period, stopping only to refuel.

Next, you need to dig out your bike and make sure it's fuelled up but don't start it unless others are doing so - some clubs are very hot on this

because of noise. Give it a quick visual once-over, adjust anything that needs doing (or attach your lap-scoring tag) and then take it (along with your crash helmet) to scrutineering - pushing it with the engine off. Once scrutineered you'll be asked to push it into a holding area near the start line (called the parc ferme). If for whatever reason your bike fails scrutineering, you'll need to push it back to your vehicle and effect the repairs before re-presenting it again for scrutineering.

Okay assuming that your bike and helmet have passed scrutineering now you need to put your fuel/spares/tools/rags/spare goggles and gloves (in a plastic bag) into the refuelling area. This will be a small area next to the start which will usually be marked out with blue tape, and have a sign saying *Refuelling: No Smoking*.

Pick an obvious spot right next to the tape (not in the middle of the area - that's where the bikes ride in and out) and try and remember where you put your fuel, because in a short while there's likely to be 120+ green Jerrycans in there - all just like yours. You will have already worked out your re-fuelling tactics depending upon the length of the race and its format (whether there's a break for lunch), but work on an average of approximately two hours riding before your bike will need fuel (slightly less time if it's a 125 or 300cc two-stroke) and loads more if it's a four-stroke trailie.

About 20mins before the race is due to start, listen out for an announcement on the tannoy for the riders' briefing. This is where everyone gathers around the organiser's tent/truck and the clerk of the course informs riders of what they can expect in terms of the day's riding, how the race is going to be started and of course any important last minute course information (such as look out for hidden ruts in the long grass etc). There is also the opportunity to ask any questions you might have - albeit with a crowd listening.

As soon as the briefing is over, go back to your vehicle and finish getting kitted up. Then using the marker pen and the silver gaffer tape you brought along, write your start time in big numbers on a small piece of torn-off tape and head over to the start with that and your cheap digital watch in your hand. Okay, set the watch to the exact same time as the course time-clock (which may or may not be actual time), then walk over to your bike and attach the watch to your bike's handlebars and stick the gaffer tape onto the bar-pad.

Make sure that you're all ready to start the race - that you're wearing your body armour/hydration pack/bumbag and then push your bike to the start line or line up with other riders of similar numbers. Not long to go now...

5

Step 5: The Race

First things first, switch on the bike's fuel and choke (if it needs it) **BEFORE** your start time.

Once you're on the line make sure you're all ready to go (thumb on the button or foot on the kickstart, goggles on etc) and keep watching the time-clock.

Given that this is your first race and you're unlikely to be winning, all you're aiming for is a good clean getaway. Some clubs allow you to start-up and warm the bike a few minutes before the race - others don't. But whichever method the club employs, virtually all require a dead-engine start for the actual race.

As the time-clock clicks over to your start time

Scrutineering

Not all clubs scrutineer these days because of liability problems. However chances are you will be asked to get your machine scrutineered before being allowed to push it to the start line. Scrutineering is simply a general safety check to ensure that you're not riding a death trap. Push your bike to the scrutineering tent (taking your crash helmet with you) and then let the club officials look the bike over. They will be looking for items which may affect the bike's safety, as well as ensuring that any specific issues mentioned in the regulations (such as a rear trials tyre) have been adhered to.

A typical scrutineer's check will include twisting the throttle a couple of times to ensure that it snaps shut of its own accord. A quick check that both front and rear brakes are working and that there's no play in the steering-head bearings. They'll ensure that your footpegs fold up, that your suspension goes up and down (that fork seals aren't leak-

ing), that there's no obviously loose spokes (by running their hands around the wheels), that the wheel-bearings are sound (by taking hold of both wheels at the ten-to-two position and joggling them backwards and forwards), that the front sprocket has a guard over it, and many of them give the bike a bit of a general shake just to make sure that nothing's loose or rattling. In some cases (if you have an after-market pipe fitted or if they're noise testing) you may be asked to start the bike for them.

Most scrutineers will also require a brief look at your crash helmet, just to make sure that there's no cracks, big dings or sharp edges. Also that the straps are securely attached and that the helmet bears an ACU sticker and an E-mark label on the strap. Just occasionally we've known H&Hs where club rules mean that you're obliged to show some proof of eye protection (like goggles), or occasionally bring along a small fire extinguisher for the refuelling pits, but this is unusual...



When it comes to scrutineering: it's always best to smile sweetly and wear a tight top..

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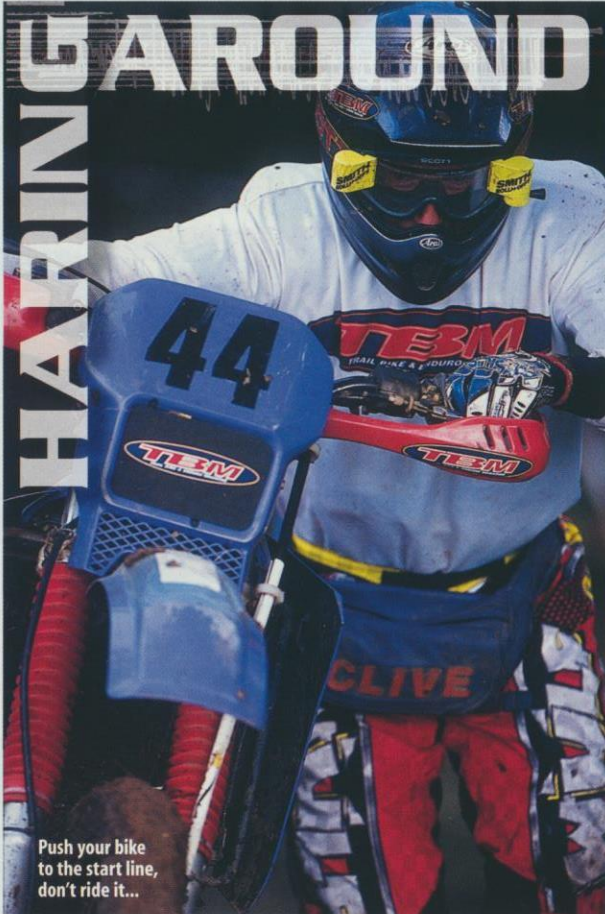


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Push your bike to the start line, don't ride it...

(or the flag drops), start your bike and ride away smoothly from the startline not forgetting to switch off the choke as soon as you reasonably can. Right, now you're racing, the first thing you need to do is..... RELAX!

Yes, I know this sounds mad because the adrenaline will be flowing, and there'll be riders all around you (trying to overtake already) but take my word for it, if you don't relax now you'll be so tense, you'll make a mistake and fall within the first few minutes and you'll be so knackered you won't be able to finish the race.

So..... ignore everyone else, stand up on the pegs, look ahead and give yourself a little shake-down, letting all the muscles in your shoulders, arms and legs relax one-by-one. Once you've done that you'll feel so much better and your riding will be much more natural - less 'crispy' as the French say.

Okay, since this is your first race no-one will blame you if you pit after the first lap just to take

a breather (or after every lap for that matter). On the other hand you've paid to enter a race and there's not much point in not trying to ride as fast as you can. However you must remember to pace yourself. It's no good burning up all your energy in the first hour if there's another three hours to go, so ride steadily but keep circulating at a reasonable clip.

One of the things most beginners worry about is being overtaken. The simple rule of thumb is to ride your own race and let faster riders worry about themselves. That said, don't be selfish - if it's a tight or narrow course, move over where it's safe and convenient to do so (but don't stop, just move slightly off-line) and let faster riders pass. Don't compromise your own safety for theirs and whatever you do don't swerve out of the way the first time someone shouts at you or revs their engine, because you may well swerve into them. And be prepared for a bit of argy-bargy. Most experienced racers will recognise a novice and pass them cleanly, but there are always a few idiots out there who will try and force their way past. Don't get angry with them, just accept it as part of racing and have a chuckle to yourself when you pass them later on, trying to extract their bike from a tree.

Which brings me on to *crossed arrows*. When you see *crossed arrows* slow down - it means there's a hazard that's likely to have you off if you hit it too fast. You have been warned. Most courses are signed with single arrows pointing either left right or straight on, though occasionally clubs will use a double arrow system if the turn is particularly tight or comes at the end of a long straight. And watch out for blue course-marker tape (usually in the pits/refuelling area) this means *walking pace*. Ignore it and you may well be excluded.

Okay, the end of the race is usually signalled by a chequered flag (if it's a mass start), or when your allotted time is up (say three hours), and if it's an enduro-type start you may need to keep an eye on your digital watch to know when to come in. Remember, points are awarded for every lap completed but deducted for each minute you are late over the allotted time period. As you're riding along you should take note of roughly how long it takes you to complete a lap (on average) and as the end of the race approaches

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HARING AROUND

Each club handles lap-scoring differently. Here a rider stops to use a wrist-mounted transponder system...



you can then decide whether it's worth going around for another lap - or not. Generally speaking if there's less than two-thirds of your average lap time left to go, it's usually not worth doing an extra lap. So if a lap takes you say 25mins and as you approach the finish line there's only ten minutes left to the end of the three hour period, then it's not worth crossing the line again, so pull over just short of the finishing line (either in the pits or safely out of the way) and wait for the time period to expire then ride across the line for a finish.

Most small clubs will let you pull into the pits or off the course at any time. At the end they'll simply count up your laps and credit you with a finish, but other larger clubs take things a little more seriously and you may have to actually cross the finishing line at the end of the race to be awarded with a finish. Be aware.

Afterwards, assuming you've finished, you'll

be absolutely elated and completely knackered. But try and avoid the temptation to pull a massive wheelie across the car park - this'll almost certainly get you excluded.

Anyway, now you've ridden your first Hare & Hounds race you'll be completely hooked. The feeling as you finish an enduro is totally addictive. And you'll be asking around for when the next event is on.

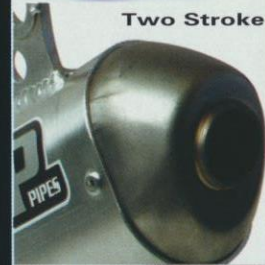
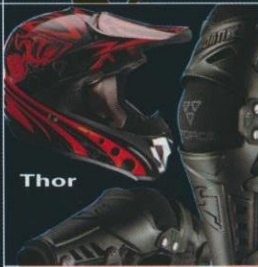
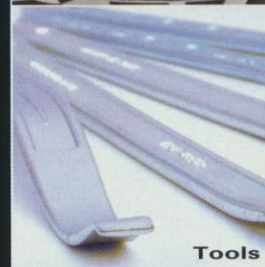
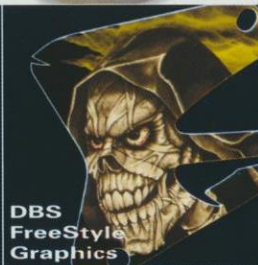
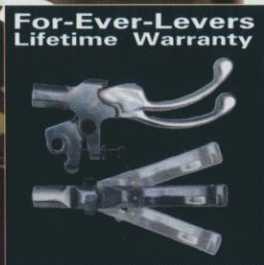
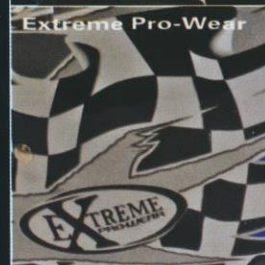
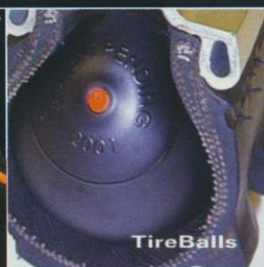
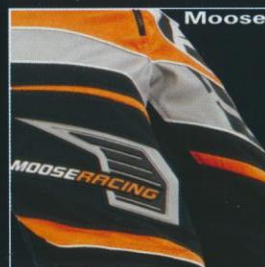
A few days later your results will be sent out to you (and/or published on the web), and you may even earn yourself a coveted finisher's medal. But no matter what happens I guarantee you'll be back for more....

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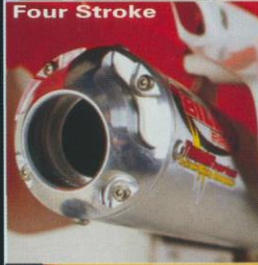
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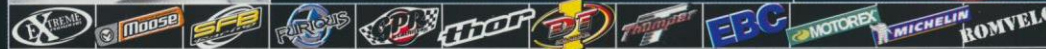
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AXLES OF



EVIL

WORDS: BARNI & SI; PICS: TBM & VARIOUS

The mighty Maico 490 Mega2...
Die young and
stay pretty!



Never mind Blair and Dubya's missing WMDs, TBM unearths the *real* Weapons of Mass Destruction and presents its own *war on terror*...

Way back when, in a time before brakes and suspension that actually worked, you could hear 'them' out on the moors. Carried in the wind, swirling through the mists came that unmistakable howl. Starting as a faint cry, it changed into a blood-curdling scream as it moved ever nearer. Then you saw it: rising up on its haunches it barked at the moon, a rooster-tail of dirt flying high into the sky, before it darted off into the darkness - gone as quickly as it appeared.

This marauding beast left a trail of destruction in its wake: broken bones, torn ligaments, tattered wallets and ruptured bank accounts. For it was a particularly vicious animal, and its thirst for blood was legendary. It was... 'an evil enduro bike!'

Nowadays, we like to think that the enduro gene pool has evolved beyond the point where these dinosaurs roamed the Earth. And so the evil enduro bike has all but disappeared from the scene. Or has it?

There's still a few of them out there amongst us, and even more lurking in the backs of sheds just waiting to maim a new generation of enduro riders foolhardy enough to 'restore' them. Heck,

there's even a few manufacturers who still conspire to produce these malevolent machines. And so, we'd like to take you on a none-too-serious look at the kind of bikes that simply can't fail to move you... that little bit closer to your maker!

EVIL OLDIES

Maico 490

Yep, we thought we'd kick-off this look at mechanical gravediggers with one of the most revered, and feared, dirt bikes of all time - the 490 Maico. Back in 1981, legendary US dirtbike journo, Rick Sieman, described the Maico as having 'all the subtlety of a safe falling on a cricket' and 'all the finesse of a cannon being fired in a handball court'. It was light... and boy, was it fast. Which meant that unless your name was Geraint Jones, or Graham Noyce, you were pretty unlikely to ride it anywhere near its limits. Instead, you were far more liable to find yourself upside-down in a hedge wondering just what the hell had happened..?

Compared with modern machinery, the 490



Cagiva's WMX500DE: All you really needed in a big, fast, scary dirt bike: half a litre of two-stroke power, ineffectual brakes and four gallons of highly volatile fuel...!



Maico was tall and rangey, with a seat height of 960mm and a limo-like wheelbase of 1582mm. And there was well over a foot of suspension travel to keep you literally on your toes. It was a big bruiser of a machine, a real man's bike. And whilst the celebrated red and yellow machines with their gorgeous radial-finned motors, were actually bloody good 'open class' bikes, they earned their place in dirtbiking folklore simply because they were just so darn big and powerful... And they always broke down. Oh, and not forgetting the fact that the kickstart had the kind of kick-back that'd take your leg clean off, just below the knee of your Jofa race-pants. Life was sweeter back then, if a little shorter... **Verdict:** German bombs killed fewer people...



Cagiva WMX500DE

Ah yes, now we're talking. We simply couldn't ignore the old mid-Eighties Cagiva without a mention. Not only because it's got to be one of the most bonkers production dirtbikes of all time, but also because we've got one rusting in peace in the TBM shed.

Talk about niche markets, the DE moniker stands for Desert Enduro and the bike was built

simply to go racing in the US desert. So the Italian firm took their 500cc, two-stroke WMX motocrosser, added a wide ratio five-speed gearbox, a basic set of lights and - since its thirst for fuel was almost as legendary as its thirst for blood - a whopping great 18L fuel tank. This thing was a beast to ride: not only was it a pain to get onto since it featured an eye-watering 990mm seat height, but it was also a bitch to steer as you

Yamaha's IT490 was the culmination of years of research into what really makes people scream!



Legend has it that the bike is so evil it somehow repairs itself, just like the Plymouth Fury in Stephen King's 'Christine'. But there's little truth in the tale, as the TBM project WMX was taken to bits a year ago, and it's still in pieces today...! **Verdict:** 'You toucha my throttle, I smasha your face, capice...'

Yamaha IT490

Remember the end of the film Ghostbusters, where the sky turned funny colours, the clouds churned ominously and lightning blitzed across the sky? Well that's exactly what happened when the second TBM project bike in this

fought to overcome the effects of 18L of fuel slopping its way around at waist height.

Somehow a small number of bikes escaped their Stateside destiny and found their way to the UK where they set about demoralising our dirtbiking establishment with their legendary power, their unwieldy centre of gravity and their demonic kickback - if it didn't break your leg, it broke the kickstart shaft and smashed the cases!

line-up - issue 76's Yamaha IT490 - first rolled from the back of the TBM Transporter. It was the devil incarnate, badly disguised in faded blue plastics and drooling gearbox oil. And just as the sky turned purple, so ex-TBM test rider Clive Garnham's face turned a particularly putrid shade of green at the thought of piloting the early Eighties Yamaha at the Weston Beach Race that year.

Husqvarna's legendary 360. For the riders it was not so much *On Any Sunday*, as on every hospital ward...



With its cantilever rear-end and radial-finned motor, the big two-stroke Yamaha is considered by some at least, a classic machine. And Clive probably would've thought the same had he not found that the IT had no suspension, very little in the way of brakes, and a constantly detonating motor thanks to filling the tank with cheap unleaded. Oops. Never mind, you may think, a 490cc two-stroke must have flown down Weston's mile-long straight. And back in the bike's heyday it certainly would've done. One of these babies at full chat was easily good enough for a ton-up blast down the beach - even if it would take another mile or so to stop it!

Ours however, was a little different. Because what the pre-race check (a bumble along a residential street) had failed to highlight was that the bike was geared not for three-figure speeds, but for a top-end of about 55mph!

Clive was not alone in his dislike for the ol' 490. To once again quote the legendary Rick Sieman, 'the 490 handled like a safe falling down a flight of stairs'. And it was this haphazard handling which finally did for Clive's Weston attempt, and ultimately his dirt riding career.

Having spent a thoroughly unpleasant couple of hours trying to steer this unrideable old nail around a freezing West Country beach, Clive took the merest little dab mid-corner to save the wayward from-end from tucking, and immediately tore his Cruciate Ligament. Game over.

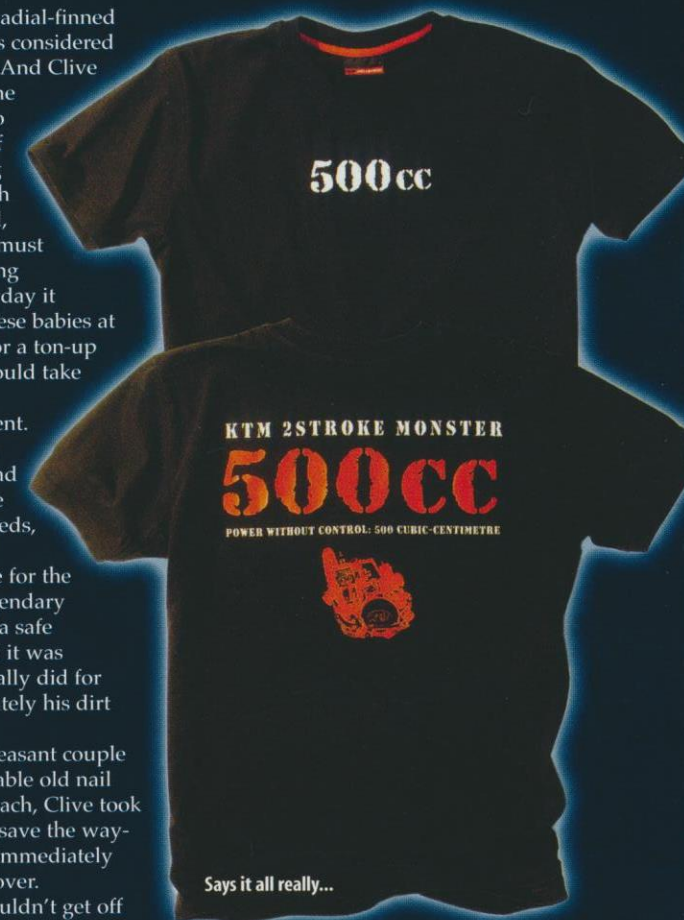
Just to really top things off he couldn't get off the bike 'cos his leg wouldn't support him and he couldn't stop the jackhammer of a motor because his gammy leg meant he'd never start it again. Not that he'd have got it going anyway, 'cos the kickstart mechanism had sheared at the start of the day!

Looking back, Clive really should've known better. After all, when he signed-on the previous day he'd landed a particularly pertinent race number - 666... **Verdict:** You had more chance of survival as a Kamikaze pilot...

KTM '500' two-stroke

'Power Without Control' reads the slogan on the KTM T-shirt celebrating this most awesome of engines. And it's as a powerplant, rather than a specific bike, that the KTM makes this list.

Throughout the '80s and '90s the Austrian's employed big-bore low technology two-strokes in a wide range of off-roaders and in slightly varying displacements - all the way up to a life-threatening 550cc - though we particularly



Says it all really...

liked the sound of the 1990 540DXC desert racer: more low-down oomph than a Mack truck and with a top-end that'd drag your competitors clean off their bikes in your wake, this was one of those bikes you'd always remember... for all the wrong reasons.

They say that if you can remember the '60s then you weren't really there. And by the same token, if you're still in one piece today you probably never took a ride on an old 500cc 2T Katosh... **Verdict:** Austria's other evil export...

Husqvarna 360

No collection of old timers would be complete without a mention of the God-daddy of all widowmakers, the legendary 'willy-shrinking' Husky 360. This was a bike so infamous even the great Malcolm Smith (of MSR and *On Any Sunday* fame) had trouble controlling it at times. God help the rest of us mere mortals.

The fact that it produced gobloads of power at



MODERN MONSTERS

the merest touch of its throttle was not really the problem - rather that all this performance was harnessed in a spindly Scandinavian steel chassis with its origins back in the mid 1960s - and with brakes and suspension to match.

If you could ever get a 360 Husky to start you knew you were in for an epic ride. Fortunately most of them either failed to fire or broke-down soon afterwards, sparing a whole generation of riders the discomfort of numerous broken bones and disfigured bodies.

With its famous polished-and-painted alloy tank, it did however have the saving grace of being extremely pretty to look at. Something that must have been scant comfort as you gazed longingly at it from your hospital bed... **Verdict:** No wonder so many Swedes commit suicide...

