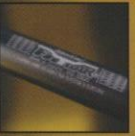


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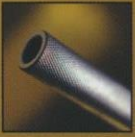
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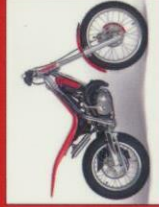
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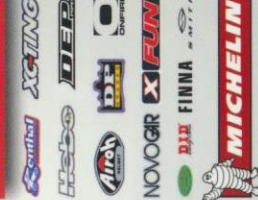


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The 2006 Husqvarna TE250 featuring a host of technical revisions, designed to improve the rideability and power delivery of this already successful machine, is now available at the following authorised Husqvarna dealers, along with the rest of the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

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EDITORIAL

The Cost of Living

In real terms, stuff is getting cheaper. I know this because the original Apple Mac computer which I bought in order to start the mag back in '95 and which had less computing power than you find in your average remote control, cost about the equivalent of a small studio flat in Brighton. Well, we're now on our fourth generation of computers here at TBM (with wafer-thin monitors, DVD this, megabyte that, broadband the other) and each one costs less than Charlie Boorman's lunch. The same goes for things like plasma televisions, ipods, cameras, and yes - even dirt bikes.

On the other hand, not everything costs less year-on-year. My council tax bill seems to go up faster than a Hertfordshire oil depot, train fares appear to be constantly on the move (unlike the trains themselves), and the last time I filled a 20L jerrycan it made my eyes water - though, I did drop it on my foot.

And what about property? Had I invested my money into that Brighton flat instead of into what has become a worthless piece of beige hardware, I'd now be sitting on a small fortune - and one with neighbours who know how to host a great dinner party. Because while the cost of purchasing something like a DVD player is actually cheaper than buying yourself a cinema ticket, the cost of owning a room in which to sit and watch its output has (metaphorically speaking) gone through the roof.

All of which is a very roundabout way of saying that next month's TBM is going to cost a little more - 25p more to be precise. Which will probably cause the cheapskates among you to sit down clutching your hearts, whilst others I suspect won't even notice.

The problem is you see that historically we're used to our newspapers (and thus magazines) costing pennies. That's because when Caxton

invented the Daily Mail, he made it affordable so that he could tell everyone how much their one-bedroom hovel in the forest of Birmingham had gone up since it was first valued in the Domesday book, whilst selling acres of advertising space to the suppliers of rat-catchers and wizards.

So people expect their periodicals to be cheap. Interestingly, the same goes for using services like the Royal Mail. Which because some of TBM's more senior contributors still remember using Penny-Black stamps, they expect to be able to send letters for just a few pence. Well I'm sorry, but things just aren't like that anymore. Sure you can still post a first class letter for 30p, but if you actually want it to be delivered to the correct address then you end up doing what we do, and using Special Delivery - which currently costs £3.85. Add in the cost of a bit of compensation in case they lose your valuable photograph, and you can easily be looking at the thick end of ten quid just to send a single transparency from one town to another. On the other hand you can pick up a copy of TBM and see hundreds of great pictures - all for less than the cost of delivering just one image to Swindon. How weird is that?

So there you go. TBM is officially great value as I've just proved beyond doubt. And of course if you subscribe (trailbikemag.com), then you save yourself even more money - well you will do if you subscribe within the next month and take advantage of the existing subs price (and if that isn't a very un-subtle hint, I don't know what is). Alternatively you could always invest your £3.20 a month in a high interest savings account and at the end of ten years, well you might've just about saved up enough for a pink doorknob for your flat in Brighton...

SI MELBER

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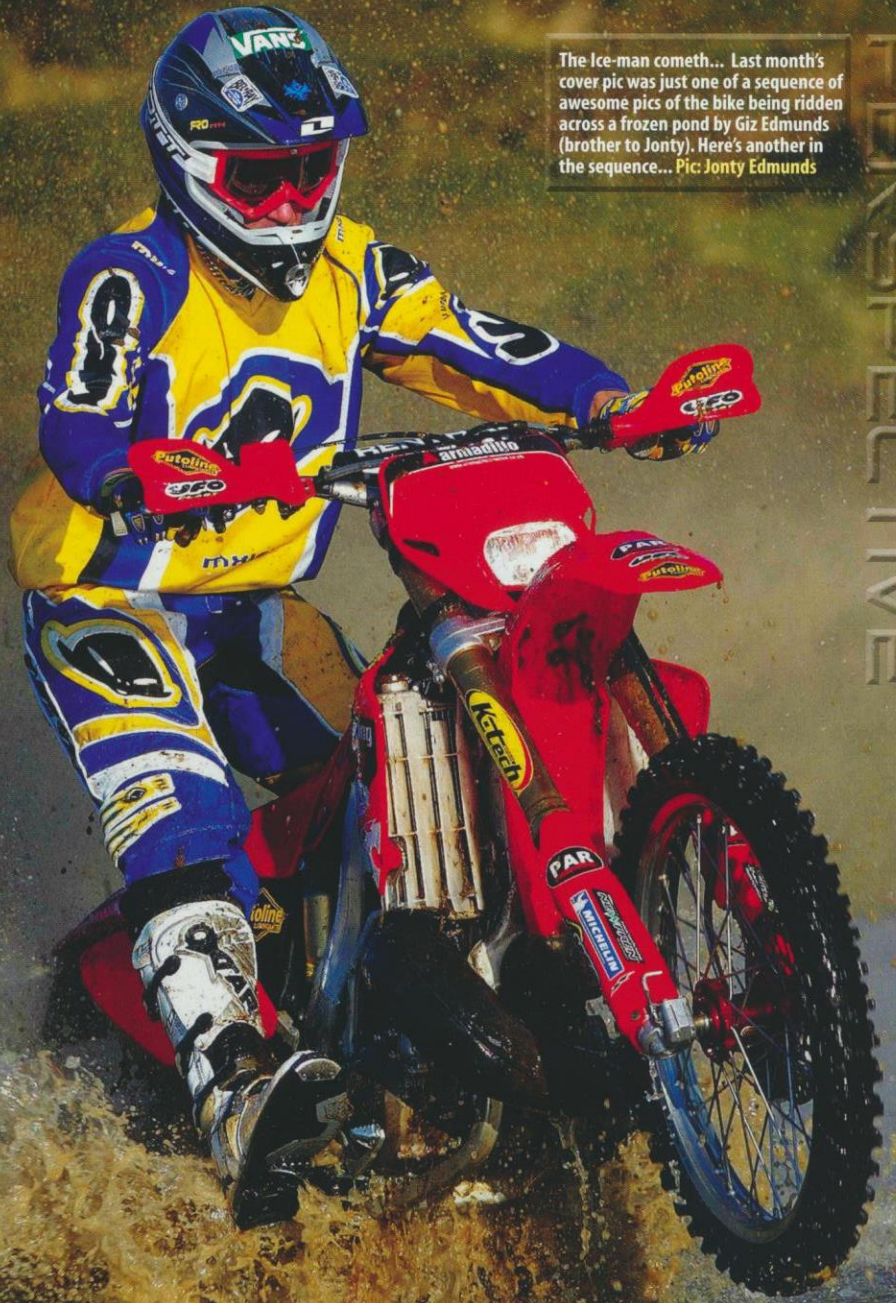


John Rushworth & Honda TLR250:
When the Scottish Highlands are
your back garden, you get to ride
some awesome terrain - with the
landowner's permission of course!
Pic: TBM

PERSPECTIVE

The Ice-man cometh... Last month's cover pic was just one of a sequence of awesome pics of the bike being ridden across a frozen pond by Giz Edmunds (brother to Jonty). Here's another in the sequence... Pic: Jonty Edmunds

PERSPECTIVE



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PERSPECTIVE

Australia's Andy Caldecott lost his life at this year's Dakar Rallye in a high speed crash, and the off-road world lost a true hero. God speed, mate.
Pic: DPPI



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DAKAR DREAMS



Spaniard Marc Coma claimed his first ever Dakar Rallye win despite the sad death of his KTM-Repsol team-mate Australian Andy Caldecott.

Last year's winner Frenchman Cyril Despres gave up his fight to retain his desert crown after crashing and suffering a dislocated shoulder, but carried on to finish as runner-up with four special stage wins to boot.

Highest placed Brit finisher was tough Derbyshire rider Mick Extance aboard his Honda Racing CRF450X in 27th position. And it

was fourth time lucky for Brit lady rider KTM 525 mounted Patsy Quick, who finished 88th with co-rider Clive 'Zippy' Town right behind in 89th place.

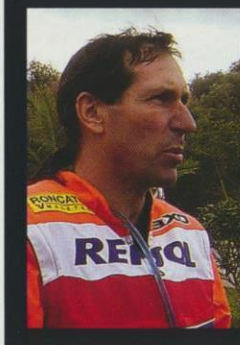
Nick Plumb came home 78th and honorary Brit Si Pavey eventually finished in 86th spot after both his 'Race To Dakar' team-mates Charley Boorman and Matt Hall retired, due to a broken hand and exhaustion respectively.

In total, the 28th Dakar saw 93 riders complete the gruelling Lisbon-Lac Rose 15-day race.

FINAL STANDINGS

| POSITION | RIDER | MAKE | TIME |
|----------|--------------|------|----------|
| 1 | COMA | KTM | 55:27:17 |
| 2 | DESPRES | KTM | 56:40:46 |
| 3 | SALA | KTM | 57:57:05 |
| 4 | BLAIS | KTM | 58:03:35 |
| 5 | DE GAIVARDO | KTM | 58:50:04 |
| 6 | ULLEVALSETER | KTM | 59:22:09 |
| 7 | DUCLOS | KTM | 60:11:13 |
| 8 | CASTEU | KTM | 61:43:38 |
| 9 | RODRIGUES | YAM | 62:21:58 |
| 10 | VINTERS | KTM | 63:20:31 |

Andy Caldecott 1964 - 2006



The little town of Keith in South Australia is in mourning following the death of four-time Australian Safari winner Andy Caldecott who had only recently been called up to the KTM Repsol team for this year's Dakar to replace the injured Jordi Duran. Andy was holding tenth place overall when he died on the ninth stage of the race following a fatal neck injury sustained during a high speed crash.

With his distinctive pony-tail hair

and staring eyes, the quietly spoken Caldecott was one of those blokes who lived for bike racing and was an inspiration to many riders. His home town of Keith had formed a fundraising committee back in 2003 to finance Andy's Dakar dream.

A fund has been set-up to help his wife Tracey and daughter Caitlin. The Andy Caldecott Memorial Trust is the a/c name, bank: ANZ, Branch: Keith, BSB: 015-595, a/c 4955-98859.

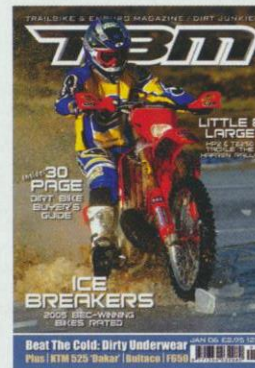
Sub Standard!

As some subscribers will no doubt be aware, a number of January subs copies of TBM were mailed out with only a partial address on them, which resulted in some issues not being delivered (or delivered on time).

This was an error on the part of the mailing house we used and was *not* due to TBM or the subscription company using incorrect data. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Though the error has now been rectified, any subscriber who has still not received their January issue should call our subs hotline on 020 7903 3993 for a replacement.

Rest assured we have now changed our mailing house so hopefully there will be no further problems. Sincere apologies...



When the going gets Tough...

Staged at Nantmawr Quarry, Oswestry on 21 January the 2006 extreme hare scramble race the 'Tough One' once again saw David Knight demolish the rest of the field to win for the second consecutive year.

Despite having to run up a very steep hill (twice!) before getting on his KTM David took just half an hour to fight his way through the 30 rider strong premier class before taking the lead.

And it stayed that way for the rest of the race, with Knight completing 17 laps and finishing a whole lap clear of runner-up Honda pilot Wayne Braybrook, earning himself a cool £1500 prize money in the process.

With the second hour being ridden in the dark all the riders had to pick their way around the semi floodlit course - an incredibly difficult task that proved beyond some riders.

And it wasn't all plain sailing for some of the top boys, with

former WEC champ Paul Eddy pulling out after just an hour, despite leading the race after the first lap and earning £250 for his efforts thus far.

TM racer Euan McConnell wrested third place away from trials ace Graham Jarvis just before the end, with Ed Jones and Juan Knight following them home in fifth and sixth positions. See page 102 for the full story...



SNIPPETS

WYN-WYN SITUATION

Former BEC front runner Wyn Hughes is again running his popular Husqvarna enduro training schools this year. Available dates are:

29 Jan Lark-Hill Salisbury
5 March Carno Mid-Wales
10/11 June Cardiff
25 June Carno Mid-Wales
9 July Lark-Hill Salisbury

For more info and to book, email: wynandtracy@tre-feglwys.fsnet.co.uk

THE RIGHT WAY

Even if you've never trail ridden in Rutland before, now's your chance to make sure you still can in the future. Rutland County Council Highways Department

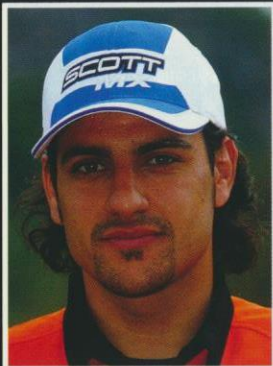


(responsible for Public Rights Of Way) are putting together a PROW improvement plan that will identify any changes that need to be made to develop the current network.

Head of Highways, Malcolm Ainley, said, 'It is important that anybody who is interested in the PROW in Rutland forward their views. This does not mean that we only want to hear from the many people who currently use the PROW Network.'

This is to be done via an online survey (found at: rutland.gov.uk/rowipsurvey) and the simple questions do take account of the off-road community's needs.

As an added incentive, the Council is offering the chance to win £100 worth of gift vouchers to complete the form. Deadline for responses is 24 March 2006.



5 MINUTES WITH...

SPANISH RIDER IVAN CERVANTES WON THE ENDURO 1 CLASS IN 2005

WHAT WAS THE FIRST ENDURO BIKE YOU OWNED?

The first proper enduro bike I had was a 500cc four-stroke KTM, four years ago. Before that I used my father's XR Honda to go trail riding with my friends. Because I was racing for KTM Spain as a motocross rider it wasn't right that I was also riding a Honda. They gave me an enduro bike and asked if I wanted to ride the first Spanish championship race. I did and I won it, and my enduro career started.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ENDURO?

I think that it would have to be the races in Spain, just because of the support I get from the Spanish enduro fans. But races in Finland are very enjoyable - very technical, very sandy motocross tests, which I enjoy. I also like to try and entertain the public so I really like the indoor events as well.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST ENDURO THAT YOU HAVE RACED?

Any race in the mud as it is very difficult for me. I know that if it is very muddy I can't win against some riders. I used to try and win every race in the mud but that meant crashing a lot. However my mud riding has improved. The WEC race in Italy last year was very hard because it was really wet. I felt okay but Salminen was 30 seconds a test faster than me!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BEST EVER PERFORMANCE?

I think it would have to be the third race of the 2005 WEC. There was a very dangerous enduro test but I rode well.

I had won the first two world championship races the year before and then things fell apart for me at race three, so I was a little afraid the same might happen again. My friends joked with me that I wouldn't do very well. To win on both days, and then at the fourth race, I knew that I could win the E1 world title.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST DISAPPOINTING RESULT?

The last race of the 2005 world championship, where I rode a 125. I heard a few people saying that I only won the 2005 E1 title because of my bike, and that I wouldn't have won on a 125. I wanted to show them that I could race and win on a 125. But I wasn't able to do much training on the bike and the first day didn't go so well. On day two I was riding well but then I had a big crash on the enduro test. I was disappointed because I was sure I could win. I wanted to close the mouths of those people.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CRASH?

It was at the same race, the last race of the '05 WEC. Because there isn't as much bottom-end power on the 125 as there is with the 250cc four-stroke I was a little too aggressive with the power. I came out of a corner, lifted the front wheel across some rocks and cart wheeled down the track. A big crash.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED ENDURO MEMORY?

One day at my home I went riding with my friends. I have a very difficult trials climb, which I rode to the top of on my enduro bike for a spot of extreme test training. I was expecting my friends to follow me on their bikes but they didn't, they just looked at me and laughed. I had to ride about 15 of their bikes up the climb. My friends claim that I won the world championship this year because I was good on the extreme tests, because they made me ride up the hill!

WHICH RIDER HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

Juha Salminen without a doubt. Juha is the number one rider because of what he has achieved over the past five years. His mentality, his style, his ability on a bike, these are all things that make him such a great rider. He is the king of enduro for me and I am looking forward to racing against him in 2007.

WHAT BIKE HAVE YOU ENJOYED OWNING/RIDING THE MOST?

The bike I ride now, the 250cc four-stroke. It is such an easy bike to ride, I love it. I have ridden most sized bikes

and the 250cc four-stroke does everything any other bike does. It is small and light but has good power.

WHICH IS YOUR PREFERRED TERRAIN?

Sand. I know that might sound wrong because I live in Spain and I always train on hard ground, but I prefer softer, sandy terrain. When I was racing motocross I always liked to race in the sand, in Holland and Belgium.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT MEAN MORE OFF?

I think that bonuses for winning extreme tests rather than points towards the world championship would be a good idea. Because you can easily lose a race, and possibly a world championship, by making a mistake in an extreme test many riders would prefer if there were separate prizes for them. That way you could still put on a show as well as winning something. The other thing is to try and reduce the distance between the special tests, so the public don't have to drive from one to the other.

WHAT DOES THE SPORT OF ENDURO NEED LESS OF?

I think that if we took away all the muddy races it would be better! Seriously, I think that sometimes the sport's politics do more damage than good but apart from that I think the world championship is pretty good at the moment. Also, people who try and stop us riding our bikes are very bad for our sport. These people seem to be everywhere now, all over the world.

WHAT WILL THE SPORT OF ENDURO BE LIKE IN FIVE YEARS?

I think the image of the sport will get better and better, certainly for the WEC. For the rest, I don't know. We have problems with the places that we are allowed to ride so we might have more and more cross-country races. I think things like extreme tests will become more popular.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IN ENDUROS?

I want to win more world titles. But I also liked racing in Las Vegas so maybe I would like to race in the US. Now, I want to win one more Enduro 1 title before moving to a 450 in the Enduro 2 class. After that, I don't know exactly but as long as I am enjoying everything that is what is important to me.



Merri-Go-Round

As the start of the 2006 enduro season looms ever nearer, four-time enduro world champion Stefan Merriman is still without a guaranteed ride.

At the time of going to press, the Aussie legend has yet to sign for a factory team, despite parting with Italian-based UFO Corse Yamaha two months ago. The 32-year-old was facing a substantial drop in salary due to the Japanese parent company's decision to withdraw part of their enduro funding.

And despite failed negotiations with the CH Husqvarna team and a rumoured signing for Italian outfit KL Kawasaki, Merriman's future still looks undecided...

SELLING POINT

The overall motorcycle sales marketplace had a steady month last December, remaining at two percent above the same time the year before.

Despite a slight dip, the Adventure Sport category was still a full 28 percent ahead of overall figures, with the Trail/Enduro class up a very respectable three percent to boot.

There was no stopping the mighty 1200 GS Beemer, with another 109 units sold and a well-earned fifth spot in the top ten registrations table - the only 'off-road' bike in the line-up. But it was goodbye to Yamaha's XT600X, as the pint-sized DT125R SM took fifth place instead.

There was no change in the Trail/Enduro sector with the ever-popular Honda XR125L still out front with another 71 machines sold. Complete figures were as follows...



| ADVENTURE SPORT | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------|
| 1 | BMW R1200GS | 1980 |
| 2 | Honda XL125V | 703 |
| 3 | Triumph 955 Tiger | 563 |
| 3 | Suzuki RV125 | 560 |
| 5 | Yamaha DT125R SM | 420 |
| TRAIL/ENDURO | | |
| 1 | Honda XR125L | 980 |
| 2 | Suzuki RV125 | 542 |
| 3 | Yamaha DT125 | 462 |
| 4 | Yamaha WR450F | 379 |
| 5 | KTM 450EXC | 347 |



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Suddenly electric dirtbikes are springing up everywhere. TBM flew to Switzerland for an exclusive test of the very latest battery-bike...

Of all the countries around the world, Switzerland has gotta be the most highly regulated and environmentally conscientious of all. Apparently in Switzerland it's illegal to own an un-silenced alarm clock, and also against the law to take a 'leak' in the standing position after ten o'clock at night. I kid you not.

In fact, such is the Swiss people's obsession with rules and the environment that when it comes to organising their national enduro championship they run it in someone else's country! So much better than polluting your own backyard, don'tcha think?

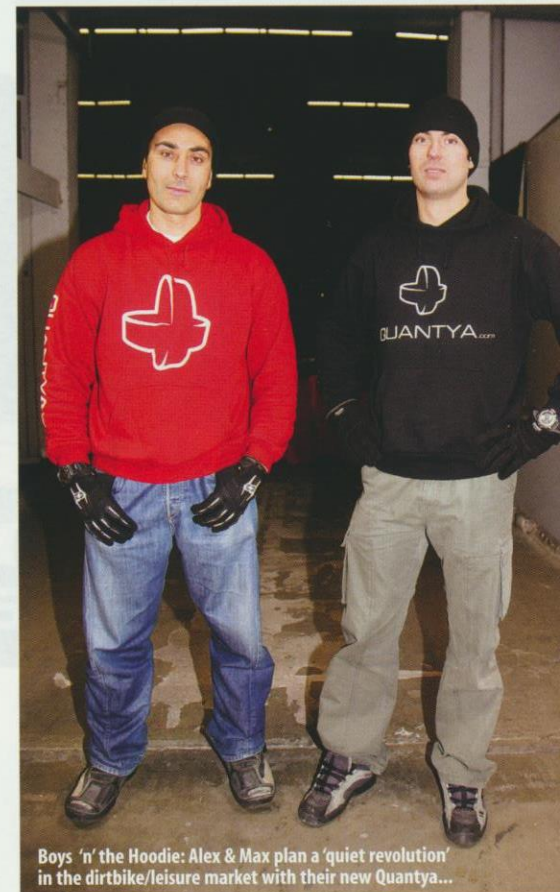
All of which nonsense means that it probably won't come as much of a surprise to you to discover that the latest *electric* dirtbike to break cover comes from the country where the act of mowing your lawn at the wrong time of day can actually land you in jail...

Ex MX

Quanta is a relatively new company, formed just two years ago by friends Alessandro Tiberia (or Alex, as he's otherwise known) and Max Modena. Both are keen motocrossers (though we won't hold that against them...!), and like all great ideas the Quanta bike was born over a drink at the bar. 'Two double sparkling waters please, barman.'

Although Switzerland is clearly a very different kinda place to the UK, the pair realised that noise is gradually killing off dirtbiking on a global scale. And that a quiet (or in the case of an electric bike, virtually silent) machine has the potential to open up huge new riding areas not just in the countryside, but also in an urban environment! And that's exactly where TBM tested the new bike. In a warehouse in 'downtown' Lugano. Not 200 yards from the lake of the same name and in the shadow of snow-capped mountains. If only we were allowed out there!

Rather than sell the 100 Quantas the company aim to have produced by the end of February, Alex and Max are hoping some budding entrepreneurs will set-up a number of 'arrive-and-ride' schemes across Europe. And it's one such scheme that they've organised



Boys 'n' the Hoodie: Alex & Max plan a 'quiet revolution' in the dirtbike/leisure market with their new Quanta...

in Lugano. Of course, they'll still sell individual bikes to paying punters, but by running what could be considered a fleet of demonstrators they can offer a greater level of support and keep track of how this batch of bikes are performing, whilst getting their name seen by a greater number of people. Makes sense really.

Hall of Fame

As I walked through the giant doors into the exhibition hall which housed the Quanta track I noticed something about the circuit - there wasn't any dirt. Potted plants yes, and a few

Quanta Leap



Quantya Leap

wooden jumps, but there was a distinct lack of mud. 'We'd been trying to get this place for ages', commented Alex, 'and it was only two days before Christmas that they finally said we could use it'. With time at a premium, the guys set-up what is essentially an indoor supermoto-urban-SX track. A more permanent venue is planned with plenty of 'varied terrain', but for the moment ignore the lack of dirt and look instead at the potential...

In some ways the Quantya is very similar to the ElectricMoto Blade T6 we rode back in issue 123, and that's only to be expected. But in others it differs considerably. The wheelbase is shorter and the chromo-moly frame more compact (in a bid to make it easier to transport, claimed Alex), whilst the seat's a touch higher. The Quantya employs basic 35mm Marzocchi Shiver forks whilst the Blade had top-spec Ohlins items, and the wheels are slightly smaller 18in items wrapped in Kenda motorcycle tyres. Unlike the Blade, the Swiss bike does away with the rear

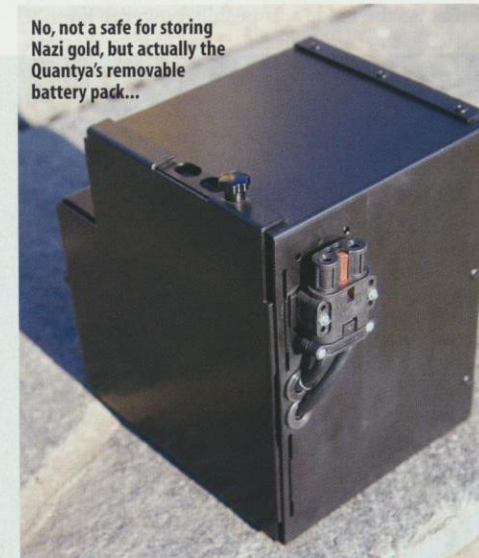
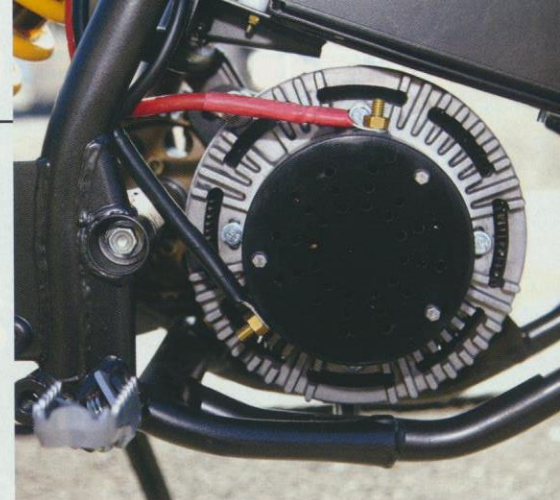
brake pedal, locating both levers for the AJP stoppers on the bars, pushbike stylee.

But probably the biggest physical difference between the two is the way in which the batteries are mounted. The Blade carried its four batteries in fixed holders on each side of the bike. Quick removal was not an option, and therefore they had to be charged in situ, meaning a break of at least 45 minutes between each ride. But the guys at Quantya immediately recognised that having a removable battery pack (containing four sealed batteries) would be a huge benefit to longer riding, and so engineered a quick-detatch facility into their design.

Unplug the 'power connector' (located just in front of the battery on the right-hand-side), then unclip the motocross seat with the single Dzus fastener at the rear. And this allows access to the clamp which holds the battery in place, and with a quick twirl of an Allen key, the 20-something kilo battery-pack can be slid out of the frame. Reverse the process, slipping in a fully charged



Push the 'start' button and... it's completely silent!



No, not a safe for storing Nazi gold, but actually the Quantya's removable battery pack...

Quantya Leap

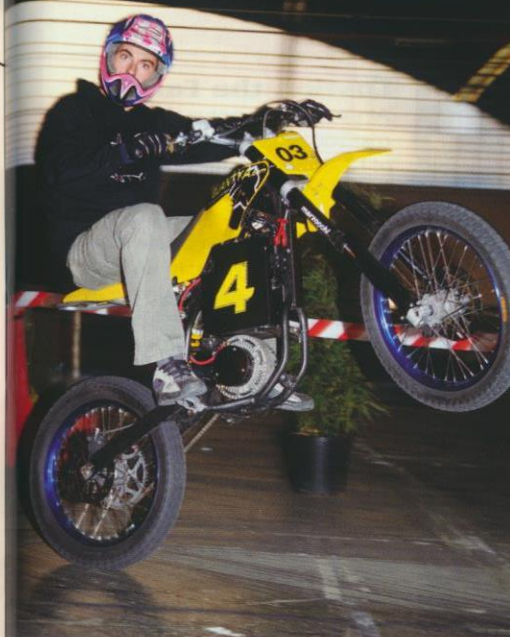


battery (like the T6, a quick-charge takes a little under an hour), and you're ready to go in just a couple of minutes - if that. This, however, still isn't quick enough for Max. 'I want it so that you don't have to remove the seat', he told me as we swapped out a flat battery pack. I countered this by reminding him that it's *only* one Dzus fastener. Max though, is clearly a perfectionist.

The bike's industrial electric motor, again similar to the Blade's, transmits power to the

rear wheel via first a belt, then a regular chain-drive. There's no gears, no engine braking, and very little noise (45dB). The power control unit (the box of 'electricker' which links the throttle and batteries to regulate how much power the batteries supply to the motor) is the same as those found in golf carts (the kind which takes the exercise out of a game for fat Americans).

There's little in the way of bodywork on the Quantya. The bike wears a short front fender, a



front numberboard, a pair of rad shrouds and a dummy plastic tank covering the power control unit. These plastics make the bike immediately identifiable as an off-roader, which is key to the marketing off the bike. There's a distinct lack of rear bodywork on the bike, and because of how it's currently being used, it doesn't need any.

When I quizzed Alex about this he simply smiled and explained that the small loop at the rear of the sub-frame will be useful for 'when the company establishes its freestyle MX team!'

Live and Kicking

Once aboard the Quantya it felt very similar to a regular dirtbike, though at 85kg, far lighter to chuck around. Despite the claimed 915mm seat height it also felt quite low, perhaps as the soft suspension sits well down in its stroke. With a linkless Sachs rear shock, the ride height is actually adjustable via the two-position mounting, and one of the bikes I tried was also set up for youngsters with a cut-away seat, making it particularly easy for fearless teenagers to scythe around the course, cutting everyone up.

Having plugged in the battery connector and flicked the bar-mounted kill-switch to 'on' the bike was now live, as indicated by a small green LED located below the steering head in the tank plastic. Although there was no play in the throttle, the controller meant that there was a slight delay between a closed and part-open

throttle, which made setting off and some of the slower corners that little bit more interesting.

Once underway, the Quantya exhibited a good turn of speed, though perhaps not quite as quick the Blade T6. Alex admitted that they weren't running quite the same power output as the ElectricMoto, instead these demo bikes have been 'detuned' to run about 20 percent down on the Blade's output in order 'to help the longevity of the motor' he claimed. Whatever the reasoning, on a tight track such as this, it was never a problem and, thanks to the immediate torque of the powerplant, it was easy to spin the rear tyre exiting the corners - even the faster, sweeping turns.

Once the rubber had built up some warmth (not something you normally read about in TBM!) the bike could be thrown about with almost reckless abandon. The twin-pot AJP front brake was easily man enough to slow the bike (and perform rolling stoppies), and the rear allowed plenty of controllable 'backing-it-in'.

Thanks to its sharp steering, short wheelbase and wide bars the Quantya changed direction with minimal input and would cut as tight a line as required. How this would transfer to the dirt I'm not really sure, as combined with its relatively small wheels it has the potential to transform the bike from nimble to unstable.

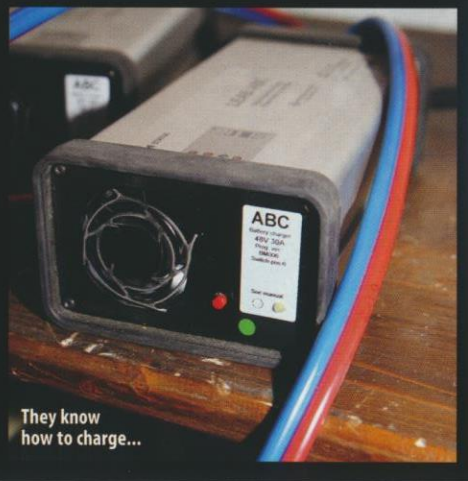
That's not to say the bike felt anything other than planted around this track, and although it proved almost as easy to jump as a BMX bike, it never felt skittish. With the batteries located centrally within the frame the bike is particularly narrow between your knees, though not *too* skinny - 'we know some people like to grip the bike with their knees', Alex reminded me.

The over-riding impression is one of a bike that's amazingly easy to ride - once you get the hang of the 'electric' power delivery. This was evident when the local 'scooter boys' turned up to ride the Quantyas after school had turned up, and we watched their riding improve lap on lap.

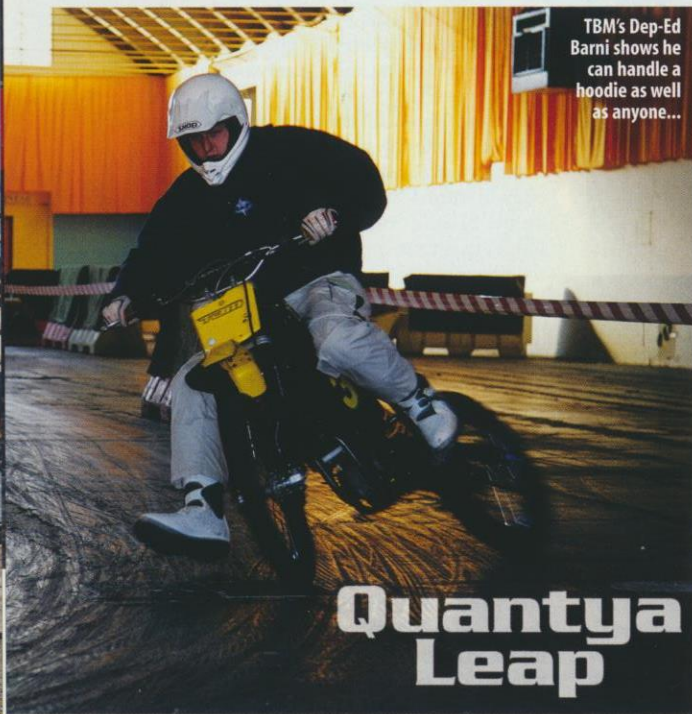
Kids such as these are really Quantya's target market and Alex sees the bike being sold primarily as an urban off-roader for use in back-yards, nearby woods and urban BMX tracks (and even summertime ski resorts!) - marketed purely by Pester-Power. In fact such is Quantya's wish that their product is targeted at the X-Box generation, that they requested we rode in baggy trousers and a hood! Which explains why I returned from Switzerland minus a large piece of skin which used to cover my right elbow.

On Charge

Just like with a mobile phone or anything else which runs on solid-state batteries, the Quantya's 48-volt power-packs and chargers, have a finite lifetime depending upon the amount of usage. The regular charger which is supplied with the bike and which takes 3.5hrs to fully recharge the batteries will last on average 900 charge cycles (or the life of two battery packs). And by inference each battery pack should last for 400-450 charge cycles before it needs replacing. If the optional fast charger is utilised it requires just 50mins to fully charge a battery pack and will last for approximately the same length of time as a set of batteries. Currently replacement (four-battery) power-packs cost approximately £200 at today's conversion rates.



They know how to charge...



TBM's Dep-Ed Barni shows he can handle a hoodie as well as anyone...

Quantya Leap

Future Perfect?

The next step for the Quantya is the use of a new brushless motor, a part which has only been in production since mid-2005. This new motor should offer more reliable performance, and with less vent-holes will also be better suited to the off-road application. Simply finding a controller which would be compatible with the new motor caused a few problems, though this has now been resolved and the components are currently undergoing testing.

In the short term, the company will be producing around 200 bikes a year, with a facility in Italy enabling them to make use of the tax breaks EU membership allows (Switzerland is outside the EU). Long-term aims are to have a range of models, each using a motor specific to that bike. A fully waterproof motor was muted, though as Alex pointed out, you'd have to be careful not to 'cook' it, and hi-tech, lightweight lithium polymer batteries are also being considered. From a trail/enduro point of view it was good to hear Alex talk about producing a road-legal machine which could hit the streets as soon as 2007 if there's enough demand.

Costing the Earth

At present a Quantya should cost you somewhere in the region of £3300, though the price very much depends upon whether you buy the bike from its native Switzerland or from inside the EU, and where you pay VAT. This represents a hefty saving of almost a grand over the Ohlins-equipped Blade that we tested, though it's a similar price to that claimed by ElectricMoto's imminent Blade XT3.

At present there's no UK importer, though Quantya have confirmed they will offer a bulk discount for anyone interested in setting up an 'arrive and ride' facility on these shores. A range of accessories, including clothing and upgrades such as billet triple clamps is planned, though at present the optional extras are limited to extra battery packs, a quick-charger, and various replacement cycle- and chassis-parts. But we can foresee a huge new aftermarket in trick parts,

if electric bikes really take a hold.

First Among Equals

When we exhibited the Blade T6 on our stand at the Dirt Bike Show this year, we were frankly overwhelmed by the amount of interest shown in the bike. And we've no reason to believe that now there is a competitor in the marketplace there'll be any less curiosity shown in this fledgling side of the sport. At the genesis of anything new, lots of enthusiasts and inveterate bike tinkerers like to be in at the beginning where they can use their own engineering skills, knowledge and abilities to improve their bikes.

And that's where we are right now. The products are beginning to arrive and the interest is undoubtedly there. I just wonder how long it'll be before someone takes up Quantya's offer to launch the UK's first 'arrive and ride' facility. Not long I reckon...

Huge thanks to Alex and Max for inviting us to Switzerland to ride their bikes. For more information click onto quantya.com

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RIGHT TO RIDE

So when exactly will off-road motorcyclists officially become a law unto themselves, muses Mark Williams..?

We must ensure that our byways and rights of way are protected for the enjoyment of *everyone* who uses these important parts of our countryside, now and in future.'

So spake not another member of the beleaguered trailriding community but no lesser a fine and worthy politician than Rural Affairs Minister, Jim Knight... although needless to say the italics are mine.

And after Mr Knight's U-turn on the compromise solutions to the NERC Bill negotiated with the TRF and LARA, it does indeed seem a bit rich that he should make such fair-minded utterances just as we're about to get shafted when the bill makes its final plod through the House of Lords.

However Knight wasn't actually referring to NERC, but rather the much-awaited publication of DEFRA's revised 'Making the Best of Byways' (MBB) on 19 January. The first edition of MBB, published back in 1997, was generally regarded as a sound set of guidelines that local authorities Rights of Way and Highways departments could apply to the management of byways.

Many county councils at least paid lip service to the government's recommendations, but in practice ignored some of the crucial stuff about consulting with user groups over the maintenance and, crucially, the application of closure or re-classification orders.

It was generally expected that the new MBB would embrace any new legislation, and indeed its delayed publication (from 2005) suggested that it would include references to clauses 61 and 62 of the NERC Bill. But in the event that's not so because of course the Bill hasn't (yet)

received Royal Assent. But it does include advice on how to deal with increasing pressure of use on unsealed roads and an extremely useful glossary of definitions, which we might expect since this was largely compiled by TRF Vice Chairman, Tim Stevens.

Whether or not local authorities will take any more notice of it than the first edition remains to be seen, but interested parties can download it from the DEFRA website which can be found at www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/mpv/index.htm, or get a copy by calling 08459 556000.

Sting in the Tale

Also available is a new and slightly more sinister publication snappily entitled 'Regulating the Use of Motor Vehicles on Public Rights of Way and Off Road' (RUMVPRWOR), which does pretty much what it says on the can and will enable local authorities and of course, the cops, to deal with the illegal use of dirtbikes and 4WD vehicles off-road.

RUMVPRWOR wades through the complexities of the issues in a not entirely coherent manner but tacitly takes account of further changes in legislation, eg NERC. It is ironic that just prior to publication of RUMVPRWOR, Gwent Police Inspector Fran Richley, who has mounted several successful 'sting' operations against unlicensed 'bikes using illegal trails in his area publicly stated that the critical aspects of NERC (ie Clauses 62 and 62) were 'unfair... impractical' and 'virtually unenforceable'.

Which brings us to the current state of play... or rather it doesn't because already the date mentioned in last month's Right to Ride for the

first Committee Hearing of the NERC Bill in the Lords, namely 18 Jan, has passed. And though it has been re-scheduled for the 24th this will inevitably have a knock-on delay in the Committee's Report, originally due to be published on 27 February, and thus the return of the Bill to the Commons in order for it to receive Royal Assent.

It would be unwise to shout with joy over a further stay of execution in our right to ride RuPPs (due to become illegal 'Restricted Byways' under NERC), or the fact that we may have a little longer to claim individual RuPPs for upgrading to BOATs on the Definitive Map. Especially as it still seems likely that due to politicians in both Houses of Parliament accepting the outright lies put about by the Ramblers lobby regarding inflated numbers of such claims, the cut-off date for making any them will be rolled back to 19 May 2005.

But even so there are some 1000 claims in the pipeline - some of them having been there for over five years thanks to local political foot-dragging - and as the law stands we have the

'There are some 1000 claims in the pipeline - some of them having been there for over five years thanks to local political foot-dragging - and as the law stands we have the right to ride them pending council decisions...'

Commons) on trailriding's future...

Institutional Inertia

On the positive side, the TRF's David Giles has spent the past few weeks drumming up as much support from literally anyone who could possibly convince their Lordships of the iniquities of the Bill and the fraudulent basis of some of its drafting. Much criticism has been made of relative inertia of other motorcycling bodies, most notably the ACU, BMF and MotorCycle Industry Association, and Giles reported that finally - despite the stable door/bolting horse scenario - both the BMF and ACU are using their considerably greater powers in some last minute lobbying.

He has also - via the wider TRF membership -

right to ride them pending council decisions. This was one of the revelations at the TRF's quarterly Executive Meeting on 21 January, a gathering which naturally was largely concerned with the current progress of NERC through the Lords and the likely effects that it'll have (especially if left unamended as it exited the



RIGHT TO RIDE

managed to find one or two MPs, and even the odd Lord, who are prepared to act on our behalf but whether they will or can do so in the short time remaining is another matter.

Emphasis is now shifting to arguments that access to buildings by motorised vehicles on what will soon become Restricted Byways is not adequately protected by NERC (although DEFRA are claiming that it will be in the final draft), which could lead to huge and costly legal battles for aggrieved homeowners, farmers and businesses somewhere down the line.

There is potentially also a human rights issue (which some readers may recall was why Clause 34A was eventually excised from the CROW 2000 Act), but DEFRA are smugly confident that this won't stack up under NERC.

We were also told that Duncan Green from the Green Lanes Association (GLASS) had just put forward a proposal to the Lords' NERC

Committee that Motor Propelled Vehicle use on Restricted Byways 'be assessed on a sustainability basis', which is broadly similar to what the TRF and LARA had agreed with Minister Knight regarding upgrade claims. So it's doubtful if GLASS has a hope in hell on this.

The aforementioned Tim Stevens assured the meeting that once the Bill leaves the Lords, 'If there is a legal crack we can get our tyre-levers into, then we will... but the trouble is that too often when we mount, and win, a legal challenge, we get shafted because the Government simply changes or ignores the law.'

Unclassified Chaos

This remark in part referred to another currently contentious issue, the status of Unclassified County Roads (UCRs) that the TRF spent over £10,000 commissioning a legally definitive report on (see TBM, February 2005).

Despite its distinguished authorship of senior RoW officers who concluded that 'on the balance of probability' UCRs were Public Rights of Way open to all traffic, DEFRA has attempted to undermine this with a series of convoluted and/or spurious challenges, and a paper (by the same authors) was presented to the meeting rebutting these claims.

I will not tax your probably already aching brain cells with the arcane legalities involved (I can barely understand them myself), but they are of vital importance inasmuch that it is not clear whether RuPPs that have dual-status as UCRs will automatically become Restricted Byways under NERC.

And in any case in recent dialogue with DEFRA weasels, sorry, officials, it has become clear to Giles and Stevens 'that UCRs are the next target for (anti-vehicular) legislation'.

This could however prove very expensive for the local authorities who'd likely find themselves having to defend (and almost certainly lose) legal cases concerning UCRs that are in fact metalled roads in villages, towns and even cities. Which is presumably why DEFRA are muttering about changing yet another law in order to penalise an unpopular minority.

And therein lies the nub of it: as new Chairman Andy Gerrard again made clear, the public in general and the politicians who allegedly serve them simply DON'T LIKE MOTORCYCLISTS. And particularly motorcyclists who, in their eyes, ruin the peace and tranquility of the countryside they've paid good money to drive their Volvos and Mercedes into in order that they can take little Benjy and little Kitty for a tramp up a manicured hillside in their designer fell-walking bootees.

A New Dawn?

How the trailriding landscape (sic) will look once NERC finally exits the Lords and becomes law is obviously a matter of great concern to us all, but as always, TRF officers attempted a positive stance. Stevens observed that we were in a period of 'darkness before dawn' and that as a consequence of what DEFRA tacitly admits will be 'a legal war' after the passing of the Bill, it could be years before our rights are finally and clearly established.

Moreover having admitted that 'our intelligence has been crap' (inasmuch as no-one in the TRF of LARA had any idea what was coming down the pike vis-a-vis NERC), the organisation resolved to investigate paying an MP to brief it about future threats. (This sounds corrupt, but is in fact common practice in industry and elsewhere).

Finally, the TRF is to advertise for someone to undertake an assessment of the likely cost and feasibility of hiring a full-time fund-raising officer who would raise money from the industry for the TRF's Fighting Fund and co-ordinate swift, effective response when it's faced with further threats, possibly in concert with the BME, ACU etc.

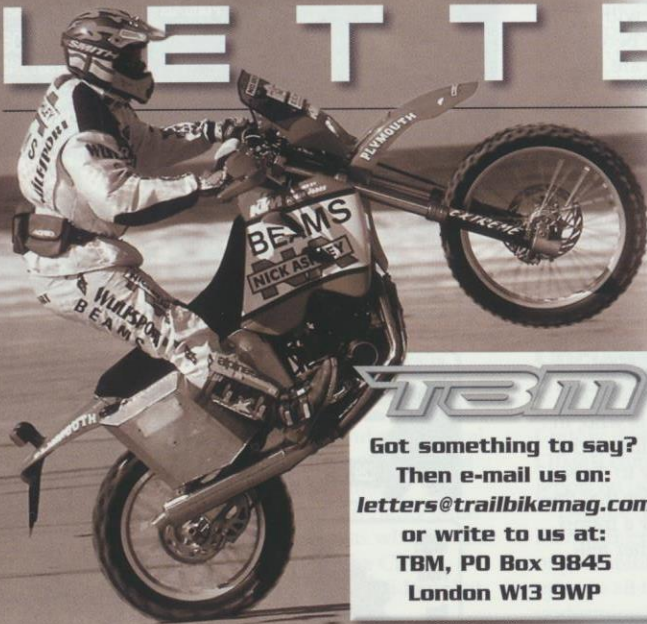
(To declare an interest, this follows a paper this writer actually submitted to the TRF Executive some two years ago and a further proposal I made at last year's AGM. It gives me no pleasure to note that things might've been less problematic now had these been acted on sooner). **MW**



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he made regarding the costs involved in attending the show (entrance and food prices).

I live out in Cyprus and have been a subscriber to TBM for some time; I have also featured in one of Mark Williams doing the rounds at the end of last year. So I would like to add if I may, another example of why visitors and certainly myself probably won't attend this show again in the future.

I come back to the UK a few times a year and decided to tie in a trip with the Dirt Bike Show as I needed some gear and thought it would be a good opportunity to pick some up cheap. I also had a load of requests for gear from some

of my friends.

I attended the show on the Saturday and made a beeline for a particular stand as I had purchased a helmet from the same company at the BMF Tail End Show for a very good price and I had a couple of requests from the lads to get them a similar helmet if possible.

I got to the stand and found exactly the same helmet that I had bought. There was no price sticker so I asked the guy how much it was and he told me it was twice the price I had paid previously. I explained to him that I had bought the same helmet in the same colours and the same size at the BMF show for a lot less. However, he said that it must have been a different model and even though I told him that it was definitely the same one he then got very defensive about it and just walked off.

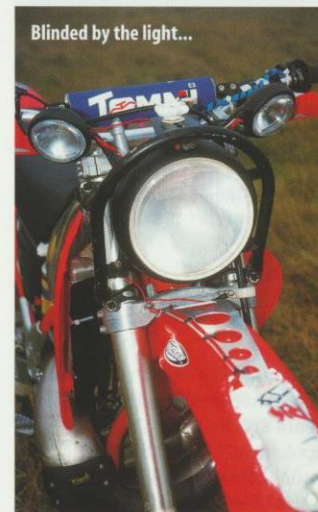
My point to all this is, why can you go to a show that is mainly for road bike riders and purchase gear a lot cheaper than you can from a show that is specific to off-road riding? It is obviously not just the high entrance prices we have to contend with but also some of the traders that are just there to rip you off.

I accept that not all the traders are like this and it's up to you if you want to pay their prices or not, but you only need a few bad eggs to ruin it. Anyway, keep up the good work on your magazine - it's a lifesaver out here in Cyprus. Can you also say hello to Mark Williams from us - we think of him a lot, particularly when we go up the big fire break that we named after him (TBM Hill) because of his efforts (and subsequent failures) to get up!

Andy Wills
via email

Andy, your letter highlights exactly the point I was making in my editorial. You're quite right to want to pay the lowest possible price for your goods - we all shop around comparing prices for particular items. On the other hand you must also remember that it's expensive for a company to attend a show. For example TBM's own show expenses came to in excess of three grand for the four days we were exhibiting, and many stallholders have to pay considerably more than us due to the larger size of their stands. It's not just the cost of the stand either, there's accommodation, food, lighting, transport, insurance and various other costs to be taken into consideration. The fact of the matter is that as a company we probably lose money attending the Dirt Bike Show, yet we chose to go there because we want to support our industry and meet our readers face to face (TBM is the only magazine which has never used hired hands to man its stand, but always uses staff and contributors so that you can talk to us about any issues you have). You as a customer have a right to buy your crash helmet from the cheapest supplier - which these days probably means buying it off the web - but don't be too surprised when your local bike dealer closes down so that you can no longer dive in there for an inner-tube or spark plug when you're out trail riding and you need one in a hurry. I can't speak for the helmet guy, but I suspect that he was only guilty of applying simple

economics to the matter. And I also suspect that in the past he'd picked up a batch of very cheap lids for the Tail End Show (wholesalers regularly offer additional discounts to retailers during promotional periods) which you were lucky enough to take advantage of last time around. You can't have it both ways mate - if you want there to be a show, then be prepared to support it and quit your whining. And if you don't, then don't expect the industry to support you when you return home to find that the local dirt bike shops have closed down...

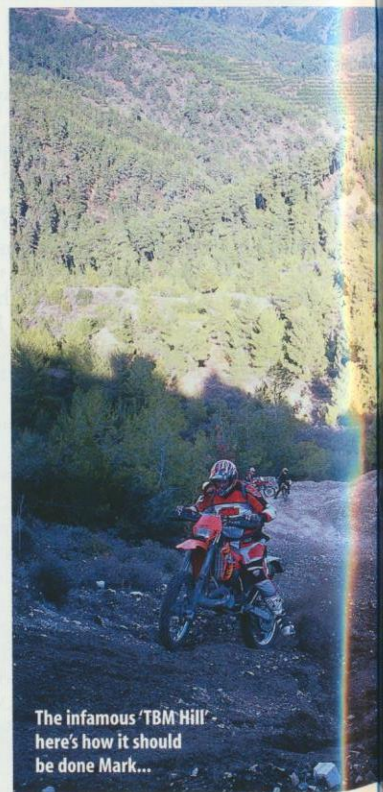


Night Rider

Dear TBM

I'm writing with respect to the article in the December issue regarding evening / night trail riding.

I really do agree with TBM that night riding is the way forward, what with all the walkers / ramblers on our case. I find that an hour of so before



The infamous 'TBM Hill' here's how it should be done Mark...

No Show #1

Dear TBM

A great mag - it's a very enjoyable, informative read. Anyway, I was looking forward to reading December's issue but read the editorial first and I was not impressed.

I agree with your views that we do need to have a single voice in the industry and sport to 'fight our corner', but I find it slightly offensive to suggest people are not attending the Dirt Bike Show because they are being 'sparing in the spending of money,' and not wanting to support the industry.

I am sure there will be many people in my position. We love the whole off-road scene, but personally working shifts with one weekend off a month, and with a young family and other household commitments it's very difficult to be able to support all things off-road.

So it's a simple choice - use what spare time and money

I have to either assist at or ride in events (thereby supporting the sport), or walk round window-shopping at what I am sure was a very good show. For me the choice makes itself.

We are not all in the fortunate position to be in employment that allows us to indulge our passion. I support the sport the best I can but choices have to be made and I would rather be riding.

Nick Chamley, Bradford
via email

Nick, I wasn't referring to the people who COULDN'T attend the show, but rather those who could, but chose not to...

No Show #2

Dear TBM

I am writing with reference to Si Melber's editorial in TBM issue 124 regarding the Stoneleigh Dirt Bike Show. In particular, the comments

LETTERS



sunset all the horse riders and walkers have headed back home, thus leaving *all* the network of lanes open to ride. Fantastic!

With this in mind I'm now actively seeking info on upgrading my lights with additional spotlights. After speaking to my Gas Gas dealer he appears to be stumped and so am I as there apparently isn't much choice. Can TBM offer any advice or maybe you could do one of your great product reviews?

Even better would be if you could offer a DIY solution for my Gas Gas 200EC...

Mike, Oxfordshire
via email

We'll see what we can do
Mike...

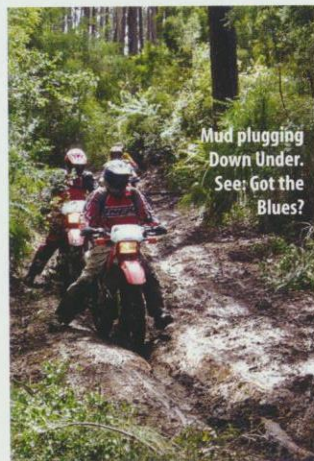
Greek God

Dear TBM

It all started when I visited my grandmother in England some years ago. Just passing by a bookstore, I spotted the TBM issue (at that time), which of course I purchased. From then on I have become a fanatical subscriber.

For the past two years I have been involved with motorcycles. Last September when a friend of mine (in combination with TBM) persuaded me that the 525EXC that I owned was ideal for the dirt and that I should try an enduro.

From that time onwards I thought I had hit the gates of Paradise. When going for a ride almost each Sunday I met other



riders who recommended I should buy another bike as the 525 was just too much for me.

So I ended up with an SXF250. Last November I took part in the teens category in the Greek championship races and I ended up second. In another race in December I actually managed to win!

Anyway, in two months the new season begins and this is where I need the assistance of the experts (you). I am 21 and need advice on training and diet. Many thanks for any help you can give me.

Jason Gouzouasis-Moore
Greece

Train hard and eat well Jason! No, seriously we've avoided writing these sorts of articles in TBM (and which you can find in other dirt bike and/or health magazines), because frankly they're boring to read for the majority of TBM's unfit and overweight readers. There's all sorts of dietary advice out there, but the best suggestion I can make is to eat a 'high-carb' meal the night

before the big race (pasta is best), and lay off the booze. Oh and do most of your training on the bike rather than in the gym or on your girlfriend. Good luck Jason, let us know if our advice works and you win the championship...

Got the Blues?

Dear TBM

I've been enjoying TBM for about four years although not so often anymore as I've moved to Australia and now have to rely on the generosity of family at Christmas and birthdays to send the latest copy. [Or you could always take out an overseas subscription - Ed]

In the UK I took part in a few events but nothing like The Blue Light Ride, which I rode last month in Oz. It's a huge event (1000+ riders), has been run for the last 30 years and is organised by the Victorian Police two hours east of Melbourne in one of the national parks.

It was great - lots of mud, a few broken bones (not me) and plenty of smiles all round. All in all a top day with \$20,000 worth of prizes up for grabs. Entrance fee (which included a BBQ) was just \$65 (£28!).

Any chance of some more features on international events - the Finke Desert Race is coming up...

Joel Milenkovic, Colac,
Australia
via email

Coming right up Joel. Check out the Cape York ride in this very issue of the mag. James here has got an idea about doing the Finke, but I'm not

sure that the TBM race budget will stretch to medi-vac-ing him home from the southern hemisphere. The Finke deserves coverage in TBM - we'll see what we can do...

NZ #1

Dear TBM

I thought you might like to see some of my pictures and hear a little about my trip to New Zealand.

I hired an XT600 in Christchurch, South Island. I then set about trying to ride around and across the island using as many of the excellent gravel roads and 4WD tracks as I could. They are nearly all on Government owned land so there's no worry of having some angry farmer or overpaid land owning yuppie trying to stop you.

These tracks are just brilliant - you can go all day and not see a single person. Some of them also have Department of Conservation (DOC) huts



situated at the end of them, which are basically tin sheds with a bunk bed, a few pots and pans and a wood-burning stove.

You must always leave some dry wood and matches for the next person who stays there. Nobody vandalises them - this is a wonderful, beautiful, friendly country and an excellent place to go off-roading and see some amazing views and wildlife.

I travelled around the whole island staying in caravans, cabins, huts, motels and campsites. I covered 3500 miles, most of which was on gravel tracks. I took my latest issue of TBM with me and it's brilliant for doubling up as a plate. Once you read the page you use it for a plate and when it's dirty just rip it out. No washing up - suits me!

I had a few near misses with stray sheep and possums and careering off a mountain but I only got one speeding ticket and a \$235 fine.

Where in the world could you go in December, ride off-road all day twisting and turning up and down mountains without a care in the world, then camp out on an idyllic beach covered with seals and the occasional penguin, cooking up a shot hare (found on the track) over a campfire? The only problem is the sand flies that eat you alive as soon as you show any skin but hey, so what.

Just a shame it's on the other side of the world!

Tim Crane, East Sussex
via email

Rode around both the North and South island myself back in '91 Tim, on an XT250 and had a ball. It's a great place to visit



and what's more, NZ plays host to the ISDE at the end of this year which means there's now even more reason to explore the Land of the Long White Cloud.

NZ #2

Dear TBM

Having just returned from New Zealand I just wanted to let you know that I got some myself some good dirty action just outside Rotorua with a trail riding company based there.

Being a bit short on time I went out for just two hours but it was enough to put a huge grin on my face with my wife hearing 'I really enjoyed that' for the next couple of days! I chose a Yamaha WR250F and now know what your reviews mean by 'flickable' after my lump of a DRZ-S.

Interestingly, the guy I went out with gave me a copy of a new mag that was on issue number four. It has been started

LETTERS

by two Brits, is in an A5 format and is a good read - I suppose they say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!

He had a good look through a copy of TBM that I had in the camper but I didn't let him keep it of course. Thanks for a great mag every month.

Rob Orme, Worcester
Via email



Sign Of The Times

Dear TBM

I was out on my bike recently and someone had put a sign up - I think it represents a lot of what we are all thinking.

Louise Hillier
Cornwall

Ride On!

Dear TBM

I would just like to ask why we as off-roaders have not (as of yet) marched or even better ridden to Westminster to show our disapproval at plans to stop green laning as we know it?

The problem is most of the population doesn't even know we exist and probably don't

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care. If all readers that owned a road legal off-road bike actually got on it and rode it to Parliament, at least we would be showing our faces.

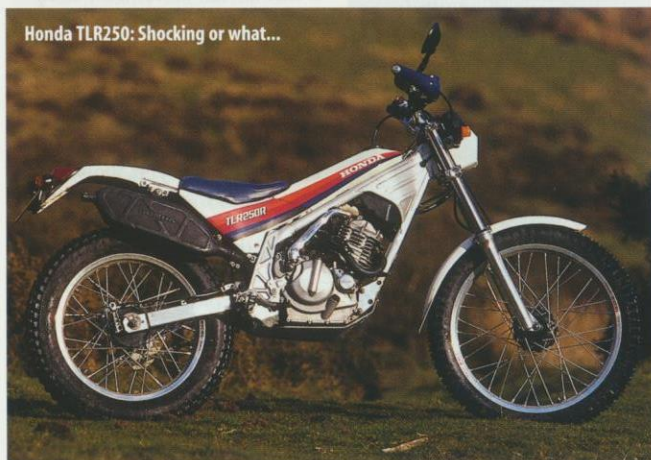
Okay, it may be too late but at least it would be more impressive than anything anyone has done so far. The Country Alliance didn't win the foxhunting ban but at least they put up a fight!

If these boring know-sod-all, killjoy idiots get their way then motorcycles won't exist and we will all be saying we should have done more. How about organising a ride out to Parliament then - there must be loads of riders out there that would be interested. I certainly am and a lot of lads I ride with would be too.

Anyway, love the mag and keep up the good work.

Rob Lee, Essex
via email

We're waiting to see what the NERC Act brings Rob and then we'll probably consider something like this. Glad that we can count on your support...



Honda TLR250: Shocking or what...

Shock Treatment

Dear TBM

I have just bought a Honda TLR250, approximately 1986, mono with drum brakes. The bike is in mechanically good shape but in need of some cosmetic TLC.

I am looking to have a go in some easy trials or twin-shock classes. Will the TLR mono be allowed in the twin-shock class? I've heard of some folks converting early monos into twin shocks so is it possible to convert the TLR set-up?

The rear end is a subframe so it would need a fair bit of frame building. Any ideas who could do this work? I have a £600 budget to get it all sorted.

Chris Millicent
Via email

Chris that's a damn good question and one I confess I don't know the answer to. My best advice would be to ring up the secretary of the organising club and ask them directly...

Satisfied Customer

Dear TBM

I bought a Gas Gas EC200 after reading your review - it's fantastic and I have now actually managed to finish a couple of hare 'n' hounds. I already have a Scorpa 125 thumper and agree with what was written about the 175 - pity I am totally hopeless at trials and fall off on every section!

Keep up the good work with the mag; it's a nice change to read something written intelligently in the field of monthly bike publications.

Michael Gray
Via email



Isn't she a beaut? We said so and lots of you agree with us apparently. Isn't that nice...

Sense Of Adventure

Dear TBM

To get back into motorcycling I am considering an adventure

type bike like a FG650 Dakar or XT660R. My wife and I enjoy motocross and I prefer the trail type bike as a commuter etc. I really like your magazine and although I do not get to see enduro I find your mag a better read than the motocross mags, especially the Dakar rally coverage and bike reviews.

Anyway, I wonder if it's time to consider introduce adventure biking into your mag and put some coverage into reviewing bikes, covering accessories, sat nav, routes etc?

With the huge increase in sales of this category and given that most monthly bike mags are sportsbike orientated I feel this interest would naturally fit in your publication. Obviously

37247

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HAND MADE IN THE USA

LETTERS

Do you want to see more bikes like the XT600R appearing in the pages of TBM?



included all the off-road bikes, adventure sports, and trail bikes for 2006. I have also subscribed to your magazine for the past 12 months and have never seen mention of the new Buell Ulysses anywhere.

Agreed, it is more an on-road than an off-road bike but I decided last year to get rid of my CRF250X and get a more road inspired bike. I test rode the BMW GS1200, Suzuki V-Strom and Honda Varadero and was left very uninspired.

I then test rode the Buell Ulysses and was immediately impressed by its MX stance and unique character.

I consequently bought one and it reminds me of my old XT500 - in some ways full of character and a bit of a bruiser. I suggest you go and have a look at this bike and put it to the test against the other so-called off-roaders in this category. It might not have the finesse of the GS but there is something about it that made me choose it and I cant put my finger on it.

one of the advantages of introducing this would be to encourage adventure-type bikers into off-road riding.

Apologies if you have already considered this request but I figured it might be worth asking you. I may add that adventure biking a la 'Ewan McGregor in a smaller way' style would be my main interest, although obviously two-up with the wife.