Husaberg FE650e

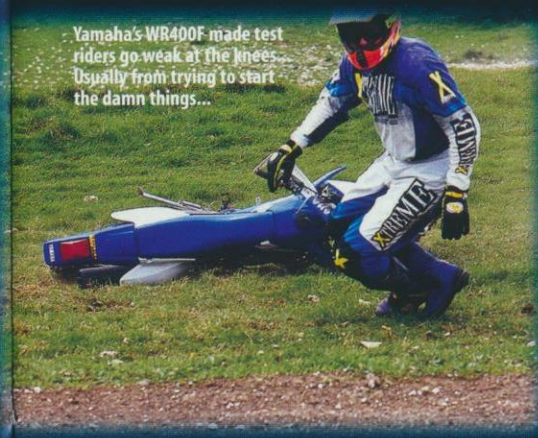
Though hugely popular in supermoto trim, there are few good reasons to want to buy the monstrous 650 Berg with dirt wheels installed. Perhaps you live in the desert Kingdom of Qatar and require the horizon-shrinking performance of a truly insane sand-blaster; maybe you're trying for an all-out assault on the off-road world record (currently 123mph), or possibly you're just sick of living!

There's no hi-tech wizardry involved with the big Berg, it makes big power because it's a big-bore motor in a ballsy state of tune. Essentially, it's the same basic engine that Swedish company Husaberg have been making since the late Eighties, only now it comes blessed with such mechanical luxuries as an oil pump! And as this

HM Honda CRE500. Riding instructions as per below right...



Yamaha's WR400F made test riders go weak at the knees... Usually from trying to start the damn things...



1) Start bike.
2) Twist throttle...

3) Fall on ass...
4) Sell bike.



Yamaha WR400F

Now I know what you're thinking: 'A mere 400 isn't evil. What's that doing here?' Well, I beg to differ and I'm sure that those of you who owned one of those first WR400Fs will agree. Because the early 400 was an absolute pig to start. To be fair, getting it going from cold was rarely much of a problem, but woe betide you stall the bike when it was hot and clattered in mud, because then those early WR-Fs flatly refused to light up.

If you were riding enduros back in '98 you'll have no doubt noticed 400F 'owners' (the term 'riders' would imply you could actually get the thing going) - they were the ones stood at the trackside burger van swigging a cup of tea

powerhouse of a motor is bolted into an ultra-lightweight (and detractors might say slightly fragile) chassis, it's easy to see why the FE650 is such a beast.

But really, we should leave the final word on the FE to Husaberg themselves, because they seem all too aware - proud even - that they've created a monster. As they state in their advertising blurb: *'The FE650e, one of the most powerful enduro bikes ever made, will expand your senses: full force out of the bottom.'*

Quite... **Verdict:** Parp!

Vertemati E570: Silver Dream
Racer or Death Race 2000.
You decide...



having given up trying to get their mounts to fire.

In fact you could argue that far from 'kick-starting the four-stroke revolution', those early Yamahas actually did the opposite. And it's because of the WR400F that we all now enjoy electric-start thumpers, and that strokers are currently back in vogue.

If you did get the bike fired up it was quite a revelation. With its high-revving (13000rpm no less) five-valve engine it produced more than enough power to get you into deep water. Unfortunately that's precisely where you didn't want to be. Since Yamaha also designed this baby with a low-hanging crankcase breather hose. Stall this sucker in a stream and not only would it refuse to start, but it would also occasionally suck-up a lungful of cold water into the top of a hot motor - and might never start again!

As the old saying goes 'to finish first, first you've got to finish'. But in the case of the 1998 WR-F, to finish first, first you've got to start the bloody thing! **Verdict:** Where do we start...? We don't!

HM CRE500

It's rumoured that when *the Devil went down to Georgia* he was riding an HM Honda 'five hunderd'! I mean, who but Old Nick himself could possibly want to pilot one of the most fearsome MXers ever built... in a forest enduro? Okay, so

the Italian Honda importers added a flywheel weight and a lighting kit but, quite frankly, they'd have been better off adding an ejector seat! It'd take more than a couple of lame tweaks to tame the hit of the mighty CR500 lump...!

Unlike more modern two-strokes, the CR500 has no powervalve to temper its fury at the bottom-end. In its place is a seamless wave of power, the likes of which could only ever come from a large displacement motor. And with so much grunt available you could probably ride most events using only third gear!

The one and only time TBM tested a CRE500 has long since gone down in office folklore as truly unforgettable. Like Beaker from the Muppet Show, it was once again Aussie Clive who was first (and last) to throw a leg over the beast, declaring with chest-thumping diffidence: 'Stand aside boys, I know how to wheelie these babies, I used to have a CR500'. At which point Clive clambered aboard the red-and-black monster and promptly gave its tail a cheeky tweak.

Suffice it to say, the wheels had barely turned a complete revolution before Clive was dumped unceremoniously on his ass and the bike cart-wheeled off in a profusion of scattered plastics and snapped sub-frame. Like a wild mustang being broken-in by a novice cowpoke, the Honda simply sat there taunting him with a ring-dinging 'laugh' from what was left of its muffler.



We hastily patched the bike back together again and returned it to its rightful owner (a dirtbiking novice) who, clearly delighted with his recent purchase, kept it for, oooh, about a week before selling it on. He'd ridden the bike just once...

Verdict: Once ridden, never forgotten!

Vertemati E570

There's nothing like a good bit of over-powered exotica to get your heart racing. And the E570 would probably send your ticker right off the scale. Originally, the Italian Vertemati brothers built their simple (and beautiful), lightweight, gear-driven SOHC dirtbike to take them racing. But, like all successful racing prototypes, when they tried to make the jump from one-off special to production machine, that's when the troubles really began.

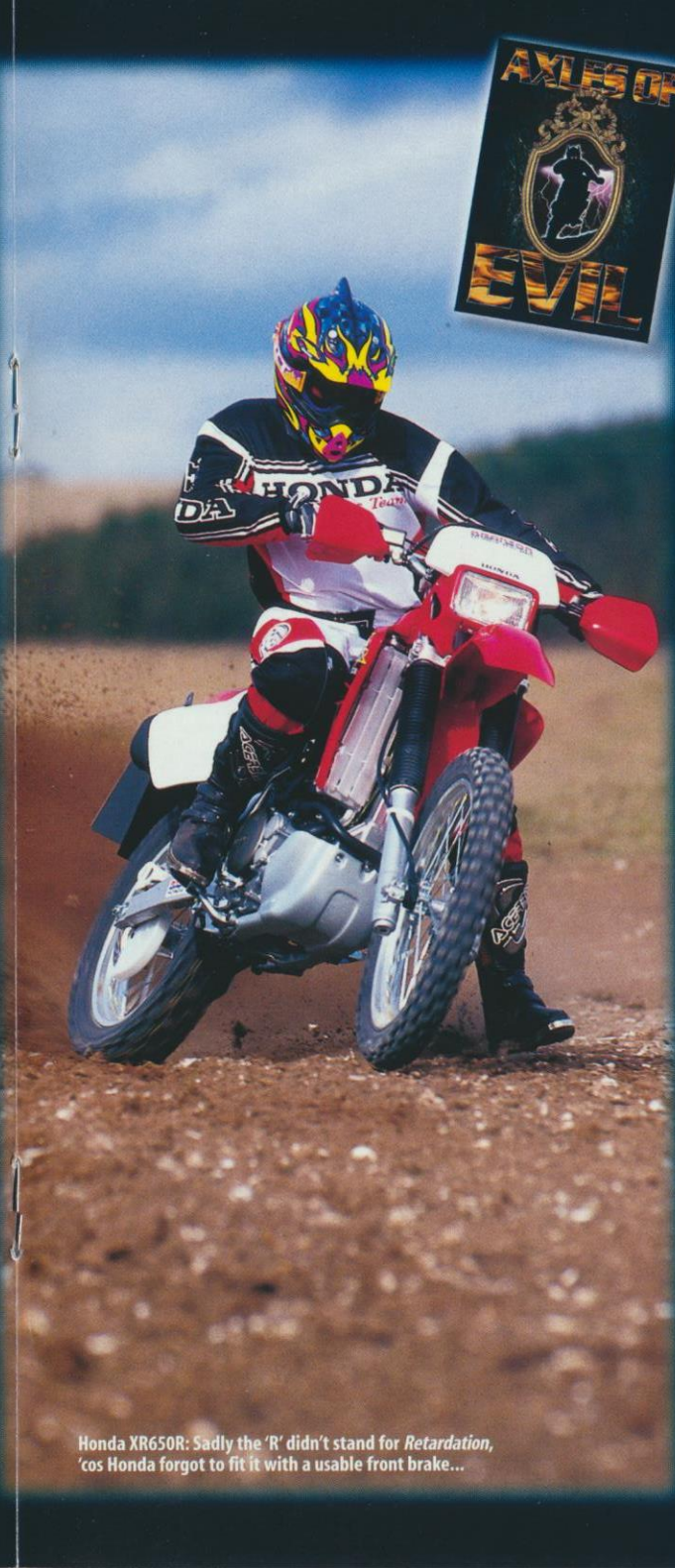
Just like Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*, how could something so beautiful ever prove so evil? After all it's not like the magnesium and billet-encrusted bike was particularly fragile, it's just that this piece of engineering art was never really designed to be productionised.

The vibes from this extraordinarily powerful motor were so strong they could be measured on the Richter Scale, and test bikes rarely went the distance.

The power it produced however was stomach-churningly brutal. When we tested a smaller 501cc SM version in our sister title *Supermoto Magazine*, it wiped the floor with an XR650 in a side-by-side drag race (spitting flames from the exhaust in the process). The 570 however, was much more of a handful!

On tarmac it was barely controllable, but get it on the dirt and the Vertemati was simply a liability. Everywhere it went it scarred the landscape leaving a 140-section trench in its wake! Fortunately as it turned out, very few people actually bought the E570, and it was listed by the Italians as 'special order' only. 'Special needs' only more like...

Verdict: One flew over the cuckoo's nest...



Honda XR650R: Sadly the 'R' didn't stand for *Retardation*, 'cos Honda forgot to fit it with a usable front brake...



Below: ATK's 700cc two-stroke INTIMIDATOR. Nuff said...



Honda XR650R

The Big Red was unleashed on an unsuspecting world back in 2000 as a replacement for the venerable old air-cooled XR600R. And, despite a lack of electric start, it proved a popular machine though certainly more suited to US desert racing than gloopy green lanes or UK forest enduros.

A large number of sixfifties have found their way onto the road as supermotors, with 17in wheels and huge front discs, and that's a good thing because the big XR gets a mention here not merely for its stonking water-cooled motor (though it *is* stonking), but for its woefully inadequate front stopper. Yep, for some reason Honda decided to fit a 100+mph, 140kg dirtbike with a front disc off a moped. The puny 240mm rotor provides about the same level of retardation as trying to use your bum bag as a parachute.

Our own Dave 'Crasher' Cornish found out just how ineffectual that brake is when, having slightly misjudged a corner on a Cambrian Rally fire-road, he tried in vain to slow the XR down using the weedy anchors. Sadly for Dave, the XR was having none of it and threw itself lemming-like off the side of the mountain, Crasher still flailing from the handlebars.

Eventually Dave made a full recovery but not before he'd discovered for himself the true consequences of riding a motorcycle blessed with more go-than-whoah!

Locals say that on a clear night you can still see the ill-fated Honda as its ghostly form tears

across the sky above the Eppynt ranges...

Verdict: Don't stop me now...

And Finally...

We couldn't end this feature without giving mention to two of the scariest, most pointless production dirtbikes on the planet. First off another Maico! When the remainder of the Dutch/German firm was sold off to yet another German industrialist he couldn't simply settle for selling spares. Oh no. He had to build his own bike - and one which was even more terrifying than the mighty Maico which heralded it. Enter the 685cc Koestler two-stroke. A bike so scary we don't know anyone who's had the guts to ride it.

But the final word must surely go to American dirtbike manufacturer ATK. Clearly the company

enjoys a laugh, why else would they buy the remaining stock of Cannondale motorcycles. So when they launched a bike called the *Intimidator 50* - a kiddy motocrosser with black plastics and blood-red calipers, we all thought: Ooh, scary..!

But that was before we 'met-the-parents'. Cos this little fifty is the unholy offspring of the mutha and father of all dirtbikes... the mind-numbingly stupid 620cc and 700cc two-stroke INTIMIDATORS!

What we really want to know is... who was it that tested the 620 version and thought, 'Hmmm, not bad. But what this thing *really* needs is just a little bit more power'?

Answers on a mortuary toe-tag please...

Dishonourable Mentions

- All Triumph 650 Twins
- Any big open-class CZ or Jawa
- KTM's 620SX & 540 Tiainen Rep
- Moto Guzzi Quota
- Suzuki's TM400 Cyclone
- TM 700SM
- Praga 610

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OUT IN AFRICA



I'm definitely not a gifted off-road rider by any means. In fact I can only watch in awe when I see a good rider in action. But I am still an enthusiastic off-roader and probably unlike most of you reading this, I've only owned a dirt bike for six months.

So when I was asked if I'd be interested in going to South Africa with a couple of mates and taking part in a three-day off-road event specifically aimed at BMW riders I jumped at the opportunity. Before I knew it, I was on a plane to SA, destination Cape Town...

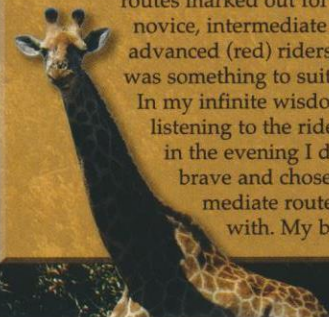
Sands Of Time

Touching down after a tiring 11.5hr overnight flight but with the bonus of no jet lag (SA is only an hour ahead of the UK), we loaded our kit into a car and our local guide drove us to the event - the Great African GS Challenge (GAGSC). But I guess we must've taken the tourist route because it took over six hours to drive 350 miles!

The destination was near Loxton, in the middle of the Bo-Karoo desert, a vast and desolate area with little in the way of civilisation - not unlike Hull as it happens. We arrived at the venue, the Jakhalsdans game park where there were 380 riders setting up their 'homes' for the next three days and pitched our tents alongside before registering in the massive marquee. The event is open to owners of any BMW 'enduro' model, regardless of age, as long as the bike is roadworthy.

On offer for the three days riding were routes marked out for either novice, intermediate (green) or advanced (red) riders, so there was something to suit everyone. In my infinite wisdom and after listening to the rider's briefing in the evening I decided to be brave and chose the intermediate route to start with. My bike for the

WORDS: KYLIE MAEBUS; PICS: VARIOUS



Desert rose Kylie Maebus jétted off to ride the annual BMW GS Challenge in South Africa. This is how she got on...



three days was a BMW F650GS with trail tyres, probably not the choice of most riders, but in these conditions it should be able to cope with most of the planned riding terrain.

The Lion Sleeps Tonight

Another interesting touch (and to try and instil a sense of adventure), all riders who weren't hiring bikes had to arrive with their tents and sleeping bag on their machines - no cars or trailers were allowed near the site. Instead, you had the option of transporting your bike to a nearby town (with secure parking) and then packing everything onto your bike before riding to the venue.

During the night I battled to sleep in my tent in the freezing cold, while trying to block out the noise from some of the other noisy campers, so it was a night of little rest. I was woken in the early hours by some enthusiastic riders starting up their bikes nice 'n' early in order to set off before the rest of the participants - thanks guys!

My group was a little more laid back, enjoying a buffet breakfast, filling up the hydration packs,

collecting our lunch packs, fitting our road maps to the bikes and then starting up our machines ready for the 278-kilometre off-road ride.

Enter Sandman...

Initially I struggled with the unfamiliar terrain of long sandy roads and winding mountain climbs and descents. I had never ridden on sand before and the only way I survived the day was to hold on for dear life, ending up with massive blisters on my hands, but some of the most amazing scenery I have ever seen en-route was fitting compensation.

However, I was glad to get back to the campsite at the end of the day and enjoy the temporary showers that the organisers had installed for the event. It was now time for the second part of the event - the Skills Challenge. Only open to experienced riders, this was all about bike control at slow speeds, stopping on steep inclines feet up, jumping logs and riding technical routes without sitting down or putting your feet down.

That first night, 150 competitors took part on a



OUT IN AFRICA



OUT IN AFRICA



trials-like circuit, riding one-by-one over tyres, and logs around a tight and twisty course. Only 25 progressed onto the next level, proving just how difficult it was. But with a brand-new BMW F650GS Dakar worth £5500 as a prize for the winner, it had to be tough.

Afterwards I relaxed and met some of the friendly locals who had travelled from all over South Africa to take part. There were riders of all

ages and various ranges of riding ability. We happily feasted on the local cuisine - game park lamb was the speciality - and listened to the riders' briefing for the following day. I took tips from some of the riding instructors on the technique for riding in sand - stand up, keep legs loose, weight back, keep the front light, accelerate out of situations and look at the horizon.

Then I decided, with a little coercion from my friends to take on the next level. Yep, the advanced route...

Sand Advice

I tried to get an earlier night this time, but sleep was once again hampered by the cold and the sound of someone choking on his own tongue but I got there in the end. It was another early start and I rolled out of bed to meet our group, which included a number of people that we met the night before. I was feeling a little nervous, with thoughts of crashing down a steep ravine and being eaten by lions at the forefront of my mind.

Anyway, we all set off on the 185-kilometre red route, which was very different from the day before. As soon as we rode off the site we turned into another game park, where giraffe and springbok were nearby but hiding from the noise of the bikes.

We started out on rocky, sandy 4x4 tracks, and

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instantly I was more relaxed as I really enjoy this type of going. We climbed rocky ascents, breathed in the fresh air and admired the view before traversing down steep off-camber descents through water crossings and along deep sandy trails. I even mastered jumping the GS over the

bumps on the track. It challenged me no end and I only dropped the 650 once and crashed twice - but take it from me, the GS crashes rather well!

With the sand riding advice that I was given over a beer the night before, still ringing in my ears, I was dying to practice my technique, which to my relief worked a treat. Along the way there were no petrol stations and we rode seven special stages during the day, riding from one property to the next. I don't know of any other location where you would have access to this amount of private land and not come across any sign of civilisation. It was brilliant and truly a day of achievement - I loved every second.

We eventually made it back to base later in the afternoon, showered and enjoyed watching the top 25 riders do battle in the next stage of the Skills Challenge. This time the circuit was a lot longer with more difficult terrain and the determined riders were desperate to get through to the next round.

Sand Blasting

On the third and final day of riding I returned to the intermediate route as we were warned in the rider's briefing that the terrain on the advanced course was only suitable for bikes with proper off-road tyres. As a result I teamed up with two new riders for the last 412km.

For the first time on this event we rode on

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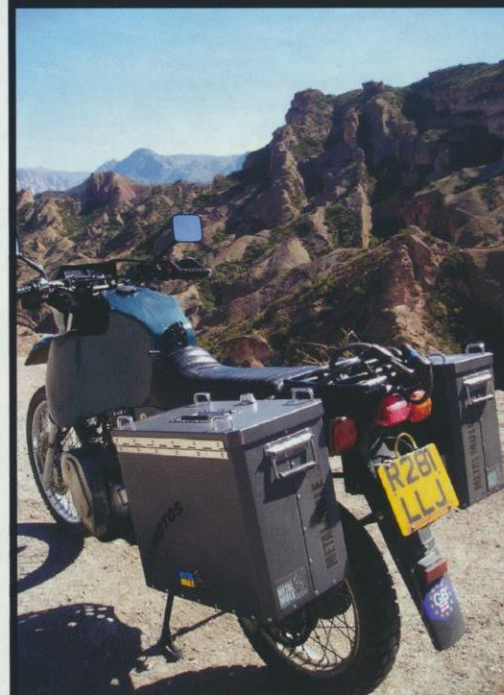
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OUT IN AFRICA



After eight hours of riding we returned to base camp and went directly to watch the final ten riders battle it out for the Skills Challenge win. It was yet another new and longer track, but there was only one real winner, local rider Hein Kumm.

Unsurprisingly everyone was exhausted and after a few vodkas I felt the same way. But despite the tiredness I have never experienced such awesome riding, and for a fairly novice rider like myself it was a real eye-opener into just how good off-road riding can be. There's nothing else quite like it...

some tarmac (60km) so we could get to a new area of dirt roads. By now I felt so much more confident on the GS and I took the sandy roads easily in my stride and just wanted to go faster, so we didn't stop and enjoy the views very much and just got on with the riding. But although the pace felt pretty quick to me, it wasn't actually that frenetic, which was just as well as I suffered a few near spectacular falls in the soft sand as a result of my newly found over-confidence.

The GAG5C is an annual event and changes locations each year. To find out more about the 2006 event visit gagsc.com. The £90 (approx) participation fee includes access to the site, all route maps, organisation, hearty meals, access to on-site bar, use of toilet/shower facilities and evening entertainment. See you there next year...



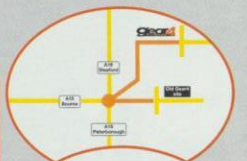
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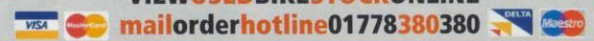


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GOODBYE

2005

It's been a strange sort of year, this year...

Si Melber: Things Can Only Get Better

Well I can't say it's been an easy year here at Team TBM. We've had the draconian DEFRA threat, rival magazines launching 'spoilers' against us, staff changes, falling bike sales, the death of great riders (among them Fabrizio Meoni), and finally the ill-thought out NERC Bill. Truth is I'll be glad to see the back of 2005.

Thankfully there have been some good times along the way. Many of them came thanks to the people I've met and the places I've been this year, as well as from just getting out there and riding dirt bikes in the company of friends and strangers. Highlights (in no particular order) include trail

riding in France with Chris Evans on his inaugural Pyrenees trip (yes it was as awesome as it sounded in my report); racing the little KTM 125EXC (everyone should try one); getting our ill-fated Trials Magazine to the point where another (considerably larger) publisher felt the need to launch a rival title (very flattering); and watching them subsequently have to close their mag down again (tee hee); launching the TBM website and forum, and watching it take on a life all of its own (life is very strange in cyberspace); marvelling at David Knight winning not just the Six Days, but also his first world title and everything else he entered (what a star); and riding not one, but two alternative-powered dirtbikes (weird).

I know I'm biased but I think the mag has really improved a helluva lot this year - not just in terms

STORY & PICS: TBM

of its size and content, but also in the standard of the contributors (and staff) that write for us. As well as regularly turning out 150+ page issues each month, we can also draw on a considerable amount of experience in terms of knowledge, ability and photographic input. And this year the subject matter has been incredibly diverse. We've found ourselves covering not just news, sport and reviews, but also having to talk politics and environmental issues at times. We've ridden everything from trials bikes to rally bikes and all points in between. And we've travelled the length and breadth of the country to test the bikes. It's been fun.