Stewart McBride via email

TBM's been covering 'Adventure Biking' since issue #1 Stewart (the very first issue had a test of the BMW R1100GS in it), though I admit we don't always get as many of the bigger bikes into the mag as we'd like. However we're trying to do something about that. Watch this space...

American Beauty?

Dear TBM

Just read the January issue that
34 TBM



A Yank Tank or a proper trailie?

Eddie Harwood via email

Could it be the copycat BMW GS styling - or the totally unsuitable cast alloy wheels I wonder? Okay, okay, I'm only joking. A big TBM test on the major Adventure Sports bikes coming up - and done in a way that maintains our difference to the road bike mags...

Soft Rock

Dear TBM

I've been reading TBM since the black and white days and it's still excellent - it has just the right balance.

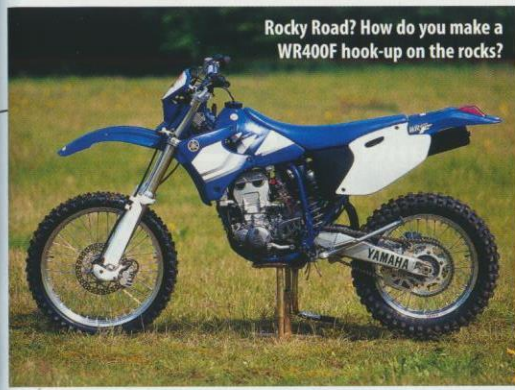
I use my Yamaha WR400F for trail riding and I'm trying to soften the power on it as I find it a handful on some of the technical rocky terrain. On a recent trip to the Wye Valley I felt like a novice on stuff easily done before on a Honda XR400.

Have you tried White Bros 'tork valves' before? They apparently fit into the exhaust between the head and the header. Can you also get flywheel weights for four-strokes and do you have any suggestions on gearing?

Or should I get something else? If so, what would you suggest? What about a Suzuki DRZ-E or a CCM 404? Definitely not a Yamaha WR450 as I've tried one and found it even scarier than my 400!

Gary Williams via email

Gary, the idea behind the Tork Valves is to effectively narrow the header pipes which has the effect of improving torque



Rocky Road? How do you make a WR400F hook-up on the rocks?

at the expense of power. They might do the trick especially when combined with a big flywheel weight (they are available for four-strokes). But in fairness a naturally revvy engine like the WR-F's is never going to be a match on this sort of terrain for a grunty engine like you find in the XR4.

However the other thing you could look at is your tyres. Many trail riders opt for MX rubber because it's cheaper, and the deep knobbls means they last longer. However I've always found that good quality enduro tyres run at low-ish pressures 10-12psi offer far superior grip on slippery rocks. Just a thought.

Law Abiding

Dear TBM

I have just been watching Crime Fighters UK (or some such rubbish) and on it there were two policemen on Suzuki DR400s and one in a car.

They were amusing themselves by hassling a guy who was teaching his son to ride on a bit of wasteland, telling him if he was caught again he would be prosecuted. The kid was only on a Honda MT50, which checked out to be registered to his father.

The police then went on to have a rip round themselves on the pretence they were checking nobody else was riding there - I suppose they think they're doing good don't they?

On that subject, I had a very interesting conversation recently - a well known importer who lives near me is sure you cannot be prosecuted for riding on any common land etc - you can only be sued if they can prove you caused damage. What do you think?

Anyway, after 30 years of riding legal bikes (only where I should of course) I have had enough - I'm moving to Alabama. Oh, just one more moan - my wife owns a newsagent and she sells a few TBMs but you keep trying to steal her



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LETTERS



customers with special subs offers. Can she have some free stuff to make up for it? Keep up the good work.

Tom, via email

White Wash

Dear TBM

I love the mag and read with amusement the article on washing designer kit in last month's issue. I personally am a rather plodding trail rider but my 15-year-old son is a quite quick junior AMCA MX rider.

Being a teenager he obviously can't possibly ride unless wearing the latest designer MX gear, which is of course nearly always white or lightly coloured, so we were having the same problems getting the kit clean after his races.

This was compounded by the fact that our practice track is Finningley, which is a red sand circuit and no amount of my wife's expert attention seems to shift the muck.

So, one day in desperation I threw my son's red stained pants and shirt onto the concrete where I was pressure washing his bike and blasted them with traffic film remover (the detergent for the pressure wash) followed by a sound hammering with the cold water pressure wash and hey presto, absolutely spotless kit!

I now give them this delicate wash cycle every time and then hand them to my better half to pop them into the washing machine. There doesn't seem to be any deterioration in the materials, and nothing has

fallen off yet (padding, logos etc) so I'll keep zapping them. I'm not too sure what the manufacturers would say, but what the hell - my lad looks super cool!

Rob Curry
via email

Nice one Rob. Just a word of advice, don't try this technique with your wife's smalls...

Honda Badger

One of our recent trail rides near Sheres was a little different to say the least. Four of us (Steve Everington, Mike Watts, Barry and myself Karl Barker) set off but only 300 yards up the first lane we came across a badger, apparently in pain and unable to walk. We stayed well back, turned off the bikes and approached the badger quietly. We made some calls to the RSPCA and the local Animal Rescue who said they wouldn't be able to pick up the animal until later that day.

We all decided that to leave the badger in its current state was unwise so we thought we'd try to remove the badger to keep it safe and warm.

After getting a dog cage, we managed to coax the animal inside. 'Billy' the badger seemed to calm down quickly, happily snuggling into a blanket whilst we carried the cage back down the trail. Billy was then taken to the rescue centre as we didn't want to wait for him/her to be collected.

It was at this

point we encountered the landowner who lived next to the byway - sadly she introduced herself by constantly honking the horn of her Mercedes 4x4 and then got out to complain at us blocking her drive. At this point a torrent of accusations came thick and fast as she'd been told by the Council that 'motorbikes aren't allowed up that lane but 4x4's are fine to use it'.

I tried to calm the situation and advised her about the injured badger, at which point she accused us of basically raiding the badger set that was on her land! Finally she calmed down and apologised. The real story was that apparently a walker was recently injured by two kids on motocrossers and she'd then called the Council for advice. I'm sure it was a simple misunderstanding but this seems to be truly indicative of the general public's view towards our bikes/situation.

It turned out that Billy (it was a girl by the way) had probably been hit by a car on the nearby road, but the good news was that she was okay. After about a week she was ready for release and Steve gladly performed the honours.

Karl Barker
via email



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TALKING

Chris tells us about 'his own little Dakar...'

DIRTY

As I sit down to write this I have a strange sense of déjà vu. That's normal I suppose, seeing as how this is my tenth Dakar and that every year around 10 January, just after my non-existent birthday celebrations, I get a gentle reminder from a nervous Editor along the lines of 'where's the bloody column, Evans'.

Of course déjà vu can be both a pleasure or pain, or in the case of the Dakar, both. The huge over-riding negative aspect are the accidents, and it has been tragically rare for the rallye to get all the way to the coast of Senegal without somebody paying the ultimate price for their passion. This year (so far) it was the discreet but very likeable Australian Andy Caldecott, called up at the last minute by the KTM Repsol team, who ran out of luck.

As soon as the news broke the polemic started, with apologists and accusers going down well-worn cul-de-sacs. Personally I have given up having an opinion. It won't change anything. There will always be people who sail across seas, throw themselves off mountains or ride across deserts on motorcycles. And there will always be those who think that they should be saved from their own stupidity.

Happily for me there are plenty of positives to compensate. A certain, and inevitable degree of compassion fatigue means that I get less excited about the exploits of the riders than I used to, but there are still exceptions. Obviously I take a keen interest in the progress of the team that pays for me to be here, and equally obviously I have friends among the entrants. As I write, Patsy Quick and Clive 'Zippy' Town are still in the race, and with the hard Mauritanian dune days behind them, statistically at least, they are looking good for Lac Rose. Another rider, who I hardly ever saw, but was always a pleasure to chat with, was first timer Steve Malone. He went out when his alternator packed up just before the rest day, but was still smiling as he headed for his flight back to Europe from Nouakchott. A fine example of grace under pressure.

Keeping graceful is one of the biggest challenges here. I have one of those bodies that dirt is magnetically attracted to - unfortunately that seems to be the only thing attracted to my body, but that is a whole other column. Five years go I remember going for ten days without a shower, but now there are basic versions on a douche theme at every bivouac. Yesterday it was a small bucket of salty water! Every year I try and bring something that will make life a little more comfortable. I hate camping, but this year I have a fabulous springy tent that goes up in seconds. It is a pleasure to unfold it. Packing it down though is a little more complicated...

It is a pleasure to unfold it. Packing it down though is a little more complicated...

Perhaps one of the biggest pleasures for me though is seeing my 'January mates' that I hook up with for three weeks of short haul flights across Africa. It's something that doesn't occur to people before they come on the Dakar, but there are more 'hangers on' than competitors on this event. And while anybody with the money can sign on for the race, places as a hanger on, paid or otherwise, are pretty hard to come by.

Hangers on and competitors, all have their own little Dakar. Late last night I went out to the end of the liaison time control at Kiffa to watch the competitors coming in. I went with January mate Piero, an Italian journo who has done 15 Dakars and is here this year thanks to the largesse of KTM Austria. Of course we had no reason to be there - the factory teams who

'I have one of those bodies that dirt is magnetically attracted to - unfortunately that seems to be the only thing attracted to my body...'

pay our way were long tucked up in bed. And as both of us have work to do, we can't afford to do it too often or we would be exhausted before we got to Dakar. But just for one night we sat there on folding deckchairs, bathed in the orange glow of the checkpoint beacon, watching the distant headlights of the competitors' bikes coming through the bush towards us. Magical.

It reminded me a bit of when I used to go fishing. You'd sit there without a nibble and just when you were about to pack up and go home along would come another bite. And it was the same with the competitors. We kept on saying 'allez, two more bikes and then we'll head back to the bivouac for a few hours kip.' But then you'd chat to the rider. He'd tell you that so-and-so was just behind, one of us would know them or want to see their bike, or had a message for them and we'd decide to extend our vigil for another 20 minutes. In between 'nibbles' we'd chat to the controllers, and ask them how they got from control to control, when they slept, what they eat, who were their favourite among the front runners - about their own little Dakar.

Eventually we did manage to drag ourselves away and I staggered off to my springy tent, pitched under the wing of the plane I was due to take the next morning. Something I always do, so that it can't take off without me. My own little Dakar...



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COMPLETELY

**Bah Humbug:
Williams hasn't
mellowed at
all over the
festive period...**

RUTTED

Although by the time you cast an eye over what follows you'll probably be looking forward to next Christmas and the new Arai your partner somehow forgot to buy you this year, I'm scribbling away just a few days after what we laughingly call the festivities and trying to emerge from a seemingly endless hangover.

At least for the past two years running I've managed to escape to sunnier climes from the mawkish sentimentality and bad singing that is New Year's Eve in Britain, but this time I was stuck in London. Which meant spending a couple of hours in the company of several dozen people I didn't know, braying loudly and spilling warm fizzy wine over each other's best clothes and at the bewitching hours getting snogged by several large ladies I've never met before and will hopefully never meet again.

'Bah humbug,' about sums it all up from which you may gather that I'm in a pretty intemperate mood, and one not made any easier by the hiccupping progress of the NERC Bill through the Lords. But rest assured that I am not going to devote a thousand irascible words to that particular debacle, except to say that a regrettable side-effect of this is the creeping factionalism that it's caused within the trailriding community.

Recriminations over the betrayal we suffered at the hands of MP Jim Knight and DEFRA have already been documented here and elsewhere, but there is an ongoing sense of disillusion amongst rank and file TRF members which, unsurprisingly, is echoed amongst the recreational 4WD community.

Many in both camps feel somehow let down by the elected officials who represented them during two years of negotiation, or should I say, sparring, with the government and some are so indignant that they feel only direct action can now possibly save the day.

Hot-headed protests outside Parliament or the BBC have, with good reason, been sternly dismissed as likely to do far more harm than good by our aforementioned leaders but a palpable feeling of impotence isn't dispelled by the fact that little or nothing else seems to be going on by way of trying to preserve what's left of our dwindling rights. Or is it?

Repeated efforts by this writer to try and discover what's going on have met with the usual guff about 'co-ordinated efforts' to canvass their Lordships directly and via sympathetic MPs (of which there are probably no more than a handful), and the odd veiled hint that discussions are going on with

DEFRA about which nothing can be revealed for fear of providing ammunition for the well-connected and heavily-muscled rambler's lobby who are allegedly monitoring our activities closely. In the meantime we are being conditioned to accept that the very best we can hope for is that the cut-off date for all DMMO claims won't be backdated to May 2005. And that's it.

Ooops, that's almost half my column prattling on about NERC when what I really wanted to reflect on was the wonderful world of mini-bikes. Now I'm sure you're as aware as I am of the flood of these horrid little off-road machines that currently blight our landscape, and they've been particularly prevalent over Xmas as indulgent fathers have bought thousands of little Johnnies their first motorcycle. Most of these have been acquired off the internet or from non-traditional outlets like filling stations and garden centres, and of course as such they come with little or no spares back-up or any form of warranty.

'If the motorcycle trade had acted with the same alarm over anti-trailriding legislation as they're doing over mini-motos, then we might not be in the parlous situation we now are...'

Hopefully most of these shoddily-built third world imports will have broken down or otherwise expired by this time next year, and serve their owners right, but the sad thing is that by the time they do, several motorcycle dealers will have gone out of business. Now I'm not normally one to shed tears over bad businesses going down the toilet, but the fact of the matter is that the motorcycle trade is in a terrible state at the moment which the migration of machinery sales to eBay and the aforementioned non-trad outlets is largely to blame for. And dealers both good and bad are suffering. The MotorCycle Industry Association and the ACU have suddenly woken up to this and are urging dealers to work with local politicians and other bodies to provide facilities for these bikes and ban what are of course non-road legal imports... something that can't come too soon after a pair of young whippersnappers on their unlit buzz-bombs nearly ran me over as I came out of my local

gym a couple of nights ago.

At one of the many highly sophisticated London soirees I attended over Xmas a gent in the classic car business opined that most of the small component suppliers he used to deal with have disappeared and he now has to spend hours scouring the web for the bits he needs to complete his restorations. At another booze-fuelled event some journalists for the so-called quality newspapers engaged me in heated, nay desperate discussions about the demise of our beloved print media due to diminishing attention spans and a reluctance to pay for something they can get for free on the internet. One highly-paid newspaper lawyer I met over several pints of Cabernet Merlot saw nothing ironic in the fact that he conducts most of his business via a Blackberry PDA [*a sort of sophisticated mobile phone capable of handling emails - ed*] from his large house in Muswell Hill, his country cottage or an airport lounge - and hasn't even seen the 'paper he works for in months.

That may seem like a grumpy old man's digression, and indeed it is, but it is also a symptom of the accelerating social change we are evidently powerless to stop, the same social change that sees intolerance and the special interest groups who espouse it curtailing the nation's rights and recreational habits willy-nilly. The NERC Bill is but one example of this, the recently passed anti-hunting legislation another and both are of course targeted at minorities, in these cases predominately those in rural communities.

Would that what's left of the motorcycle trade have acted with the same alarm over anti-trailriding legislation as they're doing over the outbreak of mini-moto-mania, then we might not be in the parlous situation we now are. But as they didn't, it's just occurred to me that if I decided to continue riding the newly Restricted Byways that I've always ridden because *I've always ridden them* (a justification most of us will be long familiar with), I might invoke the excuse these young mini-bikers uttered when I collared them at the local re-cycling centre the day after the near-death gym incident. 'My dad got it me for Christmas' uttered one callow youth 'and he said I could ride anywhere I liked as long as it wasn't on the road.'

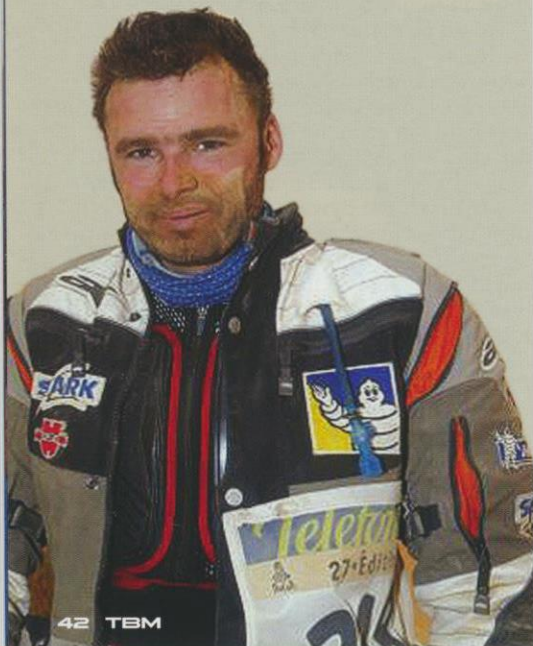
Might be a bit of a long shot halfway along an ex-RuPP on a TTR250 when confronted by a rozzer in a Landie, but hell, I can do a squeaky teenage voice with the best of them, and I blame my father for everything anyway. Well Father Christmas, anyway...



HACKED

Fugitive Alex Hearn is definitely barking up some sort of tree this month...

OFF



The month of January has passed me by completely this year, spending it as I have living only off the land, perfecting the survival skills outlined in last month's column. I've learnt many things - indeed, you may not be able to skin a rabbit with a biro but you can certainly fashion undergarments out of tree bark, albeit I have now developed an unusual rash. Note to self: always check for woodlice.

Anyway, the forces that move against us have not taken kindly to this new thinking and made it plain that my freedom would be severely curtailed if I persist in spreading this heresy. They like to have control you see, and if they can't see us or find us when we're riding, control is something they certainly haven't got. So I'm writing these words on an A4 pad in a four foot square and five foot deep foxhole somewhere just off the South Downs. It's a good defensive position, and my bike's hidden under camo netting in a nearby copse.

January, of course is Dakar month so I'm sure you've all been glued to the telly. I wish I could have done the same, but I have to operate a strict light and noise policy. Plus I haven't got any

'It's very easy to sneer and be cynical about a bloke who's never really had to work (I imagine) by providence of birth and who's found minor recognition by knowing somebody really famous, and hanging on in there...'

electricity. Or a TV for that matter.

So I haven't a clue what's happened, but I'll take a wild guess. Charley Boorman went out early. Si Pavey was the only one of his team to make the finish and Patsy and Clive finally made it, like we all knew they would this year. Oh, and Mick Extance came good too. I've certainly missed watching the Dakar again but I do think now that the goggle box gives such a detached view of the event it's almost a waste of time anyway.

I reckon it is basically impossible to connect via the medium of TV with the Dakar Rallye and fully comprehend just how hard it really is, even if you have seen, smelt and felt it in the flesh aboard a motorcycle. I seem to remember on the rest day lots of shiny Dakar 'tourists' flying in to

wander among the rally faithful - it felt like being an exhibit in a dusty, sand-blown open air zoo.

By that stage of the event nothing else matters and you exist in that reality to do one of four things; mainly, ride your bike, do your roadbook, eat and sleep. The latter three items help you do the first, which is why they're crucial. But nothing else is, certainly not the outside world and definitely not a load of squeaky-clean Dakar wannabes in M&S Bedouin-chic outfits waving digi-cameras and asking stupid questions.

So, what's your opinion of sometime actor and motorcycling 'name' Charley Boorman doing the Dakar then? Everybody in our little world seems to have one and most of them aren't positive.

I first met him in 2005 on the above mentioned rest day, with telly producer in tow, doing some research for his '06 attempt, so perhaps I wasn't in the best place personally to come away with anything other than an apathetic 'whatever' response to his talk.

I'd watched the Long Way Round with its Hollywood back-up and something-out-of-nothing drama - 'Oh my God, Ewan's got petrol in his eye... can we go on?' - and couldn't imagine quite how that would work in the Dakar.

Then a mate of mine, Mary Anne Hobbs who does Radio and TV presenting, asked me if I'd make a 'guest' appearance on a telly show she was doing which, in this particular instalment would focus on Charley and his efforts to make it to Dakar. So I blindly trotted along, simply because I'd been asked - therefore ego satisfied - and met the man again at his Long Way Round offices near Wandsworth. I talked a load of rubbish for an hour, gave him the best advice I could (me, yeah right... the irony wasn't lost, don't worry) and came away with a slightly different opinion of our man Charley.

There's no doubt he's carved a little niche as a minor celeb in motorcycling (the queues of punters at the NEC bike show waiting for his autograph proved that) a fact which BMW has been quick to aid and jump on - they're not daft



after all, and the Long Way Round has done more marketing for BMW than BMW ever has. And it's very easy to sneer and equally be cynical about a bloke who's never really had to work (I imagine) by providence of birth and who's found minor recognition by knowing somebody really famous, and hanging on in there.

But all that aside, Charley is a rather likeable chap in the flesh and his enthusiasm for Dakar (and motorcycles) I believe was and is genuine. And after all, his will be the first effort to film the Dakar from the inside that we'll ever get to see. There's no doubt too he worked very hard in the run-up to the event, although his 'Race To Dakar' team being billed as a 'privateer' effort, (as has been pointed out in this magazine previously) is a bit rich, what with its trio of £25,000 Beemers and an X5 in support to lug all the freebies.

I didn't doubt his desire to do the Dakar. My doubt was that as he hadn't had to invest financially in the event, and more than likely would be on a nice little earner, and that when push came to shove - as it invariably does, quite early on - he wouldn't have the primal, basic, stupid urge to carry on NO MATTER WHAT.

It's only a TV programme after all, a slice of Hollywood and to him, maybe another job, or part even. Ask Patsy or Si or Mick or Clive what Dakar is and it's *everything* - their lives are dedicated all year round to getting to that start line, and then finishing, none of which is ever guaranteed. Money will get you so far in Dakar, about a yard off the start in fact. But then you have to do the rest. It's really that simple...

BEST OF THREE

STORY: SI MELBER; PICS: SI & BARNI



In the battle for the 2006 250 four-stroke crown, three bikes stand out from all the rest. The Husky TE250 which last year won our five-bike 250 shootout; the Yamaha WR250F which maintains its lead at the head of the sales charts (just above the Honda CRF250X); and the joker in the pack - KTM's all-new 250SX-F motocrosser which when converted to enduro trim offers a competitive orange alternative to the mainstream enduro bikes. TBM gathered together all three for a unique shootout...



There's little doubt in our minds that this year we're likely to see a huge increase in the numbers of riders going racing. And it's not hard to see why. Pressure has been bought to bear on trailriding, and for many people that means getting their off-road kicks in other ways. Undoubtedly one way will be in competition and it's Hare & Hounds which are likely to see the biggest boost in numbers. Because not only is it the most accessible form of dirt bike racing, but also because H&Hs are far more numerous than the complex and ultimately more demanding timecard enduros.

When it comes to choosing a bike for H&Hs (among other uses) it's clear that 250 thumpers are in the ascendency right now. Thanks no doubt to a

combination of price advantage, excellent power characteristics, ease of use and an all-up weight of only about 120kg, the 250 fours are finding a whole generation of converts to their cause. And while a 450 may ultimately be more exciting, for the vast majority of riders who make up the clubman class (and who want to be fit for work on Monday morning), a 250 offers everything they need in a less daunting package (which probably helps to explain why you see more 250s out on the trail these days).

But can last year's winner of our 250 shootout hold onto its crown? With stiff opposition arriving in the form of a revitalised Yamaha WR250-F and (at long last) a DOHC KTM 250 thumper worthy of the name, where exactly does that leave the Husky? We wanted to find out...



BEST OF THREE

Husqvarna TE250, £5717, 124.2kg

To be honest there were more than a few sideways glances from various people when they read in last April's TBM that the TE250 had won our five-way quarter-litre-thumpers shootout last year. Could it really be that a financially-strapped Italian manufacturer could develop a bike which is better than the perennially rev-tastic Yamaha WR250F; that is superior to the lightweight alloy-framed Honda CRF250X and a cut above anything emanating from the factories of both KTM or Beta?

Well you'd better believe it, because that's exactly

what the Husky achieved last year and why the 2006 version earned the right to be automatically included in this year's more targeted shootout. But before we go into the changes for the 2006 model, what exactly was it about last year's bike which set it above the rest?

Two things: the engine (specifically) and the overall package. The engine was a belter - with strength all the way through the rev range and arguably the best power delivery from any 250 thumper we've ever tested. Unlike the Yamaha which had a great top end (but a huge flat-spot in the middle), and the Honda with its ballsy

TE250 is a great looking dirtbike...



Quiet exhaust but still plenty of power...



Husky gains a new set of digi instruments for this year...





BEST OF THREE

bottom-end (but lack of high-end revs), the Husky had it all. From bottom to top it pulled seamlessly throughout the rev-range without any flatspots, weaknesses or carburetion glitches.

But it wasn't just a matter of good clean jetting which made the difference - it also had the power to impress. Remember the way you felt when you first tried wringing the neck of Yamaha's early WR-F250? Well that's exactly how the Husky felt to us - powerful, spirited, fun - and then some.

And we were also impressed by the standard equipment on offer thanks to Euro homologation. This means you get a bike which is suitable for

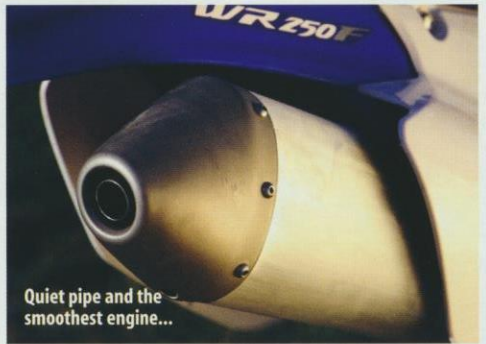
either race or trail which can be wheeled straight out of the dealer's showroom and onto the road - not the case with either of the other bikes without spending additional cash. Sure it makes the TE a fraction heavier than the rest, but you can easily remove a few of the non-essentials for racing if you prefer (clocks, indicators etc). And I for one would frankly rather have these key items in place and have the choice of removing them, than having to retro-fit them to my bike afterwards...

And the 2006 bike frankly offers more of the same. Updates for this year have been designed with ensuring that the Husky maintains its lead

The Yamaha's been around for a few years now...



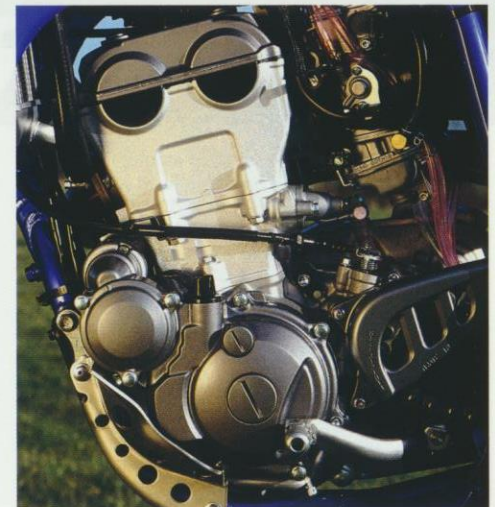
Quick detach air filter...



Quiet pipe and the smoothest engine...



Neat digi instruments are new for this year...





BEST OF THREE

in the 250 four-stroke class. Chief among these has been the fitment of a bigger valve head along with new cam profiles, and a redesigned piston with a longer rod, offering the promise of even more go.

On the chassis side there's been a little work on the suspension, there's a larger (240mm solid) rear disc, and a brand new set of digital instruments. Gone is the old-fashioned bicycle-type speedo and in its place a stylish one-piece set of digital instruments which feature everything from a stopwatch to a funky little rev-counter - though Husky have thoughtfully ensured that the neutral warning light still takes a while to make up its mind. Some things never change.

And that in essence is it. The Husky didn't need

to develop all that much... and it hasn't. It rides fantastically well thanks to a sweet chassis which goes exactly where you point it. In terms of handling the TE feels completely neutral alongside the slow-steering Yamaha and the quick-steering KTM. But the Husky's biggest advantage is the way that the chassis interacts with that storming engine. Because whenever you've got a powerful engine and an easy-going chassis you've got the makings of a great bike, and that's exactly what the 06 Husky felt like to us.

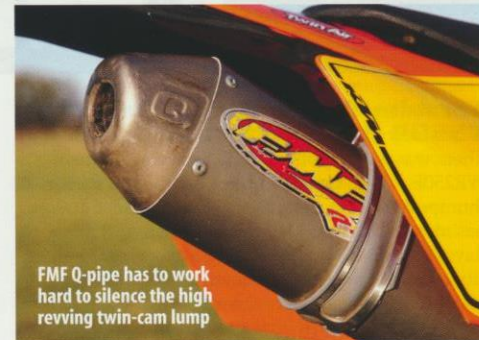
Not that it's without its faults, mind. It's the heaviest of the three on test, it's got the widest tank (why the need to carry 9.2L of fuel?) and it's the most expensive in stock trim. Ordinarily not features we admire in a dirt bike. But somehow the Husky seems to make amends in other ways. For instance the slight weight penalty gets overcome by the Husky's storming power delivery. Whilst the wide tank sits quite low and lets you slide over it when cornering. Cost is a different matter however, because the Husky works out considerably

more expensive than either of the other two (stock) bikes on test here, and despite its additional specification, you've got to work hard to justify the additional spend. And the costs don't stop there of course, because a quick glance at spares prices will tell you that running a Husky for a season or two will most likely cost considerably more than either of these others - given like-for-like spares usage.

But in the final reckoning none of this really matters thanks to the bike's overall dynamics. Because somehow the Husky manages to bring out the best in your riding. It responds superbly to the press-on rider but (seat-height aside) can still flatter the novice with its easy-going ability.

And that's not an easy trick to manage...

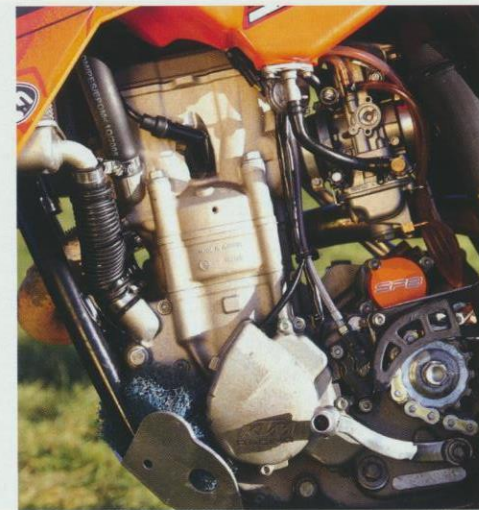
Finally a DOHC 250 from KTM has arrived...



FMF Q-pipe has to work hard to silence the high revving twin-cam lump



Beautiful Talon wheels





Blue... orange...
or, er... blue

BEST OF THREE

Yamaha WR250F, £5199 (stock) £5599 (homologated), 120.5kg

There was a time not that long ago when Yamaha's WR250F was so far out in front that it won these thumpette shootouts as a matter of course. But time has moved on and so has the 250 class, and these days the Yamaha finds itself facing renewed opposition from some unlikely quarters. Thankfully Yamaha have taken a good hard look at the poorly-carbureting and fairly low-specced and un-loved '05 model and come up with some decent solutions. And the results are very positive.

Despite utilising what at first glance appears to be the same quiet (and we're guessing, restrictive) exhaust system, I'm pleased to be able to report that the 2006 bike we tested ran beautifully all day. No flat-spots, no woolly throttle-response, no hesitation just a nice smooth gradation from bottom through middle to top.

However, gone are the days when the WR-F would surprise you with its startling power delivery. These days we've all become accustomed to the power a good 250 'four' can provide and the truth is that the once all-conquering Yamaha feels only adequate in this company. What's more - I wouldn't mind betting that this year's bike actually makes slightly *less* power than last year's. Of course that's just a guess based on seat-of-the-pants testing because we weren't able to get the bikes on the dyno. But overseas mags have reported similar findings and that's certainly the way it felt to us.