Of the bikes I've ridden this year the ones that stick in my mind are (again in no particular order) the Sherco 4.5i (great all-rounder), the Husky TE250 (frantic four-stroke), the Scorpa Long Ride (how light?), the Blade T-6 (how quiet?), and the sublime KTM 125EXC (how much fun?).

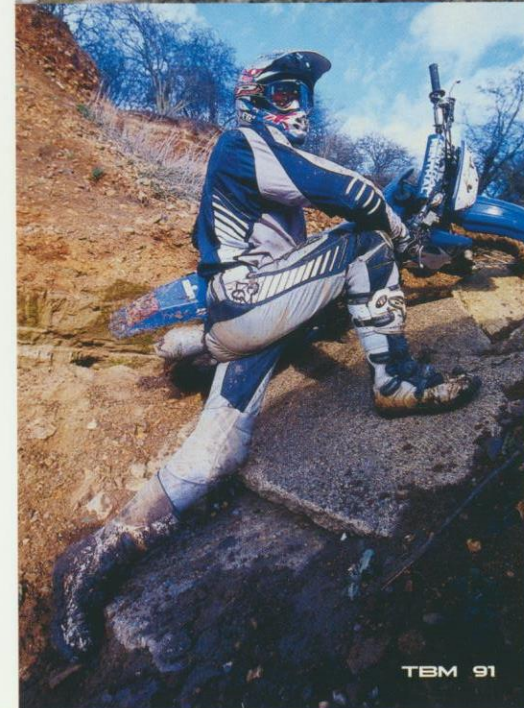
Highlight of the year for me was watching staffwriter Mel grow in confidence from being an absolute beginner at the beginning of the year, to the point where she felt able to tackle (if not quite finish) an overseas enduro. Lowlight? Surely this intolerent Government. I hate having to get political in print and I hate taking sides (especially since I helped vote in this lot, back in '97), but rarely can I remember a Government which seemed so intent on removing the liberties of individuals.

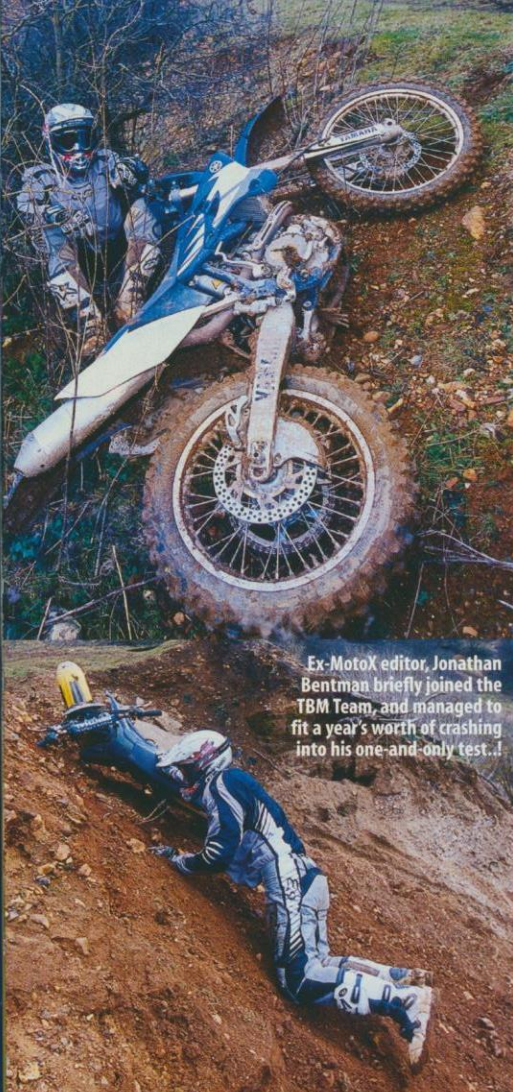
And so to my hopes and aspirations for 2006? That this Government comes to its senses regarding the rights of all users to access the beautiful British countryside, that as a magazine we can continue to do justice to this great sport of ours, and finally that Patsy Quick wins the Dakar Rallye. Failing that I'll settle for her to just reach the finish line. Thanks for your support. Please keep it coming...

James Barnicoat: Fast Forward

Take a look at the photos in this gallery of get-offs and you'll see that I've barely fallen off at all this year. Sure, that's me picking up a Honda CRF450X after a graceful dismount on a slippery, rocky Manx hill, and if you look closely you'll note that I'm also responsible for the upside-down 450X barely visible under that tree. But otherwise I've stayed firmly rubber-side down in '05!

Yeah, right! Of course I've eaten dirt plenty of times this year. It's just that I'm normally the one behind the camera, so I get to save face, whereas the others are forced to suffer the embarrassment of having their spills captured on celluloid. Suckers..! And so there's a complete lack of evidence that I parked the new long-term 125EXC in a bush at a Chiltern Hills Club enduro. Or that I almost dropped the Gasser 300 into a bottomless pit at this year's Dawn to Dusk. And if I wasn't telling you now, you'd be none the wiser that I'd dived headfirst





Ex-MotoX editor, Jonathan Bentman briefly joined the TBM Team, and managed to fit a year's worth of crashing into his one-and-only test..!



from our Staff WR250F into a Buckinghamshire bog.

But rather than continue to list a catalogue of minor mishaps, or dwell on what a bunch of 'merchant bankers' the Government and DEFRA are, I'll instead concentrate on the happier times in 2005.

Riding my first French enduro, the two-day Val de Lorraine Classic, was something really special. Ten separate, and frankly awesome special tests, glorious going, and a final stadium motocross where we lined up against names such as Peterhansel and Planet made it by far the best event I've ever ridden (even if the Ed did smoke me in the final MX). And, for one of the two days at least, I was aboard Sherco's excellent 4.5i. Bliss.

Then there was piloting a BMW HP2 around the hills of northern Spain. You wouldn't believe a 1200cc dirtbike would be so rideable, and with the sun in the sky and the scent of pine in the air, life was sweet.

Electric Moto's Blade T-6 couldn't be any further removed from the big Beemer, yet it was huge fun chucking the lightweight, electric bike around the Washbrook Farm MX track, even if the battery life meant it delivered the adrenaline hit in meagre 20 minute doses.

Aside from time spent razzing around on dirtbikes, one incident really sticks in my mind and brings a smile to my face. Watching David Knight blast around the final special test at the Hafren EEC event while standing on the seat of his bike round a fast sweeping turn, 500m from the finish. Other than Rossi, I can't think of any other World Champion who would indulge in such crowd-pleasing antics, and even Valentino saves them 'til after the chequered flag!

Yep, life with dirtbikes is great, and balls to the Government if they think they're going to stop us riding. So here's to another year of awesome events and remarkable racing. It's just a shame there won't be any shots of all those spectacular get-offs...

Mel Falconer: Natural Born Spiller

Despite the fact that I seem to have incurred more injury time than the average Millwall v Cardiff footie match, this year I think I've made some real progress, albeit at the expense of many an unfortunate test bike (and the Ed's wallet).

The litany of lacerations began back in April when I collided rather nastily with a rock whilst racing along a rocky desert piste in Morocco. Result: two badly fractured ribs. Not that I knew that until a week later, when still in pain I decided to play a game of squash and promptly ended up in Ealing A&E unable to breathe.

But that was nothing compared to the pain I felt when I was vociferously reminded by the Ed about the '£500 for every broken bone' health insurance scheme I had forgotten to take out. Ouch.

But come July this was all a distant memory as I took part in my first ever international enduro over in France - and what a truly awesome experience it was. Definitely the toughest thing I've ridden all year. Nevertheless it really inspired me to improve my riding, so hopefully I'll be able to go back next year and do a whole lot better.

But try as I might I don't get many (okay, ANY) victories aboard a dirtbike here at TBM so I was over the moon when I set the fastest lap of the day at a ladies-only training day at KTM's indoor practice arena down in Devon on my first visit. Small beer I know but you gotta' take your glory where you can. Even if it's only against girls..!

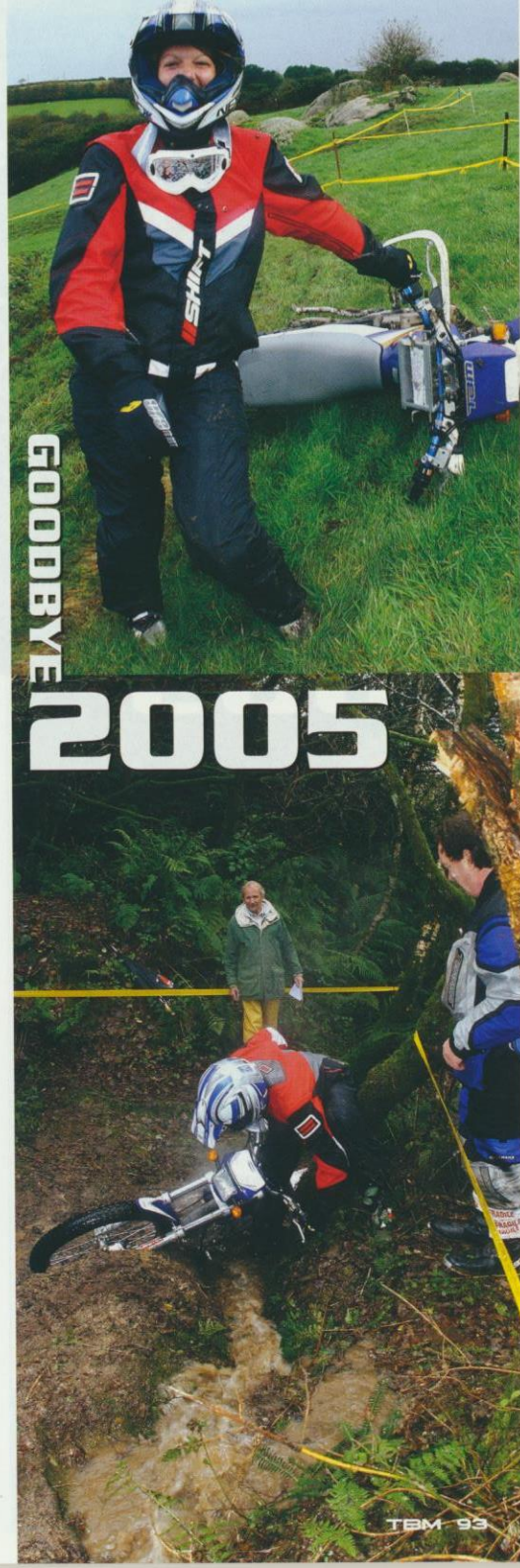
Miraculously, I escaped any serious damage (hair pulling, eye scratching etc) but it wasn't long before I was firmly back in the crash seat. However this time it really wasn't my fault when in a hare 'n' hounds race I dismounted to help another racer who had got stuck in front of me. As I hopped back on TBM's long-term Yamaha WR250F it fell onto me and crushed my right knee against the tree it was leaning against. My rather embarrassing escapade even made the host club's monthly newsletter: '*...special mention to Mel (of TBM fame) who had to be rescued on the back of the quad. With a sore knee and the view that her trousers had to come off for a better look, there suddenly seemed to be a queue of all the marshals volunteering for the onerous task of disrobing the young lady. Alas, the cool hands of the boys from Pre-med stepped in to halt our fun!*' Erm, I'm sure there's a compliment in there somewhere.

And to complete the Mel 2005 trauma list is one final injury that no gurlie should have to experience. Aboard a Scorpa SY175F Long Ride scrambling up a rocky section in the Camel Vale LDT in Cornwall I did myself rather a big mischief on the end of a handlebar, much to the rest of the TBM crew's amusement. Suffice it to say if I could ride a bike as well as I can swear, I'd be David Knight - well, a girl can always dream...

Jonty Edmunds: Life Through A Lense

I did it. I made it through a season - touch-wood - without having sampled the delights of hospital food, using crutches, or having got any part of my body stitched, bandaged or plastered as the result of anything to do with motorcycles. And that, since the age of about 14, is a first for me. I still managed to fall off and crash a plethora of different machinery during the past 12 months, but thankfully without ill effect. Long may it continue...

David Knight's rise to the very top of the international enduro scene has obviously been the highlight of my 'sporting' season. A rookie photo-journalist when Knight first ventured into the world championships, I've witnessed and documented his sporting highs, lows, frustrations,



GOODBYE
2005

GOODBYE 2005



occasional tantrums and celebrations along the way. And so to finally see him - a British rider - make it to the very top of his game is, well... pretty special. This year Knighter not only won races, he raised the bar so high that on occasions he made the world's best riders look ordinary...

Daryl Bolter's European Enduro Championship success was also a great achievement in what was a difficult, injury-marred, season for him. It was also a success that was long overdue. Back in 1997 I missed out on the 125cc European Enduro Championship title by next to nothing, and it has taken until now almost 10 years on, for another young British rider (Knighter aside) to rise to the top of the Euro series.

Let's hope that we don't have to wait another ten years before we get to see the next Brit capable of mixing it with Europe's elite.

On the home front, BEC events have been a bit, well, sparse this season. Spanning March to November, with two of the three Championship classes won in August the series has lacked the oomph of past years. Hats off to Diss MCC for organising the opening and closing rounds of the series though. If they hadn't done so, there simply wouldn't have been a championship. With five two-day and a single one-day event planned for next year, including some new and returning events, the '06 BEC should be one of the best in a long time.

When it comes to dirt bikes, BMW's HP2 tops my list of amazing machines. I'd never have guessed that a 1200cc bike could have been so purposeful off-road. Proof that even the Germans like to think outside the box once in a while. As far as enduro bikes go I'd have to say that KTM's fleet of WEC winning bikes were both interesting and enjoyable to ride. The world championship is in danger of becoming a little too orange if other manufacturers don't pull their socks up, but KTM have got to where they are for a reason. For that I feel they deserve a pat on the back.

2005 was also the year in which I managed for the first time in many years, to ride an enduro bike outside of any competition, for longer than a couple of hours. Travelling to Lapland and spending three days on a bike with no schedule to worry about was as enjoyable as the scenery was breathtaking. To simply enjoy the freedom and pleasure that a dirt bike gives you is a privilege. Long may it continue.



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TRADE SECRETS

Lock up your...

You can always tell when a bike has been prepared by someone who knows a thing or two about riding off-road: the giveaway is a set of lockwired grips. Because no matter how firmly your grips are glued to the bars, the one thing you can *absolutely* guarantee is that those suckers are going to come unstuck just as you pull the mother of all wheelies to impress your mates. And impressed they certainly *will* be, if you can control a vertical dirt bike which you're no longer holding onto.

The thing is that once you get into the slop and mud of a really wet trail ride (or race), water will work its way under your grips (as it always does) causing the glue to come unstuck and

the grips to twist on the bars - or worse still slip off. At the very least a loose grip makes the bike harder and more tiring to ride, at the worst it's positively lethal. And the only solution is to lockwire them in place.

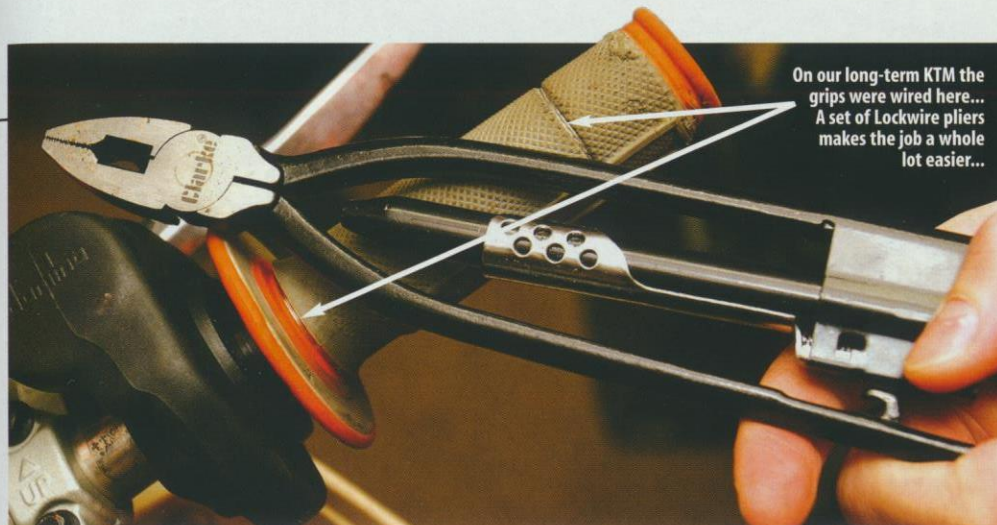
Just in case you don't know what I'm talking about, lockwire is a very thin and malleable wire usually supplied on a reel, and sold in motorcycle shops.

Everybody has their own unique way of doing this job, but what we usually do is cut a length of wire about 40cm long and then fold it back on itself so that you now have a double length of approximately 20cm long. Okay, take a look at your bike's grips - some grips have little grooves already moulded into them designed specifically for lockwire. If your bike has

these then that's where you want to put the wire. If not then go for one piece as close to the inner end of the grip as possible (the end nearest your thumbs), one in the middle of the grip, and preferably one at the far end of the grip too.

Wrap the doubled-up wire once around the grip where you want it to go and then twist the two (actually four) loose ends around each other just once.

Now then if you own a pair of lockwire pliers (specifically designed for this job) then pinch the wire in the jaws of the pliers, clamp them up using the lockable clamp and then operate the puller a single time (which twists the wire the correct amount). Alternatively if you're using normal pliers then pinch the wire in the jaws and twist



the pliers around maybe five or six times (enough times so that the wire tightens and bites into the rubber of the grip, but not so many times that it snaps). If it does snap then simply start the process over.

Once you've got the wire

twisted around, cut the ends off approximately 8-10mm away from the grip, and then take your pliers and using the blunt nose, poke the small protruding bit of twisted wire back into the rubber of the grip. You may have to poke it a couple of times

but it's important that you push it right in, otherwise it'll rub on your hands and cause blisters.

Okay, all you have to do now is repeat the process so that each grip has two/three pieces of wire securing it and the job's a good 'un...

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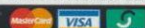
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It's the end of the road for our
long-term Yamaha WR250F.
We'll be sad to see it go...



YAMAHA WR250F

It may have taken a new exhaust, a couple of sessions on the dyno, and a replacement needle, but we got there in the end. Yep, our long-term 2005 WR250F is finally running like it should. It's a shame then that it's just gone back to Yamaha UK to be sold!

After the last instalment in issue 121, where we'd taken the bike along to the dyno to try out a couple of replacement needles, I was itching to see for myself if this had finally cured the carburetion problems we'd been experiencing. Both the Ed and Mel had already ridden the bike and reported that all was more or less fine, so I entered the WR in a local hare 'n' hounds to check it out.

The guys at the Chiltern Hills Enduro Club (CHEC) had laid out a flowing course, with a good wedge of woodland and some flat-out blasts across stubble fields. All was set for an enjoyable Sunday blast. And as Mel had tagged along, we were going to swap (at the lunchbreak) between the WR-F and our new long-term KTM 125EXC, just for the craic. So, having persuaded Miss Falconer that she'd go faster on the Yamaha if she started the event on the KTM (if you're wondering why, look back at issue 122's 125cc article), I took the morning session on the Yam.

After a WFO start straight, the course dived into the woods for a couple of miles, its twists and turns amongst the trees certain to show up any problems with the power delivery. And the riding experience replicated what our dyno runs had told us - that things were pretty much sorted. If you let the revs drop out of the mid-range there was a very slight dip in the acceleration as you got back on the gas, though much of the time it was virtually undetectable and *nowhere* near as bad as it had been with the standard exhaust/needle combo. Job done.

Now carburing as it should, the WR-F showed why it's one of, if not *the* most popular

250 thumpers. With unseasonably clement late Autumn weather, the course was slick rather than sodden, and the plush Kayaba suspension proved nigh-on perfect for the conditions, providing all the feedback you could realistically wish for.

Even in the company of much bigger machines, the WR didn't lose out *too* much on the long straights, thanks to that stonking top-end pull, and hauling the bike down from speed was easy with those predictable Nissin stoppers. Yep, life aboard the Yam was good and I was having such fun that I went out for an extra lap instead of pulling in on time for the lunch break. Doh!

Swapping onto the KTM for the afternoon simply reinforced what I thought about the Yamaha's chassis. Whilst the nimble Austrian bike had me whooping inside my helmet, simply because it's just so quick turning and involving to ride, its WP suspension really needs backing-off a lot to match the 'security' of the Yam's Kayabas and, as ever (!), the Brembos simply don't come close to the Nissins for sheer user-friendliness.

Plastic Fantastic?

But afterwards, having been hosed-down at TBM Towers, the Yamaha looked like it had been sandblasted rather than jetwashed. After seven months it's fair to say that it was looking a little worse for wear. The plastics were scarred with the odd white crease, a few nuts and bolts were corroded, and, as seems to be the way with off-road Yamahas, the frame paint had all but disappeared from some areas. Hmmm. It's not like the bike lived a particularly hard life, and it certainly hasn't been neglected. It's just that whilst the Yam is sturdily built, and mechanically strong, cosmetically it looked rougher than a footballer's mother-in-law.

And just like the aforementioned, a lot of silicon was employed to spruce things up a bit. And, although underneath it was still looking a

STAFF BIKES

YAMAHA WR250F



touch battle weary, on the surface it looked good 'n' glossy. A bit of routine maintenance and the Yam was again ready to rock.

Whaddon It Be Nice...

A couple of weeks later I decided to put a few more hours on the WR-F at a Trail Bike Enduro Club (TBEC) event at Whaddon, near Milton Keynes. Although the terrain was far more open than at the CHEC event, the ground was similarly slippery. Or at least it was for the first few laps, after which it became tackier than a cinema floor. And there was just about all the grip you could ever wish for.

Again the WR-F shined, performing almost faultlessly throughout. Stupidly, I forgot to tighten a loose brake lever during the lunchbreak, resulting in it spinning around on the bars half-way round the motocross track on the first lap of the afternoon. Duh! And later in the day the throttle momentarily, and mysteriously, stuck open resulting in one of those heart-in-mouth moments.

But that was the only time the bike gave any cause for concern, unlike a couple of KTMs I saw tackling the two 'whoop sections'. One set came at the end of a fast straight and lead immediately into a tight right-hander, acting like a row of oversize braking bumps. Gaining ground on a few Katosh riders, they looked like they were

100 TBM

trying to juggle an angry eel as they wrestled with their mounts, whilst by contrast the Yam was absolutely rock-steady as I snuck by.

The Final Curtain...

Another fun event over and done with, I'd barely finished washing the 250 when the phone rang. It was Yamaha UK, and they wanted their bike back... Ho hum. So after a bit of spit and polish the Yam was returned and the curtain closed on the saga of our long term 2005 WR250F. We've certainly had some fun together, and the bike's proved monotonously reliable, though it would've been nice not having to spend time fitting pipes and swapping carb parts to get it running as it should. Nonetheless, the WR has proved a great mini-thumper race bike and we're sad to see it go...

Thanks to: Motul (01623 757262) for keeping the Yam lubed, Michelin (01782 401853) for the rubber, Race Spec (01531 631700) for the CRD exhaust, DEP (01622 765353) for the replacement needle, and of course huge thanks to Harley Stephens at Yamaha UK (01932 358000) for having the guts to entrust us with the WR-F in the first place. Thanks a lot guys...

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crashed at the very start of the race and then been run-over by the entire field. I was not a happy bunny. Especially since I'd lined up the 125EXC to be *my* personal race bike for the season.

A few months earlier when we all sat down and discussed what bikes we should be testing long-term in 2006, I'd reasoned that a 125 two-stroke would be a sound idea as collectively the 125 enduros get very little coverage in the mag, yet we know that they make great racers. James on the other hand turned up his nose at a bike displacing anything less than about three litres - unless it was a rocketship like a TM250 two-stroke. And what Mel really wanted was a four-stroke Husky TE250.

Whether these other long-termers will come to fruition remains to be seen, but having had to repair the KTM once already I'm keeping it under lock and key until my next outing sometime over the Christmas period. And now it looks as good as new again, I'm really looking forward to keeping it that way...

Si Melber

I suppose it was all my fault for entrusting it to *them* in the first place. Because for some reason whenever Dep Ed James and Staffwriter Mel go off riding together, the end result come Monday morning is always a depressing collection of mis-shapen test bikes and a huge spares bill. And of course this time was no exception.

Sadly our shiny new KTM 125EXC was the bike in question. Barely two weeks into its tenure at TBM Towers it had been despatched to a Buckinghamshire hare 'n' hounds for a bit of weekend fun, only to return bearing all the hallmarks of having taken a serious beating at the hands of the TBM staffers. The rear fender had been snapped, the Cycra handguards we'd fitted just the day before were bent and broken (well one was broken and the other was missing altogether), and the bike looked like it was already a season old.

Of course it's a race bike and like all race bikes it's bound to suffer its fair share of spills - the problem was that this time it looked like it had



Staffwriter Mel and her handiwork...

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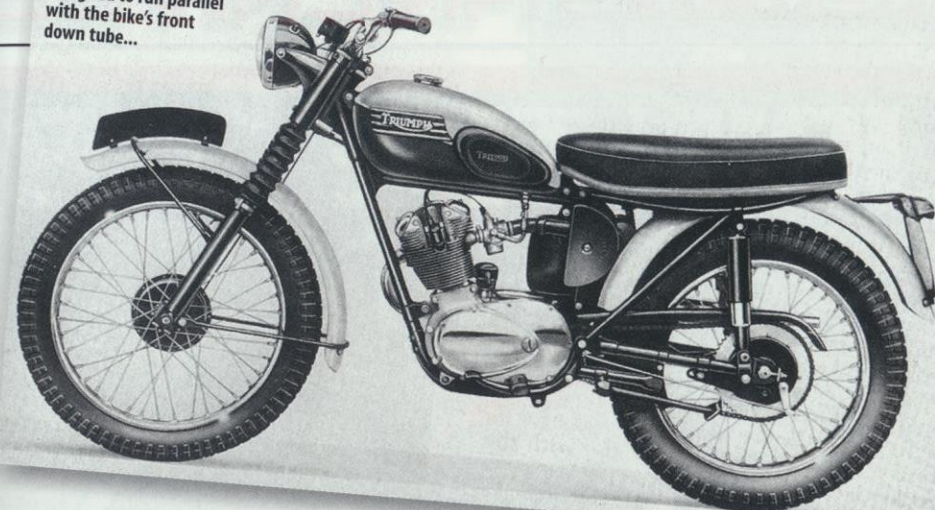
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In the Cub

Mark Williams recounts the story behind Triumph's mighty Mountain Cub



The Mountain Cub's barrel was designed to run parallel with the bike's front down tube...



Although the British are generally regarded as the fathers of off-road motorcycle sport, we were a bit slow coming forward with manufacturing pukka trailbikes. Which is why, despite notable exceptions, this series has tended to concentrate on continental and Japanese machines. However one of the earliest purpose-built trailbikes to win international acclaim and the sales that inevitably followed, was indeed British, although even older trailriders will be hard pushed to recall its name.

The reason for the inevitable head-scratching is that the Triumph Mountain Cub was conceived in America where, almost inevitably, the vast majority of the 6126 units produced by the company were exported, and this despite the fact that in both trials and scrambles form the Cub was one of the factory's great successes.

But let's start at the beginning with a market that post-war, Triumph had pretty much ignored, the lowly commuters... or at least that's how they were regarded by a company used to building big, generally sporty bikes and selling them in droves. However by the mid-Fifties Triumph could see the tens of thousands of largely two-stroke, largely Villiers-engined 125-250cc machines that back-to-work Brits were buying in droves... from other manufacturers. So managing director and design genius Edward Turner turned his pen to doing something about it, the consequences of which was the 149cc T15 Terrier.

Turner argued, correctly as it happened, that if properly designed, an OHV four-stroke single could equal or even out-perform the equivalent-sized two-stroke whilst offering less inconvenience (in terms of having to mix oil into the

petrol), greater reliability and far superior fuel consumption. The slightly higher cost of building such an engine, which would of course have to be passed onto the punters, would he reckoned be offset by the lower running costs and thus be acceptable to the cost-conscious working classes it was primarily aimed at. And Turner was right - at least in all but one crucial respect.

In designing the Terrier's engine for ease and cheapness of manufacture, compromises were made which nearly proved to be its undoing and certainly limited initial sales. The engine's main weakness was that its pressed-up crankshaft ran in a plain bush on the timing case side, though on the drive side, it sat in roller bearings. If the owner failed to let the engine warm-up properly before accelerating off to work in the morning, and particularly if he used anything but quality oil, the plain bearing would soon fail... sometimes within a couple of hundred miles!

This cost-cutting design fault was compounded by a Wipac ignition system with contact-breaker points housed in a distributor pod located behind the forward-tilted cylinder head, that was unpredictable to say the least. And along with a rather weak clutch and a pretty agricultural Zenith carburettor (even by the standards of 1952) which could be set to either aid easy starting, or smooth running, but rarely both, resulted in the Mountain Cub suffering a tranche of reliability problems.

Otherwise, however, the unit-construction engine was a nifty bit of work. The cylinder with its chromed external push-rod tube on the

JOIN THE CUB



Mike Powell's Triumph Mountain Cub is as rare as it is stunning...

Mike Powell owns and runs Wildmans Motorcycles, a small bike dealership in Lincolnshire, one of those charmingly unassuming operations with bits of bikes lying around everywhere, well-oiled stone floors and a solid fuel stove emitting a pungent smell of coke as well as a goodly heat nestled in the corner. After he lost his Honda franchise in one of the importer's interminable re-structuring exercises some years ago, he increasingly specialises in old Triumphs in general and Cubs in particular.

And in 2004 he acquired one of the very few Mountain Cubs still intact and running in the UK. 'Someone else had imported it back into the country from America,' he explained, 'and knowing I was a Cub fanatic, offered it to me at a sensible price. It was a completely original 1967 model apart from the front mudguard which was a real sod to source because it's peculiar to the Mountain Cub - alloy but painted. Eventually I managed to find one and got it painted in the correct colour.'

'This turned out to be Alaskan White,

although it looked cream to me, and fact the top half of the tank although listed as Grenadier Red is clearly a dark-ish orange, so I can only assume the paintshop at Triumph was being a bit creative with its descriptions: that, or there was some sort of corporate colour-blindness.'

Although not quite concours, Mike's Mountain Cub is complete, correct and un-tampered with, right down to its original exhaust system and tiny triangular tool box behind the oil tank. And compared to anything I've sat on in the last ten years, it looks and feels tiny, although its proportions are quite exquisite. And after our photo session, Mike offered me a ride on the thing which would've been more extensive had I taken my riding gear with me, which as I rarely get given such an opportunity, I rarely do.

Despite having not been run for a few weeks and it being a freezing November morning, the engine started first kick after a bit of tickle to the carb and a quarter turn on the throttle, and gave off a lovely exhaust note not dissimilar to, say, a Honda XL185/200. Only the clatter of the valve gear gave away the fact that this was an engine



Grenadier Red over Alaskan White were the colours of the 1967 model



designed halfway through the last century, but the engine's pulling power was distinctly modern. The light clutch and surprisingly assured gearchange gave way to an urge which took me quite by surprise, although with its low first and second gear this soon topped out and demanded a hike up to third.

Suspension travel and the wee five-and-a-half inch half-width drum brakes were of course not of this world, but the Cub's weight, just some 215lbs, certainly was. In a quieter, slower world than today's trailriders live in, the Mountain Cub was ideally suited to its purpose and even now a well-sorted one maintains a perverse appeal...



off-side, was canted forward to follow the lines of the single front downtube, and was very compact. But in an effort to make it so, the drive sprocket was mounted inboard of the primary drive, which meant that changing the chain was a real fiddle and of course replacing the sprocket itself meant splitting the crankcases! Recognising this Turner took the unusual step of off-setting the joint so at least the primary drive assembly could be removed without interfering with the crankshaft.

The engine, virtually square at 57 x 58.5mm bore and stroke, was a revvy little blighter, offering 8.5bhp at 6500rpm and 185ft/lb of torque at 5000rpm. The powerband was smooth too, and the positive stop gearbox with its four speeds meant the bike was a willing performer which equalled or bettered the equivalent 'stokers of the day and offered well over 100mpg!

As for the rest of the bike, well it was pretty conventional with telescopic forks (minus hydraulic damping) and plunger rear suspension, with 19-inch wheels at both ends. The bike was pretty small with a wheelbase just over 50 inches and a seat height of only 29 inches... but motorcyclists were smaller in those days, what with all the food-rationing during the war years!

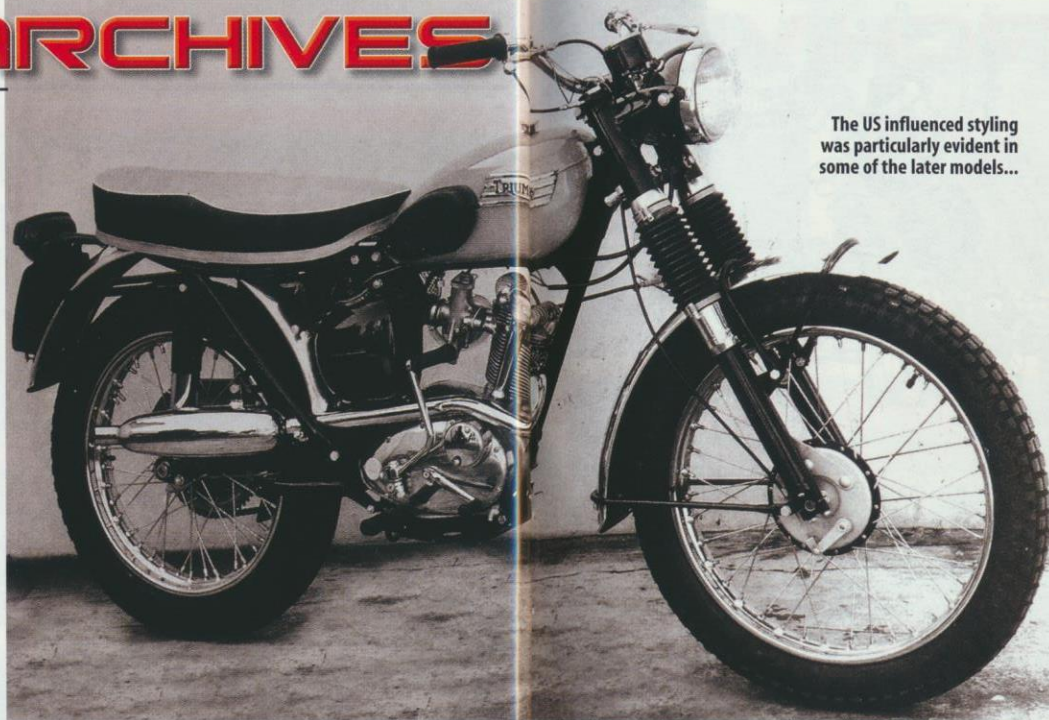
Anyway the Terrier was well-received but by 1955 it was clear the public hankered for something a little pokier and more reliable, and Turner's solution was to increase the T15's bore and stroke to create a the 199cc T20 Tiger Cub, supposedly the off-spring of its well established Tiger 110 Twin with which it shared absolutely no components or dimensions. Unfortunately the Cub still had a plain bearing containing one end of its crankshaft, but Lucas electrics replaced the



Wipac set-up, and an Amal carb offered slightly superior performance compared to the old Zenith.

The bigger engine allegedly churned out 10bhp at a less fussy 6000rpm with a corresponding increase in torque which, given that the rest of the bike was virtually identical and thus only a few pounds heavier than the Terrier, offered improved all-round performance: a top whack of 63mph which it reached in fractionally over 20 seconds were the numbers achieved by contemporary roadtesters, with fuel consumption still routinely above 100mpg. But when I said 'virtually identical' I was skating over the suspension improvements which included hydraulic damping at the front end and a proper twin-shock swing-arm at the back.

Ground clearance remained at a meagre five inches unladen however, which from our point of view looks derisory 50 years on, but in those days even trials bikes got by with just eight or nine inches of air between them and terra firma. The popularity of this particular sport wasn't lost on the Triumph management however, and within two years of the Cub's launch a T20C version with knobbly tyres appeared which soon began showing up in club events. In '59 the engine was



The US influenced styling was particularly evident in some of the later models...

Competition models featured knobbly tyres and protection for the headlight



fitted with a wide-finned barrel and a new Zenith carb specifically jetted for competition use and a year later, designated the T20S, a dirtbike Cub appeared with a dreadful 'energy transfer' ignition system, stronger forks and a small headlamp which replaced the incongruous nacelle unit hitherto been held over from the roadgoing version.

By now the Trials Cub, as it was colloquially known, was starting to acquit itself well at national as well as club level, with the likes of Gordon Blakeway and Derek Adsett overcoming the bike's inherently unstable ignition set-up and under-stressed chassis to garner the silverware. (Later on in 1962, Ken Heanes even won a Gold Medal on a specially modded Cub in that year's

ISDT). Many riders, including one of my school-friends' father up in Newcastle, reverted to the stock Lucas ignition and gusseted the headstock to make the bike more competitive, and the Alpha Bearing Company of Birmingham made a small fortune offering a ball-race conversion for the timing-side main bearing.

In 1961 Triumph offered a T20S/L Cub, effectively a factory enduro bike which had an 18in rear and 19in front wheel, but largely due to the poor electrics and failure-prone bottom end, it proved unpopular.

It wasn't until the following year that the company finally addressed the latter problem, fitting the roller bearings that Alpha had been profiting from for several years, increasing the capacity of the oil pump and improving the contact breaker mechanism which was now housed in the timing-case cover on the off-side, replacing the old single-link primary drive chain with a duplex item, and clamping on a new Amal 32 carb for improved combustion. With Girling hydraulic shocks and stronger frames, both scrambles and trials versions of the Cub using this engine were to prove more popular than their predecessors, the latter boasting a wide-ratio gearbox with low first and second gears followed by a jump to third and then fourth.

Quite a few of these later bikes found their

way to the States and some dealers even began slapping a pair of knobbly tyres on the roadsters and venturing off-road on them. Indeed in 1963 a couple of Triumph agents in California, Bill Brownell and Joe Sarkes, together with Don Brown, Sales Manager at Triumph's west coast distributors, Johnson Motors, came up with an idea for a new version of the Cub aimed deliberately at the new breed of recreational dirt-biker. 'After a day of trailriding,' recalled Brown, 'we were sitting around the campfire talking about what we'd seen that day which was a lot of Honda Trail 90 guys. But we noticed that once those Honda 90s got off the regular dirt roads, they couldn't climb the steep trails.'

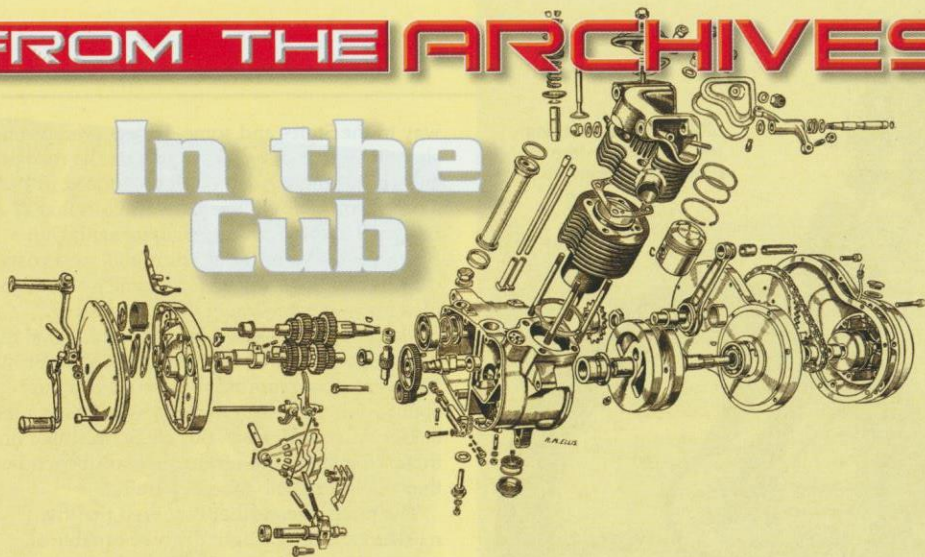
The three men further observed that the market for a lightweight dirtbike capable of carrying its rider off on camping, hunting and fishing expeditions would probably sell well, and the Trials Cub's powerplant with its wide-ratio gearbox stuck in a more comfortable version of the T20S chassis would be the way to go.

As a manufacturer in an increasingly competitive market, Triumph were always willing to listen to their American importers who were now largely responsible for the company's profits. So having been shown a prototype built by Joe Sarkes and offered an order for an initial 400 bikes, within a year they'd launched the T20M, or Mountain Cub. It shared its 7:1 compression ratio, tucked-in high level exhaust system and widely spaced gearbox with the Trials Cub, but it was fitted with a 19- as opposed to 21-inch front wheel and a set of folding foot-rests. It also filched the comfy dual seat from the road bike in preference to the small trials perch, and the T20M's 'hot' camshaft and stronger valve springs were taken from the Sports (road) Cub. With a tolerable 7.5 inches of ground clearance and alloy fenders, the Mountain Cub looked the business and in the first year the entire production of 800-odd bikes was sold in America.

Although by this time Triumph - now amalgamated with BSA - had closed down the Meriden production line and moved it to BSA's Small Heath factory (where the Cub was bastardised with a Bantam frame and fuel tank), the Mountain Cub went on to considerable success. In the 1965/6 model year, over 3200 were produced, the lion's share again sold in the States and Australasia where they proved popular with sheep farmers, although a few dozen were sold in the UK. And in the final year of production - 1967 - more than 2100 found their way out of Small

FROM THE ARCHIVES

In the Cub



Heath's factory gates, with around 115 actually ending up with British owners.

The bikes were finished in brighter livery than the normal UK range, Crystal Blue over Silver Sheen (1964), Hunting Yellow (1965) or Grenadier Red over Alaskan White (1966/7), apparently because the Yanks wanted them to stand out in their rural surroundings so that their riders didn't get shot at by shortsighted hunting types! Some models, designated T20SM, had a centrestand fitted along with the usual sidestand and from 1965 the cylinder barrels were the more attractive (and efficient) squared-off type fitted elsewhere in the dwindling range.

Ideal for their intended terrain, the Mountain Cubs would probably have carried on selling in decent numbers and because they were so much lighter and more wieldy, would've proved better straightforward trailies than the later TR25T Trailblazer, a BSA in all but name and badge, which succeeded it in the late '60s. But by now the writing was on the wall for BSA-Triumph, their consistent profit-taking at the expense of R&D and machine tool investment rendering them unable to compete with the wider and more technically advanced ranges offered by the Japanese and to a lesser extent, the Italians.

But a few small UK outfits such as Cheetah bought up stocks of un-used Cub engines and plonked them in trials and even scrambles frames and so the Cub lived on until about 1970. All-in-all some 160,000 Cubs of one sort or another were produced during the model's 13 year lifespan and quite a few of them are still running thanks to the Tiger Cub Owners Association and a few

specialist suppliers. But short of building one up to spec from bits borrowed from other models, your chances of locating a Mountain Cub in this country are about as likely as finding a trustworthy politician.