But if that sounds like a backwards step for the

blue machine, don't be alarmed. It may feel like it's packing marginally less punch this year, but what the Yamaha engineers have done is to reinstate the little WR-F's linear power delivery and, at a stroke, improve its rideability. And that in turn has helped the 250F become arguably one of the very best trailbikes out there. Especially since Yamaha have (for 2006) equipped the bike with a fantastically neat digital speedo and instrument cluster. And not a moment too soon.

Suddenly the old WR-F has had a new lease of life breathed into it. This is exactly what we were looking for from Yamaha and the difference it makes is immense. Let me explain why.

It may seem like a small deal to you - just fitting a bike with a speedo - but from an owner's point of view it makes the bike so much easier to live with, to register for the road (and subsequently MoT etc in future years), and of course sell on afterwards. Not only that but in a deeper sense it shows that Yamaha are finally waking up to the fact that owners require more out of their bikes than just single-purpose race machines.

I'd like to bet that the majority of TBM readers use their dirt bikes for a multitude of purposes including green laning, hare & hounds, rallying, even the odd timecard enduro, all of which are made immeasurably easier by the addition of data such as time, distance, stopwatch, trip etc.

But it's not just a handy set of dials and a smoothing out of the power that's made the Yamaha better this year, there have been minor

improvements in other areas too. Most notably the suspension which has seen redesigned fork internals (plus revised shock settings) with the intention of making the suspension even more compliant. To be honest we always felt that the little Yamaha's damping was among the best in class, so a little fine-tuning in this area (making it feel slightly more supple) has just helped it stay ahead. And this along with the fitment of a more comfortable seat (with softer, deeper foam) is surely

Second Opinion: Barni

I thought this one would be pretty straightforward - it was gonna be the KTM all the way. After riding the standard (MX spec) SX-F at the launch last year I figured with a modicum of enduro prep it'd make a great Cross Country weapon. And maybe the factory version will. But whilst this homebuilt conversion had the usual precise handling matched to some well set-up suspension, the mid-range felt a little hollow and the bike really needed revving hard. And whilst the KTM really can be caned without mercy, that's not enough to elevate it above second place in this test.

In this company, the Yamaha is showing its age, especially in the styling stakes. The new clocks are a nice addition, though it'd have been *nicer* to see them on an ally-framed WR-F! And whilst the plush suspension was particularly

going to play straight into the hands of trail riders out there. It still might not be quite as well equipped as a KTM EXC, but for those of you who like your trail bikes in a fetching shade of Japanese, the WR250F has just got a whole lot more desirable.

KTM 250SX-F (enduro), £4995 (stock), £6500 (here) 116.25kg

You can't currently buy an enduro version of KTM's new DOHC 250 thumper, but even if you could I'm pretty sure it wouldn't look as exotic as this one. As soon as TBM reader Mike Brooks saw the new generation DOHC 250 KTM thumper he knew he'd found his next H&H bike - despite it being an MXer with kick-start only. Transforming it into an enduro bike was simply a matter of browsing the aftermarket catalogues and ordering up the relevant parts. Mike began by swapping out the 19in rear wheel for a more enduro-friendly 18incher using Talon hubs and Excel rims. Then it was off with the suspension and over to the tuners (D&M racing in Taunton) for a serious re-valve. The result of which appear to have been money well spent - transforming the once-stiff MX front and rear ends into one of the plushest cross-country setups we've ever ridden. Some engine mods followed including the fitment of a 23oz flywheel weight from Trailtech, an FMF Q-pipe, and CNC-machined SFB cases (from Dirtbike Store). Then came the other stuff like head and tail lights from an 06 KTM EXC, a bashplate from a 125EXC (it needs slightly modifying to make it fit), a Trailtech side-stand and 909 wraparound handguards. The net result is the bike you see before you - one of the most purposeful looking dirt bikes on the circuit - even if the final cost did run to in excess of six-and-a-half big ones.

So what does that sort of money get you? Well individuality, that's for sure. And a bike which is bound to turn heads both for its performance - not

suited to the conditions and the Nissin stoppers by far the best of the three, the Yam was the hardest to ride in the thick mud. The stable chassis crossed the line into vagueness, making it slightly unpredictable through the turns and although the (just run-in) motor felt strong, it perhaps wasn't quite as strong as in previous years.

For the second year running, it's the TE250 which tops the mini-thumper class. Despite coming with a walloping mid-range, the Husky still relished being revved, making it probably the best 250 four-stroke enduro motor I've ever tried. The bike's not perfect - the front Brembo went soft(er), the seat's too tall and the bars a little low - though in most other respects it manages to pull off a fine blend of racebike precision and ease-of-use. Which is exactly how a 250 thumper should be...



BEST OF THREE

just its looks. So far Mike has managed top fives in the clubman class of his local centre enduros and reckons that this bike offers exactly the right blend of performance and agility he was looking for after suffering at the hands of his previous race bike - a lairy 300EXC. 'After riding a big two-stroke I find the four-stroke so much more stable on the front end - especially on the rocks, and the SX-F all the performance I need, and more.'

Certainly we were itching to take a ride on an enduroised version of a bike which is already taking the MX world by storm. To begin with you can't help noticing this bike's size. Physically it's small and narrow like a 125 two-stroke, and the scales show up the benefit with a four kilo advantage over the Yam and nearly eight kilos less than the Husky - though you've got to remember, some of this can be accounted for on the enduro bikes by additional

fuel, a battery, an electric-starter, instruments etc, and in the case of the Husky, extra road kit as well.

So the KTM is small and light and it handles brilliantly - I was a bit concerned that it might've felt a bit twitchy, but that certainly wasn't an issue on the day. And because that narrowness and light weight make for a bike which is easy to chuck around, you quickly get accustomed to dominating this bike. And of course you never get tired of flogging that free-revving engine for the last few rpm because of the way it happily sings up and down its rev range. And although it appears to be happiest doing most of its work in the upper third of the powerband, it's actually very easy to keep it there, making the most of the engine's sweet spot.

In fact were it not for the lack of an electric-start, I reckon you'd be hard-pushed to find a better H&Hs bike than this...



Heavy conditions meant working all three of the little DOHC 250s fairly hard, but all of them came through the ordeal unscathed...



The Test

We were grateful to be given exclusive use of the Little London Enduro Park in the Midlands for our shootout (see our report on the venue next month), though it has to be said that the heavy conditions (after days of rain falling on clay soil), made the going extremely difficult at times. To be honest in these conditions a 250 four-stroke has to work extremely hard to overcome the weight of the mud and prevent the bike from being totally mired in the gloop. But that's the nature of the sport - no two days offer the same conditions, and anyway... you want to know that if you *do* opt for a 250 thumper, that you can continue to ride it through the winter, right? Well we can certainly vouch for that. What we can't tell you is how these bikes might compare in the dry, because frankly there wasn't an inch of dry track to be found anywhere back in January.

We figured this test might throw up a few surprises and it certainly did. Surprise number one was just how well the new KTM coped in heavy enduro-type conditions. Despite the addition of a flywheel weight, a longer exhaust and some suspension re-valving, let's not forget that the SX-F was built to win motos and MX tracks rarely get as sloppy as this. To be effective in motocross, bikes need to gain revs rapidly and produce good top-end power to catapult them out of corners and up the

face of jumps. But an enduro bike is required to operate in a much broader range of conditions where speeds are frequently lower.

Nevertheless the SX-F seemed to work amazingly well. It didn't feel unduly 'cammy' or unhappy running at low-to-medium revs, and wasn't prone to stalling. On the contrary, it could be trickled down to a walking pace and opened up without any bother at all. What's more it started incredibly easily (first kick every time, provided it hadn't been on its side) and would happily idle at a sensibly low rpm.

On the other hand I was expecting to be completely blown away by the SX-F's firepower and when I wasn't, I was slightly taken aback. I mean this *is* the bike which has only recently been launched by KTM to take on the Japanese at their own game and when Dep Ed Barni rode a stock MX version

at the launch last Autumn he reported back that it felt insanely quick for a 250 four-banger. Well ours didn't. Yes it felt fast, and it revved like a dentist's drill, but the Husky would comfortably match it for pace, and had more to offer in the crucial bottom end and mid-range sectors.

My guess is that in taming the hit of the SX-F with a quieter pipe etc, it's lost a little bit of its sparkling top end for which it is renowned. But rather than be disappointed, it's fair to say that I was genuinely impressed with the SX-F for its sheer versatility. I mean it's still fast by 250 four-stroke standards, but it's also very rideable and felt incredibly well behaved - though a heavy throttle action definitely didn't help matters.

By comparison, it should be said that the Yamaha's starting to show its age now. Sure it's still got a lovely flexible powerplant with a decent amount of go all the way through to a spirited top-end, but somehow in this company it felt just a little too tame alongside the grunty Husky and the zippy KTM.

Like all WR-F's the engine is a real smoothie with power delivered in a totally seamless way. But somehow this doesn't seem to add to the bike's wet-weather tractability. We've reported on this phenomena before (especially when its really slippery), and I can only describe it from the point



BEST OF THREE

of view of the symptoms rather than be specific about the cause. The fact is that once traction is lost and the rear wheel starts to spin, it seems to take an age for it to hook up again - whereas both KTM and Husky (though happily wheel-spinning away) would continue to hook up and drive forwards. Of course it could come down to tyre choice (though we made sure that all three bikes were fitted with new enduro tyres and all had matching tyre pressures), but I've always suspected that it's got something to do with the type of power produced and the way the engine transfers that power to the rear wheel.

It's probably worth mentioning that in different conditions the results might have changed - we've no way of telling. But what we can say is that on the day, given those conditions, the Husky and KTM were much more manageable - and not all of that was down to their power characteristics either. You might expect KTM to produce a fine handling bike and the SX-F certainly fits that bill. Compared with the (ever-so-slightly) bulky Husqvarna and old-fashioned looking Yam, the KTM is rapier-like -

and a good looking rapier at that. You sit well forward on the skinny saddle with a tiny 7L tank between your knees, the steering is superb, the brakes effective and the whole bike feels minuscule beneath you. Yes it steers fast but I've got to say that it was never a problem on the day.

The Yamaha by comparison feels very old-school in both its riding position and chassis dynamics, and that's why (I suspect) many trail riders will love it. By old school I mean it's slightly more rearward-biased, fairly stable, and very comfortable. It's also probably an inch lower than either of the other two (despite what Yamaha's own stats may claim), all of which are arguably plus-points out on the trail. But in the cut and thrust of racing where you need to be absolutely certain of what the front end's up to, the Yamaha's slight wooliness in this area is disappointing. In the heavy conditions we were experiencing, the WR-F's front-end vagueness seemed to endow it with a mind all of its own, and it was the least accurate in terms of being able to place the front end in a corner and stick to a chosen line. On the plus side the Yamaha rides ruts really

well whereas both the sharper-steered bikes tend to want to climb out of them.

In terms of handling the Husky sat somewhere between the stable Yamaha and the blade-like KTM (though much closer to the KTM in feel) and for me at least, seemed to offer the perfect compromise. It turned quickly and efficiently without ever once suffering any stability problems and yet it could be accurately positioned in a corner and would hold a line brilliantly. And it was also the best at being steered on the throttle thanks to power on demand.

Tuck the front end into a slippery corner, give it a blip of gas and the rear would slide around predictably and controllably. In this respect the Husky actually felt the easiest and safest to ride, though its tall saddle and extra girth made it marginally more cumbersome during low speed manoeuvring than it really ought to feel. Add in the Husky's forward-biased riding position and great overall chassis dynamics and you have a recipe for a bike which goes exactly where you point it.

And the winner is...?

So where does that leave us in the overall reckoning? Well if you're looking for a Hare & Hounds bike which you can race year round, I think you can start by discounting the Yamaha (sure it'll be reliable, but it definitely won't be quickest in class anymore). The class has moved on since the WR-F was king and frankly it doesn't quite have the balls to cut it anymore. By the same token that also means that the Yamaha comes out clear winner in the 'Trailbike' category. Though the WR-F's always made a passable trailie, the addition of street mods like the digi speedo, extra comfort in the form of a softer seat and suppler suspension and an even-smoother powerband takes the WR250F to a new level. No longer the best bike on the track, Yamaha has sensibly repositioned its small-bore thumper as an ace trailie and I can imagine them selling even more of the things now that it's finally accepted its future lies squarely on the trail (and track) rather than as a pure racebike.

By the same token the SX-F must be considered the least useful trailie of all three (not too surprising, really). Doubtless you *could* ride one on the trail once you'd fitted it with lights, silencer, side-stand, speedo etc, but you know there are much better equipped bikes out there, and frankly you'd be wasting your money. Because a bike like this deserves to be on a track where it can exploit its fine handling and rapid-fire power delivery.

I suspect that on a dry, loamy sort of track there wouldn't be anything to touch the KTM - not even the Husky, but we all know that enduros aren't always like that. When the EXC version does arrive next year we can all look forward to riding a bike which we know will feel tiny and handle exceptionally well (though a battery and e-starter will obviously add a few kilos to the final mass). As a pure H&H weapon an SX-F is going to take some beating

- because in all honesty there's no need to go to the lengths this owner has gone, and holding onto one for a typical three hour event shouldn't really be a problem. But as stock it's still gonna need work because it's too loud and has a 19in rear wheel, (no side-stand) etc - so you still have some money to spend.

But if you want a bike which can do it all straight outta the crate, then look no further than the '06 Husky TE250. It has the best engine, the best chassis dynamics, the best standard equipment and it feels the most neutral to ride. For a 250 you simply won't believe how powerful it feels, yet it somehow manages to be incredibly user-friendly at the same time.

We like the way the small-bore Husky has been developing during the past few years with its emphasis on strength in all key areas rather than simply concentrating on trying to dominate the power race. That's made for a highly desirable product and one which is equally at home on track or trail. Yes you could trail ride the Husky, it's fully equipped and not at all like the single-minded Huskies of old - this one's far more composed. Or you can race the TE and not feel like you're being compromised in terms of power or handling. The fact is that (weight aside) it matches or exceeds every other bike currently available in this class.

But I suspect that the biggest hurdle a potential owner will have to overcome, is parting with a sizeable amount of cash for a bike with Husqvarna on its tank. In the past Huskys have been regarded as both desirable and temperamental in equal proportions. This year's TE250 I believe, lays those old ghosts to rest. Because while we have been offered the use of this bike as a long-term for 2006 and will endeavour to openly and honestly report back our findings, the truth is that it's only really been since the advent of the new-style TEs that we've even considered running a four-stroke Husky as a long-term test bike.

And I think that the strongest possible argument there is, for making a case for buying into the revitalised Husqvarna brand, is to think back a few short years to what KTMs *used* to be like, and then look at them now...

Thanks to: Little London Enduro Park, near Redditch, Worcestershire. These guys are real enthusiasts and their 3.2km of graded and flowing track meanders in and out of fields and woodland, and is not all that difficult - providing it's not too wet! Check out lep.co.uk or call Martin on 07770 393983. Thanks also to Mike Brooks for bringing along his shiny and much loved SX-F and letting us loose on it in terrible conditions - you're a star. And thanks to Husky Sport (01962 771122) & Yamaha (01932 358000) for the loan of their respective 250s. Cheers guys!

PATRICIA

QUEEN OF THE DESERT!

On 15 January 2006 Patsy Quick made history as the first British woman ever to cross the Dakar finishing line on a bike. In an exclusive post-race report, she tells TBM how her Dakar dream finally became reality...



I've bloody done it, at last! Yes, after four years of blood, sweat and tears (I will not even mention the cost), I have finally fulfilled my dream of completing the Dakar.

I have carried around in my head the picture of standing there on that finishers' podium for what feels like a lifetime, so to finally do so was an extremely emotional moment. To put it mildly. Now, sitting here writing this I can honestly say that every ounce of adrenaline has been used and my body feels completely empty.

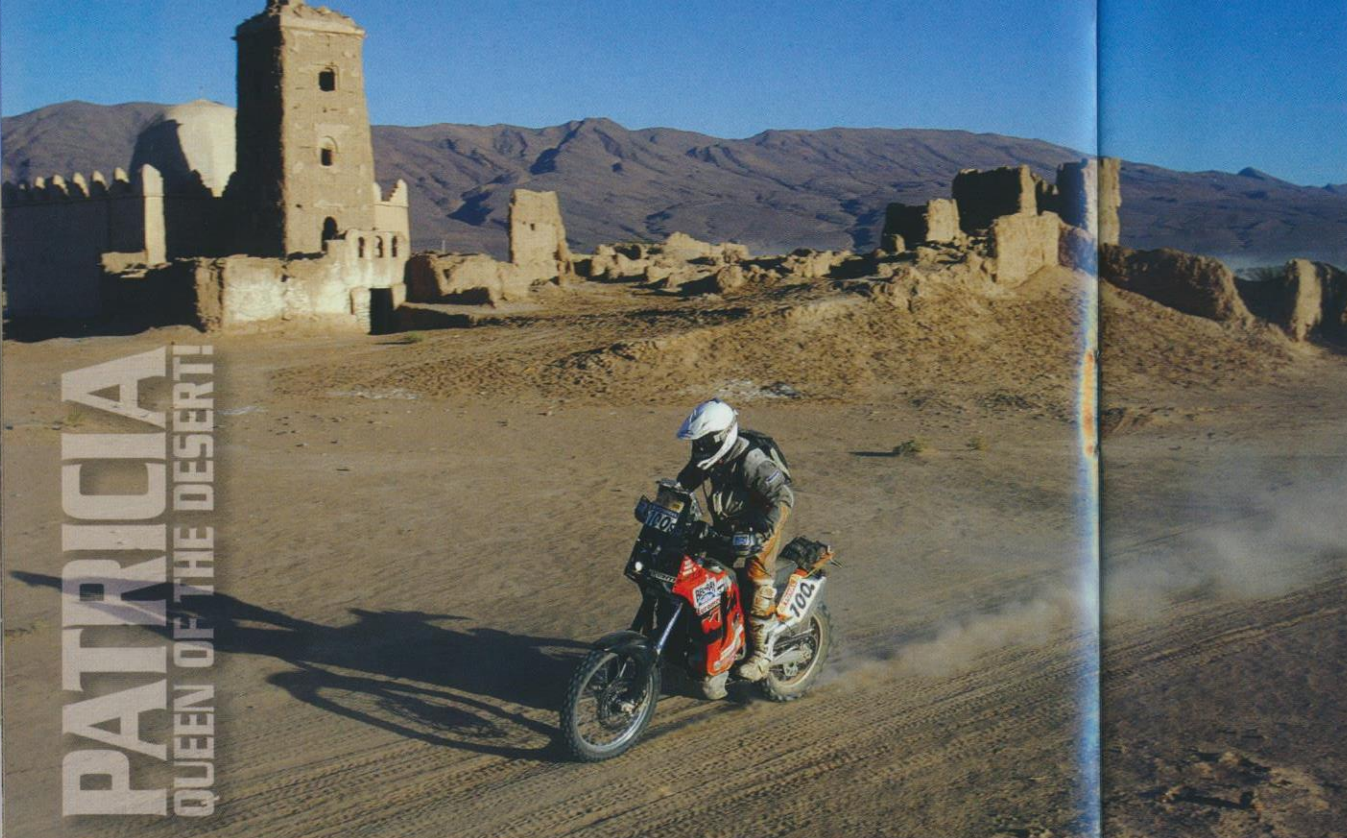
I know that a great number of people this year have been glued to the Dakar website (care of the Irritrack satellite positioning system), watching little coloured bikes stop, go backwards, disappear, then appear again and go through the checkpoints each day, and the feeling of this 'through the airways' support was great for all of us.

And now that it's all over, I can admit that the last few weeks prior to the Dakar had stretched me to the very maximum. As you may have read about me elsewhere I am very much an animal lover and, without any warning, one of my beloved dogs 'Grommitt' died suddenly. This was followed a week later by my cat



PATRICIA

QUEEN OF THE DESERT!



going blind and then on Christmas Day the same cat had a fit.

This proved all too much for me and I lost the plot and beat the crap out of a tree with a canoe paddle (which just happened to be nearby). As a result this was not really the best mental and physical shape for me to be in when I arrived in Lisbon two days later for the start of the Dakar.

Wear and Tear

Once there though I knew I had to push everything else out of my mind and calmly get on with the job in hand. When I say calmly, it's that part you actually have to really work hard at, as the all-consuming Dakar aura can just turn you into a complete bag of nerves. This was something that my co-rider Clive 'Zippy' Town and I had spoken about beforehand as we wanted to make a real effort to keep things in perspective this year.

All the usual administrative rigmarole and technical scrutineering went well, my podium start was calmly executed but then on the first special stage I found myself eating dirt followed by my fuel tap breaking up! With the bike (along with myself) now already looking decidedly sec-

ondhand, this wasn't quite how I had planned my attack for this year.

But with that behind us we left Europe for the real race in Africa, only for Zippy to tell me he had concerns over his rear mousse. And he was right: 40km into the special it let go - in fact, when we got the tyre off it was actually smouldering!

Although we had a tube, which Zippy got in and pumped up in no time, both of us knew without having to say so that the chances of the tube lasting on the long stony stage we were currently on were not great. And sure enough, after another 80km the valve came out the rim, the tube broke up and then jammed in the rear brake which stopped the bike dead and sent Zippy flying over the handlebars.

Now if there are two items that I would recommend that you should always carry with you, it's heavy duty zip-ties and what we call Beemer straps (tie-down straps that are used by BMW when bikes are imported into the UK in crates), as for the next 150km Zippy managed to keep the tyre more or less strapped to the rim using these two 'get you home' tools of the trade.

For the last 50k we were down to 20kph and

Dinner in the bivouac...



we were running on just our prayers as the wall of the tyre was breaking up and we only had one Beemer strap left.

But that good ol' Michelin tyre did hang together and eventually the lights of the end of the special stage came into view. Phew!

Tow The Line

Over the next couple of days things seemed to calm down but then we had several incidents concerning my front sprocket bolt, which kept working loose and falling out, pretty strange considering it was wired and Loctited in place. Then it happened - on the ninth stage with only 55kms to go I hit a pond-sized area of bull dust (talcum powder-like fine dust), which stopped me dead and sent me hurtling over the bars.

Picking the bike up, I thought only the chain had come off until I heard Zippy nervously saying 'it's alright, I can tow you home.' I was struggling to understand what he was talking about until my eyes followed to where his boot was pointing - and I realised I had a distinct lack of front sprocket! It had been consumed by the bull dust and we didn't stand a chance of finding it again. And even if we had, the bolt holding it in place had sheared off too. Great.

However, the piste at that particular point was not too bad as far as towing was concerned and I sort of thought this was going to be okay. How wrong I was...

Once again the good old Beemer strap came out and Zippy hooked it from his footpeg to

mine. This way of towing is excellent (given normal conditions). For about two kilometres everything was fine, but then the sand and camel grass started and it was impossible to ride on the main track. Forced onto to the side of the track the nightmare well and truly began. At times throughout the night we managed to progress two km in one hit, other times just two metres before my bike would be on its side.

Zippy's bike would then get stuck in the sand and we had to push it out - if you've ever tried pushing a heavy bike in really soft sand (having already ridden for 450km), then you'll know what I'm talking about!

It took us eight hours that night to do 55km. It stretched our friendship and tested us both mentally and physically. At one point I thought the desert may get our souls again but that thought was worse than us struggling on, so that's what we did. All the time that Zippy's bike was going we knew we had a chance, and when the lights of the end of the special finally came into view it still took us ages to get there, as the sand had got worse and Zip's bike was getting hot due to the fan not working.

At that point neither of us had anything really left in us. Then suddenly a torch beam seemed to come from nowhere and Zippy and I thought we were hallucinating because from out of the darkness came Clive (my husband) and Martin's (team mechanic) voices. I had stopped a 4x4 earlier and sent a message that Zippy was having to tow me in, so although Clive and Martin couldn't physically help (competitors are not allowed outside assistance), just the fact of hearing (then seeing) them gave us that extra boost we needed for us to get over the line.

Even the Dakar organisers couldn't believe

AFRICA
QUEEN OF THE DESERT



Zippy had towed me in and the tears well and truly flowed that night.

Home Run

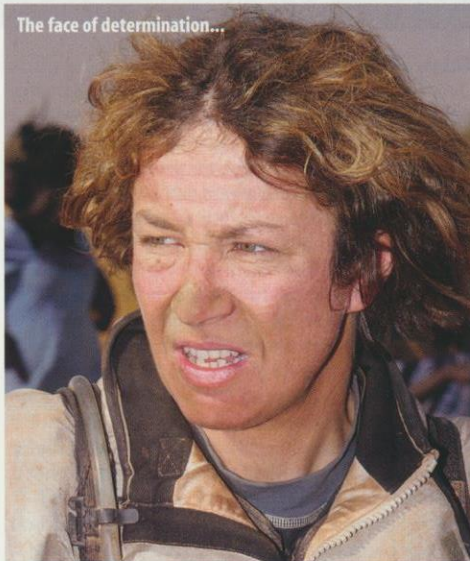
The following day thank God was rest day, so we slept while Clive and Martin worked flat out to install new engines in the bikes along with all the other necessary maintenance.

The problem with my bike turned out to be incorrect front (aftermarket) sprockets, but other than that, both bikes never really missed a beat. And when you think about the amount of stick that Zippy had to give his bike in order to tow mine all night, it shows those EXC engines are extremely strong.

At this point, I must say that the decision to ride a 525EXC was one of my better ones. They were reliable, easy to ride in the dunes, had more than enough power and were the envy of all those who were on heavier machinery. The MecaSystems kit also attracted a fair amount of interest during the race, and proved to be reliable and easy to work on.

I'd never made it to the rest day before and it did feel like a huge milestone had been reached, and although there was still a long way to go I somehow felt that our luck was going to turn and as long as we kept our heads, we could and

The face of determination...



would finish. The next seven days, although very tough in terms of riding went by without any real incident, and the finish was tantalisingly close for the first time.

And so it was on 15 January 2006 I finally

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Main pic & below: With Clive 'Zippy' Town, Pats' riding partner...

PATRICIA QUEEN OF THE DESERT!



achieved what I set out to do four years ago - to ride onto the Dakar finishing podium. At long last, my Dakar dream has come true.

I would like to thank my husband for his unwavering support over the last four years, to Zippy for agreeing to this madness in the first place and for his valiant effort in towing me this year, to Martin Wittering who has never batted an eyelid over having to do endless jobs on our bikes, and to Andrew Neri who started me off on this long journey.

My thanks also to ALL of my sponsors who have kept their faith that this mad woman would in fact do it one day, and to a brilliant chap called Dave Ede who followed the

64 TBM



mad Dakar caravan all the way on his motorbike to the end this year and helped us out so much (including doing my dirty washing).

And finally, thank you to everyone out there who has supported Team Desert Rose over the last four years - without you this crazy dream would never have been possible.

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**It's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it...
TBM mustered a medley of memorable marshals to reveal what really happens in the mad bad world of racing...**

Safety is of course paramount in our sport, but who actually cares whether your race numbers are a masking tape effort worthy of Blue Peter? Scrutineers of course...

The task of Machine Examiner or scrutineer is hardly an onerous one. Flick the footrests, pull the levers, ding the spokes, count the wheels, wiggle the swinging arm and likely as not, all machines will pass.

But just occasionally there's a rogue one out there - as discovered by one unfortunate examiner at a trial many years ago. Our friend had done the necessary - without actually holding the bike by the bars - when the time came to issue the raffle ticket that signified the machine had passed inspection.

Taking hold of the handlebars prior to handing over the counterstap, he noticed a slight movement in the bars. On closer inspection neither handlebar end was connected in the middle between the clamps! 'You can't ride it like that' said the official, rising to his full height of five feet four inches. 'It's dangerous'.

'Whadderyermean dangerous?' exclaimed the owner. 'It's alright, I shan't hit anything hard'.

'I don't care, you're not riding it like that, get a new pair of bars on or you don't start,' said our man, now relishing the authority recently bestowed upon him, (after all, the machine examiner is frequently the least able official in the club, but has to have a job that's listed in the programme).



'But where am I going to get a new set of bars from now?' the owner exclaimed plaintively. 'Nothing to do with me, but unless you do, or get them repaired, you don't start' was the firm response.

So off went the rider, determined to have his way. He eventually returned with a piece of rusty angle iron, found at the edge of the start field, which he had carefully screwed with self-tappers to the protruding ends of the broken bars in the middle of the two clamps.

'Aye, that'll do' said the scrutineer, confident he had exercised his authority and seen that justice had been done. **Mike Rapley**

Normally the golden rule when off-roading is 'if in doubt give it the berries,' but some people just don't know when to shut off...

Our forest based hare 'n' hounds race is run annually and always well attended. As with any event where the riders are out of sight for most of the time, we had a few traveling marshals to ride around and keep an eye on things.

Well, as our intrepid marshal was cruising around at the back of the circuit he spied a helmet in the undergrowth about 30m off the course. Sure enough there was a head in this helmet, and a recumbent body on the ground below it surrounded by saplings and other such forest type undergrowth.

Realising all was not well the marshal parked his bike up and walked over to the stricken rider. Somewhat shaken and sore, the rider asked for his bike to be picked up and removed from the undergrowth as he couldn't manage it himself.

The marshal was only too happy to help, so he picked the bike up and gave it the once-over and all seemed well. But

then he noticed that the clutch lever had disappeared. The still laid-out rider told the marshal his bike had an auto-clutch and that all he had to do was start the thing and 'just rev it'.

This was all a bit new to the marshal, who fired up the machine then stood at the side of the bike and gave the throttle a gentle tweak. Nothing happened - 'rev it a bit more' came the edict. Another less gentle blip ensued but still nothing happened. 'No, mate, REV IT!' our marshal was told. Now I should point out here that the marshal concerned is a big lad and subtlety is not one of his strong points. As a result he gave it a great big handful and the bike shot off with him in tow at the side of it. Unable to stop the thing, he promptly ran straight over the stricken rider who let out a violent moan!

Feeling quite awkward, the throttle-happy marshal parked the bike up and after checking the rider was none the worse for his mechanical molesting did a runner, sharpish... **Geraint Rogers, Manchester 17 club**

MARSHAL LAW

Sometimes ignorance isn't always the best policy when it comes to pre-event planning...

I remember my very first experience with Steve Ireland and Wirral Off Road. My wife and I had been approached by Steve and our neighbouring farmer to see if we objected to an event being held on the land surrounding our house - we didn't of course as I had recently got into off-road riding and had a 1995 Honda XR250 in the garage.

A date for the event was agreed and we set about planning a route for the course, Steve (as usual) had firm ideas on which route the course should take and didn't take much notice of the farmer's warning about the 'bottomless' bog incorporated into one of the lower sections of the track.

An hour into the race and one poor rider on a Gas Gas 300 wandered all of two foot off the track, only for the bike to disappear almost out of sight into what had appeared to be solid Welsh ground!

Within seconds water was washing over the wheels, then the seat, then the bars. The Gasser was only saved from disappearing for good by the quick thinking rider who had held on to it for dear life.

Needless to say it was a big rescue job, involving several marshals assisting the WOR quad to tow it out from its watery grave.

During the same race, Brian (Steve's dad) was helping us marshal and got quite a scare. In a different area of the same bog, another over-enthusiastic rider had ventured 'slightly' off the course, only to lose control and come off with the bike landing on top of him.

Brian was on the scene within seconds, but lifting up the steaming machine revealed just the head of the hapless rider! He wasn't in too deep, but was at an angle where most of his body was covered in brown, 'peaty' water, leaving just his head on view. If anybody was wondering why Brian is completely bald, that day might just have something to do with it.

Incidentally, we have since bought the 'bog' and it is now a beautiful fishing lake - definitely not suitable as a venue, even for a Wirral event... **Lobo, WOR safety officer**

As if riding an old CCM isn't punishment enough...

A couple of years ago, having never competed in a hare 'n' hounds event before, I thought I would suss the whole thing out first and try my hand at marshaling. That way I could get an idea of the terrain

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MARSHAL LAW

and how hard the going was likely to be before I committed myself.

So I duly signed up as a marshal for TBEC for a H&H at Liscombe Park. My bike of choice at that time was a CMM 604. The starting line-up consisted of groups of 15 riders departing at 30-second intervals on a big grassy field.