Special thanks to Mike Powell at Wildmans Motorcycles (01790 753219), Frank Westworth and Dave Minton for help with this feature. Anyone interested in Cubs would do well to contact the owners' club: CubClub@RealClassic.co.uk

TRIUMPH T20M MOUNTAIN CUB

Price (1967):	£205 (approx)
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Comp ratio:	7:1
Max power:	15bhp @ 6200rpm (claimed)
Transmission:	4-speed
Chassis:	Single downtube
Front susp:	Teledraulic
Rear susp:	Hydraulic
Brakes:	Front & Rear 5.5in SLS drum
Wheels:	Front 3.00 x 19in, Rear 4.00 x 18in
Wheelbase:	51in (variable - see text)
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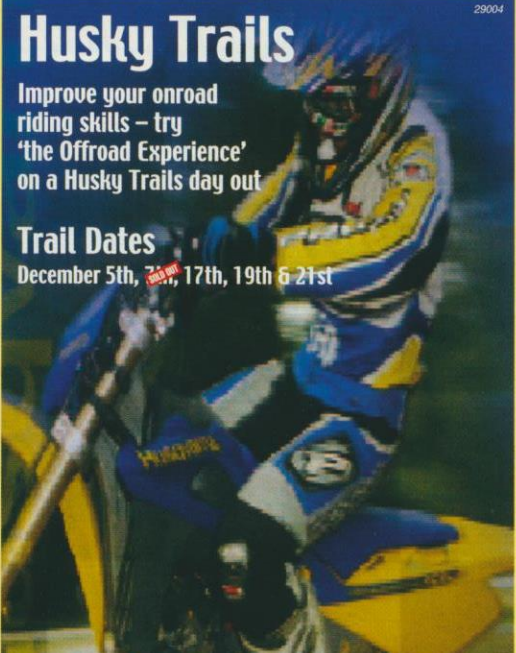
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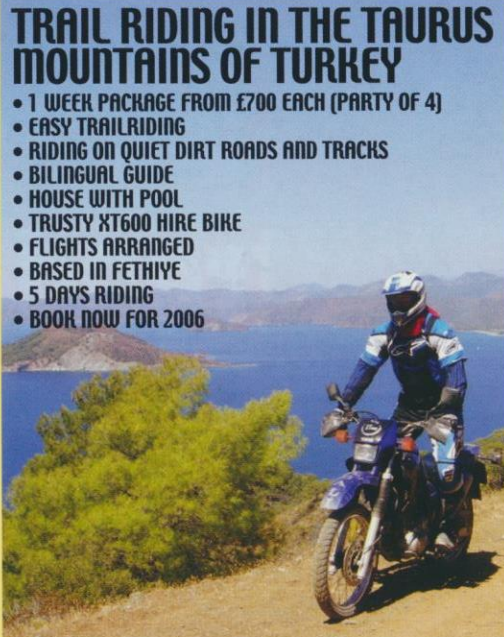
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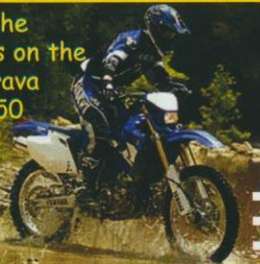
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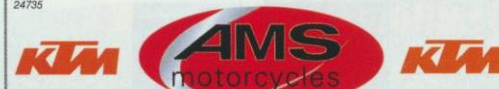
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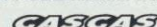
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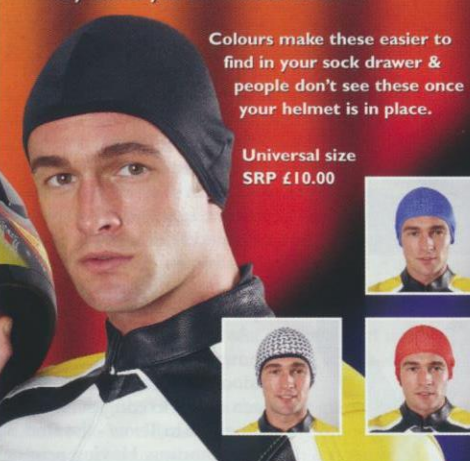
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At the start of November I didn't think 2005 could get much better for me as far as my racing was concerned, what with having won a world championship and the ISDE in the same season.

But I'm happy to say that despite failing to reclaim my British Enduro Championship title, (due to not being able to compete at the final round of the series) I've picked up an American Motorcycle Association (AMA) title, having won the second running of the Maxxis Endurocross in Las Vegas. So now, even more so than before, I can honestly say that this season has just been incredible for me.

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My decision not to compete in the final round of the BEC series wasn't an easy one to make. Missing the event meant that I'd miss out on the championship, but racing in America was something I wanted to do for a number of reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, I wanted to establish myself in the US. I wanted the US public, press and industry to know a little more about whom I am and what I'm capable of achieving on a bike.

To do that I needed to be racing in America and be getting some winning results, neither of which could obviously be done from the UK. The second reason I wanted to race in the States was to do something a little different and have some fun before the season ends. Oh, and try and win a few dollars along the way.

As well as missing the John Banks Enduro I also skipped the Barcelona Indoor Enduro for the first time as I had been asked to compete in a new event being run in Texas - the Red Bull Last Man Standing. Having originally been looking for an event to compete in after

the Maxxis Endurocross, it made perfect sense to do the two - despite missing two important races in Europe. I'm certainly glad I did both now as I have achieved exactly what I wanted to by making a name for myself in the States.

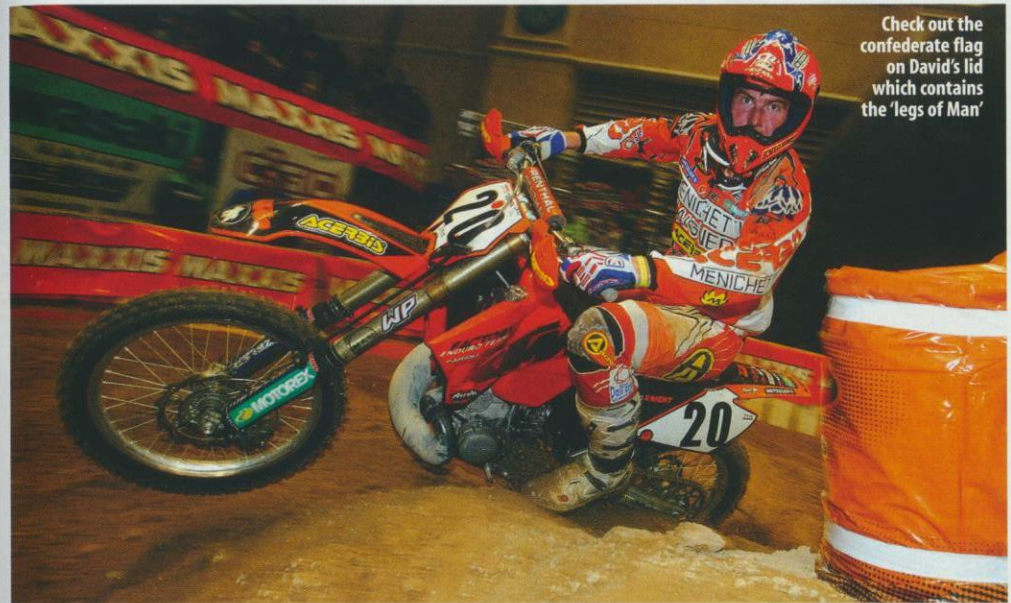
I wanted to generate some good press over there, as well as getting the chance to meet and work with those involved in the 'off-road' scene in the States because it looks all but certain I'll be heading to the US to race in 2007. I'll not go into too many details just yet but it'll be a new challenge for me and one that I'm looking forward to, despite it being over a season away.

It's weird but of all the people that I met in the States only those that were really into enduro racing knew that I was a world champion. Lots knew that I had won the ISDE but what surprised me the most was the fact that nearly everyone I spoke to knew that I had won the Erzberg race in Austria.

I guess it was because the race got featured in several magazines in the US but it was strange that people knew so little about the world championships. Maybe that will change next year when the WEC visits Canada and the US.

Of the two races I competed in while in the States, winning two big, well covered events on two consecutive weekends was better than I hoped I'd do. At one point though, having won the first half of the Last Man Standing, I wasn't sure if I would be able to race any more as I was feeling that ill. A mixture of jetlag and a heavy cold left me feeling really bad, but thankfully I was able to race and, more importantly, win.

The race itself in Texas wasn't too bad - there were about five or six hard spots and the rest of the track was like a challenging GNCC race. The venue for the event was awesome though, just a huge valley around which everyone rode two



Check out the confederate flag on David's lid which contains the 'legs of Man'

laps in the morning and then another two laps in the evening.

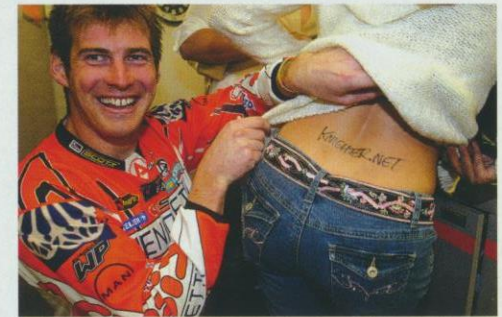
The hardest part of the race for me was having to get back on my bike after the morning race and do it all again for the afternoon/evening race. Knowing that \$10,000 was up for grabs helped me feel better and winning the race by ten minutes made me feel even better again... until the cramp set in that is.

As I wriggled around on the podium trying to free my ever tightening muscles I must have looked like I was warming up for the *Last Man Dancing* competition that took place in a local bar later that night. But that's another story entirely...

While it was great to win in Texas it was the Endurocross event I really wanted to conquer. Second last year wasn't a bad result but getting beaten by a motocross rider wasn't exactly what I'd hoped for. This year I wanted the win. Badly.

However, getting a Gasser 250 wedged between the rear wheel and rear mudguard of my bike in the first turn of my heat race wasn't exactly the best start to my night in Vegas, nor was hitting my left arm so hard I couldn't hold on during the race. Managing to work my way up to fifth at the flag meant that I didn't pass through into the main event and I had to compete in a semi final race, which thankfully I won quite comfortably.

I was a little bit concerned about the first corner of the final, having taken a soil sample in my heat race. Surrounded by some of America's fastest former motocross riders, and knowing that each of the nine

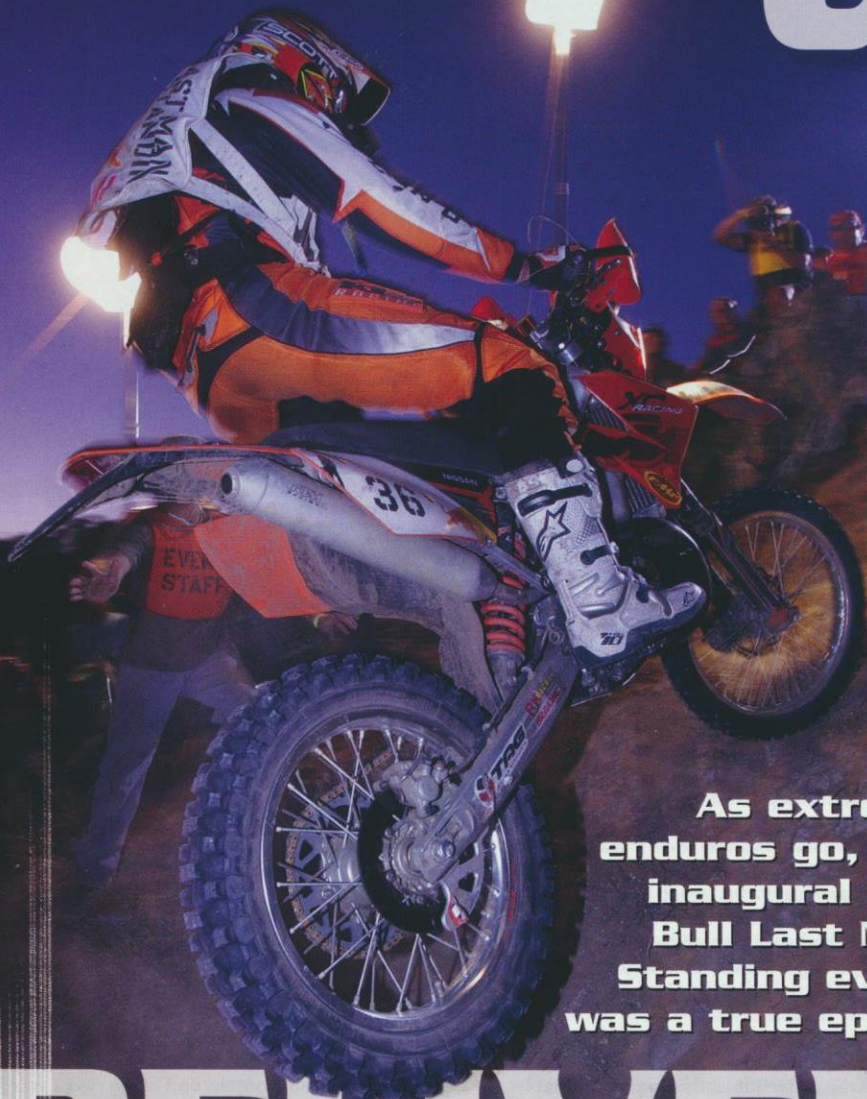


guys I was lined up alongside would all be wanting to get to the first turn ahead of the rest, I opted to start right on the inside, so I could avoid any trouble.

As it happened nobody crashed and it was in the second corner that my race nearly went wrong. Trying to go around the outside of a couple of riders I came close to getting pushed over the berm. Luckily I stayed upright and despite being at the back of the pack I started working my way past each rider until, at about the end of lap two, I was in the lead. From there I just pushed hard until halfway through the race and then I backed off a bit as I had a good lead.

Knowing that I'd won the most glamorous enduro race in the world, on top of all my other successes this season, was awesome. Watch out America, David Knight is a' coming...

STAND &



As extreme enduros go, the inaugural Red Bull Last Man Standing event was a true epic...

DELIVER

We stood looking down into a deep pit of sofa-sized rocks. There was no trail. The guy standing next to me said to no one in particular, 'You gotta be kiddin' me...they're riding up that?'

'Yep...' I replied, 'and they'll be doing it at night.'

'Wow, it looks kinda like Erzburg,' He mused.

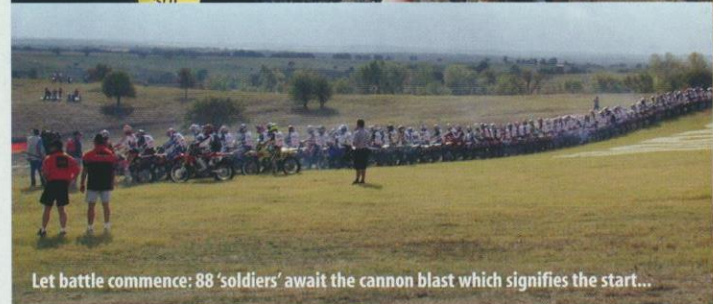
'Uh-huh, only we have cactus!' Everybody knows who Red Bull is, right? You've grown to recognise their logo in association with not only the energy drink that 'gives you wings', but a whole boatload of extreme sports as well. From the extreme relay race in Cape Town, to Freestyle Snowboarding in London, the Red Bull people put on some of the wildest events you'll ever want to see. And they're no strangers to off-road motorcycling either.

So it was no surprise when they teamed up with KTM and came to Texas to put on the 'Last Man Standing' event. Dreamt up by KTM of North America's Josh Whitaker, and touted as a 'Multi-stage Elimination Event', the LMS pitted nearly a hundred of the toughest pro-level riders in the off-road world against one another, and the inhospitable Texas countryside.

Josh later told me 'I was working on an event for KTM. I pitched Red Bull to help... they loved the idea so much they wanted to see it as a Red Bull event. From there it morphed into a one-of-a-kind, never been done in the US event.'

Josh teamed up with a local enduro club, The Red River Dirt Riders, to build and lay out the course, which according to club president Archie Taliaferro, 'took over three months to build, using at least 10 guys, 19 miles of banner tape, 10,000 arrows, 10 miles of safety fencing and 4200 wooden stakes.'

The plan for this event was to start all of the riders on a single start line. They would funnel down onto a 40 mile course of nasty terrain designed to make things 'uncomfortable' for them and certainly slow them down a bit. In fact, estimated average speed was said to be about 15mph. At the end of the first lap of the planned four, the last half of the pack would be excused



Let battle commence: 88 'soldiers' await the cannon blast which signifies the start...

from the race, leaving only 50-odd to go on to the second lap. At the end of that lap, again the latter 25 would be relieved of duty.

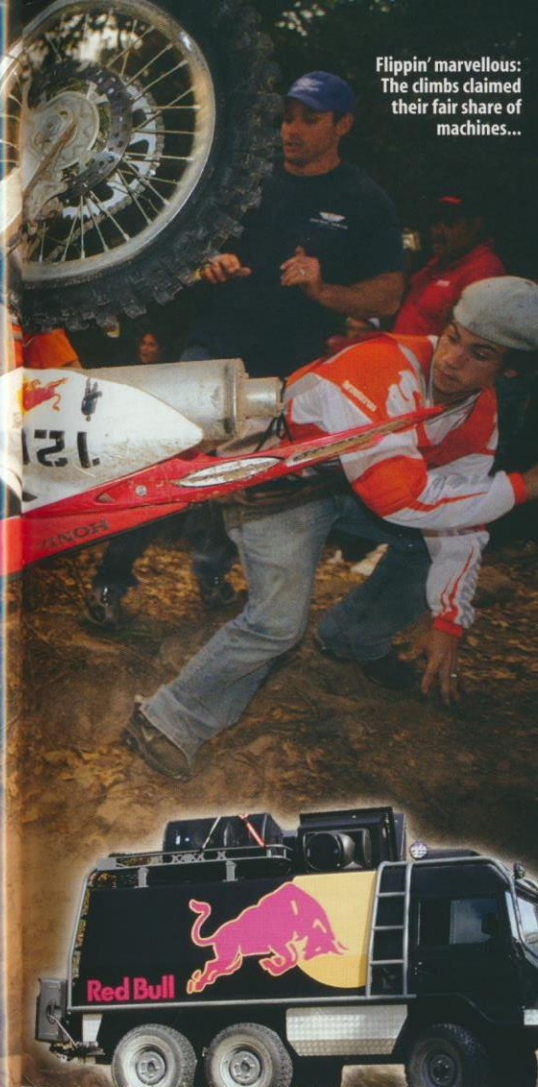
At this point, race officials would give the remaining riders two hours to put lighting equipment on their bikes, make whatever repairs they could, and head back to the start line to continue the event... in the dark. Oh, and just in case any rider had become accustomed to the terrain during the two previous laps, the course direction would be reversed for the evening jaunt as well. And as before, the last ten riders of lap three would be asked to step out of the event, leaving only 15 to ride the final loop, in the reverse direction, in the dark, after 80 miles of miserable terrain had assailed their bikes and bodies. On the last lap, finishing some time in the night, the first man across the finish line is proclaimed the 'Last Man Standing'.

Pro entry was by invitation only, and the 88 names on the RSVP list represented a good cross-section of the dirt biking community. Guys like Jeff Fredette, 25 time ISDE legend; Jimmy Lewis

STAND & DELIVER



Right: Even the sound and music rig was impressive



Flippin' marvellous: The climbs claimed their fair share of machines...



of Baja and Dakar fame; and multi time AMA National Enduro Champ Mike Lafferty was in attendance. Guy Cooper was there as well, along with Patrick Garrahan from the AMA national enduro circuit, and of course the reigning World Enduro Champ and winner of the 2005 Erzburg enduro and ISDE, David Knight.

Oh there were others as well, some names you'd recognize right away others not as quickly. But believe me when I say that the 'deck was stacked' with top riders from the GNCC, WORCS, AMA Enduro, and a multitude of other hard-core off-road organisations.

The 39.9 mile course was situated outside the tiny Texas town of Bulcher, known widely for... well, nothing really, except for the 2500 acre

Harris Ranch, home of the Red River Motorcycle Trails. While the ranch does have many open fields where the family grow crops, much of the 2500 acres is what the Texans call 'scrub land', small gently rolling hills, made of hard and rocky soil that little will grow in, other than the short Texas juniper bushes, dense thorny vines, and sparse patches of scrub grass. None of which tend to impede the flow of rainwater, thus leaving the land scarred and rutted from thousands of years of erosion and run-off to the Red River that borders the property to the north.

There are deep, narrow, ravines, where the erosion has left the sand at the bottom, and nothing but exposed sharp edged boulders lining the steeply angled walls. In the valleys you may

find dense underbrush atop a deep sandy surface, or turn the corner to be faced with the flat vertical face of gray white rock, with tyre-ripping sharp edges.

In the centre of the property a shallow creek perhaps three metres wide, twists and turns inside a 40 foot deep canyon, with 50 feet of white sand separating the water from the steep canyon walls on either side. I should mention at this point the quicksand that lingers in the bends of the creek, which has over the years claimed dozens of bikes. The land is hard, dusty, nasty, muddy, and gnarly. Always up or down. Always rough. Never a break.

On Saturday morning, the day of the event, the sky was dark and rain seemed to be in the

forecast, as if there was anything that could make the terrain a little more difficult. But after a brief sprinkle of moisture early in the day, the sky cleared to allow for a beautiful race day.

The camera-copter came to life about 9:45am and started to circle the huge parking and pit area, while riders and spectators started moving towards 'the meadow', a semi flat, slightly downward sloping field that would serve as the start line for the first and third laps.

Within a few minutes, the meadow became alive with the energy and excitement of the last few moments before the start of the race. There were media folks running around with their cameras and microphones, trying to get that special shot. There were pit crews discussing



STAND & DELIVER

last minute strategies with their riders, droves of spectators, and of course the beautiful Red Bull girls. All milling about pointing this way and that, and shouting to be heard over the helicopter, and the exhaust note of 88 race bikes.

At around 9:58 all fell silent. The helicopter backed away to capture the start in wide-angle view. The riders cut their engines for the dead engine start, and the crowd became quiet, sensing that it was time for the big show. A minute later all riders standing with foot on the kick-start, or thumb over button, and all spectators, course workers and cameras were focused a quarter-mile down the hill to where the meadow turned right and filtered into the woods.

Then, right on time at 10:00, a distant, but

startlingly loud cannon rapport brought the whole scene to life in an instant, as the racers fired their engines and charged down the hill, trailing a thick cloud of brown dust, each trying to be first onto the course and get the coveted clear view of the track ahead.

The start run of the course wasn't a marked single track, and the racers quickly began picking their own lines through the six-foot deep ruts, hidden rocks, small brush and trees that began to make up the beginning of the actual course. Many wouldn't make it to Checkpoint One.

The first section of the course was made up of an existing national enduro trail that quickly dropped the riders into a very narrow ravine with 15-foot high walls on either side. In it the riders were forced into a long, twisting, weaving, single file troop encountering mud holes, fallen trees, small waterfalls, and of course the rocks. Always the rocks. And the walls prevented escape or rest, as the only way to go was the hard way. Within minutes, Phillip's Ravine had taken two bikes, upside down at the base of a waterfall.

Popping up another one of the waterfalls and out of the ravine, the riders were sent full speed across a field on the way to yet another of at least

five creeks that the course had to offer.

This one, Kathy's Creek, had abandoned the rocks and instead started to immediately claim riders and their machines in the thick clay based mud. First one, then another, and another. In the blink of an eye, four of the front 15 riders were stopped dead in the goop. Three would be there for the better part of an hour.

And so it went mile after mile, until an hour and 17 miles later the first of the competitors motored into the first of the seven-special 'Elements' designated for the spectators and media to view some of the most exciting obstacles. This one... 'The Waterfall'. And the first rider? World Enduro champ David Knight on a KTM 250 two-stroke.

The Waterfall, lined of course with spectators and media cameras, required the rider to drop into a creek, make a left turn and immediately find their way up and over a stepped, slick, rock-faced waterfall about six feet high. The problem? Aside from the small trickle of water that added to the slickness of the rock, there was a six foot long, three foot wide erosion hole in the face of the rock. It goes without saying that David and his KTM made it over, turned to the right and climbed smartly out of the creek amid thunderous cheers and clapping from the surrounding crowd. It would be several long minutes before the next rider, multi-time AMA National Enduro Champion (also KTM mounted) Mike Lafferty came through, up and over, with equal applause.

The next 'Element' was called 'Joshua Hill', an increasing-angle hill that forced riders into an almost vertical climb for the last ten feet before clearing a ledge. But the ledge wasn't the end, only the middle. With no further run up the riders then had to ride to the top of the hill, another 20 yards, through and around large sharp edged boulders before cresting the hill. Again, Knight showed a good deal of trials expertise, making quick work of the hill on this and the following laps. Well, there was a brief period of 'graceful dismountedness', but we'll allow him that.

Lafferty followed suit a few minutes later also with a quick dismount near the top, and a few minutes after that, the third rider, Jordan Brandt out of Sunnyvale California (also riding a KTM), gave chase to the two leaders. He was followed by Supercross legend Guy Cooper and WORCS racer David Kamo. The top five all on KTMs.

Competitors would now come through at the rate of about one every minute or two, giving plenty of time to retry failed attempts at the hill, and the word 'dismount' became a gross understatement. This spot was a crowd favorite all day, and many riders ended their day here on the side of this hill.

With another 20-odd miles to go there were still tougher areas ahead. Like an area called Texas stadium, where riders dropped into a steep downhill comprised of the boulder-strewn remnants of a collapsed cave. There was a fast grass track, more creeks and ravines, tight woods sections in deep energy sapping sand, in and out from under bridges, and finally back to the pits to refuel and start lap two.

There were two checkpoints on the course. Eleven of the 88 failed to make the first one. Another dozen didn't complete the first lap.

Lap two was much the same misery as the first and by early afternoon the look of fatigue was evident on the faces of most every rider that came through. The track did its part to impede the flow of racers and their equip-

ment, and what the 'Elements' didn't claim, equipment failure, and even fuel deficiencies attempted to.

At the end of lap two and 80 miles down, the riders that remained able, came into the pits and were given time to install lighting equipment and make ready for the next two laps, to be started after the sun went down.

Of the 65 starting the second lap, 25 were unable to make it to the first checkpoint. 19 more didn't see the second one. And only 18 of the original 88 completed the entire second loop. Things were looking grim indeed, with half of the event yet to come, and that, in darkness.

The current leader, David Knight, said during an interview over the break, that 'there wasn't anything too difficult' on today's course. Whatever!

With fresh filters, tyres, fuel, and lights installed the 18 remaining racers, once again moved to the starting line for the final attempt on the Last Man Standing award.

Once again a dead engine start, and once again a cannon blast started the rush to the woods and the start of the course, only this time there would be a sharp u-turn at the end of the start run, and the course would double-back on itself.

During the evening hours, Red Bull organisers placed bright lights at the 'Elements' to aid spectators, and riders alike in seeing 'the show'. And the very nature of the event ensured that those riders that remained were true sportsmen and athletes, so it was a pleasure to watch these pros do what they do so well.

As the race wound down there were a couple of position changes, one the result of Lafferty damaging his lighting system after a fairly brutal get-off. This put hard-charging Pro GNCC rider Nathan Kanney on a Yamaha, in second place. Lafferty was able to recover and salvage a very respectable third, after spending the day on the heels of Knight. Fourth went to another Pro GNCC rider, Yamaha mounted Justin Williamson. And rounding out the top five was AMA National Enduro Pro Billy Russell.

But in the end it was Knight and KTM who prevailed. And after starting that morning at 10am, he had maintained a comfortable lead all day and earned the first ever Red Bull Last Man Standing Award. Awesome...

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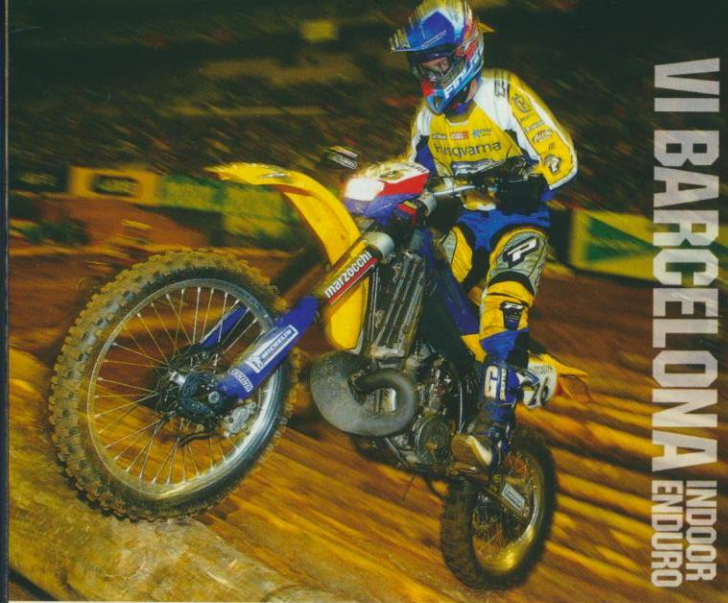
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VI BARCELONA INDOOR ENDURO

win. But in the third and fourth races Juha showed just why he is a five-time world champion and claimed two well deserved race wins.

Making it a KTM one-two-three in the E2 class, Italian Alessandro Belometti placed second overall (to Aro) with Fabien Planet finishing third and Juha a disappointed fifth.

In the Enduro 3 class home rider Xavier Galindo put one over KTM factory rider Marko Tarkkala by winning three of the four races. A former top level trials rider, Galindo's smoothness proved much more effective than Tarkkala's aggressive approach. Gas Gas mounted Oriol Mena finished third.

With Salminen failing to make the Super Final, Ivan Cervantes lead from early in the race to take the chequered flag comfortably ahead of his rivals.

With Planet, Tarkkala and Aro all running into problems at some point during the final, Italian Alessandro Belometti rode steadily to place as runner-up. Backing up his impressive E3 class win, Xavier Galindo finished in third just three seconds adrift of Botturi.

'Winning the Super Final was incredible,' admitted Cervantes after the race. 'Everything went perfect for me tonight. It is a great way to finish my season.'

Left: It's fast fun and crowd-friendly. Welcome to the spectacular world of 'Indoors'...



With the racing split into four E1, E2 and E3 races and one end-of-night Super Final, Cervantes dominated all of the smallest capacity class races crashing just once all night. Making it a Spanish one-two, Honda mounted Arnau Vilanova finished as runner-up to Cervantes in each of the E1 races. Finishing third overall was KTM mounted Italian Alessandro Belometti.

'Winning here in front of so many of my friends and family means more to me than winning the world championship' explained an emotional Cervantes afterwards.

In the Enduro 2 class the winning was shared between two Finns - 2005 E2 world champion Samuli Aro, and '05 US GNCC champion Juha Salminen. With Aro posting two convincing victories in the opening two E2 races, Salminen struggled to remain upright let alone competitive and finished in sixth and ninth waving goodbye to any chance of the class

RESULTS

ENDURO 1

- 1 IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 1+1+1+1 = 4 POINTS
- 2 ARNAU VILANOVA (HONDA) 2+2+2+2 = 8 POINTS
- 3 ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 3+7+3+3 = 16 POINTS

ENDURO 2

- 1 SAMULI ARO (KTM) 1+1+4+5 = 11 POINTS
- 2 ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 4+2+3+3 = 12 POINTS
- 3 FABIEN PLANET (KTM) 7+5+2+2 = 16 POINTS

ENDURO 3 CLASS

- 1 XAVIER GALINDO (KTM) 1+2+1+1 = 5 POINTS
- 2 MARKO TARKKALA (KTM) 2+1+4+2 = 9 POINTS
- 3 ORIOL MENA (GAS GAS) 3+5+2+4 = 14 POINTS

SUPER FINAL

- 1 IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 5:35.937
- 2 ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 5:42.669
- 3 XAVIER GALINDO (KTM) 5:45.046

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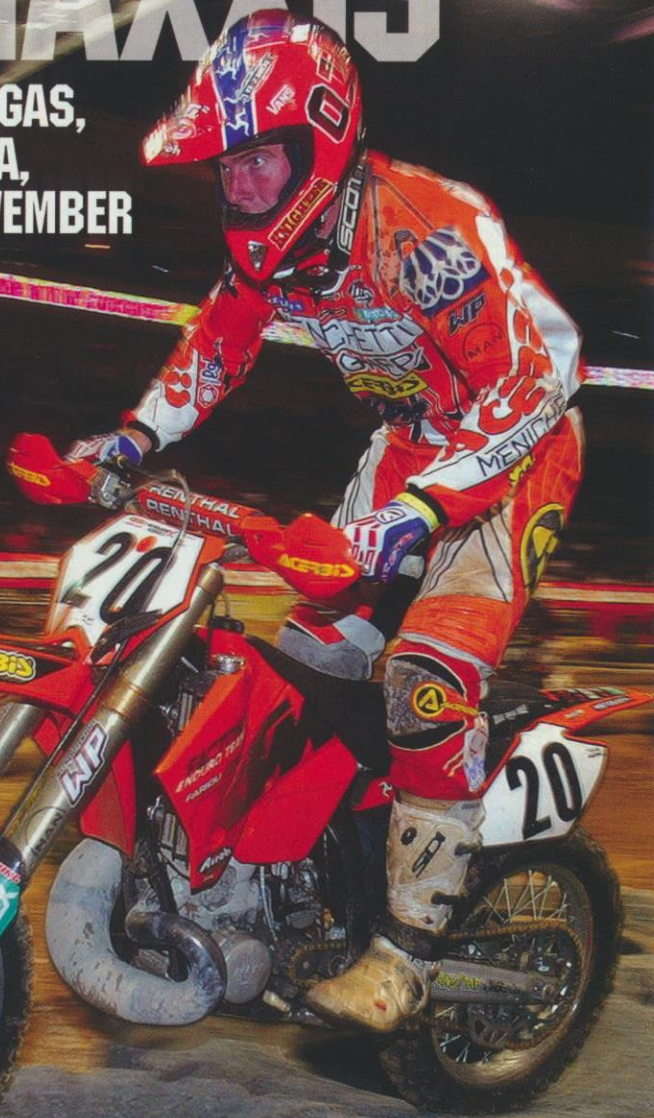
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'05 MAXXIS

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ENDUROCROSS



Barry Hawk glides over
the tricky tractor tyres...



High rollin' Las Vegas staged the second running of the Maxxis Endurocross and David Knight was the star of the show.

The Manx enduro ace finished his incredible '05 season in flamboyant style, winning the richest indoor enduro race - with its \$10,000 prize purse - just one week after claiming victory at the inaugural Red Bull Last Man Standing event in Texas.

But it all started out as a bit of a bad gamble for Knighter as he was sent crashing to earth in the first turn of his heat race having collided with another rider. David then found his bike was tangled up with that of trials pro Geoff Aaron.

Losing valuable time trying to separate the two machines, David found himself second-to-last at the end of the first lap and having banged his left arm in the crash he struggled during the rest of the three-lap race.

Eventually placing fifth, Knighter missed out on a qualifying spot for the finals so was forced to compete in one of three 'semi-final' races - something that actually worked in his favour come the end of the night.

Winning his semi' comfortably, and having spent more time on track than all but two of the other finalists, Knight lined up alongside the likes of Mike Lafferty, Ty Davies, Kurt Caselli, Ivan Cervantes, Xavier Galindo, '04 Endurocross

winner Ryan Hughes and John Dowd for the highly anticipated main event.

Starting cautiously, Knighter rounded the second corner near the back of the pack and then started to pass riders one by one, before hitting the front shortly after lap two.

With 2004 winner Ryan Hughes finishing in a lowly ninth place, David rode faultlessly to claim a comfortable win in the ten-lap race.

'I'm so pleased to have won because loads of great riders were racing this year,' commented Knighter shortly after being handed the winner's trophy. 'I knew I had what it took to win but after my first heat race I just wanted to get around the first couple of corners in the final without falling and then push hard to get to the front.

'Ryan Hughes helped me by making some mistakes but I felt strong all the way through the main race. It was a hard ten laps but I was able to ease off a little near the end of the race. I couldn't have asked for a better way to bring a great season to an end.'

Finishing behind Knight, and competing in his first Endurocross event was 40-year-old veteran US MX and supercross racer John Dowd. One of the smoothest and most consistent riders competing, Suzuki-mounted Dowd ran in third for much of the race before making a last lap pass to claim the runner-up spot.

Kurt Caselli drifts through one of the slick Vegas turns...

'05 MAXXIS ENDURO/CROSS



Finishing on the final step of the podium was Kawasaki-mounted youngster Ricky Dietrich. Charging hard through his qualifying races, the home favourite spent much of the final in second place before banging bars with Dowd in the closing stages of the race to finish third.

Second best European rider was Barcelona Indoor Enduro winner Ivan Cervantes. Having won his heat race, the Spaniard looked a likely podium finisher early in the final, though faded to finish down in fifth position.

The most disappointing rider in the final was last year's winner, Suzuki rider Ryan Hughes.

Grabbing second off the start, Ryno made a complete mess of one of the log sections early in the main event and struggled to regain his composure to eventually come home ninth.

RESULTS

1 DAVID KNIGHT (KTM); 2 JOHN DOWD (SUZUKI); 3 RICKY DIETRICH (KAWASAKI); 4 TY DAVIES (YAMAHA); 5 IVAN CERVANTES (KTM); 6 RYAN DUDAC (KAWASAKI); 7 KURT CASELLI (KTM); 8 MIKE LAFFERTY (KTM); 9 RYAN HUGHES (SUZUKI); 10 XAVIER GALINDO (KTM)

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Down in Texas a cold October wind blew through the trees outside of Dallas. The brisk morning air tingled with excitement as the morning sun glinted off the tops of hundreds of Winnebagos, box vans and trailers that had been collecting on this hilltop since Friday night.

From all over Texas they came. From Dallas, Ft Worth, Austin and Killeen. Some even came from as far away as

THEY CALL HIM THE PATMAN, AND OVER IN TEXAS HE'S A LIVING LEGEND. AT LEAST HE CLAIMS HE IS...

Louisiana and Oklahoma. There was LCS Racing, with their huge following down in the valley. On the ridge was the shiny box van of DFW Honda. The KTM boys had taken up position by the water hole. The local squads from Suzuki and Yamaha, were here in force as well. And the formidable Kawasaki team, with their nicely roped-off paddocks and bright green machinery were hidden in the treeline. Hundreds and hundreds of them. Young and old. Male and female. All here for the same purpose. All here to do Battle on the Ridge.

These were the rough boys of off-road racing. The men and women of the Texas Cross Country Racing Association. And today is the season opener at Rocky Ridge Cycle Park in north Texas.

Along with the occasional whiff of frying bacon, comes the unmistakable metallic rapport of a passing CR500. The rider clad as though out of some futuristic science fiction thriller, in

hi-tech body armor, Carbon fibre helmet and plastic boots, appears strangely robotic with his mirrored goggles and aggressive posture.

I was there on that day and like the rest of 'em, I too planned on 'takin care of some business' in the over-30 expert class. My ATK was runnin' great as always, and I was feeling very positive about the whole event. My friend Mike was there too with his new KTM 550 two-stroke and we had parked together in the big field up by the house.

I had just gotten back from an early morning practice lap and noticed that Mike wasn't dressed for the race yet. After gettin' a drink of green Gatorade, (my favorite kind) I Strolled over to his van (we both have Ford Aerostars).

'Hey man, what're you doin'?' Silence. I went on, 'we need to get to the startin' line, we're goin' in 15 minutes!', I looked at his wife and she at me, and we at him.

'What?' I demanded. His new bike was lying on it's side.

'It won't start' he whined.

'Whaddaya mean won't start?' I said.

'The kickstart gear's sheared.'

'Are ya sure?' I asked. At this point I'm of course, trying to show as much concern as I can muster... you see, my friend Mike rides the same class as me. Aww too bad... there's one down I think to myself, and smile inwardly.

In an attempt to show the futility of his situation and therefore cause me to feel sorry for him and thus ruin my positive mood, in hopes that I'll then crash out and DNF just like him, he grabbed the kickstart lever and spun it around like Vanna White spins the Wheel of Fortune... making about the same sound. Then he delivers the

'JUST FOR AN INSTANT, I SAW IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR A LOOK OF DISBELIEF IN MIKE'S EYES... OR WAS IT TERROR? ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT THE MIRROR WAS VERY BIG... AND FILLED WITH MY FRIEND'S WIDE OPEN EYES...!'

coup-de-grace, He looks up from his shiny new scooter with a tear in his eye and says. 'Well, I guess I'm out.'

Oh goddammit, now I feel *sorry* for him and I'm losing my positive mood and I probably will crash out...

'OK' I said, 'here's whatcha do', (now I wanted him to race so I wouldn't feel so bad). 'The Pros are gonna start any minute' I said, 'so go get

dressed after the pros start, get this thing rollin' down yon hill, bump start it, ride over, get yer card punched and join me on the start line just in time for the green flag. If ya don't stall it, you'll get to race and we'll fix it later.'

We decided it was a plan and off he went to suit up, meanwhile off I went to gas up. Now, here's where it gets interesting.

The KTM 550 if you'll recall is more than



THE

PATMAN

half-a-litre of rompin', stompin', fire breathin' two-stroke racer, certainly a handful for even a big burly guy like myself, let alone a skinny, spindly, wisp of a guy like Mike. Make no mistake, he can ride it... but without a moment's notice it could easily ride him.

As I was pulling my helmet on, I saw him runnin' alongside his orange pumpkin... he's up to speed... there's the hop to the saddle... and... nothin'. The back fire scraped up more dirt than a front-end loader, but didn't turn an inch.... The racers down on the line were all starting up their machines.

Plan B. I (stupidly) ran down and told him that he didn't have enough ass to fire a man's machine like this, and (even more stupidly) offered to start it for him... with the same results. The Pros were leaving.

Plan C. Someone... (him probably) had the idea of tying a strap to the handlebars and pulling it behind the great White Aerostar van, with me bringing my considerable weight to bear on the rear wheel forcing it to get traction, and thus start.

And so, with confidence that we were going to make it in time, we affixed the necessary towing device to the bike and the Great White Aerostar van. We also decided that for communication purposes, we would leave the rear doors open.

He got in. I got On. Off we went. I could hear the Expert class leaving. With the rear door open we could easily talk back and forth, he said 'Is this fast enough?' I answered by dumping the clutch. Nothing happened. Just a violent jerk on the handlebars. He dragged me along - rear tire scraping - for a few yards and I could see in the rearview mirror a look of disbelief in his eyes. And I'm sure he saw the same in mine. Then I decided to jump up in the air as far as I could and with tire still scraping, pound my butt down onto the seat, driving the tire into the ground.

Did it start you ask? Yes it did. It started alright. Remember the violent jerk on the handle-

bars, I mentioned a minute ago? Seems the tow strap had pulled something other than the handlebars, yes it did. Namely the throttle cable, all the way out. And the kill switch wires... all the way out. And yes it started, and yes it was on full throttle, and yes I was terrified!!

Now what seemed like plenty of tow strap a few seconds earlier, shrank up just like my Johnson, and suddenly I found myself rocketing (in a wheelie), into the (if you'll remember) open back door of the Great White Aerostar van.

And once again, just for an instant, I saw in the rearview mirror a look of disbelief in Mike's eyes... Or was it terror? All I remember is that the mirror was very big... and it was filled with my friend's wide open eyes!! Well, of course you can't really fault Mike for what happened next, 'cause it would be anyone's natural reaction to slam on the brakes. And sure enough... that's what he did... The bike didn't care one little bit.

Alright, so we've got this 550cc of rompin', stompin', fire-breathin' two-stroke racer screamin wide open, me on it's back also screamin' wide open, trying to pack itself and me into the back of a mini-van. (stop laughin').

Well, lucky for us all, the bike wouldn't really fit into the Great White

Aerostar van, and that's when we came to the sudden and horrible realisation that not only could neither of us switch it off, but it was now tied to a parked mini-van. Ya ever see what happens to a garden hose when ya got it wide open with a nozzle on it, and it gets away from you?

Well after a moment it fell over on its side, and Mike thinking quickly, ripped off the gas line... Moments later it died... I already had.

Well of course the bike was beat up, the van was beat up, and after Mike got finished with me I was beat up... And sure enough... I crashed out and DNFed the race. Just like Mike...

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The Patman buys a new bike...



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What's the Story?

STORY & PIC: MIKE RAPLEY

These days, there are hundreds of girls riding trials - a good number of them significantly better than many of the boys they compete against. But that hasn't always been the case. Back in the late Fifties and early Sixties, the number of ladies who were regularly trialing could be counted on the fingers of a single Marigold glove!

Nearly half a century ago, the pre-eminent girls regularly enjoying life in the feet-up game were Olga Kevelos, Rene Bennett, Penny Page and Mary Driver - and it's Mary Driver who is the subject of this month's Trials Heroes.

Mrs Mary Driver and her husband Dennis were stalwarts of the Wood Green Club, London. Heavily involved in the organisation of the club's Paley Cup Trial, a South Midland Centre event, and two far flung nationals, the Clayton held in Derbyshire and the Beggars Roost, an Easter national in north Devon, they regularly travelled the country to undertake their favourite pastime. *'We went up to Nottingham recently'* Mary told me over the phone, *'and we said as we travelled north from our*

Hertfordshire home, it seems impossible now that we used to ride to Derbyshire just to organise a trial!'

Mary rode trials for 19 years from the age of 21 until she turned 40, whereupon she and Dennis directed their competitive activities towards sailing. Mary began competing on a 197cc James, and then progressed to 250 BSAs and then a 250 Greeves for Bill Slocombe Motorcycles where the ace mechanic who prepared her machines was none other than Alec Wright, himself a very good sidecar trials driver who in later years became the face behind the Kawasaki motocross effort.

Not only was Mary Driver an excellent trials rider in her own right, she also took part in the International Six Days Trial (now Enduro), riding seven times in Wales, the Isle of Man, East Germany, West Germany, Sweden, Italy and Czechoslovakia, a

classic event in which she proved her success with numerous medals, a silver from Wales being the highlight.

And if that wasn't good enough, she also rode the Scottish Six Days Trial seven times, finishing with a superb Special First one year. Many national trials were graced with her presence, including the Kickham where this picture was taken as well as numerous local trials. In an age when multi-discipline riding was the norm, not only did Mary ride trials and enduros, she also raced scrambles and can still proudly claim a brilliant ninth place finish in the 100 mile scramble at Pirbright. *'I ached for a week after that'* she told me, *'but it was nothing compared to racing at Hawkstone Park. That was*

always a tough track!' Even now there's not that many girls that have raced round there.

Not only was motorcycling Mary's sport, it was also her business for she worked at the ACU headquarters when they shared offices with the RAC in Pall Mall, as Secretary to Harry Cornwell the Competition Manager, and when he retired, Mary took over the post as

Competition Manager until she left the ACU in 1975, when she and Dennis decided to turn their attention away from bikes to boats.