With the whole field of 200 plus riders lined up and watching me, I thought I had better get out in front before the mad dash for the first turn began. So, I gave the CCM a big handful only to have it spin around and dump me unceremoniously hard on my backside - right in front of everyone!

To this day, that has been the biggest 'cheer' I've ever got at a race meeting... **Richard Colquhoun**

Fuelling around is never a good idea in the middle of a race...

While marshaling at a MWTRA hare 'n' hounds event I came across a rider in his late thirties on a KTM 250 two-stroke who had run out of fuel. With him was his brother on an identical bike parked beside him.

I suggested that his brother might like to give him some fuel to which they both agreed. To my immense amusement his brother then got out his tiny plastic spark plug holder and started to ferry capfuls of fuel from one KTM to the other!

It would have probably taken them the rest of the day to get sufficient fuel into the bike so they were hastily instructed in the art of two-bike refuelling using a slope and a breather tube off the fuel cap.

Needless to say in five minutes I had 'em on the go again... **Fraser Hughes**



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MARSHAL LAW

Sometimes the spookiest things happen when you're out riding, as a story from the TBM Forum reveals...

A long time ago when I was helping out as a marshal at an event, I can remember this rider - I think he was on an old XR250 - came chugging out of the mist along the trail, up a long fire road hill between tall and dark pine trees, open face helmet, covered in mud, which by this time was steaming away making his old air-cooled bike look like a modern enduro tool with a busted radiator...

He stopped by me and another marshal, Steve, and the bike stalled as he let the clutch out having left it in gear... He slid off the bike, obviously completely knackered (we were about six miles into the lap) and the bike actually stayed upright with the wheels deep in a rut...

He was gasping for breath and staggering and I thought he was about to fall over so I held his arm. By this time he was steaming away like his bike and as he caught his breath he said: 'Bloody great day... bloody great...' And then sat down with his back against a tree, and fumbled together a roll up, before he realised he had no light. He looked at us and raised an eyebrow questioningly.

Neither of us smoked. He said 'Oh well, still a bloody great day' and put the roll up back in the tin; struggled to his feet and staggered back to his bike. With one last effort he literally stood on the kickstart that held his weight until he pulled in the decompression lever and fell back onto the seat as the old XR wheezed back into life. He looked back at us, winked and white teeth showed on his muddy face. 'Bloody great day' were his last words as he slipped, slithered and wheezed up the trail and was lost into the mist again...

It was some time before the expected first riders came through - about 30mins after the old guy on the XR.

We found out later that the start had been delayed for at least 10mins when a bike had pulled off the road by the parking area, ridden through the pits, parc ferme, past the queue of riders waiting for their start time and joined the beginning of the marked course by the start line and chugged off into the mist... while the start marshals, competitors and viewing guests watched, wondering if he was a rider jumping the start or a travelling marshal.

When we were packing up at the end of the day and having a beer and burger someone asked who the hell was the prat of a marshal who rode through the start? No one knew - he definitely wasn't one of the marshals or club members who had helped set up the course.

We just thought it might have been someone who had turned up late or the landowner, and the subject soon changed. It wasn't until we'd packed up and were about to head off home when an elderly woman came over with the club secretary. She thanked us for all our help and for the money the event had raised.

She then told us what a nice touch it had been to organise a rider in memory of her deceased husband and whom the fundraising memorial race event was named after. She said it had looked just like him, even down to the clothing, the type of bike and the noise it made. Seeing the rider lead off the race had brought back happy memories for her. Apparently he loved to



ride his old Honda up through the woods and would come home covered in mud, have a fag and tell everyone what a 'bloody great day' he'd had... Steve and I just stood there open-mouthed as she shook our hand in thanks. Neither of us said much on the way home in the van that night... **Andy T**

TBM would like to stress that no marshals have been harmed (much) in the making of this feature, but regret to announce we can't guarantee their safety or indeed sanity at future events... cheers for all your help guys!

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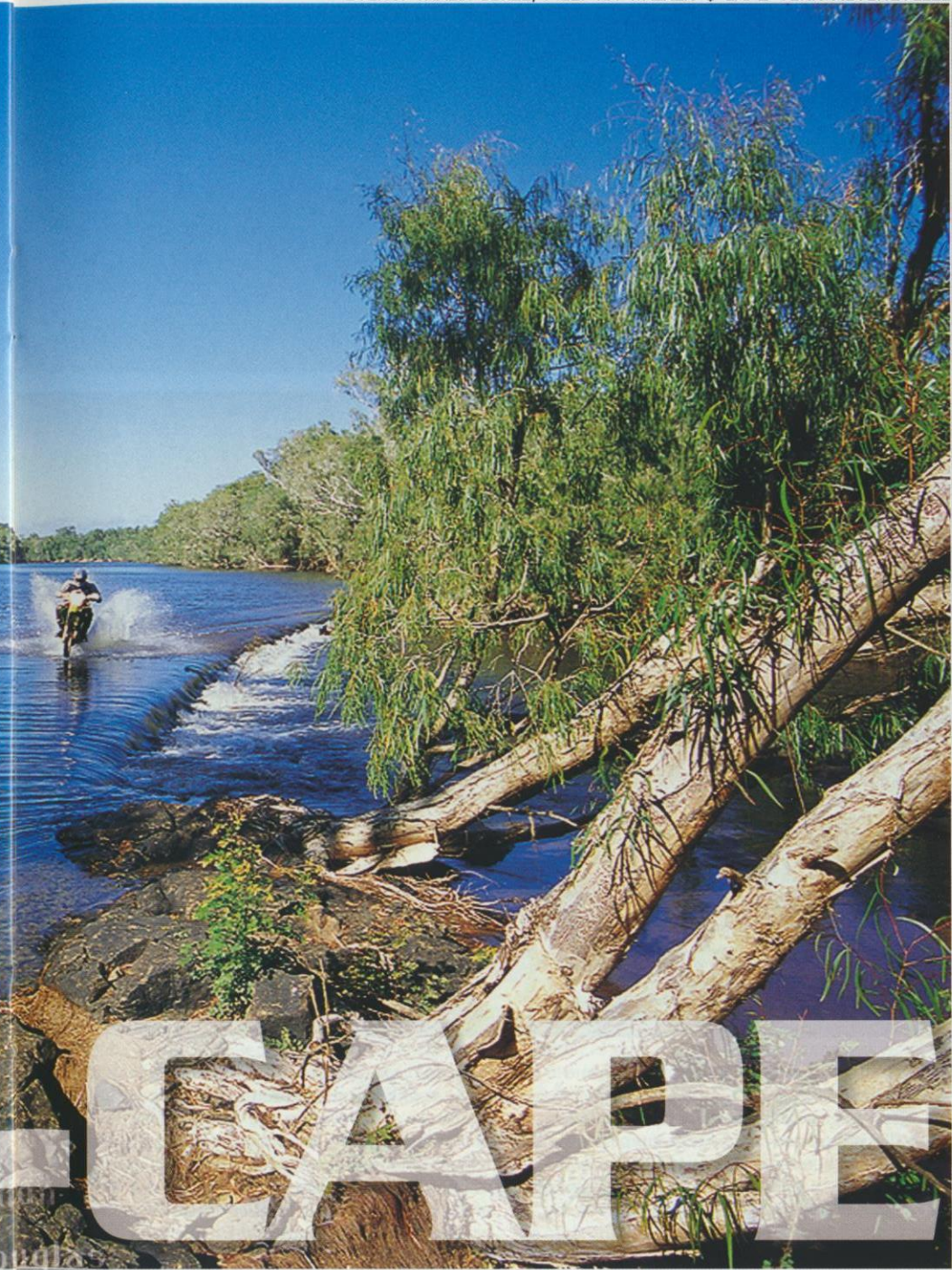
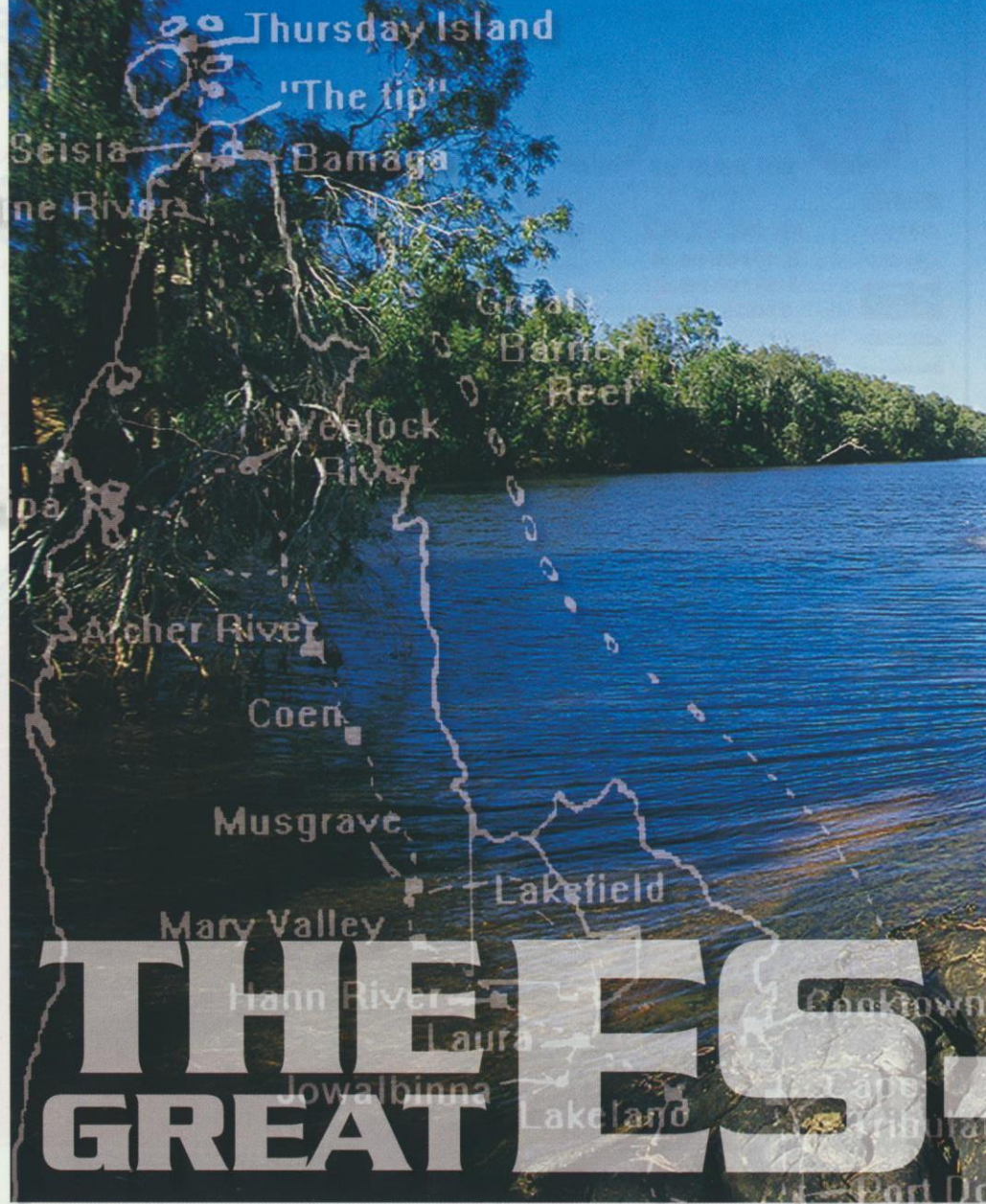
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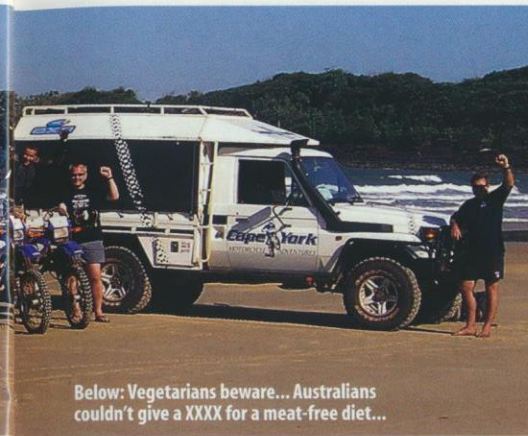


A LARGE SELECTION OF CLEAN USED MX/ENDURO & TRIALS BIKES ALWAYS AVAILABLE

TBM reader Tamsin Jones dodged the crocs in the Northern Territories of Australia on the trail riding trip of a lifetime...



THE GREAT ESCAPE



Below: Vegetarians beware... Australians couldn't give a XXXX for a meat-free diet...



You can expect to encounter plenty of sand...

Riding off-road motorcycles was something I never thought I'd be doing at the age of 32, especially flying to Cairns, Australia, on my own to join a group of people I'd never met before, to ride over 1000km to the most northerly point in Australia. I've been over to that part of the world a few times now as my sister lives in Cape Tribulation (far North Queensland). She got married there last year, which is where I met Roy Kunda who owns Cape York Motorcycle Adventures...

He told me about an eight day trail ride that you can only do at certain times of the year as the creeks and rivers get too deep to cross. And about how the only way you can make it all the way to the top of the cape is by off-road vehicle. In fact all tarmac roads stop after the second day of the ride. Being a bit of an adventure addict I was keen to try it but didn't have the time or the money. But it just so happened that a year later, after a relationship split and the sale of a house, I had the money and time to do it.

Going Bush

The trip proper started at Roy's place in Clifton Beach. His workshop is attached to his house and there's a really welcoming relaxed atmosphere. We were treated to a proper fry-up by the excellent tour chef Brett, who'd be tagging along with us in the support truck. Those who hired bikes were given TTR250s or Kawasaki 400s. I opted for a TTR and was very glad I did, 'cos it meant I could touch the floor with both feet for once. Back home I'd been riding a KTM 250EXC which I'd just about sussed out how to keep upright when stationary!

The rest of the group seemed pretty friendly, there were 14 of us in all. It was a very mixed bunch. Most were older than me and consisted of predominantly Aussies and Kiwis - and included a chicken farmer, a horse whisperer and a wine technician!

We set off at about 10am, all of us carrying 'bum tanks' as petrol stations were sparse, and once we got past Cook Town we would be fuelling mainly from the support truck. The first part of the day was a windy tarmac road to Kuranda. Half way up we pulled off into some single track. Fast, red mud with slippery corners. Lovely. The group were of mixed ability from complete novices to enduro aces, but our two guides Johnny and Lincoln kept us all together and we stopped at all the viewing points so we could admire their beautiful country. The lunch stop was a strange little outback town where all they had on the menu was meat and beer! They found it quite strange that someone who rode bikes *didn't* eat meat (I'm a veggie, who eats fish) so I consoled myself with a liquid lunch!



Happy Landings

So there I was, 6.30am one June morning, jetlagged and bewildered at Cairns airport, Australia. Hurray, I thought, land of sunshine. So guess what? Rain! But hey us dirt bikers love it. I'd actually done a two-day tour with these guys after my sister's wedding, so knew a little of what to expect - greasy, wet, red mud. Yippee!

My sis was there to pick me up so we headed to Rustie's Market where you can get a smoothie to combat all kinds of illnesses and injuries. I told the guy I wanted something for jetlag so he fixed me up a ginger concoction that kinda worked... after I'd mixed it with a few cups of strong black coffee.

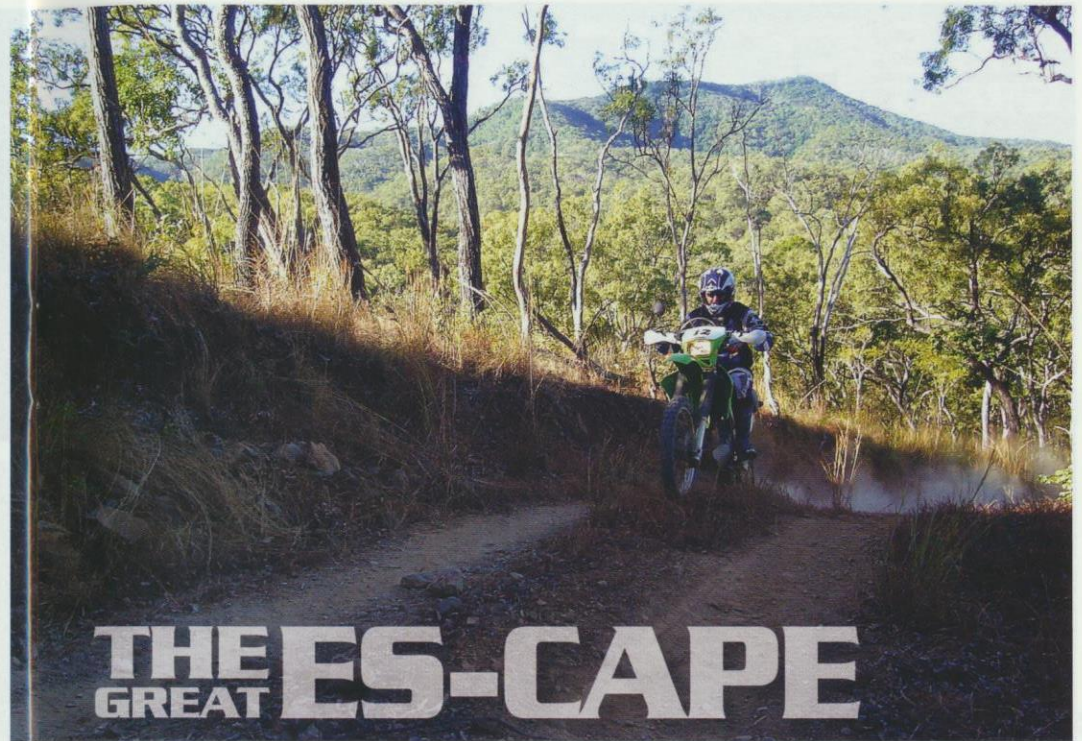
It's well worth spending a couple of days just getting over the jetlag before undertaking a ride like this, so I headed for Cape Tribulation (about four hours north of Cairns) to chill for a while. Apparently it's the only place where the rainforest meets the barrier reef and if you're into diving, surfing, fishing, kayaking, horse riding or just relaxing it's the place to visit.

We rode more fast single-track in the afternoon. We were warned early on about the Wait Awhile Vine; It's a hooked vine that hangs down over the road that can have you off your bike in an instant. If you don't avoid it and it hooks you off, you have to 'wait awhile' before you manage to untangle yourself. That's just one of the many hazards you have to look out for in Oz.

Crossing the creeks and rivers got a bit hairy as to get across many of them we had to push the bikes over 'bridges' which were really just a few logs laid from bank to bank with massive gaps between them. The thought of crocodiles made sure you didn't hang around for long. Roy has a great story about coming around a corner to see a croc in the track - all he could do was wheelie over it.!!

Our first night's accommodation was at PK's Jungle Village - a backpackers' hostel in Cape Tribulation. Beds are of the bunk variety and about six to a room. Apparently comfortable but I was lucky enough not to find out, cos my

Kawasaki's KLX400 (a green DR-Z) is the bike everyone gets to use...



sister lives nearby so I managed to escape sharing a room with the blokes, which according to the tales of snoring was a good thing. It's probably the last night of civilised entertainment you would have before heading north - well if you can call scores of English backpackers on the lash, civilised.

Next morning we had brekky at PK's, checked the bikes were okay, then headed to Cooktown. Most of the going was wide, fast dirt roads which you could pick up loads of speed on, but the corners were deceptively tight and slippery and had a few of the guys off. We went through lots of creek crossings with rocky and sandy bottoms. The water was so clear you could see what was down there, but later in the day my front wheel washed out in a rut which appeared from nowhere. I thought I'd dislocated my thumb but was keen to carry on so I just taped it up and got on with it, this was just before we reached a river crossing which was too deep to ride, so we carried the bikes across.



As there were so many big strapping lads I was left to carry the crash helmets. Never mind, eh? The problem they had was large, slippery boulders and the fast current. Watching the guys carrying the bikes across and trying to stay upright was quite comical, but after the seventh bike they started to look a bit weary. It wasn't too long after that we arrived at the lunch stop. The second oldest pub in Queensland, the Lions Den. This was more bizarre than the one we'd



stopped at the previous day. Pizzas had been ordered in advance. I could have a veggie one, but that required scraping off the meat first...

The road to Cooktown was scenic and we stopped a couple of times at view points and for the guides to fill us in with a bit of local history. This turned out to be the last we'd see of the tarmac road and the last time we would be sleeping in proper beds for the rest of the trip. Ah well, I'd come here looking for adventure...

Dusty Bin-It

We were all looking forward to the next day's riding. That was until we met the bull-dust (lovingly renamed 'bullshit dust' by the group). For most of us it was the first time we'd encountered this stuff which is much finer than sand - and which settled in deep, heavy, ruddy terrain. I'd ridden in the desert before so knew that as long as I kept the power on I'd probably be okay, but for a lot of the oldies - nicknamed Silverbacks by the Aussies - it was a real struggle. And there was a lot of it, it seemed to go on forever and once you stopped it was a nightmare trying to get going again.

By lunch we were all knackered and collapsed by a creek. No more café stops for us, we really were out in the outback. Luckily the creeks were full as we were all really thirsty and our camelbacks were empty. There were quite a few falls and injuries so we were held up for a while, the guides were good at getting everyone back together and dealing with the various injuries that affected everyone. We ended up running really late and riding back in the dark.

The hardest time riding was when the sun was going down as it cast really weird shadows on the track. Every root was a lizard and every movement a croc or snake. It was quite scary

THE GREAT ES-CAPE



waiting in a relay in the dark next to a creek that could have had a croc in it. I just kept my lights on and engine running. The last river crossing was a flooded causeway which we got to at about 10pm. It was pitch black and the relay person in front just gave the message 'if you don't stay within a metre width whilst crossing the river you'll fall off the edge'. Brilliant, I couldn't see a thing. We rode the last track in groups as it was so dark and eventually turned up at camp at 10.30pm. There were camp chairs around the fire, tents up, food on the BBQ and beers in the cooly. Nice one, Brett! What a relief.

We were all a bit achy the following day so we had an 'easy' day's riding on main dirt track roads. We stopped for lunch at an airstrip which had cows running wild all over the runway.

Some Aussie pig hunters took great pride in showing us the head of a hog they had killed earlier on in the day. Nice! It was a relief to have an easy day as everyone was knackered, saying that, it was dark by the time we got to camp. We camped out again at a secluded sandy spot next to the river. No one bothered putting up tents as it was so warm and the stars were fantastic. Again Brett treated us to a culinary Aussie feast.

It's surprising how well you sleep, even with the knowledge of all the poisonous snakes, spiders, weird lizards and crocs that they have up there. But everyone did sleep well. I always made sure I slept as close to the fire as I could, just in case.

We were given a choice of rides when we got up the next day. For those who found the bull-



It's amazing what you find out in the bush... Here an old CCM prototype sits quietly rusting in peace...

The locals are friendly...



pery boulders and strong currents to counter. We did spend a lot of time in waist deep water but dried off pretty quickly. There were also a few slippery hillclimbs coming out of the rivers which were fairly tricky. Half way through the day we came across Gunshott Creek, which is a steep downhill track with drop-offs either side. All the group tackled it, no problem. Accommodation was again camping outdoor at Elliot Waterfalls, which are a truly spectacular sight.

Night Owl

We had a late start the next day as we all wanted to go for a swim

dust too hard, they could go the scenic dirt road route and for those who wanted another day of hard riding the track we would be riding was the Frenchman's Track. The group split 50/50 and I opted for the hard route.

The Frenchman's track was a fast, stony, rutted track with sudden areas of sand and bull-dust. It's amazing how rapidly the terrain changed. We had a few high river crossings to contend with and again there were large slip-

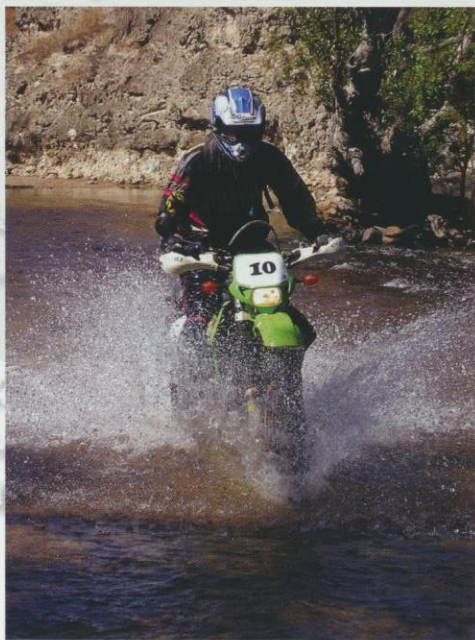
near the waterfalls and the bikes needed a bit of TLC. The terrain was going to be a lot of sand and bull-dust, and the group were again given the choice of dirt road or sweat and pain. All the group opted for sweat and pain. This may have been a bad idea as ten minutes down the track one member of our group (George) had fallen off and suffered a groin injury. He took great pleasure in telling all the ladies he saw what he'd done. A bit later a guy (given the name



Redline by the guides, as he rode most of the first morning with his choke on) fell off and broke his collarbone. The guides took this in their stride and managed to get him to hospital without having to call the air ambulance.

As we were held up for so long we thought we might have to spend the night in the bush as we had to catch a ferry which stopped running at 6pm. Luckily we made it with two minutes to spare. Apparently the ferry we took was the most expensive in the world (for the distance). It's the only way you can cross the croc-infested river and so they can charge what they like. We rode back in teams again as it was getting dark.

Back at camp again the fire was lit, food on, beers in the cooly, we were really looked after. Poor old Redline's luck wasn't good that day. As soon as he got to the camp from hospital with his broken collarbone, he fell down a hole and took the skin off his leg. He hobbled about for a bit and then decided to go to bed. As he was saying goodnight, an owl flew up his shorts and bit him on the arse! Poor guy, but most of us fell off our seats laughing at his misfortune. Sorry Redline!



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The next day was going to be our final day's riding up to the tip. With two injured guys in the support truck we all rode wide dirt tracks up to the tip of Australia. The group had worked well together and the guides had got us all up there. We decided we'd carry the injured riders to the top if that's what it took. We parked the bikes and had about a 20 minute walk to the tip along Australia's beautiful coastline. We'd made it, we'd travelled 1000km over sand, bull-dust, creeks and rivers. It had been a real adventure.

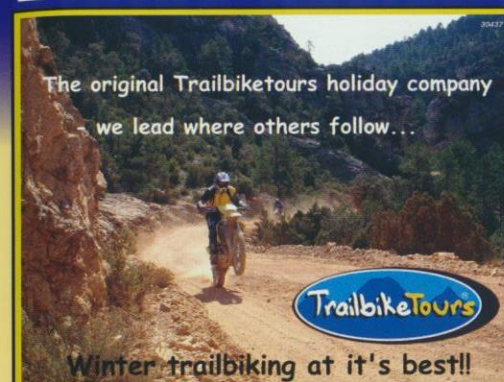
We were up early the following day collecting all our belongings together and sorting out kit we were to leave behind with the guides who were staying to meet the next group who were to ride back from the tip to Cairns. Poor things, having to use the kit we had ridden up in. The bikes had all survived really well - I didn't have any problems with the TTR, it was perfect for the terrain we were riding. We caught the ferry to Thursday Island and sat in a café for a couple of hours. It was a strange feeling being back in some sort of civilisation. We were flying back to Cairns and in order to get the weight right on the tiny little plane, we all had to be weighed with our baggage. Then they started taking bits out of the plane, like the back seats...

One Last Adventure

Believe it or not I'd entered the Welsh Two Day which I had to sign on for a few days after flying back from Cairns. I jumped on the plane back to the UK, had an eight hour stopover in Hong Kong, didn't sleep a wink on the flight, arrived in London and headed straight up to the start in Llandrindod Wells.

Jetlagged and dazed I set off the next day for the first Welsh I'd entered, dropped a minute on the first day as it was lovely and dry but dropped 58 minutes on the second. Still, I loved it and it was a fantastic way to end the big adventure. Eventually I went to see the doctor about my thumb which I thought I'd dislocated early on, on the trip. I'd actually snapped the ligament and had to have an operation and was in plaster for eight weeks. It just shows what a few painkillers can do.

I hope some of you do get the opportunity to ride with Roy's boys up to the tip. It really is an adventure of a lifetime. He also offers shorter trips mixed with a bit of fishing. For more information check out capeyorkmotorcycles.com.au. As for me, I'm planning my next adventure, which is going to be the Turaeg desert rally in Morocco this year. Wish me luck...



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STAFF BIKES™ EN250



It's been exactly a year since we last tested a TM in the pages of TBM. Yep, it's really been that long. Twelve issues ago, Jonty Edmunds headed over to Ireland to ride the 2005 range of enduro machines from the small Italian concern, and since then the only TMs to appear in the mag have been those of factory riders Jake Stapleton and Petri Pohjamo. Of all the current Euro-enduro manufacturers TM remain the most enigmatic, insular and single-minded. And their product is perhaps the least well-known within the dirt bike world.

But 2006 is going to be a little different... Because rather than simply reprise an updated version of last years' launch test, or slot a TM into the relevant shootout, we instead intend to give you a whole lot more information about owning and running an example of this peculiarly high-spec brand of machinery.

TBM entered into 'negotiations' with TM UK about getting hold of one of their bikes for a little longer than usual - like the whole season. And with a level of diplomacy to rival Boutros Boutros Ghali the outcome of those talks is that a shiny TM EN250 two-stroke is the latest addition to join the TBM test fleet for 2006.

And the plan for our latest long term? Well, other than simply cooing over all that lovely machined alloy it's going to be a year of racing, racing and yet more racing for the electric blue

machine. Which is why we'd asked for a 250 stroker. The Ed already has his eighth-litre KTM so we didn't want to run two 125s, and although TM wondered if we'd like to try out a 300 we weren't quite ready for that level of commitment just yet (if you get what I'm aiming at!).

The upshot of all this is that I'm aiming to get out on the bike as often as possible and put the EN through the kind of season a keen enduro competitor would undertake, whilst regularly updating you on our progress together. That's not progress as in 'we're steadily climbing the championship leaderboard', because I think you know Team TBM (and our results!) a little better than that.

No, it'll be regular reports on what it's like to live with, to race and maintain a handbuilt enduro bike. There'll be the usual enduro prep 'n' products - a pair of handguards, a glideplate, y'know, that kind of thing - and some proper running reports on all the stuff you might want to know about - how easy it is to work on, what do spares cost, what's it like to ride in different conditions, that sort of thing.

First riding report kicks off next month with a Southern Counties race. Watch out for it... **Barni**

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Before the monsoon season that is British springtime, it'd be wise to get kitted up with some waterproof riding kit. And Scott's N-Duro jacket is their latest wet weather gear.

Fully waterproof, the grey and black N-Duro features a full-length storm flap, neoprene cuffs and a comfortable fleecy collar. There are four pockets, providing plenty of storage space, though for some reason only the back pocket gets a waterproof zip. Weird, huh..?

The treated nylon material should prove hard-wearing, and reflective piping and sleeve detailing will enable you to be seen through the gloom. In order to keep you warm and dry there's no venting or zip-off sleeves, so the mesh lining and breathable material provides the necessary 'ventilation' whilst the drawstring waist ensures a snug fit.

The N-Duro's neatly finished, nicely styled and at just £119 it's certainly well priced too. They should be available now from your local Scott stockist, or you can contact Bert Harkins Racing on 01582 491076 for more information.

SUPERTROOPER



One Industries actually launched the Trooper helmet for the 2005 'season', though for '06 they've given their top-line helmet a cosmetic makeover. And doesn't it look stunning? The shell has a very modern shape, with lots of sculpted vents and chrome detailing, and the finish is top notch. But most of all the matt candy paintwork is simply gorgeous! Hmmm, candy...

The Trooper isn't just for show though, and comes with all of the features you'd expect of a £199.99, kevlar/fibreglass helmet. The lining is plush and comfortable, employing a soft wick-away-sweat material (even on the chin strap), and a rubber nose guard should help keep the crud out of your face. Rubber goggle grippers (combined with the contoured shell) will keep your eyewear in place and at 1410g the Trooper should remain all-day comfortable. Top stuff.