'I had a wonderful time in the sport' she said, *'but there came a time when we decided to move on, and I regret to say that we haven't really kept in touch with the bike scene. However, we do go to reunions, and I would love to go back to Scotland again.'*

'Riding the Scottish was always very special, the scenery was marvellous, it would be good to take in the Highlands again at Scottish time.'

During the course of researching this article I tried to persuade Mary and Dennis to make a long-overdue return to Fort William next May, so if you should spot a retired gentlelady wistfully eyeing up the sections, she could well be Mary Driver, one of the genuine First Ladies of Trials...

'Not only was Mary Driver an excellent trials rider in her own right, she also took part in the International Six Days Trial (now Enduro), riding the ISDT no less than seven times...'

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FREE CLASSIFIEDS BIKES

Suzuki DR-Z400, 2001, 51-reg, light trail use, new rear tyre / c+s, very clean and tidy, £2100 ono. Tel 01507 524040 (Lincs)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, purple, little use, green lane only, lots of extras, DEP, handguards, bashplate etc, plus standard parts, vgc, £2250 ono. Tel 01509 817311 (Leics)

Honda XR650L, red, 3000 miles, only used as toy, mint cond, any test, phone for details, £2950. Tel 01785 663832 (Staffs)

Yamaha XTZ750, fitted with TRX850 engine, full raider spec, Marzocchi, Brembo, luggage options, unique bike, phone for details / photos, £2800. Tel 01746 712503 (Shrops)

Honda CRM250 mkII, MoT, low miles, DEP system, lots of spares, lovely bike, £1500. Tel 07739 174511 (Bristol)

Husqvarna TE410, 2000, X-reg, low miles, supermoto wheels, brake fitted, easy convert, vgc, £1800 ono. Tel 01947 605595 (N Yorks)

Husaberg FE400, 2003, 81 hours' use, dual start, handguards, digi dash, very quiet, very clean, must sell hence £2100 ono. Tel (mobile) 07970 540046 or 01308 458543 (Dorset)

Honda XR400R, 1997, T&T, new clutch / camchain, serviced every 500 miles, spare full set of plastics and others, £1650. Tel 07748 946462 (Derbys)

Yamaha YZ250F, 2001, road reg'd, T&T, '03 cam, recent piston / x-ring c+s, new plastics / graphics, Renthals, carbon frameguards, immaculate, £2275. Tel 01252 323110 (Surrey)

KTM 625SX, only 1400 miles, good tyres, fantastic machine, exc cond, first to see will buy, £3350 ono. Tel 01824 709754 (Clwyd)

Kawasaki KLR650, 1998, T&T, loads of new parts, £1300 or swap for P100 pick-up. Tel 07981 456539 (N Ireland)

TM 250 2T, 1999 model, not reg'd, owned for three years, good cond, exc fun, £875 ono. Tel Andy on 01663 744694 (Derbys)

Honda XR400R, 2001, road reg'd, reliable many extras, good cond, £2300. Tel 01778 344144 (Camps)

BMW R1150GS Adventure, 2002, 52-reg, black / yellow, T&T, 12000 miles, FBMWSH, Datatag, panniers, heated grips, crashbars, vgc, £6850. Tel 01926 856129 (Warks)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999, T&T, well maintained, new tyres / c+s, good starter, green laned only, vgc, £1695. Tel 0118 989 1893 (Berks)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005, road reg'd, taxed, KB Racing suspension, DEP and standard silencers, exc cond, £3800. Tel 07801 014505 (Oxon)

Derbi Senda R-Extreme 50, 2004, royal blue, derestricted, service history, later type headlamp, very reliable, mint cond, £1595 ono. Tel 01280 815225 (Bucks)

KTM 250, 1994, road reg'd, some spares, exc cond, £850 ono. Tel 01280 815225 (Bucks)

KTM 300EXC, 2004 model, taxed, new c+s / tyre, vgc, ready to ride, £3150. Tel (mobile) 07974 202921 or 01664 434892 (Leics)

Triumph Tiger, 1996, N-reg, blue, T&T, FTSH, Ohlins shock, engine bars, good cond, £2100 or may p/x for cheap green laner. Tel 07961 812839 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KDX220 trail version, P-reg, MoT, good cond, £1000. Tel 01606 882399 (Cheshire)

Beta Alp 200, 2002, T&T, 3000km, UFO plastics, WES exhaust, new and slightly used spares inc headlamp, instruments, decals etc, exc sorted bike, £1600 ono. Tel 01778 345915 (Lincs)

Suzuki DR350, 1999, black, T&T, only 1200 miles, two owners, exc cond for work, £1850 ono, no timewasters or canvassers. Tel 02920 593457 (Cardiff)

Honda XR600R, T&T, electric start, fortune spent, exc starter / runner, eligible for classic insurance, vgc, great fun for only £1500. Tel 07752 067590 (Cheshire)

Yamaha WR246F, 2002, blue, T&T, fully road legal, Renthals, exc cond, £2300. Tel (mobile) 07940 510327 or 01296 688065 (Beds)

KTM 525EXC, 2003, 03-reg, one owner, very well maintained, loads of extras, vgc, £3100 ono. Tel 07909 535475 (Kent)

Yamaha XTZ750, 1996, green / purple, final model, T&T, 27000 miles, fully overhauled for European trip this year, did 26000 miles no problems £1995 ono or may take late DR650 in p/x.

Tel (mobile) 07971 081814 or 01465 714125 (S Ayrshire)

Gas Gas Pampera 200 mkII, 1998, silver, T&T, one lady owner, vgc, perfect LDT / green lane bike, £1150 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07957 950672 or 01989 567597 (Herefordshire)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 51-reg, taxed, can put MoT on it, full CRD exhaust, 'guards, many spares, vgc, £1900 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07951 255980 or 01763 257823 (Herts)

CCM 404DS, 2004, taxed, 2000 miles, green lane use only, 92dB enduro and original exhaust, bar risers, Acerbis handguards, HD sumpguard, £2995 ono. Tel 07967 327180 (Bristol)

KTM 200EXC, 2002, clutch/aver etc, as new, genuine reason for sale, you won't find better, £2300. Tel 07891 685559 (Notts)

Yamaha WR250, 2001, two-stroke, road reg'd, lighting kit, FMF pipe, recent top-end engine rebuild, good condition, must sell due to work commitments, £1900 ono. Tel 07980 570445 (Coventry)

Honda CRF450R supermoto, road reg'd, SCT tuned, Akrapovic system, lowered, four-pot caliper, black Excels, Talon hubs, beautiful cond, £4200. Tel 01282 839616 (Lancs)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005, DEP system / jetting, little use, exc cond, £3600. Tel 01639 711280 (Wales)

Honda XR250R, L-reg, rebore, suspension rebuilt, new o-ring c+s / front pads, Answer silencer, some spares, not ridden for three years, rider lost interest, £1200. Tel (mobile) 07962 031384 or 0161 339 8859 (Cheshire)

Gas Gas EC250, 2002, complete rebuild, new bearings / seals everywhere, flywheel weight, loads more mods, Renthals, M12s, shock serviced, all receipts, proper race bike. Tel (mobile) 07706 163776 or 0151 513 5482 (Cheshire)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, only 48 hours' use, Doma pipe, hand / sumpguard, exc cond, £3300. Tel 01395 442291 (Devon)

Honda XR250R, P-reg, 1997, T&T, new disc / pads, good tyres, absolutely brilliant bike, £1400. Tel 01395 442291 (Devon)

Honda XR400R, 2000, W-reg, MoT, green lane use only, fastidiously maintained, all original equipment, £1800 ono. Tel (mobile) 07739658042 or 01279 850289 (Herts)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, show bike, black Excels, gold hubs, Twinwalls, full 'R' conversion, fan, FMF Q-pipe, carbon belly pan, wave discs, quick release bits, Cyra handguards, hardly used, mint cond, £5000. Tel (mobile) 07899 943567 or 01604 232000 (Northants)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, 53-reg, taxed, hand / frameguards, done no hard work, mint cond, hard to find better, £2995 ono. Tel 01597 822798 (Powys)

Gas Gas EC250, 2004, road reg'd, new tyres, mousses, black rims, Fatbars, Ti pegs, CRD bashplate, handguards, gripper seat, exc cond, £2650 ono. Tel 07886 532825 (Powys)

Suzuki DR200 Djebel, 1999, T-reg, T&T, 3500km, vgc, £1550 or p/x for supermoto. Tel Chris on 07791 504718 (Cumbria)

Gas Gas EC450FSE, 2003, GMX rads, Talons, Fatbars, new tyres / mousses / c+s / forks/seals, serviced and ready, £2850 ono. Tel (mobile) 07759 825919 or 01904 337353 (Yorks)

Yamaha WR250F, 2004, 1500 miles, too many extras to list, mint cond, must sell, £3100. Tel 07946 782362 (Essex)

Suzuki DR400, 1982, classic, completely rebuilt, many new parts, 12v conversion, stainless bolts throughout, loads of spares, genuine Suzuki manual, £1250. Tel 01539 721154 (Cumbria)

Kawasaki KDX200, April 2005, only 350 miles, one day's gentle trail ride and the rest on tarmac, o-ring chain, £2950 ono. Tel 01824 750659 (N Wales)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2002, 2000 miles, mature owner, ideal green laner, £1450. Tel 01327 877094 (Northants)

Honda CRF250X, 04-reg, 353 miles, road legal, mature owner retiring from green laning, free trailer, £3250. Tel 01322 660162 (Kent)

Yamaha WR250F, 04-reg, T&T, exc cond, £3400. Also Yamaha DT175MX, 1981, blue, 80% restored, rideable, logbook, with many spares, offers. Tel (mobile) 07970 317122 or 0121 351 7522 (B'ham)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, MoT, 2800 miles, recent service / c+s / tyres, £2300 ono. Tel 01522 510981 (Lincs)

Honda XR600, 1978 '88? model, F-reg, twin carbs, runs but needs tidying, all parts there, best offer over £500 or may p/x for trailie.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Tel 01491 834059 (Oxon)

Honda CRF250R, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, 18in rear wheel, FMF Q-pipe, skidplate, exc cond, £2850. Tel 01626 351564 (Devon)

Husqvarna WR250, 2003, 53-reg, 15 days' trail use only, spares, exc cond, want trials bike, £2750. Tel Ged on 07866 621352 (Lancs)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, MoT, sump/handguards, clutchsaver, regularly serviced, green lane use, vgc, lack of use forces sale, £2995. Tel 01872 274983 (Cornwall)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, 54-reg, taxed, stainless rear wheel respoke, bashplate, barkbusters, neoprene fork gaiters, good cond, £3000 ono. Tel 07779 520190 (Staffs)

Honda XR650R, 2002, road reg'd, MoT, one owner, new road legal enduro tyres, £2750 ono. Tel 01793 814046 (Wiltshire)

KTM 450EXC, 03-reg, hand/cutch/sumpguards, new plastics, well maintained, spares, good cond, £2950. Tel 01761 490060 (Bristol)

Gas Gas EC250, 2003, hand/frameguards, well maintained, good cond, £2100. Tel 07717 557243 (Kent)

Honda XR350, 1985 model, fully restored, history available, great trail bike, first to see will buy, £1100 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07971 273986 or 01562 850183 (Worcs)

Gas Gas EC250, 2002, just had engine rebuild, new c+s, reliable and clean bike, £2000. Tel 07779 134092 (Northants)

Yamaha XT350, 1990, black with yellow detail, good cond, £750. Tel 07770 998919 (Bristol)

KTM 525EXC, 2004 model, 53-reg, 500 miles light use, some extras and spares, exc cond, £3600. Tel 07779 625183 (Oxon)

Honda XR250R, 1998, R-reg, T&T, green lane use only, £1550 ono. Tel 0116 286 7758 (Leics)

Yamaha TTR250R, 2002, new in April '05, 04-reg, only 278 miles, never been off-road, new Trelleborgs, ill health reason for sale, £2400. Tel 01591 610696 (Powys)

Yamaha TTR600R, 2000, MoT, 3400km, Sunday green lane use only, always garaged, £2100. Tel (mobile) 07815 100564 or 01249 721518 (Wilts)

VOR 450 enduro, 2001, 51-reg, road legal, T&T, dual start, good condition, may px/swap for road bike up to 600cc.

Tel (mobile) 07884 311088 or 01489 795501 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2000, MoT, standard and supermoto trim, gold Talons and SM fender, DEP pipe, twin headlight, good tyres, good cond, £2400. Tel (mobile) 07979 625224 or 01586 553601 (Argyll)

Yamaha WR450F, 05-reg, 520 miles, taxed, new hand/sump/frame/radguards, vgc, standard bike, £3600. Tel 07798 894204 (Staffs)

Yamaha YZ250F, 2005, road reg'd, bashplate, bark busters, oil change every three hours, new tyres/pads, FMF Q-pipe, exc cond, £3095. Tel (mobile) 07771 833962 or 01929 472859 (Dorset)

Husqvarna TE450, 2004 model, 2700 miles, mousses, recent c+s/tyres, some extras, vgc, £3000 ovno. Tel 01895 237670 (Midxx)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, Nov '04, 54-reg, blue/white, 700 miles, hardly used, green lane only, exc cond, £3500 ono. Tel 01633 614657 (Gwent)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, 2300 miles, exc cond, £2850. Tel 01278 425751 (Somerset)

KTM 200EXC, 2005, FMF system, bashplate, clutchsaver, handguards, green lane use only, well maintained, road bike forces sale, £3450. Tel (mobile) 07813 982996 or 01237 424966 (Devon)

Gas Gas EC300, 2002, light use, exc cond, £2200 ono. Tel 011993 779303 (Oxon)

Yamaha DT200WR, T&T, regularly serviced, DEP can plus original, Renthals, brushguards, new front tyre, good working order, no parts needed hence £995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07968 833212 or 01883 650654 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR350SE, 1998, T&T, 2000 miles, Renthals, barkbusters, must be seen, exc runner, phone for details, £1900 ono. Tel 01384 78357 (W Mids)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, taxed, hand/sump/exhaust guards, new c+s, well serviced, exc cond, £2900 ono. Tel (mobile) 07733 334735 or 01723 850782 (N Yorks)

Honda XR250, 1995/96, T&T, very well maintained, many spares and accessories inc set of wheels, clean and tidy machine, £1500

ono. Tel (mobile) 07838 195262 or 01285 860119 (Gloucs)

Suzuki DR350SEX, 1999, good cond, £1700. Tel 07813 589049 (Lancs)

VOR 530EN, 2003, 03-reg, works Solva suspension, Doma pipe, enduro wheels plus supermoto wheels, in excellent condition, £3250 ono. Tel 07973 458614 (Derbys)

Scorpa SY125F, 2004, road reg'd, fully sorted, well maintained, many mods, exc cond, £1800. Tel (mobile) 07929 838301 or 01829 740148 (Cheshire)

Gas Gas EC300, 2003, taxed, mature rider's second bike, DEP pipe, kevlar exhaustguard, handguards, good cond, can email pics, £2400 ovno. Tel 01926 888348 (Warks)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, 52-reg, taxed, key-switch, clutchsaver, hand/sumpguards, indicators, routinely maintained by KTM mechanic, occasional sportsman use, includes KTM documents, £3100 ono. Tel 01531 670283 (Hereford)

CCM 604e Sport, 1999, V-reg, T&T, 2000 miles, quality bike, WP, Paioli, Talon, Excel, Brembo etc, race can, extras, vgc, £1800 ono. Tel 07835 431626 (Leics)

Honda XR400, 1999, T&T, hand/sumpguards, lots of spares, vgc, £1750 ono. Tel (mobile) 07966 251724 or 0121 477 0849 (Birmingham)

Desert rally prepped CCM 404DS, rally bracket, 3L watertank sumpguard, moussets etc, loads more extras, just had suspension service, ready to rally. Tel 01926 888348 (Warks)

Gas Gas EC250, 2005, very little use, brand new wheels/tyres, mint cond, quick sale, £3450. Tel 01772 901320 (Lancs)

Beta 450RR, full enduro spec plus black supermoto wheels, very little use, mint cond, quick sale, £01257 274391 (Lancs)

Honda NX650 Dominator, 1989, E-reg, 25L tank, Excel rims, stainless exhausts, rebuilt engine, very reliable, lots of spares, like new, £1400 ono. Tel (eves) 07708 985859 (W Yorks)

Suzuki DR200, 2003, white/black/yellow, taxed, 850km, elec start, as new, can deliver, £1650 or may p/x cheapo. Tel 01896 831689 (Borders)

Yamaha TT600E supermoto, 1998, new rims and stainless spokes, top-end rebuild, new plastics/seat cover/Remus race pipe/loom/battery/switchgear plus more, looks and sounds great, £2000 no offers. Tel 01270 569120 (Cheshire)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, 20 hours' use, 750km, £500 worth of spares, £3500 ovno. Tel 07971 329264 (Surrey)

MuZ Baghira Metallic, 54-reg, height reduction model, 500 miles, 12 months warranty remaining, unused toy, like new, £2650 ono. Tel 01623 860428 (Notts)

Gas Gas EC250, 100 miles, FMC exhaust, spare plastics, green lane use only, good cond. Tel 07966 651250 (Devon)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 52-reg, only 3600 miles, price includes complete set of off-road wheels/tyres/spares/FMF exhaust worth over £800 in total, good cond, £2495. Tel 07831 440852 (Notts)

Blata mini supermoto, KTM style, only 15mins use, cost £600, as new, £400. Tel (mobile) 07917 863759 or 0113 282 1555 (N Yorks)

Husaberg FE450e, 53-reg, 2500 miles, trail use only, hand/sumpguards, oil change every 200 miles, SM wheels available, £2850 ono. Tel 07989 494809 (N Yorks)

KX-engine sidcar, 2002 BSU chassis, Talons plus spare Talons/new tyres/discs etc included, Reigers shocks, manual, full spares kit, trailer available, vgc, £2500. Tel (mobile) 07862 247887 or 01242 519500 (Gloucs)

Yamaha TTR250, 2004, taxed, 1600 miles, elec start, knobblies plus original unused tyres, fender bag, £2450 ono. Tel (mobile) 07776 146906 or 01603 259373 (Norfolk)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2000, X-reg, new MoT/battery, brushguards, casesaver, TRD exhaust plus original, quick sale hence £1400 ono. Tel (mobile) 07876 440889 or 01252 545613 (Hants)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005 model, fully road legal, sump/hand/frameguards, UFO headlight, new graphics/tyres, superb example, mint cond, £4150 ovno. Tel Paul on 07980 236185 (Herts)

Honda XR400, 1999, T&T, hand/sumpguards, lots of spares, vgc, £1750 ono. Tel (mobile) 07966 251724 or 0121 477 0849 (Birmingham)

Husqvarna WR250, 2004, reg'd Sept '04, used but not abused,

balance of two year warranty remains, £2850 or exchange for more road-biased trailie, cash either way.

Tel (mobile) 07962 228133 or 01246 297166 (Derbys)

Honda XR400, 1997, long-range fuel tank, bashplate, recent service, Renthal c+s, vgc, £1595ono. Tel 07813 244063 (Lancs)

Honda XR250R, 1998, T&T, good tyres, very easy to ride, £1200 or may p/x for bigger bike. Tel 0191 488 0989 (Northumberland)

Honda XR250R, 04-reg, UK bike, mainly road use, good cond, £2200 ono. Tel (mobile) 07903 145443 or 01452 424516 (Gloucs)

Honda XR400R, 2002, T&T, green lane use only, new Renthals, sump/frameguards, vgc. Tel (m) 07967 739221 or 01246 200330

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 1997, four-valve model, used once in Pyrenees in last 18 months, first class cond, must be seen, £1450.

Tel Carl on 01527 876364 (Worcs)

Gas Gas Pampera, 2002 model, well used but well maintained regardless of cost, recent c+s/ wheel bearings, £1375.

Tel Carl on 01527 876364 (Worcs)

Honda XR250, 1998, R-reg, T&T, new AC10 tyres/c+s, Wexr graphics, Gadget bashplate, well maintained, £1750.

Tel 07917 771472 (Herts)

Yamaha YZ85, 2004 model, fully standard, only five months old, only just changed standard tyre and rings, never raced, only used for learning, must be seen, £1850. Tel 07725 045399 (Devon)

BMW F650GS Touratec Rallye, 2001, repainted 52L tanks, WP suspension, full spec desert bike or overlander, £4995.

Tel Darren on (mobile) 07785 555888 or 01937 831655 (W Yorks)

Kawasaki KX65, 2003, Renthals, little use, good cond, bought for son who changed his mind, £1250 ono. Tel 01823 254254 (Somerset)

Yamaha 2-Trac WR450F, 04-reg, Ohlins suspension/steering damper, used one £5795, brand new one £7250 ono. Tel Darren on (mobile) 07785 555888 or 01937 831655 (W Yorks)

Honda XR400R, 2003, 2400km, one owner, CRD system, Mikuni pumper carb, bash/heelplates, SRC handguards, Grityts, £2800

ono. Tel 01992 410730 (Herts)

Honda XR280, 2001, 1400 miles, Q-pipe, loads of extras, exc cond, £2100 ono. Tel 020 8805 2222 (Midxx)

Yamaha TT600R, 2004, only 1400 miles, OE Ohlins, Paioli, Brembo, Renthals, full road kit, commuter use only still as new, £2650. Tel 01983 402611 (IoW)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, T&T, 1400 miles, new plastics/rear tyre etc, green lane use only, vgc, £2700 ono. Tel 01634 818004 (Kent)

KTM 450EXC, 2005 model, 700 miles use, maintained regardless of cost, exc cond, new bike forces sale, £3850. Tel 07860 728332 (Kent)

KTM 400EXC, 2004, 54-reg, one owner, very low miles, green lane use, immaculate, £3750. Tel 01452 813952 (Gloucs)

Honda XR250R, 2004, one owner, very low miles, hardly used, absolutely mint cond, priced to sell, £2350.

Tel (mobile) 07769 603011 or 01384 404151 (W Mids)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, 1995, T&T, elec start, many new parts fitted, ready for the lanes, £1195 ono. Tel 01707 270076 (Herts)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, 6000 miles, hand/sumpguards, maintained regardless of cost, complete with spare plastics etc, £2650. Tel (mobile) 07802 358030 or 01458 253707 (Somerset)

KTM 125EXC, 2003, ultimate lightweight enduro/green laner, done two events only, bashplate, handguards, USD forks, vgc, no time to use it, £2350. Tel 01934 627648 (Somerset)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, engine/suspension rebuild, new c+s/tyres/brakes/bearings/graphics, DEP, Renthals, full 'guards, immaculate cond, the best you'll find, £2000 ono.

Tel 07941 903691 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400RX, 1999, T&T, new rear tyre, rebuilt rear wheel with HD spokes, unusual scuffs from trail riding, £1650 ono.