Of course, the helmet comes in a range of sizes and a huge array of colours and graphics. Rush Racing are the new One Industries importer, so for your nearest stockist give 'em a ring on 01404 549696.

WARM AND WET

For riding in the rain, you want some neoprene gloves keep your hands warm. Whilst they're not actually waterproof, the neoprene (wetsuit material) traps the water next to your skin and allows your body to warm it up.

The Neo is the latest wet weather glove from French company Kenny, and the spec certainly belies their lowly £24.99 price tag. The top of the glove is constructed from neoprene, with stretch panels between the fingers. The clarino palm is printed with silicon, as are each of the fingers, to help you keep hold of the bars, whilst the wrist is closed with a velcro tab. And, assuming it stays clean enough, the back of the thumb is covered in terry toweling allowing you to wipe clean your goggle lens. Very neat.

You can buy the Neos in either the black/grey you see here or white/black, and in sizes 7-12. For your nearest stockist phone Motogear on 01536 526460.



OIL BE BLOWED

Dirt bikes can be pretty hard on their chains, what with all that mud grinding away and the pulses from the single cylinder motors doing their best to stretch the links. But chain lubrication specialists Scottoilier reckon they have the answer with their new 'CR-01 Off Road System'.

Improved performance, longer chain life and easier cleaning are all benefits Scottoilier are claiming, which means it'll cut down on 'chain maintenance'. Unlike their better-known roadbike systems, the CR-01 doesn't use the engine's vacuum pressure. Instead you operate it manually, with the 'fingertip pump' on the left-hand bar grip feeding oil from the bar-mounted reservoir. And this is where things look to go a little awry.

Although it's good that you don't need to take your hands off the bars to operate the pump, this method means that you can't lockwire both ends of the grip. But of more concern is the reservoir which lives on the crossbrace of your bars (you can't use it with braceless bars without some modification!). The hard plastic container sits within what appears to be a branded barpad, though this offers very little in the way of actual padding and, just like the brace itself, you certainly wouldn't want to hit your chest on it. We certainly wouldn't use it mounted on the bars...

At £49.95 the CR-01 is reasonably priced when you consider the price of a quality replacement chain, and you can buy one online at scottoilier.com or by phoning 0141 955 1100. If you can adapt to the slightly weird grips and are sufficiently concerned about the life of your bike's chain, then you'll probably embrace the off-road Scottoilier ideal. If not, then it seems like the answer to a question no-one actually asked...



PLAIN & SIMPLE



STEVE PLAIN IS BOTH AN EX-CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS ENDURO RIDER AND EX-WEC MECHANIC, HAVING SPANNED FOR FOUR-TIME WORLD CHAMPION PAUL EDMONDSON AMONGST OTHERS. NOW RETIRED FROM TOP-LEVEL COMPETITION, HE RUNS STEVE PLAIN MOTORCYCLES (01597 825817) IN LLANDRINDOD WELLS AND IS A RESPECTED AUTHORITY ON DIRTBIKE MAINTENANCE.

Daft as a Brush

Dear Steve

The other day I attempted to check the valve clearances on my KTM 400EXC. To find TDC I used a small wooden paintbrush in the spark plug hole. However while easing it up to TDC there was a 'crack', and it became obvious why it's not a good idea to use wood for this procedure - the tip of the brush had broken and now lies inside the engine.

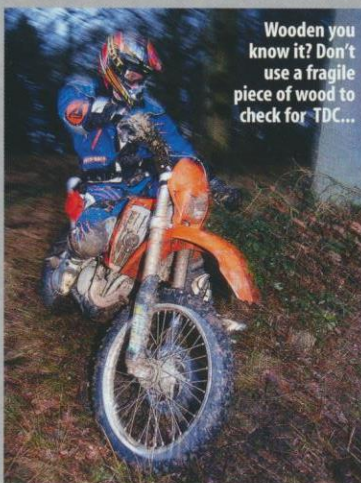
My questions are: is it possible to remove the head without taking the engine out of the frame? And is it necessary to split the camchain or will it just slip off the sprocket when tension is released and the head cover off? Thank you for your help.

Simon Watts
Via website

I can only imagine the level of swearing that went on when you realised what had happened Simon, and I'm afraid things are gonna get worse before they get better. It is possible to take the cylinder head off with the engine in situ, but it's a bit of a fiddle and you'll find it much easier to work on if it's out of the bike. And, yes, you will have to

split the camchain. For all that work, you might want to see if you can get the wood out without tearing down the motor. Whip the engine out of the frame and see if you can get the tip back out through the plug-hole somehow. Alternatively, has the bike done enough work to make it worth replacing a few parts whilst the motor's apart?

To ease the pain a little, have a pair of BF Goodrich Crossengos on us...



Feeling Hot, Hot, Hot

Dear Steve

I went out practicing recently around some very boggy land and towards the end of day the temperature light on my 1992 Kawasaki KDX250 kept coming on. Eventually when I headed back to the pit area I spotted that the front of the engine was heavily packed with mud. This mud was dry and hot, and when I pulled it

away from bike it was left steaming on the floor. So, my questions are: Do you think the temperature light coming on was purely down to the engine not cooling properly due to all the mud?

I'm going to add an extension to the rear of the front fender, but would you suggest anything else to keep the motor mud-free? What damage, if any, should I be checking for following this ride?

Wayne Woodcock, Via website

STEVE PLAIN

HAVING A SPOT OF TECHNICAL TROUBLE WITH YOUR DIRTBIKE? WELL MAYBE TBM CAN HELP. OUR RESIDENT TECHNICAL GURU, STEVE PLAIN, IS ON HAND TO HELP WITH YOUR MECHANICAL MALADIES. SIMPLY SEND IN YOUR QUERY TO US VIA: tech@trailbikemag.com ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN SUBMIT A QUESTION VIA OUR WEBSITE, WWW.TRAILBIKEMAG.COM. ENCLOSE YOUR FULL NAME AND ADDRESS AND THE BEST SUBMISSION WINS A PAIR OF BF GOODRICH CROSSENGO ROAD-LEGAL MX TYRES.!

As you said, Wayne, fit a mud flap to the front fender. I'd also suggest making a guard out of plastic and fitting it to the frame downtubes with zip ties. This will help keep mud off the engine and allow the air to circulate.

I trust you made sure that the rads weren't clogged with mud and grass..? It's unlikely the mud around the engine alone would cause your bike to overheat, so I'd ensure that your cooling system is up to scratch (flush out the rads and refill with a quality coolant, check that the waterpump's okay etc). If there's no loss in performance and the bike wasn't making any funny noises you've probably got away with it... just keep on top of the maintenance.

Jump Around

Dear Steve

I'd had my early (2003/04) CCM 404 for about a month when I rode it in the MCC Edinburgh Trial. But when I went to leave the finish the bike wouldn't start. After several minutes with some jump leads hooked up to a car battery the bike started, so rode back to the hotel no problem. Only when I got up the next morning the bike wouldn't start again. I had to 'jump' it from the wife's car to get it going, and it rode from Buxton to Leicester no problem. It seems that once it's warm, and the battery has some charge, it starts straight away every time.

I hope you have some idea what the problem is, as having bought the bike it would be quite nice to have a ride on it now and again.

Ian Mitchell
Via website

Okay Ian, it's time to break out the multimeter. You're gonna need to get the bike started, by whichever means is easiest, and you'll need access to the battery terminals. Check that the bike is actually charging the battery at 13-14 volts. If there's no charge then I'd methodically check through the wiring and the rectifier. If the bike is supplying charge to the battery, then it's the battery at fault and you'll have to invest in a new one. Hopefully that should sort it...

False Start

Dear Steve

I recently bought a 2001 KTM 200EXC(GS). The first time out it started first kick, but five minutes later, having stopped to stock up on supplies, it wouldn't fire - not even a sign of it trying to start.

We bumped it and it started straight away, but the problem persisted all morning. So I decided to change the plug, which seemed to get things working fine, but only for a while - then the problem reappeared. At times the bike seemed to be smoking a lot and when I removed the plug it was oiled up. Could the problem be with the autolube? I can't find any reference to this in the manual, so any help would be much appreciated.

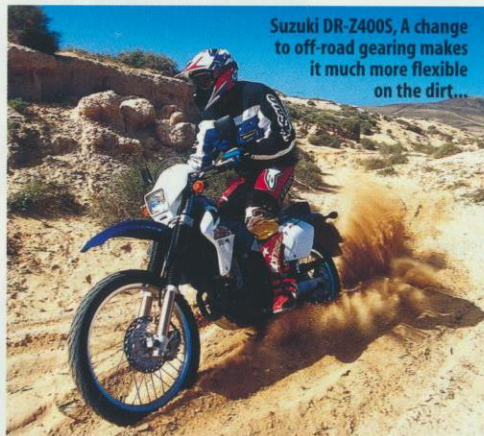
Roger Stead
Via website

This could be a number of things, Roger. Firstly, is the bike jettied correctly? Check the carb settings and jetting to ensure that it isn't simply running far too rich. It's possible that the stator is weak, so you'll need to check its output. And lastly, a faulty crank seal could be to blame, letting transmission oil into the engine. To check this you'll need to keep an eye on the oil level. Eliminate the other possibilities first, though, as you'll obviously have to split the motor to replace the seals... →

KTM 200EXCGS - problems with the autolube? See above...



PLAIN & SIMPLE



Suzuki DR-Z400S, A change to off-road gearing makes it much more flexible on the dirt...

cleaned it. They're a relatively simple design and there's no obvious wear or damage. Any idea what the problem could be?

Kevin Bond
Via website

The first thing I'd do is check that the carb jetting is correct. If this is fine then I'd have a look at the power valve governor, which you'll find inside the clutch casing. Remove the governor and check for wear at the point where the four ball bearings run in the housing. If this is worn you'll obviously need to replace it. Hopefully, this should sort the problem, Kevin...

Cold Blooded

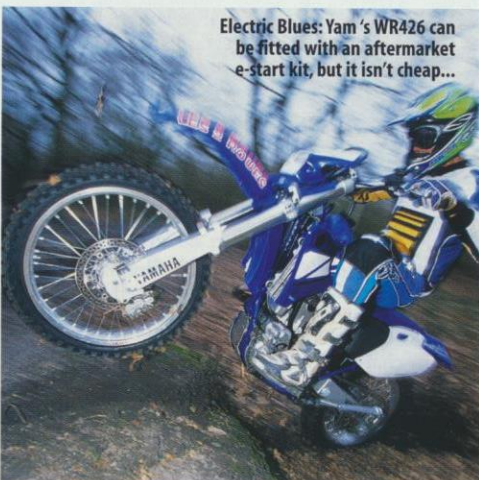
Dear Steve

My 2002 Yamaha WR426F starts very easily from cold but if it's then turned off for more than ten minutes it fails to start. Even when I run through the hot-start procedure it still fails to go.

If it's only left for a couple of minutes it starts fine, but after ten minutes it has to be left to cool right down - then it starts first time! I've done all the usual checks: carb, spark plug etc.

I would fit an electric start kit, if someone made one for this bike. Would this cure my hot start problem? And if there is such a kit, how much would it cost and is it going to be hard to fit?

Clifton Edmeades
Via website



Electric Blues: Yam's WR426 can be fitted with an aftermarket e-start kit, but it isn't cheap...

Top Gear-ing

Dear Steve

The original chain and sprockets on my 2003 DR-Z400S have now had it. I want to replace them with gearing which is more suitable for off-road riding. As I'm a novice, having only been off-road once, could you suggest something that would make the bike easier to ride off-road.

Martyn Smith
Via website

The S-model is geared more for road riding, Martyn, and as you've found this is generally too tall for off-road use. As the bike comes with a 15T front sprocket, many owners simply swap it for a 14-tooth item but as you're replacing the chain and sprockets together I'd suggest going for a 14T front and a 47T rear, which is what the DR-ZE (enduro) model runs. You'll find this much better suited to the dirt...

Taking a KIPS

Dear Steve

I have a 1990 Kawasaki KMX200 which uses the KIPS power valve, but I cannot seem to resolve a problem.

When revved to over 6500rpm in neutral the power valve opens perfectly - as the manual says it should (you can see this easily with cover off). But when riding the bike it chokes up at 6500rpm in all gears with the throttle fully open. If you back off to half throttle it'll pull right through to the top-end.

I've had the power valve completely apart and

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PLAIN & SIMPLE

Clifton, it may be that the valve clearances are too tight which is preventing the Yam from firing up. Give 'em a check first. French Yamaha dealership 'Les 2 Roues' did build e-start 426Fs, one of which graced the cover of TBM 68 (back issues are still available). They also sold the electric start as a kit for around a grand, though it's unlikely they still produce it. Contact them via les2roues.fr to find out. Either way, and even if the bike would fire easily with an electric start, there's clearly a problem which requires sorting.



Totally shafted: WR250F without gears? See below...

Totally Spineless

Dear Steve

I've recently purchased a 2003 WR250F and, having been a two-stroke rider all my life, I have to say I'm mightily impressed. It runs and rides like a dream, well it did until about two weeks ago...

Firstly, it became harder and harder to find a gear and a quick investigation revealed that the gear lever was loose on its shaft. Removal of the lever revealed that the splines had begun to crack and shear (all but a few of them came away with the lever).

A mechanic took a look at it and reckoned that the only way to solve it would be to spilt the cases and insert a new shaft, but with the bike being so new (to me, at least) and the enormous cost of such an exercise I'm reluctant to do this. The guy suggested that the only alternative would be to weld the lever on. (The mechanic was not a dirtbike engineer, or a roadbike one for that matter, he just comes to service our combine harvester!)

When I was young, a friend and I replaced the selector shaft on an old Honda motocrosser by removing the clutch cover and inserting it from the other side. Is this possible on my Yamaha? If not, would welding it on be as ludicrous as it sounds, seeing as I can always grind it off and replace it with a new part should I ever need to give the motor a lower-end rebuild? Also, being a newish bike and not personally being overly hard on the part in

question, is this a common fault? Could anything else have caused it?

Peter Bevan
Via email

Don't even think about welding the lever to the shaft, Peter, do the job properly and fit a new shaft. Remove the clutch casing and the clutch assembly and you'll be able to replace it in a similar manner to that old Honda.

As to what caused the problem, it sounds like a certain amount of neglect by the previous owner. If the lever wasn't tightened properly it probably wore away at the splines, and if they had a heavy left foot this probably wouldn't have helped. To prevent the same thing happening again you should regularly check the lever retaining bolt.

Knock, knock...

Dear Steve


I bought a 2002 DR-Z400S second-hand with only 1800 miles on the clock, the bike having been in storage for a long period of time. When I rode it I heard some knocking at low revs and, when I changed down through the gears, on deceleration.

I'm certain it's not the big-end bearing as the engine isn't under load when it happens. I've checked the valve clearances and the automatic camchain tensioner. The other thing I investigated was the primary nut, as these are known to come loose on the DR-Z motor, but it was fine. So do you think it could be that the fuel is bad and causing piston knock?

Jason Turner
Via website

Jason, if you suspect the problem lies with the fuel then surely you've drained the tank and refilled it with some fresh juice? Anyhow, you've carried out all of the obvious checks and without being able to hear the noise for myself it's pretty hard to diagnose the problem. I can only suggest that you take the bike to a reputable dealer (preferably one who deals with Suzuki dirtbikes) and let them take a listen....

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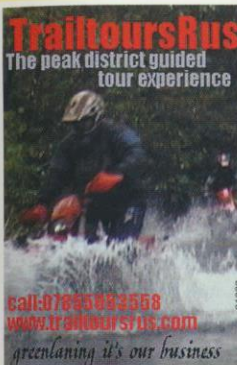
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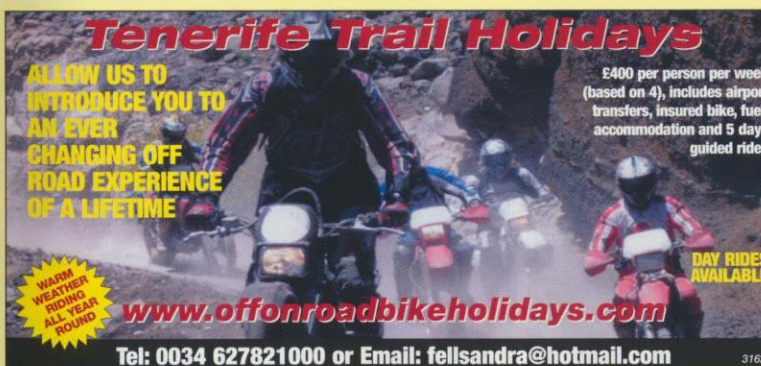


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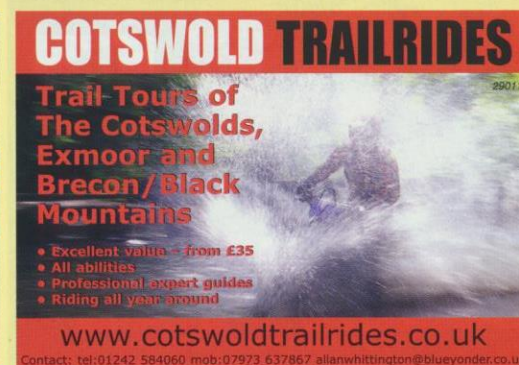
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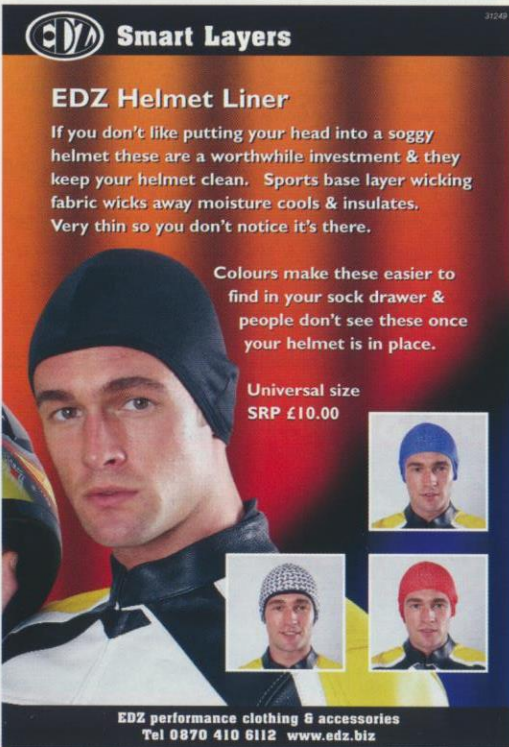
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KNIGHT

Knighter becomes his own personal trainer...

SPEED



With the start of the British Enduro Championship just a few weeks away and, even more importantly, the start of the World Enduro Championship just a few weeks after that, January has been every bit as busy as the end of last year.

For 2006 I decided to make a few changes in the way I prepare for the year - to shake up my pre-season routine and inject a little warmth into the often cold, wet month of January.

When I was riding for Yamaha I was always told that I needed to join the team in the south of Spain, where I'd spend two or three weeks testing b-gger-all when I would have been better off at home preparing in my own way on my own tracks.

So for the past couple of years I've not been to Spain. Instead I've prepared in two very different ways from the start of previous seasons. For example, in '04 I hardly rode a bike before the opening round of the BEC series due to having had an operation on my lower back. While I don't mind admitting now that at the time I was a little concerned that I wouldn't be fit or fast enough come the opening round of the British or world championships, my first

'I got to spend some great time on a bike, which included passing Travis Pastrana on one of the more natural motocross tracks I went to...'

ever proper rest from riding did me much more good than it did harm, as it made me hungrier than ever to win.

Last year I simply did my own thing back on the Isle of Man. With all Farioli KTM team riders given the freedom to prepare the way they want to prepare I stayed on the Island and rode the tracks and trails I know, which obviously worked as '05 was an incredible season for me.

However this year is different. As well as doing plenty of riding on The Island, mostly in preparation for events like The KTM Tough One, Genoa Indoor Enduro and Hell's Gate, I headed to California for ten days soon after Christmas to ensure that I spent some quality time on a bike. Time that wouldn't be affected by Manx rain.

As well as wanting to ride in warmer weather I also wanted to work on one particular area of my riding - my motocross skills. Coming from a trials background, and confident in my abilities on both extreme and cross-country tests, the

one area I know I can improve in is MX. Not so much flat, grassy motocross special tests but the occasional proper jumps n' all motocross tracks that appear in the WEC from time to time, and like the one used for the final motocross at last year's ISDE.

Given that SoCal is where the world's best motocross riders head pre-season, and having been invited there by KTM rider Kurt Caselli and Suzuki's Ryan Hughes after the Endurocross race in Las Vegas, I can honestly say that going over there was definitely the right thing to have done.

Not only did I get to spend some great time on a bike, which included catching and passing Travis Pastrana on one of the more natural MX tracks I went to, I also had a really enjoyable time. And that, I reckon, is the most important thing about any pre-season training. If you're not enjoying it, like I didn't when I was made to go to Spain, you won't get the most out of it.

After getting used to wearing T-shirts and sunglasses it was a bit of a shock coming back home to The Island, where the weather was predictably awful. Despite needing to dig the waterproof clothing out again I guess once back home my real training started in readiness for the pre-WEC extreme and indoor events.

One thing I am aware of this year is that to improve on my result from last season I'm going to have to win, well, everything. Although that's my goal I know that with much of my year spent competing in extreme style events the chances of something simple like a bent brake disc or a thrown chain stopping that happening is high.

What I really want to do though is win every day of the world championship in the Enduro 3 class - and winning every day overall would be awesome. I missed that by one day win last year so I really want to try and record a clean sweep this season. Saying that, winning each and every day is just something that motivates me - defending my title is what really counts.

With the WEC season starting in the Swedish snow (conditions I've not ridden in as yet) it'll be hard competing against the Scandinavians but hopefully I can do it.

As I write this I have had just one event so far this season - the Tough One, which was a great event and one that I won. Winning it last year gave my confidence a real boost early on in the season and from that I remained confident and



Plenty of pre-event training saw Knighter dominate the Tough One for the second year running...

focused and continued winning races. And that's why making sure I won this year's event meant a hell of a lot to me. I worked hard in the weeks leading up to it, possibly harder than I needed to, but I wanted to make sure nobody was going to beat me.

Running the race into the dark was great fun and I haven't spoken to any rider or spectator that didn't enjoy it. For too many years the UK has been lacking a pre-season event that brings together all the top enduro and cross-country riders in the way the Lalay did in France or Hell's Gate does in Italy, or for that matter the way the Sheffield Indoor Trial or Hawkstone International Motocross does for the British trials and motocross scene each year. Now we have that event and I hope it continues to get the support of the industry and public it deserves.

Finally, I just want to say a few words about Australian rider Andy Caldecott, who was killed in this year's Dakar Rally. Only last month after testing the very same bike on which Andy was killed I said that I'd feel safer racing the TT than I would the Dakar.

I know it's a cliché to say that he died doing what he loved doing, but it's true. I didn't know him personally but I'm aware of how hard KTM and the event organisers were working to make things safer for all riders in the Dakar. For any rider that races at the highest level, myself included, there are risks involved. It just never gets any easier knowing that someone that enjoyed riding a motorcycle as much as you or I do died way before their time... **DK**

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THE TOUGH ONE, NANTMAWR QUARRY,
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THE QUARRY MEN

Imagine standing in the middle of a quarry, hearing 'bike engines start and clambering up a steep hill, only to find at the top it's just a false alarm. Then try and imagine having to scramble back down only to repeat the same exhausting climb two minutes later. And then run 300m to get to your bike. Before you even start the race.

Well, that's precisely what reigning Enduro 3 world champion David Knight had

to do at the start of this year's KTM sponsored 'The Tough One' event.

Staged within the challenging Nantmawr Quarry near Oswestry, a revised format saw the second half of the two-hour event being run in the dark. The reworked structure also included a one-hour clubman race in the morning, with the top ten finishers being offered the opportunity to compete against Britain's best expert and premier class riders in the main race.



WORDS & PICS: JONTY EDWARDS

However, the course proved to be extremely difficult for the majority of clubman riders that were brave enough to take up the challenge of competing.

Change Of Pace

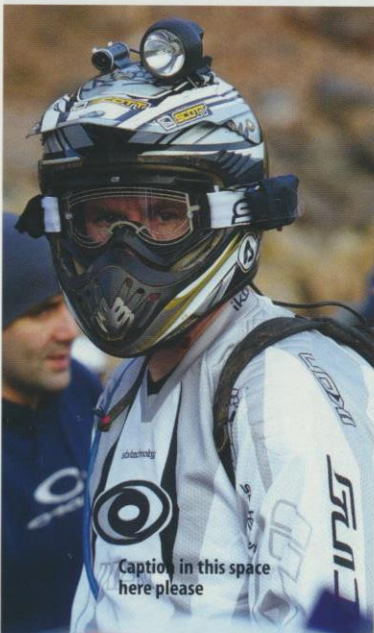
With event favourite Knighter having been held back at the start of the main race to practice his hill-climbing skills, the inclusion of former WEC champion Paul Edmondson into an already

competitive premier class entry was enough before the four o'clock start to get everyone asking 'will David be able to win?'

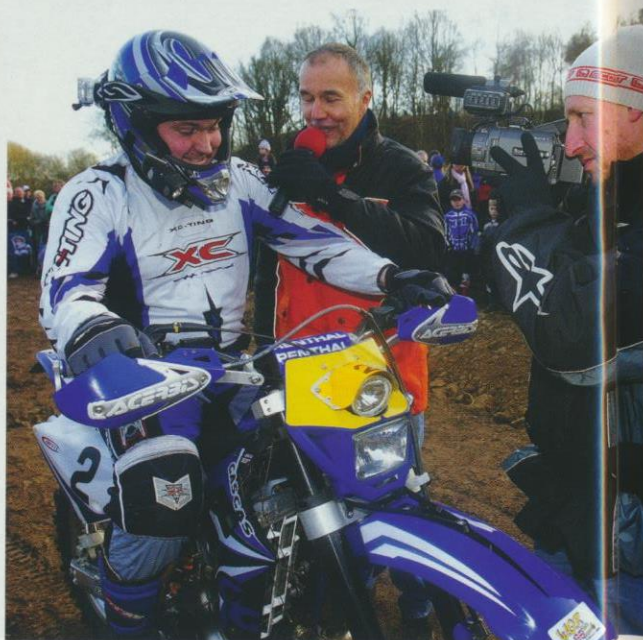
But it didn't take long for David to silence the doubters. It took the KTM factory rider a little over 30 minutes to hit the front of the race! Despite his late start Knighter was soon at the tail end of the premier class and passing the riders that started the race at the same time he set about 'Knighter's Hill'.



THE QUARRY MEN



Caption in this space here please



Russia's famous enduro champion Vladimir Schweitzer graced the event with his presence...

Taking no time at all to arrive just outside the top ten riders David's smooth yet aggressive riding was in stark contrast to the hit 'n' hope tactics the majority of the premier class riders had adopted, most of which were struggling to fully control their bikes due to arm pump.

Leading the race from the drop of the flag was Paul Edmondson. Collecting £250 for being out front at the end of the first lap, Eddy was closely followed by Wayne Braybrook as the pair fought back and forth lap after lap. Opening up a sizeable gap from the rest of the pack the two Honda mounted pilots remained out front until Knighter passed them both in quick succession.

Going on to claim the £500 for leading the race at the halfway point David stepped into overdrive as dusk started to turn into night and opened up what would prove to be an unassailable lead. Lapping riders as if they didn't exist he made just one mistake during the race to prove that even as the world's best rider he too is human and sometimes needs a second attempt on the occasional hill...

Collecting the chequered flag and receiving rapturous applause from the sizeable crowd that gathered to watch the prize giving ceremony Knighter proved in no uncertain terms just how good he really is in extreme conditions.

'To be honest I wasn't sure if I would be able to catch Paul and Wayne,' reckoned David. 'I was lucky to get away from the start before the expert riders, which made my job of getting to the front a lot easier. I was surprised how quickly I caught Paul. The race went pretty well really, I didn't make any big mistakes and really enjoyed riding in the dark. The race was great fun, although I wouldn't like to have to run up a hill before the start of every race.'

And then there was light...

As any rider that has tried doing serious night riding will tell you, when the sun goes down riding off-road gets a whole lot harder due to the low power output of any standard enduro lighting system.

Which is exactly why, as well as feasting on carrots before the race, Knighter's 300 XC was lit up like a Christmas tree at The Tough One this year, with close to £1000 worth of the latest lighting technology fitted to him and his bike.

Before looking in detail at exactly how Knighter managed to turn night into day a few technical terms need to be addressed. The lights used by Knighter were all Xenon HID (High Intensity Discharge) which use a heated tungsten filament.

Unlike halogens, HID bulbs do not have a filament as an arc between two electrodes creates the light. HID lights also produce greater light than a halogen with less power consumption.

Many luxury and WRC cars have been using HID lights for some years because HID light systems produce a white light beam, which resembles natural daylight. The light produced is measured in lumens (lm) and Kelvin (Km). Lumens means the quantity of the light - an average dinner candle gives off 12 lumens while a typical household 60 watts bulb gives off 830 lumens.

Kelvin is a basic unit of dynamic temperature (colour temperature), which is used to measure the whiteness of light power. The higher the number of Kelvin the brighter the light, eg when



THE QUARRY MEN

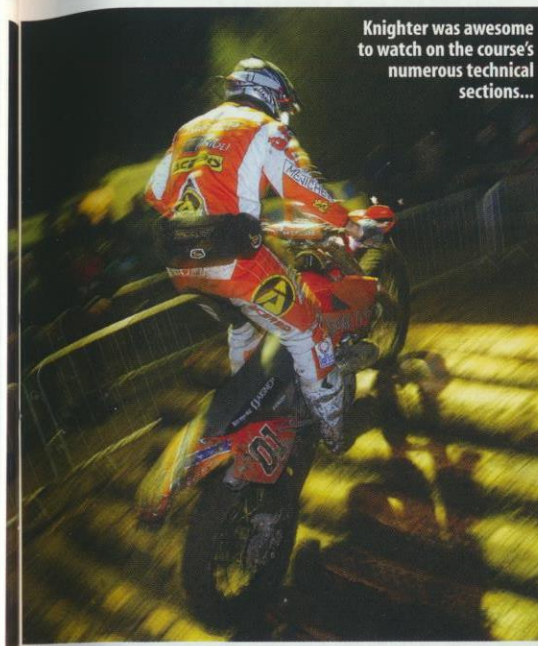
Off The Pace

At around the one-hour mark early leader Paul Eddy brought his race to a premature end. With David pulling away at the head of the field and with Braybrook close behind him, Eddy messed up the hill known as the 'Root of all Evil' no fewer than three consecutive times.

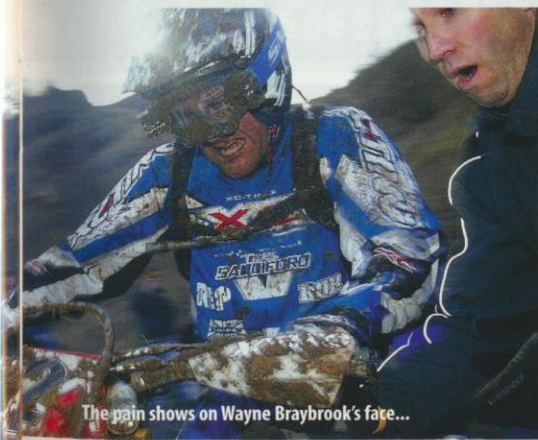
Failing to get to the top of the climb on the first attempt Paul tried to fire back up it a second time a little too hastily and again failed to

scale the ascent. On the third attempt he found himself in a heap under his bike and decided enough was enough and headed back to his van.

With Edmondson out Wayne Braybrook circulated in a comfortable second place showing exactly why he had placed as runner-up to David Knight at last year's Hell's Gate extreme event in Italy. Teasing his 250cc four-stroke up and over the course's most challenging sections, Wayne remained unchallenged during the



Knighter was awesome to watch on the course's numerous technical sections...



The pain shows on Wayne Braybrook's face...

closing stages and eventually claimed the runner-up spot to Knighter once again.

'My race was pretty straightforward,' he said afterwards. 'I got a good start, managed to pass Paul at one point before messing up in the rocks on one lap and dropping back down to second before then settling into a good rhythm during the hour in the dark.'

Behind Knighter and Braybrook any number of riders could have claimed the final podium spot including Juan Knight, Ed Jones and British trials champion Graham Jarvis. But at the end of the race it was TM's new boy Euan McConnell who placed third having, like so many riders,

a light is over 5000K it begins to turn blue - like daylight. Right, back to Knighter's light system.

Attached to either side of his helmet (although he reckoned that they would have been better mounted on top of his helmet as he suffered with too much light reflecting back from the shiny, metal surfaces of his cockpit), were two Trail Tech Eclipse HID lights.

With both lights putting out a combined 90 watts the power for the lights came from a battery in his bum-bag. With the lights retailing for around £270 and with a battery costing anywhere between £60-£120 the system ensured that wherever David looked that area would be illuminated. If David were to have crashed, get parted from his bike, and then have his bike's lights go out for some reason (which happened to him in the Gilles Lalay Classic a few years ago) having a good helmet light ensured that he can firstly find his bike again and then continue riding. The system fitted to Knighter's helmet put out 1000 lumens (500 per light), which is the equivalent of having 84 candles attached to his head!

But it was the lights fitted to the front of his bike that enabled him to lap on average just 30 seconds per lap slower in the dark than he did in the daylight. Using an older style KTM front headlight, fitted with a glass lens from an LC4 supermoto bike, David fitted a Trail Tech HID bulb, which put out close to 2000 lumens.

Above that, where you would normally run a number, were three more lights - one Trail Tech Eclipse MR16 rated at 2000 lumens in the middle pointing forwards and two lights, fitted with halogen bulbs, pointing outwards and towards the ground. With the two halogen lights fitted so that the area around the front wheel was well illuminated, the round HID light, although a little vulnerable, pointed forward to light up the trail.

To ensure that David had constant power from his lights he ran a three-phase ignition, rather than a standard one-phase (the same as Patsy Quick did on her Dakar bike this year). With a standard ignition in effect giving an AC current, his three-phase DC style current ensured that he had a strong, smooth power output.

From the ignition the current passed through a regulator/rectifier, which effectively turned it from AC to DC, and into a battery - in David's case a KTM four-stroke battery and holder, which fits straight onto a two-stroke KTM.

The lights then work off the battery ensuring that they are always constant and aren't affected by the bike's rpm. In addition David had a spare battery tucked in between his front light and bar pad so that if his lights should fail, he had a back-up power supply. You can never be too sure.

In total David's bike put out between 6000 to 8000 lumens, which is pretty much as close to artificial daylight as you can get.

struggled during the opening hour of the race.

'I went a little too hard too soon,' admitted Euan. 'I got all pumped up and crashed way too many times during the first hour and then started getting cramp during the second. I'm well chuffed with finishing on the podium though.'

Pace Yourself

Fourth went to Sherco's trials ace Graham Jarvis. He made his way forward from a bad start during the race to make each and every one of the event's difficult sections look easy and place as the first of the non-podium finishers.

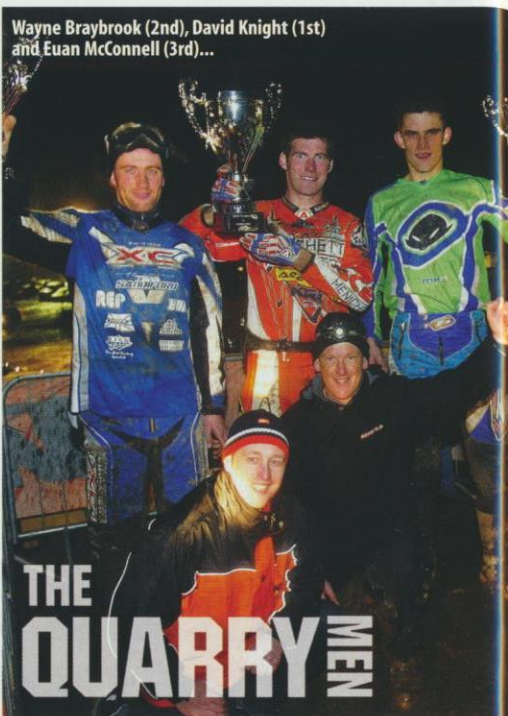
Behind Jarvis, Welshman Ed Jones made it home in fifth having crashed heavily exiting the boulder garden early in the race. With his bike refusing to start at first, Ed then set off a bit too aggressively and paid the price in terms of lost energy, despite managing to settle down into a steady pace and finish with a respectable result.

For David's brother Juan 'overtraining' in the weeks leading up to the event was the tongue-in-cheek reason the burly Manxman gave for not managing to get closer to a podium finish. Having over-hydrated himself in the pub the night before the event and despite his near horizontal approach on race day, Juan showed that despite not having the fitness to compete against the likes of David, Wayne and Euan he certainly had the required skills.

KTM riders Jason Thomas and Mark Jackson placed seventh and eighth respectively while Daryl Bolter had a somewhat disappointing ride as a newly signed CH Racing Husqvarna factory rider, despite having spent a week training with Knighter on the Isle of Man, finishing down in ninth position. He was followed home by Honda rider Tom Sagar.

Winning the expert race was former national downhill mountainbike rider Rob Warner aboard his 125cc Yamaha. Honda rider Ashley Wood, also mounted on a 125, followed him home and placed second, splitting Rob from his brother Rich, who claimed third. Of the clubman riders that made it through to the main event, three finished, with winner Paddy Langan ahead of Thornton and McNea.

Having gone out on a limb running the second hour of the event in the dark, race director Steve Ireland took a risk that certainly paid off. With competitors and spectators going home from the event having thoroughly enjoyed themselves it seems that finally, after many years of waiting, Britain finally has an extreme event all of its own.



Wayne Braybrook (2nd), David Knight (1st) and Euan McConnell (3rd)...

RESULTS - PREMIER CLASS

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-------------|---------|
| 1 | DAVID KNIGHT | (KTM) | 17 LAPS |
| 2 | WAYNE BRAYBROOK | (HONDA) | 16 LAPS |
| 3 | EUAN MCCONNELL | (TM) | 16 LAPS |
| 4 | GRAHAM JARVIS | (SHERCO) | 16 LAPS |
| 5 | ED JONES | (KTM) | 15 LAPS |
| 6 | JUAN KNIGHT | (GAS GAS) | 15 LAPS |
| 7 | JASON THOMAS | (KTM) | 15 LAPS |
| 8 | MARK JACKSON | (KTM) | 14 LAPS |
| 9 | DARYL BOLTER | (HUSQVARNA) | 14 LAPS |
| 10 | TOM SAGAR | (HONDA) | 14 LAPS |
| 11 | ROWAN JONES | (YAMAHA) | 14 LAPS |
| 12 | BEN HEMMINGWAY | (BETA) | 14 LAPS |
| 13 | PAUL BOLTON | (BETA) | 14 LAPS |
| 14 | DYLAN JONES | (YAMAHA) | 13 LAPS |
| 15 | LEE EDMONDSON | (HONDA) | 13 LAPS |
| 16 | CRAIG BOUNDS | (GAS GAS) | 13 LAPS |
| 17 | ANDREW EDWARDS | (KTM) | 13 LAPS |
| 18 | RICHARD HAY | (KTM) | 12 LAPS |
| 19 | JUSTIN WILSON | (HONDA) | 12 LAPS |
| 20 | SI WAKELY | (HONDA) | 12 LAPS |
| 21 | ROB WRAYFORD | (KTM) | 12 LAPS |
| 22 | ROB JONES | (YAMAHA) | 11 LAPS |
| DNF | PAUL EDMONDSON | (HONDA) | |
| DNF | ADY SMITH | (KTM) | |
| DNF | TIM FOREMAN | (KTM) | |
| DNF | ANDREW CRIPPS | (GAS GAS) | |

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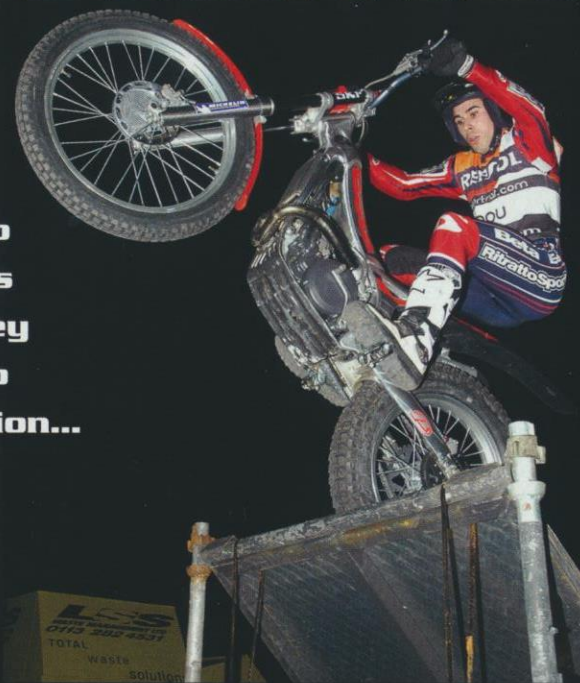
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REIGNS SUPREME

The opening round of the Indoor World Trials Championship at Sheffield threw up some major surprises this year. Mike Rapley was there for TBM to report on all the action...



British trials fans had a new hero to cheer at the beginning of January when the opening round of the World Indoor Trials Championship took place at the Hallam FM Arena, Sheffield. Nineteen year old Spaniard Toni Bou eclipsed all the seeded riders to claim his first ever win indoors and put down a marker that the Young Guns have arrived.

With Dougie Lampkin, eight times a winner at Sheffield and seven times the World Outdoor Trials Champion, failing to make the elite three man final for the second successive year, the capacity crowd in the tiered Hallam Arena had to find a new star to boost with their manic shouting, and it was Bou that received their accolades when Gas Gas riders Adam Raga - the defending champion, and his team-mate

Jeroni Fajardo, failed to put in the effort expected of well-paid entertainers in the tie-splitting races.

Eight riders lined up for the opening round of the 12-event, ten week series, five of whom are seeded for every round (Adam Raga, Albert Cabastany, Jeroni Fajardo, Dougie Lampkin and Takahisa Fujinami) with three further wildcards that vary for each of the rounds. The format at Sheffield was eight sections to be ridden in ten minutes with a mark for each minute over the time allowed.

British cannon fodder Shaun Morris, the 2004 European Champion and James Dabill, the 2005 Junior World Champion went out first - a hopeless task for the young Brits who have little experience of riding at this level. Morris made a valiant effort and secured a clean of the big

Spanish Gas Gas rider Jeroni Fajardo wasn't stumped by this obstacle...



yellow skips whilst Dabill went slightly better with no cleans but fewer maximums.

Third man out was Toni Bou, a newcomer to the world of indoor trials, but when he completed his heat for just five marks lost, the crowd were immediately behind him for they knew they had just witnessed a stunning performance. After taking a two on the first section, a series of chequer plate ramps and steps, his 20 metre leap from a standstill off a rock to exit the second section, landing on his backside but still feet up on the bike was amazing - folks held their heads in horror, but a zero went up on the scoreboard!

Just two more marks went his way in the sections, and after his heat ending race his score stood at an impressive five - virtually guaranteeing his final place, even though five riders were still to ride.

Fujigas never looked like matching Bou's score, and he had to change machines after six sections having punctured a tyre, but he was on 16pts, the four stroke Montesa clearly still not the best bike for indoors.

Dougie Lampkin came next and the biggest cheer of the night went up as he revved the Honda motor to its maximum before take off from the start. A single dab on the first section was a great start, but a five on the rocks (Lampkin preferring not to take the heroic leaping way out), left him trailing Bou after just two sections. A good clean on the cable drums came next

REIGNS SUPREME

SPAIN



but then on the Cusworth sponsored box section, he dropped the Mont off the final step and smashed the clutch case - though he didn't realise it at the time. Lampkin then cleaned the Q8 oil bottles but the clutch didn't like the abuse it was getting and by the time he attempted the big step at the start of the logs, the dodgy clutch and the oil dripping everywhere resulted in his bike failing the step. A quick change of machinery and another mark in the final two sections left him on 17 and the fans knew in their hearts they would not be cheering another Lampkin win this year.

Three Spanish riders were left to ride the heats, Jeroni Fajardo notched up five great cleans, a one and two fives, which looked pretty impressive and was good enough to get him into the final. Albert Cabastany, the first man to ever beat Lampkin at Sheffield, lost one more so it was all down to Adam Raga to pull off a ride that would ease Cabastany out of the final.

Raga went out with all the confidence in the world - he even looked cocky - and you have to say the crowd didn't take to him. But he did the business in the sections, finishing on six marks which netted him second in the heats and therefore a guaranteed place in the final with Bou and Fajardo.

Half an hour later the three finalists lined up - each rode every section in the reverse direction with just a minute per hazard allowed. Fajardo failed the first, Raga cleaned it and Bou lost two; all three failed the rocks, finding the first double step impossible to ascend, while all three easily cleaned the drums.

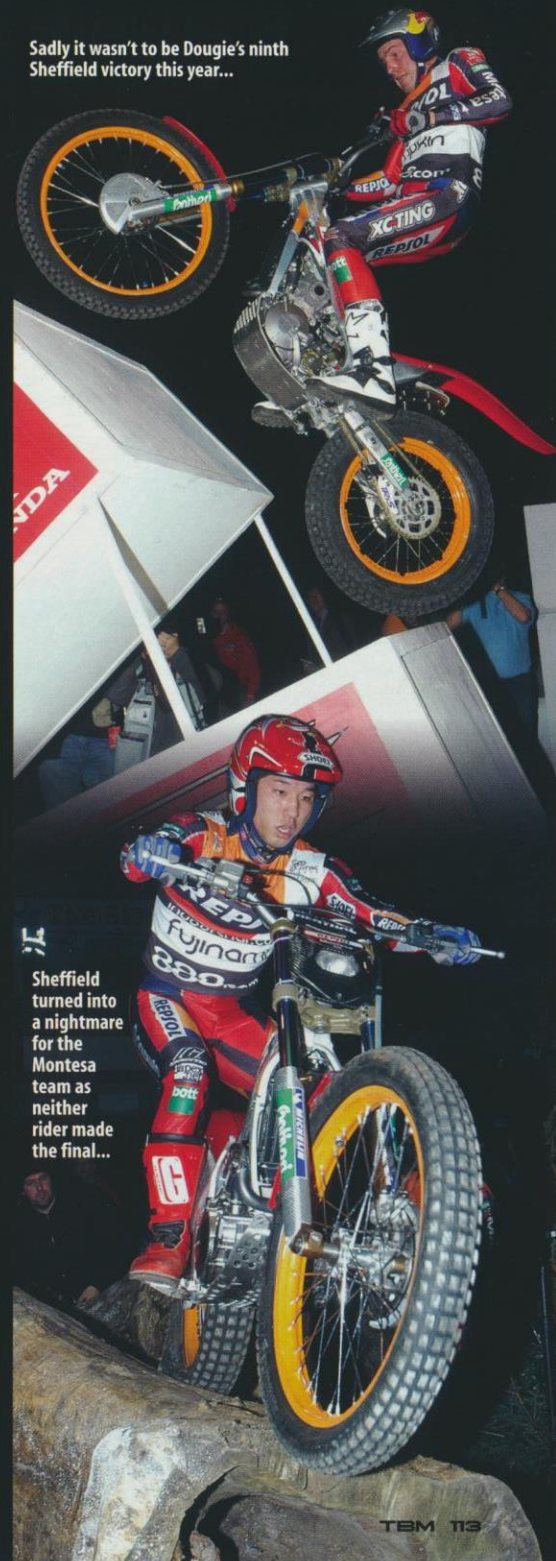
Fajardo looked to have put himself out of the running when, despite a brave attempt, he failed the Cusworth boxes whilst Raga was stunningly brilliant and Bou needed a safe one. The races came next and the two Gas Gas boys fixed it that Bou would finish second every time, therefore third overall in the races, and at that point, Raga looked to have the trial all wrapped up.

But there was still a more drama to come. The Q8 bottles, logs and skips were cleaned by all three riders which left the scoreboard showing Raga on five and Bou on ten, but then on the final waterfall - higher this year than ever - Raga failed the final step after watching Fajardo clean it easily. Boy was he angry with himself!

That left a tiny crack open for Bou to storm his way back into the action and he didn't pass up the chance. With the crowd cheering him on like he will have never heard before, he urged the Beta to the top for a great clean. They could have heard the roar in the nearby Meadowhall Shopping Centre!

So it was level pegging between Raga and Bou

Sadly it wasn't to be Dougie's ninth Sheffield victory this year...



Sheffield turned into a nightmare for the Montesa team as neither rider made the final...



SPAIN

REIGENS SUPREME

with just the high jump and final race left. All three cleaned the high jump, but what price Bou winning the race when he had already finished second four times throughout the evening?

But this was the one that mattered. Referee Dave Willoughby counted them down off the

double skip jump and across the metal pipes; at the turn Bou was a quarter of a bike ahead and back over the pipes he gunned it like a crazed madman, leapt the double skip jump higher, faster and further than ever before. And now all he had to do was land first... And he did, just a millisecond in front of Raga.

So Toni Bou was the deserved first round winner of the 2006 World Indoor Trials Championship, and a new trials star was born. But as he was not a seeded rider, would he be in round two, six days later in Marseilles? That was for the Indoor Trials Federation to decide. But on the night, in broken 'Spanglish' he said: 'This means so much to me, especially as I had to ride before Adam in the heats. It got me into the final as the heat winner which meant I could watch the others and see what I had to do.'

'The final race was fantastic, I knew I had to give it my best, but when I leapt over the ski jump to the final platform, I thought I would crash back down. But by then it didn't matter. I like Sheffield and everybody seems to like me winning.'

SHEFFIELD 2006 RESULTS

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 TONI BOU | BETA (ESP) | 10 |
| 2 ADAM RAGA | GAS GAS (ESP) | 11 |
| 3 JERONI FAJARDO | GAS GAS (ESP) | 16 |
| 4 ALBERT CABASTANY | SHERCO (ESP) | 12 (IN HEATS) |
| 5 TAKAHISA FUJINAMI | MONTESA (JPN) | 16 (IN HEATS) |
| 6 DOUGIE LAMPKIN | MONTESA (GB) | 17 (IN HEATS) |
| 7 JAMES DABILL | BETA (GB) | 36 (IN HEATS) |
| 8 SHAUN MORRIS | GAS GAS (GB) | 40 (IN HEATS) |



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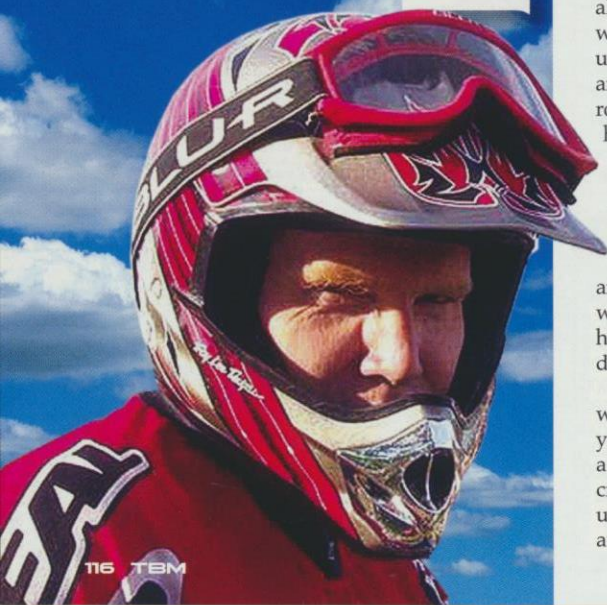
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Patman reveals how he took up the Hairy-assed Challenge...

THE PATMAN



I think it was at Rocky Ridge, in oh, '96 maybe, that I myself, tested the laws of physics on a CR500. With catastrophic results, I might add!

For those of you that don't know it, Rocky Ridge is a riding park of some 1000 acres, of dry, hard black dirt, scattered with rocks and gravel. It's hard on tyres, hard on suspension, and the dry dust is hard on air filters and lungs.

The cross-country track there is nice though, winding ten miles through the brush, up and down the steep rocky ridge for which the place is named, and always through the grey dust, and over the dinner plate sized rocks.

Darrin, my ridin' buddy and I, had done about four laps that day. It was the practice Saturday, before the season opener that year. He was riding in the 250 expert class, and I was in the over-30 amateur class.

We always had this thing about who was faster. I had the faster bike, and more experience, but he was (and don't ever say I said this), a slightly faster rider. Now I say that only 'cause he was young, and had no fear of anything. Or respect for pain! I don't care about all that though, he's had the helicopter ride!

Like I said, for a cross-country track, the place is nice enough. The razor sharp rocks will waste your tyres in no time at all, but it lacks any sand or tight tree sections to impede the ample use of the throttle. An open-class bike track if ever there was one.

Out in the last few miles of the course they had made a spectator road with a 'dozer' or something, that crossed the long straight and of course, left a ridge of dirt, rocks and gravel, along both sides of the road. Me and Darrin were the only ones that I know of that were using this little ridge (maybe a foot or two tall and a foot wide) to jump to the other side of the road. Ya' had to be fearless and you had to hit it hard and fast... with gusto... if you planned on using the short, sharp, mound of rocks and dirt to jump all the way to the other side - which was maybe 20 feet. Of course, it made for a low, flat, and very high speed jump, and the ridges on each side were small and sharp, so you really had to make it all the way to the other side of the road, and still be high enough to clear the little ridge of 'dozer droppings', otherwise you were in trouble.

Because if you didn't have the required height when you arrived on the opposite side... well, you know, at that speed, in those rocks... It'd be a really *bad* day. It was unfortunate that the road crossed the track 100 yards into an otherwise unobstructed (except for the rocks) mile straight-away. The few other riders out there that day,

'With the tree sections behind us and three miles of open desert terrain ahead I would show this young cocker where the real men lived... at ninety miles per hour in the open terrain!'

would exit the preceding corner with vigour, as if they really intended to jump the whole road, only to slam on the binders at the last second, roll over the road humps and then continue on. Wimps!

In four laps we never missed it, nailed it perfect every time. Hit it at about 65 or 70mph, weight forward, hold the throttle wide open, and boom! It'd launch ya up, only a foot or two, but at 65mph it would allow you to clear the other side, and not lose any speed, while your buddies hit the brakes, and slowed for it. It was rough though, and you couldn't be timid about it either. It was like runnin' into a curb at that speed. Very exciting though. Very exciting indeed!

Well, it was gettin on toward dark this particular afternoon, and we were getting ready to go home to get a good night's sleep for tomorrow's race, when Darrin said, 'Hey man, let's do one more!'

'Naw' I said, 'I'm kinda knackered, and it's gettin' late...'

Then he looked me straight in the eye, and said 'Man, you ain't gotta hair on yer ass, if you don't take

another lap with me!'

Well, what would you do? When faced with the 'no hair on your backside challenge', there's no way around it. What would people think? I mean, the admission of a hairless bum an' all. So... I hadda 'man up' to it!

What I did was stupid. 'Alright' I snarled, 'lemme get some more gas in this pig, and we'll dance!'

I gotta admit, it was kinda neat. Most of the other riders had left the track for the night, and there wasn't too much dust - or too many obstacles in the form of, how shall I say, more cautious riders.

Darrin and I roosted away. He'd get ahead in the trees, and I'd get ahead in the rough and fast stuff. We wheeled, we laughed, we banged bars in the corners, we yelled at one another. We really had a blast that last lap. Tomorrow was the first race of the season and we were both in high spirits.

In the tight, rocky, tree section, just before the long back straight, Darrin and his little CR250, squirted past, as usual. In my defence I gotta say that Darrin was 13 years my junior, and the CR500 was always a handful in the

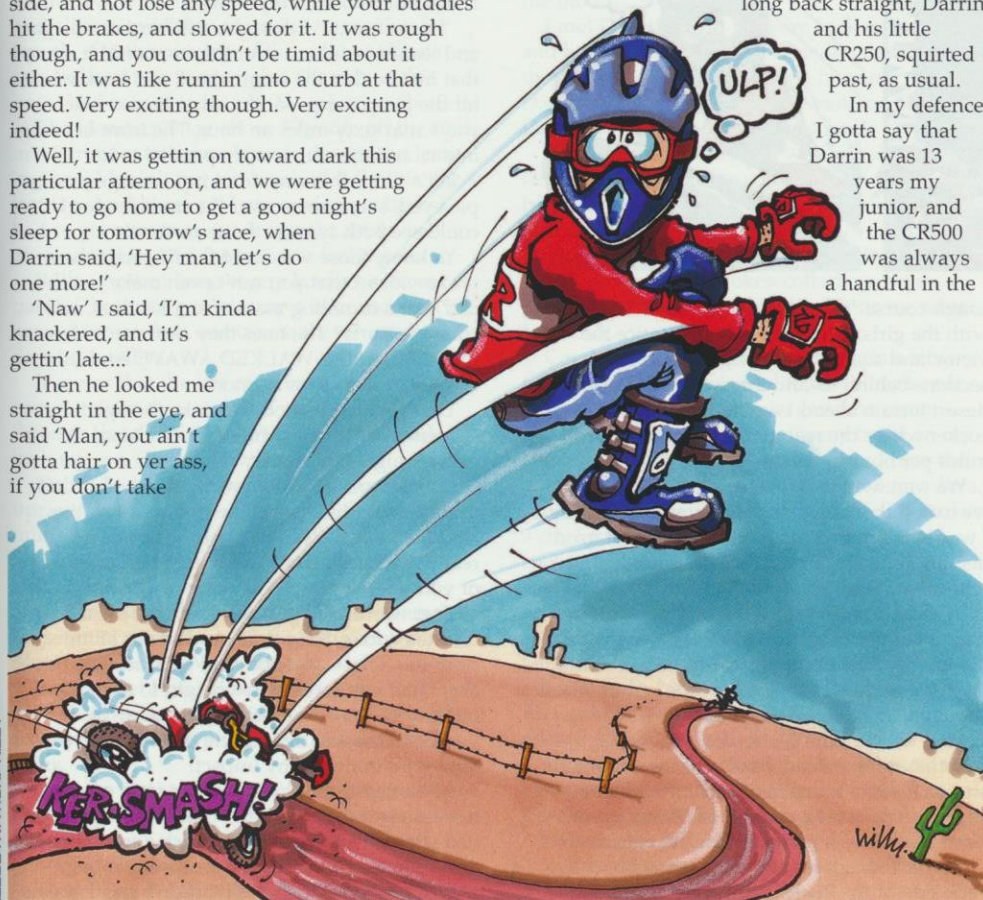


ILLUSTRATION: HILLY

trees, especially with lots of loose rocks layin' about. (Excuse #234 I'm old, my bike is heavy, and overpowered for the loose stuff).

But I was not about to let that youngster get past me for long. Knowing that the long straight was coming up, I screwed on the gas even harder than the last four times, as we exited the last corner prior to 'the hi-way', a wide, flat, hard-packed and dusty right hander, with just a few baseball sized rocks thrown in to keep your attention during your 60 horsepower induced powerslide towards the long back straight.

On this last lap of the day, we were movin' fast. Man and machine pressing the limit. Clutches burning, suspension struggling to keep pace with the moonscape-like terrain, and both of us determined not to be the last one back to the pits on the last lap. The pits that were only a few miles away now as we completed the very



rough course. The pits with the beer. The pits with the girls, who would surely notice the victor, and squeal with delight! With the tree sections behind us and three miles of open desert terrain ahead I would show this young cocker where the real men lived... at ninety miles per hour in the open terrain!

We were within a few feet of each other as we exited the last of the scrub trees, and though I was being pelted by the tiny little roost from his tiny little 250, I stayed close, poised to strike without notice.

In order to make the necessary pass, I first had to get out of his CR250s 'blast cone'. So I let the mighty CR500 slip out wide, comin' outta the turn, in third, and 'on the pipe', front wheel about six inches off the ground.

Man what a ride! Black dirt, and gravel shootin' out in a deadly spray, front wheel aloft, and on up into fourth and then fifth gear! He kept pace as best he could, but Darrin's pint sized scooter was no match for the behemoth CR500 in the terrible and open terrain of the back side of the Rocky Ridge race track!

I figured I'd make the most dramatic pass possible, and spike 'im right over the road jump. As I approached the jump (bump) I realized that I was quite a bit further over to the left than I had been on previous laps, and Darrin had the 'good' right hand line. Then I realised something else, everything was moving in slow motion. Oh no, you know what that means!

Yes indeed! Just about 15 yards before I hit the first dirt ridge of the road jump, I got involved in the braking bumps formed by the more cautious riders.

First the back end went wide to the left, but I boldly held the gas wide open, knowing that there was no room left to brake before the two foot tall ridge of razor rock. An instant later, the rear tyre struck the ridge, viciously ripping up rock and dirt and swinging out just to the left of my left hand grip. 'I got it!' I remember thinking. 'Stay on the gas, and it'll straighten up'.

Then an instant later, I could hear the 500 revving wildly, and I could just barely see the rear fender, now on my right.

'I can save it!' I thought, still hard on the gas, and leaning way out over the front end! It was at that instant that the front wheel, and back wheel hit the jump ramp... at the same time... side-ways... at sixty miles an hour. The front heading into it, and the rear, exactly parallel to it!

Let's put it this way, from my vantage point, pie-eyed, somewhere over the front fender, I could see both tyres at the same time!

Ya know those wrecks of the F1 cars, where it's so violent that you can't even make out the car? Just a tumbling mass of smoke, dust, and spraying parts? The ones they show on videos like 'AND THEY WALKED AWAY'? And they show it in ultra slow motion.

That's what I looked like. Like the opening sequence of 'The Six Million Dollar Man'. A mid air high-side at sixty miles an hour.

I think most of you know by now, what that ground looks like up on the ridge. Nasty. You can ride on it with good tyres, but ya don't really wanna touch it with your bare hands... or your ass!

That was the longest wreck I've ever had. It lasted a long, long time. And it was all in slow-mo. I flew over the road true enough, but alas I had not the required height to clear the other side... nor was I at that moment, in possession of any motorcycle that may have otherwise buffered my impact.

As I rifled through the air, just for a moment it seemed strangely quiet... The CR's engine had stopped on impact with the ridge, and the grinding noise from its tyres clawing at the gravel was missing as well. I didn't know it was

right behind me, spinning around silently like an ice skater doing a triple axel!

Then suddenly I was moving in real time again, and I could hear the gravel, and rocks clatter, and scrape as I tumbled. I felt my gloves tear. Then the knees of my pants. I heard the loud snap when my collarbone broke. But still I went rolling, tumbling, cartwheeling. Me and the Honda. It hit me a few times, I remember thinking that I was relieved that it had cut out, cause I didn't want to be fodder for the rear tyre in addition to my current situation.

Finally I was on my hands and knees. I couldn't breathe properly. I tried to look up to see if Darrin had stopped but the half metric ton of dirt inside my helmet and goggles prevented any view of the outside world. The collarbone peeked through it's skin and cotton jersey covering. I got sick.

I sat there for a moment, and realised that Darrin hadn't seen it, and was still racin' me, a mile ahead. And I was alone on the track. Within moments the sound of his scooter faded away, and all was quiet, but for my own gasping for breath, and the pinging of the still hot Honda somewhere over to my right. The ride at this point had ceased to be fun. No question about it.

The Honda 500 lay about 30 yards off the trail, in a barbed wire fence. Upside down, and leaking fuel. I hadn't put too much in it for this, the last lap. And I knew if I was gonna get back, I had to get over to it, get it upright, and worst of all... start it. And the fuel was leaking out.

With a broken bone of any kind, movement is painful, but trying to pick up a bike and start it brought more than one tear to the eye on that day, I can tell ya.

It seems that the left collarbone, had broken completely in two, and was making it's way through the skin with each movement I made, be it my toe. Or my eyebrow.