Tel 01634 231782 (Kent)

CCM 644, 2002, 1300 miles, green laned only, well maintained, good cond, £2500 ono. Tel 07721 458350 (Kent)

KTM 200EGS, 2001, only used for trail riding, exc cond, £1900. Tel (mobile) 07939 036024 or 01792 499449 (S Wales)

Yamaha TT350 enduro, 1994, L-reg, white, T&T, 27000km, one owner, road use only, not used in mud since imported from Italy two years ago, mint cond, £1500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07974 328207 or 01962 856358 (Hants)

CCM 644DS, Oct '02, T&T, Suzuki motor, just serviced, Acerbis handguards, race and standard exhausts, vgc, may deliver, £1995.

Tel (mobile) 07909 688054 or 0191 410 3957 (Co Durham)

Thumpstar pit bike, 120cc, red, six months old, vgc, £575.

Tel 01622 721588 (Kent)

Husqvarna TE610, Y-reg, road reg, race cam, Akrapovic exhaust, hi-comp piston, race tuned, vgc, £3000. Tel 01622 721588 (Kent)

Honda XR400, 2001, Y-reg, used, 4000km, Renthals, brush/frame/sumpguards, FMF Q-pipe, new c+s/pads, regular oil changes, manual. Tel (mobile) 07771 801115 or 01493 445828 (Norfolk)

Suzuki DR350SE, 1999, T&T, 15000 miles, recently serviced with full history, recon top-end, CRD exhaust, heated grips, new tyres, £1650. Tel 01993 823326 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, X-reg, blue, MoT, 6700 miles, Renthals, new plastics/tyres etc, well maintained, exc cond.

Tel 07870 641572 (N Wales)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, Renthals, CRD bashplate, barkbusters, vgc, £3650 ono or p/x for KTM 525 or 400EXC, 2004-on.

Tel 01269 861741 (Carmarthen)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1998, T-reg, 9500 km, all new plastics, FMF pipe, frame/sumpguards, gold wheels, brilliant greenlancer, £2595 ono. Tel 07733 021795 (W Mids)

Suzuki DR-Z400EK3, Yoshimura exhaust/graphics/ECU, sump/frame/handguards, supermoto set-up plus spare off-road wheels, beautiful bike, as a package plus spares, £3250.

Tel 01242 523131 (Gloucs)

Necht 125, Honda XL125 copy, brand new, dual start, USD forks, disc brakes, a little gem, £895. Tel (mobile) 07799 460641 or 01257 241289 (Lancs)

Honda Dominator, 1992, T&T, rebuilt, new engine/carb/exhaust/bearings/c+s etc, many spares and Acerbis tank, £1295. Tel (mobile) 07799 460641 or 01257 241289 (Lancs)

Gas Gas EC450FSE, 2003, great bike, does everything: race/trail/ride to work, sick dog forces sale, £2700.

Tel 01208 72413 (Cornwall)

KTM 200EXC, 2005, not road reg'd yet, just 400 miles, Datatag, warranty, Pro Carbon exhaustguard, ally bashplate, as new, £3900 ono. Tel 07815 756936 (Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 2004, road reg'd, fan, hand/sumpguards, road kit, clutch saver, highly maintained, £3250. Tel 07802 195597 (Scotland)

Husqvarna TE410, 2001, Y-reg, light green lane use, regular oil changes, vgc, £2050 ono. Tel 07870 683478 (Powys)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005, frame/sumpguards, DEP system/jetting, A1 cond, must be seen, £3400 ono. Tel 01639 711280 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2001, X-reg, T&T, bashplate, performance pipe plus standard, handguards etc, vgc, £2090 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07905 364694 or 01332 554883 (Derbys)

Yamaha YZ125, 2004 model, road reg'd with 05-reg, new c+s/pads etc, Renthals, vgc, £2300 ono. Tel 01962 777526 (Hants)

Yamaha TT250R, 04-reg, taxed, 1200 miles, warranty, lowering link, Renthals, light trail use only, good cond, £2400 ovno.

Tel 01274 494446 (W Yorks)

Honda XR400, Dec '01, T&T, low miles, green lane use, regular oil changes, extras, with bike trailer, £2300. Tel 01633 815199 (S Wales)

Yamaha YZ400F, 2000, Fatbars, new tyres/pads, starts easily, lovely bike, mint cond, £1800. Tel 07963 975195 (Swansea)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 51-reg, Talons/Excels, well maintained, all the extras, well maintained, green laned only, good cond, £2395.

Tel Steve on 07785 570332 (Derbys)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, 54-reg, 30 hours' use, spare new OE plastics, bashplate, clutch saver, hand/radguards, sale due to new bike, £3000. Tel 07957 317626 (Northumberland)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 04 model, 30 hours' use, usual spares and extras, road use by older rider, as new, £2999. Tel 02392 632418 (Hants)

Gilera Dakota 350, 4T trail bike, T&T, elec start, well fettled, new parts inc clutch, good cond, £850. Tel 01273 241035 (Sussex)

KTM 300EXC, 04-reg, taxed, hand/sumpguards, new tyre/c+s, £3150. Tel (mobile) 07974 202921 or 01664 434892 (Leics)

KTM 450EXC, 2005, six months old, bashplate, clutch saver, handguards, race pipe, black plastics, mint cond, must sell.

Tel 01633 480456 (Gwent)

Gas Gas EC250, 2002 model, very low miles, CRD frameguards/bashplate, handguards, spare Talon/Excel rear wheel, new Renthal c+s/rear tyre, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07717 022369 or 01227 770449 (Kent)

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Honda XR400, 1999, red, T&T, 7000km, sump/frame/handguards, spare MT21s, very tidy. Tel (mobile) 07792 462708 or 01538 360920 (Staffs)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, 52-reg, handguards, bashplate, race pipe, new fork seals, very clean and tidy bike. Tel (mobile) 07980 279976 or 01789 205110 (Warks)

Honda XR350, MoT, comfy seat, vgc, £1300 ono. Tel 01202 460196 (Dorset)

Honda TLM220, MoT, want £1000 ono. Tel 01202 460196 (Dorset)

Yamaha YZ250, 2003, Boost Graphics, full FMF system, V Force reed valve, Excel rims, new piston/rings, wide pegs, spares, exc cond, £2000. Tel 07851 047909 (Manchester)

Yamaha WR200R, 1994, T&T, DEP system, new AC10s/bash-plate/rings, hand/frameguards, mint cond, can email pics, £1475 ono. Tel 01670 522904 (Northumberland)

Gas Gas Pampera, reg'd 2002, one lady owner, well maintained, green lane use, all sensible mods, injury forces sale, £1650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07979 771304 or 01284 789588 (Suffolk)

Honda MTX125R, 1994, L-reg, orange/white, T&T, 14000 miles, tidy cond, £850 ono. Tel (mobile) 07796 401187 or 01484 711344 (W Yorks)

KTM 525EXC, 2003 model, MoT, one owner, 57 hours' trail use only, new c+s, extras, exc original cond, £3250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07791 080763 or 01332 741415 (Derbys)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, July 2002, 3500 miles, T&T, clean and reliable, £2300 ono. Tel 020 8977 6118 (Middx)

Kawasaki KDX200R, S-reg, enduro model, green lane use, totally standard and great cond, injury forces sale, £1600 ono. Tel 0117 947 7870 (Bristol)

Kawasaki KDX220R, 52-reg, road reg'd, 1200 miles, road kit fitted, green lane use only, well maintained, vgc, £2300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07979 700706 or 01905 757950 (Worcs)

Honda CRF250X, taxed, 18 hours' use, 390 miles, hand/sump-guards, mature owner, green lane use only, exc cond, £3125. Tel 01491 834112 (Oxon)

Yamaha WR400F supermoto, 1998, T&T, fully road kitted, new c+s, includes off-road wheels/plastics etc, £2300 ono. Tel 07879 621720 (Cumbria)

Honda XLV600 Transalp, E-reg, T&T, clean bike with second bike for spares, rear disc model, £995. Tel 01302 859857 (S Yorks)

CMM R30, 2002, Suzuki engine, 1800 dry miles, vgc, reluctant sale, £3400 ono. Tel 07919 305285 (Derbys)

CCM 404DS, 2004, only 800 miles, both sets of wheels, lots of extras, original unused plastics, absolutely immaculate cond, £3650 ono. Tel 01822 832839 (Cornwall)

Gas Gas EC250, 1998, blue, T&T, light green lane use only, £1395 ono or swap for Honda XR250/400 of similar value. Tel 07724 129736 (Wilts)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, road reg'd, one owner, FMF system, frame-guards, recent tyres, good cond, £2000 ono. Tel 01473 830489 (Suffolk)

Honda CRF450, 2002, road reg'd, suspension work, supermoto wheels/caliper etc, new plastics/graphics, other spares, £3300 or poss split. Tel Tony on 01925 722299 (Cheshire)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1995, red, DEP system, new tyres/head-set/fork seals, Renthals, mature owner, £1795. Tel 01932 240150 (Surrey)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2003, blue, 1600km, hardly used, Renthals, sump/handguards, toolbag, exc cond, £1950. Tel 01622 692528 (Kent)

KTM LC4 640E, 2003, orange, 53-reg, 8200 miles, supermoto and enduro wheels, Akrapovic system, Datatagged, full Bracken history, £3800 ono. Tel 07876 030493 (London)

Suzuki TS185ER, 1981, no T&T, many new parts, vgc for year, can email pics, £600 ono. Tel 01335 300814 (Derbys)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, sump/hand/frameguards, new tyres/pads, DEP exhaust, great cond, £1600 ono. Tel 01539 445971 (Cumbria)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, road reg'd, gold Talons, wave discs, mousses, full FMF Gnarly, spares kit, over 50s rider, mint cond, £2600 ono.

Tel 01978 266769 (Denbighshire)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1996, T&T, DEP system plus standard, new rings/pads/bearings, handguards, spare levers, £1800 or swap for superbike. Tel 07974 940668 (Shrops)

Yamaha PW80, one complete runner with Renthals and knobblies, one nearly complete needing a few parts, spare engine in bits, £450. Tel 07974 940668 (Shrops)

CCM 604E, 2001, T&T, 5500 miles, both sets of wheels, road/green lane use only, factory extras, Supertrapp silencer, vgc, £2450 ono. Tel 01947 602303 (N Yorks)

Gas Gas Pampera, 2002, 2000 miles, mature owner, £1500. Tel 01327 877094 (Northants)

Honda XR400R, 1999, T-reg, white, reliable, lack of use forces sale, £1250. Tel 07887 951109 (Oxon)

Gas Gas EC450FSE, 2003, factory lowered 50mm, low miles, green lane use, sump/handguards, with unused road kit, exc cond, £3150 ono. Tel 01706 376026 (Lancs)

Kawasaki KXL250E1, 1993, kick-start 4T, MoT, USD forks, Renthals, fair cond, £900 ono. Tel 01239 612504 (Ceredigion)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, elec start, new Renthal c+s, vgc, injury forces sale, £2900. Tel 07711 328045 (Yorks)

Honda SL230, 2001, very low mileage, exc cond, never seen dirt, £1750 or swap plus cash for CCM604 or KTM LC4. Tel (mobile) 07710 399231 or 01453 836575 (Gloucs)

Honda XR250R, 1989, road reg'd, Renthals, handguards, a few spares, manual etc, green laned only, exc cond, £1150. Tel (mobile) 07989 335636 or 01462 713611 (Herts)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1992, J-reg, MoT, well maintained, regular oil changes, new tyres and many other parts, £995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07986 650102 or 0161 224 2597 (Yorks)

Yamaha TY250 twin-shock, road reg'd, plate valued at £1500, fully rebuilt engine, lots of new parts, good cond, £475 ono. Tel (mobile) 07986 650102 or 0161 224 2597 (Yorks)

Yamaha WR400F, 2002, green lane use only, exc cond, £2200. Tel 01722 716713 (Wilts)

Husqvarna SM570RR, 2003, factory-built race bike, same spec as Nox, extensive spares kit, never raced, awesome bike, £4300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07971 296404 or 01929 481268 (Dorset)

Husqvarna TE570, 2002, 02-reg, well maintained, mint cond, £2550 ono. Tel (mobile) 07910 433120 or 0116 2914763 (Leics)

Honda CRM250 mkII, T&T, everything works fine except the rider-too old and slow, £1000, looking for a Beta Alp. Tel (mobile) 07941 449277 or 01494 715162 (Bucks)

KTM 450EXC, 2004 model, 58 hours' use, new c+s/AC10s, bash-plate, Factory 909s, full road kit available, £3750 ono. Tel (mobile) 07889 904990 or 01480 472180 (Camps)

KTM 520EXC, 2002, T&T, new c+s/pads, £2695. Tel 07899 954505 (Teesside)

WANTED

Wanted barrel for Gas Gas EC300. Also supermoto wheels. Tel 07787 545722 (Norfolk)

Wanted CRM250 mkII/III/AR, plus cash in p/x for Honda VTR1000 Firestorm, 2003, 2000 miles, value £4000, would consider other two-strokes. Tel (days) 01493 664874 (Norfolk)

Wanted desperately seeking Yamaha XT350 engine, preferably a runner. Tel 07974 326811 (Oxon)

Wanted FMF Q-pipe silencer to fit Suzuki DR-Z400, must be in good cond. Tel 0121 707 1615 (W Mids)

Wanted enduro wheels to fit 2001 KTM 640 supermoto. Tel 07710 424643 (E Lothian)

Wanted skidplate for 1994 Yamaha TTR250. Tel 01625 268437 (Cheshire)

Wanted front pipe or complete system to fit 2002 Gas Gas EC250, prefer FMF Gnarly or DEP, anything considered. Tel Rob on (mobile) 07706 163776 or 0151 513 5482 (Cheshire)

Wanted three- or four-bike trailer, any condition, will collect. Tel 01202 421840 (Dorset)

Wanted any trick parts for Honda XR650 supermoto, for private project, will pay good price, all offers considered. Tel 0151 348 1960 (Cheshire)

Wanted complete engine for XR250, RFVC twin-carb type, must be in good working order, cash waiting. Tel 02380 849006 (Hants)

Wanted issue one of TBM, desperately wanted, I also have a number of back issues for sale. Tel Gary on 01377 219034 (E Yorks)

Wanted Yamaha XT500 or XT250. Tel 01229 716814 (Cumbria)

Wanted riding buddies for trail riding, competent ex-enduro rider based in Gloucs area, will travel. Tel Bob on (mobile) 07716 155459 or 01452 540949 (Gloucs)

Wanted parts for SWM RS175GS TF/I, anything considered. Also wanted 1980 workshop manual. Tel 01751 473666 (N Yorks)

Wanted issue 58 of TBM, June 2000, to replace lost issue, will pay postage as well. Tel 01697 322329 (Cumbria)

Wanted large tank to fit 2005 KTM 200EXC, 13L or above, any cond or type. Tel 07802 914043 (Surrey)

Wanted enduro/MX Kit, have finally got back to two wheels but need the gear to go with the bike, jacket size L, trouser size 36, and boots size 9 required. Tel 01992 534660 (Herts)

Wanted wheels for CRM250 AR, WHY. Tel Simon on (mobile) 07989 690712 or 01303 243689 (Kent)

Wanted 18in rear MX tyre, the newer/cheaper the better. Tel 07732 869028 (Lincs)

Wanted MX wheels to fit KTM LC4. Tel 07831 235507 (W Mids)

Wanted supermoto wheels for 2004 KTM 525EXC, with discs etc, must be in vgc. Tel (mobile) 07887 600186 or 01903 730775 (W Sussex)

Wanted KTM 500LC parts, or twin-shock. Also Montesa enduro and Bultaco enduro. Tel 01243 513243 (W Sussex)

Wanted parts for 1997/98/99 Gas Gas EC, seat or seat base, and FMF silencer. Also 1990/91 Husky 250 exhaust, outer clutch cover, clutch parts, other years may fit. Tel 01243 513243 (W Sussex)

Wanted handbook/workshop manual for 2003 Suzuki DR-Z400E. Tel (mobile) 07817 271635 or 0114 268 3787 (S Yorks)

Wanted CCM 604 or KTM LC4, cash waiting but must take Honda SL230 in p/x, worth £1750. Tel (mobile) 07710 399231 or 01453 836575 (Gloucs)

SPARES

Budget brake upgrade or SM conversion, Nissin CBR600 twin-pot caliper with recent pistons/seals/EBC HH pads, a few scuffs, braided hose, Brembo master cylinder, 320mm floating disc 6-bolt Honda CR fitment, £100 plus courier. Tel James at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)

Complete set of bodywork for DR-Z400S, blue/white, lights, mirrors the lot, as new, £260. Exhaust system, as new, £160. Tel 0121 707 1615 (W Mids)

FMF Powercore IV end can to fit DR-Z400, with removable quiet insert, as new, £160. Tel 0121 707 1615 (W Mids)

Genuine Yamaha silencer to fit 2005 YZ250F, 2-3 hours' use, will also fit WR-F, mint cond, bargain compared to new/aftermarket, £75. Tel 07752 067590 (Cheshire)

Akrapovic Ti system to fit 2003 KTM 525EXC, exc cond, £350. Tel 07909 535475 (Kent)

KTM triple clamps, brand new, exc cond, £180. Tel 07909 535475

FMF Gnarly to fit Honda CR250, 1997-99, brand new, cost £195, accept £100 and will throw in CR silencer. Tel (mobile) 07706 163776 or 0151 513 5482 (Cheshire)

Pro Circuit T4 tuneable tailpipe to fit TTR250, good looking lightweight pipe, unused cond, cost £225, will accept £125 plus postage. Tel 07751 125785 (Devon)

Exhaust for 2003 YZ250F, used but dent free, offers. Tel 07791 105333 (Gloucs)

Cams for 2003 YZ250F, brand new, unused, sensible offers. Tel 07791 105333 (Gloucs)

Spares for Kawasaki KDX200, front wheel, tank, front pipe, fork clamps, clutch plates, sprockets, £40. Tel 01453 750742 (Gloucs)

KTM supermoto wheels, Behr rims, Maxxis Goldspeed tyres, wave disc, caliper bracket, rear disc/sprocket, £500.

Tel (mobile) 07951 545492 or 01634 312230 (Kent)

Trail/trials bike trailer, new in July '05, galvanized, ramp, spare wheel, tie-straps, carries two bikes, cost £570, now £450. Tel 01522 510981 (Lincs)

Gold Talon enduro wheels, with discs/sprocket/speedo drive and Pirellis, never used, £400. Tel 01491 834059 (Oxon)

Enduro wheels to fit 2003 Gas Gas EC300, black Excel rims, gold Talon hubs, Comp3 tyres, discs and sprocket, call for details, £375. Tel 01603 712470 (Norfolk)

Four pairs of Renthals, £10. KDX frameguards, £8. Barkbusters, black, £15. Micron stand, £10. Tel Dave on 07974 368174 (Oxon)

Doma supermoto system to fit XR650R, best bolt-on performance gains you can buy, £275. Tel Wayne on 01753 824918 (Berks)

MSR Goretex jacket, size XL, worn twice, £90. MX helmet, size large, gold ACU sticker, plus Pro Grip goggles, £60. Tel 07816 266424 (Derbys)

Remus exhaust system to fit BMW 1200GS, Ti end can, includes Y-piece and all fixings, as new, £420 ono. Tel 07802 925609 (Northumberland)

Parts for 2003 KTM 450EXC, indicators, bracket and switch, £20. Rear light & mudguard, £10 plus p&p. Tel 07966 103733 (Notts)

KDX220 parts, ex exhaust, tailpipe, front/rear fenders, sidepanels, handguards, filler cap, rear light, pegs, seat cover and more, ring for prices. Plus Acerbis Klima jacket. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)

Front-end from Kawasaki KDX200/220, from 2003 model, wheel, disc, caliper, forks, gaiters, clamps, stem and bearings, as new cond, £250. Tel 01934 627648 (Somerset)

FMF Q-pipe to fit 2003-06 Yamaha WR250F, complete with Powerbomb header and heatshield, brand new in box, £220 ono. Tel (mobile) 07976 544870 or 020 8330 7141 (Surrey)

DEP performance silencer to fit 2004-05 Yamaha WR250F, three hours' use, as new, £150. Tel 07788 725014 (Oxon)

SM wheels to fit Husqvarna TE610, with discs and tyres, £550. Tel 01622 721588 (Kent)

Supermoto parts to fit KTM, 2 sets of wheels, wets + D208 tyres, yellow plastics, Scorpion race system. Tel 07831 235507 (W Mids)

TBM back issues, 54-77, 80-88, 90, 91, 99, £2 each plus postage. Tel 01329 289480 (Hants)

Dainese jacket and trousers, trail or road, removable armour and lining, timecard pockets, vgc, £80 ono. Tel 07967 504031 (London)

Brand new spares for XR250, headrace bearings, CK1190 clutch, EBC FA128R brake pads, unused, cost £95, sell for £55. Tel (mobile) 07776102630 (Isle of Lewis)

Spare for Yamaha DT250/400MX, many new/used spares, exhausts, plastics, carbs, electrics, NOS pistons/rings, NOS seat cover plus lots more. Tel (mobile) 07986 650102 or 0161 224 2597 (Yorks)

Braking 320mm disc to fit KTM 450/640, good as new, still have box, £90 ono. Tel (after 6pm) 01430 441960 (E Yorks)

STOLEN

Stolen Beta Rev-3 trials bike, 2004 model, frame no ZD3B9DD0030009110, taken from Epsom between 6-8 November. Any info please contact Dave on 01372 724464 (Surrey)

Stolen KTM 300EXC, reg no KS51 ZMX, frame number VBKGSAA2002M41, engine number 2-556-54621, stolen from Raunds, Northants, on 20-21 Nov, crime no NW10203/05. Contact local police on 01933 304405 (Northants)

Stolen Yamaha YZ250F, 2006, frame no JYACG25C56A003434, engine no G342E-015446, Works Connection Pro Perc, polished standard engine cover, Motominder hour meter fitted under the right-hand plastic, r/h plastic and seat cover removed at the time, stolen from Sussex area. Tel 07749 309503 (Sussex)

Stolen Honda CRF250X, 2005 model, frame no JH2ME11A15K110574, taken from Peterborough area. Tel 01733 468194 (Camps)

Stolen two Yamaha YZ450F supermotos, both 2003 models, first bike frame no CJ03C0006660, engine no J313E0006690. Second bike frame no CJ03C0002672, engine no J313E0002659, stolen from Peterborough area. Tel 01733 468194 (Camps)

Stolen Yamaha YZ450F, 2003 model, MX trim, frame no 000770, taken from Peterborough area. Tel 01733 468194 (Camps)