Once I had gotten the crumpled Honda upright, I could only sit and try to rest for a few minutes, I knew I could only kick it once, and it was gonna hurt. And I knew it wasn't gonna start. I'd be stuck here. I'd die and fossilize, and later be found and immortalised in some museum of the future... 'Late 20th century Motorcycle Man'. What a bonehead.

You can bet I was feelin' pretty sorry for myself at this moment, pitiful in fact. My head was spinning, everything hurt, and my helmet stank.

I got the kickstart lever up to the top, and rested again, fearing the violent pain I would have to endure in order to kick the 500 hard enough, to even have a chance of it starting.

Then I just did it. All at once I jumped up in

the air, screamed, and let fly the hardest kick I could muster. I saw the white light, and stayed away as I was taught. It was tough. I've had a broken bone before but nuthin had ever tried to come through the skin. oh woe was me.

But the kick was enough. It started. I looked down at the clutch lever knowing I had to reach out and squeeze it, and the chin bar of my helmet hit the broken bone, again I saw the white light, again I stayed away from it. The pain almost knocked me off the bike. I wouldn't look down at the clutch ever again, that's for damned sure.

The Honda sat there and idled as if nothing had happened. Though pieces and parts hung from broken mounts and bits of wire and cable. So I rested again.

Where was Darrin?

Anyway, I managed to lean way forward, and squeeze the clutch just long enough to get into second gear, and take off at a speed just above idle. The slightest bump felt like the surface of the moon.

I met Darrin, about halfway back to the pits, and he escorted me into the medics area, where they put me in a sling. I took a hundred Aspirin. Darrin loaded both bikes, and took me home to Carole, by way of the bumpiest roads on earth.

By the time I got home, I was actually feeling better, due no doubt to consumption of lots of beer and Aspirin and was able to walk relatively normally into my home.

The wife looked at my now bleeding left shoulder where the broken collarbone was peeking through and off to the doctor we went. In silence.

Carole knows not to say anything in a situation such as this. She's a good dirt biker's wife. And so the doc set the bone, gave me some stitches, and I had to wear a funny brace on my back and shoulders for a while... you know the one. And I had to sleep in a chair for a few days. I didn't know it at the time but I had also broken a rib, I found that out later that week when I sneezed!

What d'ya think about when you're injured and away from the track?

Your friends, that's what. The uninjured ones. On Sunday, Darrin was out racin' with all my other friends. I was at home in the Lazy-boy, it was quiet. It was misery. I missed the action. I missed the excitement. The noise.

At about two o'clock on Sunday I figured my class would be startin' about now. I called to Carole, and asked her to bring me a in mirror...

'Why?' she said.

So I could make sure that I still have hairs on my ass!!

What's the Story?

Dave Rowland



In the days when the standard clobber for a trials rider was a Belstaff or Barbour waxed cotton suit, riders adopted other means to personalise their appearance, and for Cheshire rider Dave Rowland it was the wearing of a beret and frequently a chequered scarf which helped people identify him.

The Chapel-en-le-Frith based rider was a BSA factory teamster back in the mid Sixties, and we pick up the Rowly story with our picture which was taken on Tyndrum in the 1964 Scottish. The '64 Scottish was probably one of the wettest on

record - it was the year when riders were stranded on Rannoch Moor due to the flooded river, with some of the them having to spend the night at Rannoch Station before they were rescued the following day.

Sammy Miller was the winner that year, but in fourth place (which netted him the trophy for Best Newcomer) was Dave Rowland who rode a 250 BSA. And whilst that year was relatively uneventful for Rowland, the following year's trial was an altogether different story.

Early in 1965 Dave had been witness to a

criminal offence and the trial of the culprit was due to take place in Derby during the week of the Scottish. Rather than waste time attending court however, Rowland headed up to the SSDT and was very much in contention for the win when the cops came looking for him. Desperate to finish the trial and avoid having to attend court, Dave (who related the story to his son Scott many years later), changed hotels to stay one step ahead of the law until on the Friday morning he walked to the parc ferme to collect his bike to start the fifth day of the trial, only to find that the bike had been impounded by the police who insisted he return to the court case in Derbyshire.

This was rather an unwelcome complication for Rowland who had been best performer on Thursday and was lying second in the trial. But the Derbyshire courtroom beckoned, and Dave reluctantly did his civic duty.

Ironically however, he was never called to give evidence at the trial and could easily have completed the week in Scotland, had he been so allowed.

In 1967, now married to wife Doreen, he was offered a further BSA contract, but when he arrived at the factory to collect his machine he was told there wasn't one ready, but he could have the pile of BSA Bantam bits in the corner.

Undaunted, Dave took the box of bits back home to Cheshire and with ace mechanic Bob Lydiat, they built the now famous BSA Bantam on which he was to finish second in the 1967 Scottish, and which he used to great success to win the prestigious Mitchell trial.

It was also the year when the incurable disease Multiple Sclerosis first began to affect Dave, and though he was able to continue his

riding for a few more years, his career wouldn't last for much longer.

With the coming of the Spanish Invasion in the late Sixties, Dave rode Bultacos and Montesas and with his illness becoming an increasing problem, he took up sidecar trials with first Belle Vue speedway star Ken Eyre as his passenger, and latterly Ray Armstrong who found fame as passenger to the late Jack Mathews).

He proved to be an excellent sidecar driver and many thought that if he'd been able to continue, a British Championship on three wheels could have been his, but it was not to be.

Undaunted Dave became a Cheshire Centre delegate and ACU steward and one of the last times he was out on a bike was as a Steward on a 123 Montesa - Scott's bike - in the Lyn Traders trial of 1977.

We'll let his son Scott take up the story: 'It was Rowly who taught me all I needed to know to get

enthused about trials. He insisted - when he took me out practicing - that I had to clean a section three times on the trot before I could move on, and when I couldn't, he would show me how to do it, even though I had to start the bike for him and help him onto it. He could barely walk by then.'

Much of Dave's remaining years were spent in a wheelchair, but until his passing in 1995 he followed Scott's career avidly and was delighted that all he had taught Scott was to result in him winning the British Sidecar Trials Championship three times as well as being an excellent solo trials rider and for a short while, an equally successful sidecar motocross driver with good results in the British Championship...

'Early in 1965 Dave had been witness to a criminal offence and the trial of the culprit was due to take place in Derby during the week of the Scottish...'

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Honda XR600 supermoto, 1988, Talons, Supertrapp exhaust, updated lights/plastics/electrics, good cond, reliable fun bike, £1450. Tel 07773 135479 (Herts)

Honda XN650 Dominator, 1997, Givi topbox, some spares, lovely bike, ideal off-road tourer, reluctant sale, £1350 ono. Tel 020 7654 4942 (Essex)

KTM 525EXC, 2003, usual extras, hand/sumpguard, manuals, gentle use only, new bike forces sale, £3000. Tel Liz on 07712 582641 (Devon)

KTM 400EXC, 2005, six months old, road reg'd, 600 miles, £3000 no offers. Tel 01978 755143 (Flintshire)

KTM 300EXC, 2000 model, V-reg, new c+s, very well maintained, good cond, £1595 ono. Tel 07813 172389 (Warks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, Dec '04, 1000 miles, road legal, £500 worth of extras, exc cond, £2995 or poss p/x. Tel (mobile) 07989 913655 or 01977 620990 (Yorks)

CCM 404E, 2004, 1100 miles, serviced, as new c+s, £3500 ono. Tel 01502 742085 (Suffolk)

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Sherco 125, 2004, regularly serviced, good cond, £1950. Tel (mobile) 07778 054226 or 01483 534098 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, road reg'd, taxed, sumpguard, barkbusters, Talon linkage, serviced regularly, £1800 ono. Tel 01685 875611 (South Wales)

Husaberg FE450, 53-reg, 80 hours running time, oil changed every eight hours, sumpguard, waterpump guard. Tel 07811 334317 (Lancs)

Yamaha WR400F, 1998/99, T&T, approx 3000 miles, third owner, standard bike, light enduro use, rarely used, exc cond, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07976 075482 or 01942 711025 (Lancs)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, T&T, FMF Q-pipe, Renthals, CRD bashplate, recent Michelins/c+s etc, mature owner, £1900. Tel (mobile) 07776 242726 or 01935 476895 (Somerset)

Honda XR250R3, 2003, taxed, totally standard, all working, any trial, good cond, sale due to injury, £2200 or £2400 with all riding kit. Tel 07812 243704 (Leics)

Honda XR400, 2002, 4000 miles, CRD system, CRD bashplate/frameguards, K&N air filter, Renthals, lovely bike, can email pics, £2350. Tel 01562 637628 (Worcs)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1992, J-reg, MoT, well maintained, regular oil changes, new Michelins/cables/filters, £950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07986 650102 or 0161 224 2597 (Yorks)

Honda CRM250 AR, T&T, under 5000km, road use only, very clean, £2495. Tel (mobile) 07973 689112 or 020 8289 3483 (Kent)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, T&T, Red Bull graphics, some spares, full road kit, Michelins, Stealth sprocket, well maintained, £2495. Tel 01344 778010 (Berks)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, road reg'd, one owner, FMF system, frameguards, recent tyres, good cond, £1900 ono. Tel 01473 830489 (Suffolk)

Husaberg FS650, 54-reg, pristine cond, spotless, immaculate, son started racing so I need the cash, £4000 ono. Tel 01347 821577 (Yorks)

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Honda XR400, R-reg, white, MoT, standard bike, very little use, needs nothing, vgc, £1650 ono. Tel 01373 463253 (Somerset)

Kawasaki KMX200, L-reg, one owner, 11000 miles, all standard, good runner, no T&T, make good cheap trail bike, £300. Tel 01287 660715 (N Yorks)

Suzuki DR350SEX, 1999, T&T, recon top-end, recently serviced, full history, CRD exhaust, new tyres, heated grips, £1550. Tel 01993 823326 (Oxon)

KTM 400EXC, 2001, very well maintained, too many extras to list, owner retiring, superb cond, £2600 ono. Tel (mobile) 07969 949081 or 01937 834773 (N Yorks)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005, road reg'd, taxed, KB Racing suspension, DEP and standard silencers, exc cond, £3700 ono. Tel 07801 014505 (Oxon)

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Husqvarna TE410, 1998, T&T, reliable and well looked after, vgc, must sell hence £1150. Tel 01208 851991 (Cornwall)

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Cagiva Gran Canyon 9041, 2000, X-reg, blue/silver, MoT, 14000km, never Been off-road, garaged, new tyres, vgc, £2295 ono. Tel (mobile) 07876 797803 or 01685 876700 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR200 SEII, K-reg, purple/white, 26000km, elec start, low seat height, removable topbox, road tyres fitted, good cond, £850 ono.

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KTM 250 EXC 2T, 1999, road reg'd on SORN, full engine rebuild 30 hrs ago, recent c+s/tyres/graphics, good cond, £1500 ono. Tel 01938 556558 (Shrops)

CCM 6440S, 2003, Suzuki engine, silver, 3000 miles, taxed, second owner, FSH, green laned, great on/off-road, legal enduro tyres, good cond, £2450 ono.

Tel Tim on 01455 610850 (Leics)

Yamaha YZ250, 2002, new clutch and basket, recent top-end rebuild, Talon wheels, Langcourt barrel, rider downgrading, offers around £1800. Tel 01924 829199 (W Yorks)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1989, new c+s, serviced, all documents but used for practising by youth, £500 ono. Tel 01205 760829 (Lincs)

Moto-Roma MRX125, 2004, blue, featured in TBM 98, standard, exc cond, £995. Tel 07931 392116 (Oxon)

Armstrong MT500, 1987, T&T, new rear tyre, almost complete spare engine plus other bits, £650 ono. Tel 01778 440689 (Lincs)

Honda XR400R, 2001, road reg'd, many extras, good cond, £1995. Tel 01778 344144 (Cambs)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, little use, many extras, excellent condition, £2395. Tel (mobile) 07767 755305 or 01535 607229 (Yorks)

Honda XR650L, elec start, red, two-and-a-half years old, 3000 miles, used as toy only, TBM verdict on the XR650L was 'worth searching out', mint cond, £2800. Tel 01785 663832 (Staffs)

Honda CRM250 mkl, 1993, white/blue, ProSkill pipe, recent c+s/tyres/rings/wheel bearings, very reliable, lack of use forces sale, £1350. Tel 07785 928637 (N Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, W-reg, blue, very low miles, bashplate, hand guards, all original, vgc, new baby forces reluctant sale, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07706 380553 or 01327 810008 (Northants)

CCM 404DS, 05-reg, only 660 road miles, trail tyres, hand/sumpguards, black rims, bargain at £2595. Tel 01296 630396 (Bucks)

KTM 520EXC, 2001, T&T, 4300km, hand/sumpguards, well maintained, exc cond, first to see will buy, £2495 ono. Tel 01582 650061 (Beds)

Husaberg FE400, 2003, 52 hours, elec start, new c+s, ally hand/sumpguards, maintained at any cost, green lane use only, really nice cond, £2475. Tel 01444 461347 (W Sussex)

KTM 125EXC, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, little use, exc cond, very competitive lightweight machine, £2650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07775 746199 or 01305 257395 (Dorset)

Gas Gas Pampera 200 mkl, 1998, silver, T&T, one lady owner, vgc, perfect LDT/green lane bike, £1150 ono. Tel (mobile) 07957 950672 or 01989 567597 (Hereford)

KTM 300EXC, 2004, one owner, 1140 miles/40 hours' use, taxed, exc cond, sale due to lack of use.

Tel (mobile) 07932 731692 or 01522 532684 (Lincs)

Yamaha WR400F, 1998, T&T, good cond, £1700 ono. Tel (mobile) 07745 582135 or 01563 574019 (Kilmarnock)

BMW Paris Dakar replica, professionally built, WP forks and twin shocks, Acerbis tank, phone for full spec, needs a little work hence bargain at £2000. Tel 07759 187500 (Londn)

Yamaha TT600, 1990, T&T, many new parts inc tyre/fender/sidepanel/seatcover and much much more, lovely bike, £1100. Tel 02380 333955 (Hants)

Thumpstar mini-bike, 120cc, upgraded shock and Honda three-speed gearbox, £600 or swap for trials bike. Tel 07876 444885 (Leics)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 2004, light OAP use, just run-in, immaculate, £2700 ono. Tel 07831 827743 (Northants)

Husqvarna TE450, Oct '05, road reg'd, taxed, new plastics/c+s/tyres, never been raced, green laned only, exc cond, £3300 ovno. Tel 07971 845661 (Kent)

KTM 125EXC, 2005, 31 hours' use, lowered seat, exc cond, £3100. Tel 07833 768428 (Oxon)

Yamaha TTR600RE, 2004, only 850 miles, still under warranty, never been off-road, absolutely immaculate, £3000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07979 513503 or 01559 384241 (Carmarthen)

Suzuki RM250, 1998, ex Paul Edmondson, T&T, good cond, swap for WR400/426F, cash adjustment either way. Tel (after 6pm) 01229 464060 (Cumbria)

Honda XR280R, 2001, Y-reg, 2200km, road legal, Q-pipe, sump/brushguards, spares, exc cond, £2000 ono. Tel 020 8805 2222 (Middx)

Yamaha YZ125, 2005, only six hours' use, DEP system, immaculate cond, as new, £2450. Tel Rob on 07803 275265 (S Wales)

BMW F650GS Dakar, 54-reg, low miles, twin spark, topbox, heated grips, road use only, FBMWSH, still under warranty, immaculate, £4500 ono. Tel 07803 275265 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2004, 600 miles, braided hoses, Cyca handguards, quiet baffle, lighting kit, carbon fibre 'guards, trail use only, exc cond. Tel 07976 256589 (Mid Glam)

Honda XR400R, 2002, T&T, 2400km, never used off-road, as new, £2500 ono. Tel 01394 460803 (Suffolk)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, yellow, registered 2004, well maintained, good cond, £1650. Tel 01473 620342 (Essex)

Honda CRM250 mkl, 1989, F-reg, 16000km, major overhaul, not used much last four years, much spent with receipts, lost interest, superb cond, £1195. Tel 01403 741307 (W Sussex)

CCM 404DS, 53-reg, new tyres/c+s, frameguards, HD bashplate, trail use only, exc cond, £2500 ono. Tel 07973 479274 (Staffs)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, N-reg, rear disc model, 12000km, light trail use, hardly used last two years, Bridgestones, Renthals, o-ring chain, vgc, £1500. Tel (mobile) 07941 570438 or 01252 838673 (Surrey)

KTM 250EXC, 2002, MoT, well maintained, smart bike with many new parts and spares inc full plastics/DEP system, very little use during '05, pics available, £2000. Tel 07870 204215 (Mid Wales)

Honda XL600LMF, 1985, rare Paris Dakar replica, needs battery and some TLC, workshop manual included, ideal project or spares, £350 ono. Tel (mobile) 07968 728301 or 01327 830929 (Northants)

Husaberg FE450, 2004 model, 53-reg, taxed, 80 hours' use, oil changed every eight hours, sump/water-pump guards, £3195 ono or may take trials bike in p/x.

Tel 07811 334317 (Lancs)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, March 2000, blue/white, T&T, CRD bashplate/frameguards, Renthals, been used for weekend green laning, fair condition. Tel 07930 395614 (Dorset)

Suzuki DR-Z400SK3, Dec '02, 52-reg, FSSH, mainly used for commuting with green lanes on a Sunday, vgc, £2850. Tel (mobile) 07773 656146 or 01244 548407 (N Wales)

Kawasaki KDX250, 1992, J-reg with V5, USD forks, used as field bike, mint engine, have lights if required, very tidy, £1000 ono. Tel 07791 288671 (Staffs)

Honda XR400, 1999, V-reg, UK bike, red, T&T, handguards, bashplate, SDG seat, £1450 ovno. Tel 01373 451816 (Somerset)

Yamaha DT230 Lanza, S-reg, blue, T&T, dual start, lady owner, hand/sumpguards, superb all-rounder, vgc, £1495 ono. Tel 01271 816272 (Devon)

Yamaha YZ426F, 2001 model, hardly ridden, serviced, new tyre, spares, good cond, genuine reason for sale, £1500 ovno. Tel 07768 306220 (Powys)

Honda XL600, 1983, Paris Dakar model, imported 2002, T&T, good original cond, ring for details, £775 ovno. Tel 07860 472869 (Surrey)

Honda XR600, new in 2003, black Excels, White Bros system, full overland kit, too many extras to list, £2100. Tel 01625 668966 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400, S-reg, T&T, Werx graphics, sumpguard, vgc, £1950 ono. Tel (mobile) 07977 246423 or 01526 832271 (Lincs)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, T&T, Renthals, sump/handguards, all road parts, vgc, rider retiring, £2250. Tel 01527 402444 (Worcs)

KTM 300EXC, 2004, new c+s/pads, recent service, good cond, £3200 ono. Tel 07876 648180 (W Mids)

Honda CRF250X, 2005, taxed, little use by over 50s rider, DEP pipe, CRD bashplate/radguards, vgc, ready to go, £3600. Tel 01242 697494 (Gloucs)

Yamaha TTR250, 2004 model, 04-reg, 1600 miles, elec start, Knobbles plus original unused tyres, fender bag, great cond, £2150 ono. Tel (mobile) 07776 146909 or 01603 259373 (Norfolk)

Honda XR400R, 2003, 2500km, mainly road use and easy green lanes, loads of aftermarket bits plus all original parts, exc bike, phone for details. Tel (mobile) 07917 832845 or 01457 834359 (Lancs)

Yamaha XT250, 1980, T&T, 10000 miles, new tyres/front brakes/genuine exhaust, exc cond, ready for the trail, only £750. Tel 01225 719358 (Wilts)

Kawasaki KLX250, 1997, P-reg, 7000 miles, fully serviced, new knobbles, very reliable, vgc, ideal first off-roader, £1300 ovno. Tel 07725 949858 (Worcs)

Kawasaki KDX220, 2000, Y-reg, T&T, light use only, first to see will buy, £1650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07778 163927 or 01252 694695 (Hants)

KTM LC4 5M, 2004 model, 05-reg, 1600 miles, KTM warranty, Datatag, hand/sumpguards, crash bobbins, as new, £4000. Tel 01268 782669 (Essex)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, road kit, green lane use only, rad braces, Rental top yoke, Fatbars, new tyres/c+s/pads, £2900. Tel 07711 034598 (W Yorks)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, fully road legal, hardly used as owner overseas, first to see will buy, £3250 ono. Tel 01600 860779 (Monmouth)

Honda XR600R, 1994, currently SORN, low miles, new tyres/pads/plastics, fenderbag, sump/handguards, Renthals, £1050 ono. Tel Dave on (mobile) 07793 358756 or 01787 223115 (Essex)

Honda CRM250 mkl and Yamaha Serow, all the mods, must go to pay the tax man, CRM £1100, Serow £900. Tel 01652 658787 (Lincs)

Honda CRM250, H-reg, T&T, ran out last Nov, runs well, nice looking bike, reluctant sale, £600 no offers.

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Honda XR250, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, only 300 miles, mint cond, £3000 no offers.

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Yamaha WR400F, S-reg, T&T, fully road kitted with supermoto lit, 10L tank, many spare parts, £2200 ono. Tel 07879 621720 (Cumbria)

CCM 404E, 04-reg, bashplate, handguards, vgc, £2500 ono or swap for Gas Gas EC200.

Tel 01841 520553 (Cornwall)

Honda XR250S, 1995, T&T, elec start, good mechanical order, good tyres / chain, £1250 ono. Tel 01628 474777 (Bucks)

Honda XR400, 2002, T&T, 4300km, Renthals, WRP pipe, very clean and tidy, £2450 ono.

Tel 01296 423910 (Bucks)

Gas Gas Pampera, 2004, Trailtech, bashplate, rear-sets, Morad rim, various spares/tyres, reasonable condition, £1900. Tel 01494 758649 (Herts)

Honda CRM250 mkl1, 1993, T&T, low miles, superb runner, good cond, £1300. Tel (mobile) 07960 862349 or 01892 669384 (E Sussex)

Yamaha TTR600R, 2000, T&T, 3500km, light sunny green lane use, always garaged, £1700 ono. Tel (mobile) 07815 100564 or 01249 721518 (Wilts)

Yamaha WR426F, 2002, T&T, exc cond, with pair of blue Talon wheels plus tyres, £2700, will not split. Tel (mobile) 07940 510327 or 01296 688065 (Bucks)

Kawasaki KLX250 enduro, 1995, road reg'd, currently SORN, V5 and manuals, Kayaba forks, ideal greenlaner, exc cond, £1195 ovno.

Tel 07783 461844 (N Yorks)

Husqvarna WR250, 2003, reg'd 05, taxed, road / race ready, recent new plastics / workshop inspection / fork service, well maintained, spares, superb cond, genuine sale, £2400 ono. Tel (mobile) 07976 350075 or 02380 871262 (Hants)

Yamaha YZ85 small wheel, bought new in April 04, new graphics / tyres and some extras, vgc, £1300. Tel 01490 460515 (N Wales)

KTM LC4 350, 1993, MoT, currently SORN, full set of spare plastics, new air filter / headlight / bars, £1000 ovno. Tel 07788 785461 (Wilts)

Yamaha WR200, 1996 model, S-reg, well maintained, recent c+s, good tyres, DEP exhaust, Renthals, £1200. Tel 01326 373306 (Cornwall)

KTM 400EXC, 2004 model, less than 500 miles ridden, USA factory graphics, brushguards, bashplate, some extras, immaculate cond, £3950 ono. Tel 07815 325973 (Derbys)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2004, 2700km, taxed, still under warranty, Rental bars / sprockets, E-model exhaust, recent tyres, green laned only, good cond, £3000 ono. Tel 01522 696708 (Lincs)

Yamaha WR200R, 1994, T&T, mint cond, ready to trail / race, £1400 ono. Tel 01670 522904 (Northumberland)

Honda XR400, 1998, T&T, green lane use only, Renthals, sumpguard, bark busters, plenty of useful spares, vgc, £1650. Tel (mobile) 07966 251724 or 0121 477 0849 (W Mids)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, exc and reliable bike, one owner, sumpguard, barkbusters, black plastics plus standard, regularly maintained, £2950 ono. Tel Chris on (mobile) 07713 401283 or (work) 01908 561560 (Bucks)

Yamaha TTR125, 2002 model, new tyres, handguards, good cond, ideal first bike for up to 14 year old, £1000. Tel 01874 636444 (Carms)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2001, X-reg, T&T, CRD

bashplate, performance pipe plus standard, handguards etc, exc cond, £2000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07905 364694 or 01332 554883 (Derbys)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, 1994, 10000km, MoT, elec start, large headlight, long-range tank, Renthals, little use, exc cond, £1400. Tel 01244 528994 (Flintshire)

Montesa Cota 315R, 2003 spec, road reg'd, £1900 ono, or swap or p/x Scorpa 125, Beta Alp or Honda XR250. Tel (mobile) 07950 527812 or 01634 310990 (Kent)

Suzuki DR200 Djebel, MoT, lady owner past two years, recent service, road and off-road tyres, ideal learner bike, £1000 ono. Tel 02476 384356 (Warks)

Husqvarna WR125, 2005, recent piston and rings, full spares kit plus extras, like new, you will not find better, £2800 ovno. Tel 02476 384356 (Warks)

Gas Gas Pampera, 2002, only 2000 miles, mature owner, tidy bike, £1425. Tel 01327 877094 (Northants)

Honda XR400R, 1998, S-reg, T&T, Renthals, brushguards, new MT21s / c+s, frameguards, spares, manual, £1950. Tel 07967 048790 (London)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2002, T&T, low miles, light green lane use, good tyres, new c+s / plastics, very reliable bike. Tel 07849 325441 (Lincs)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2004, 53-reg, UK bike, one owner, bashplate, barkbusters, frameguards, very clean, £3000. Tel Tim on 07831 811257 (Kent)

Honda XR250RE, 1985, T&T, rebuilt shock, regularly maintained, occasional green lane use past five years, workshop manual, good cond, £750 ono.

Tel 01747 870736 (Wilts)

Kawasaki KX250E, 2005, 18in rear wheel, enduro suspension / tail pipe, only ridden six times, absolutely immaculate. Tel (mobile) 07074 326707 or 01271 326707 (Devon)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2003 model, blue, T&T, 1600km, Renthals, sump / handguards, trials rear tyre, exc bike, £1795. Tel 01622 692528 (Kent)

Honda XR250R, 2002, T&T, 4200km, handguards, good cond, £1695 ono. Tel 01442 823488 (Herts)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, Dec '02, T&T, 1400 miles, well maintained, handguards, CRD pipe / bashplate / frameguards, new c+s / tyres, spares, £2600 ono.

Tel 01522 810552 (Lincs)

KTM 640 Adventure, 2001, T&T, 6500 miles, new tyres, GPS bracket, centre stand, exc cond, £2995 ono. Tel 01442 823488 (Herts)

KTM 450EXC, 53-reg, only 59 hours' use, light green lane use, exc cond, £2900 ono. Tel 07831 692628 (Lincs)

KTM 200EXC (GS), 2002, T&T, recent engine / gearbox overhaul, new tyres / brakes / fork seals / swingarm bearings, well maintained, good cond, £1800.

Tel 01452 722032 (Gloucs)

Honda CRF230, six months old, as new cond, £2500 ono or consider exchange for mint XR400.

Tel 01373 463253 (Somerset)

Kawasaki KX250F, 2005, ridden once for five minutes, as new, injury forces reluctant sale, £3595 firm.

Tel (mobile) 07841 916844 or 02837 528283 (N Ireland)

Honda XR250R, V-reg, red, T&T, 10000km, 280cc kit, CRD exhaust, Ti footpegs, Renthals, good cond, £1750. Tel 07711 317611 (N Yorks)

VOR EN450E, 2004, Ohlins suspension, elec start, regularly serviced, very trick and reliable, make ideal supermoto, £3200. Tel 07798 676697 (Gloucs)

Yamaha WR250F, 2005, 3500 miles, green laned only, CRD sumpguard, frameguards, FMF Q-pipe system, £3400 ono. Tel 01538 381716 (Staffs)

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FREE CLASSIFIEDS

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, black, T&T, hand/sump/frameguards, DEP system, vgc, £2350 ono. Tel 01271 816272 (Devon)

Gas Gas Pampera mkIII, 2002, brilliant all-rounder, handguards, Renthals, o-ring chain, vgc, £1550. Tel 01296 613568 (Bucks)

KTM 400EXC, 2004, 10.5 hours' use, mature owner, protection parts, original spares kit, not raced, immaculate cond, £3500 no offers.

Tel Dave on 07974 368174 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 53-reg, low mileage, extras, very clean, first to see will buy, £2500 ono. Tel 07790 227129 (Norfolk)

Yamaha YZ250, 1999, road reg'd, well maintained, still loads of original bits, cracking bike, never let me down, £1495 ono. Tel 01432 265009 (Hereford)

Honda XR400R, Dec' 03, 3000 miles, regularly maintained, Renthals, bashplate, handguards, green lane and novice enduro use, vgc, £2650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07957 434316 or 01995 641290 (Lancs)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1999, T&T, 7000km, road and green lane use, spares, good cond, £2100. Tel 01376 516051 (Essex)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, 1200 miles, handguards, bashplate, moustes, green lane use, maintained regardless of cost, vgc, £2900. Tel 07724 251148 (Kent)

Yamaha YZ426F with WR400F motor, black/yellow, CRD exhaust, wave discs, big tank, spare Talons, vgc, £2300 ono, can deliver. Tel 07817 595818 (Warks)

Yamaha Serow, G-reg, T&T, elec start, standard except for Renthals, road and MX tyres, new steering head bearings, good c+s, £895. Tel 01258 837094 (Dorset)

Honda CRM250 mki, MoT, Renthals, FIM enduro tyres, rebuilt forks, new DEP silencer/head and wheel bearings, great bike, £1000. Tel (mobile) 07775 761890 or 01283 222997 (Derbys)

KTM 640 LC4E, 2003, 3500 miles, road and green lane use, race carb and exhaust fitted from new, vgc, £3400. Tel 07932 682675 (Suffolk)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2004, taxed, less than 40 hours' use, Talon lowering links, bar risers, road kit fitted, vgc, £3000 ovno. Tel 01953 603471 (Norfolk)

KTM 450EXC, 03-reg, hand/sump/clutch guards, new plastics, spares, well maintained, good cond, knee injury forces sale, £2950. Tel 01761 490050 (Bristol)

KTM Duke II, Oct' 2005, 400 miles, genuine sale at a saving of £1000 on list, £4500. Tel 01206 845567 (Essex)

Honda XR400, Dec' 2001, T&T, low miles, green lane use only, regular oil changes, hand/sumpguards, trailer, good cond, £2100. Tel 01633 815199 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR350, T&T, J-reg, Renthals, handguards, workshop manual, sound cond and well maintained by mature owner, £995. Tel 01980 654112 (Wilts)

Honda XR400R, 52-reg, 2003, standard UK bike, regular oil/filter changes, green lane use only, £2400. Tel (mobile) 07790 903189 or 01454 887949 (Bristol)

Husaberg FE400, 2002, road reg'd, black plastics, N-Style graphics, hand/sumpguards, well maintained, little use, vgc, £1950 no offers.

Tel 01749 343488 (Somerset)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, T&T, Renthals, new plastics/graphics/c+s/bearings, hand/sumpguards, toolkit and spares, all invoices, £2500. Tel 07814 943455 (Lancs)

Bultaco Sherpa 340, six-speed, many new parts, nice bike, £895. Tel 07932 116625 (Kent)

Fantic 250 KROO trials bike, 1992, needs some

TLC, would suit restoration project, don't have time, running, good cond, £375 ono. Tel (mobile) 07866 505976 or 01332 833698 (Derbys)

Honda XR400R, 52-reg, T&T, 6000 miles, Renthals, bashplate, regularly serviced, trials rear tyre, green laned only, £2300 ono. Tel 02920 843643 (S Wales)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2000 model, 3500 miles, handguards, bashplate, Renthals, trail riding and road use only, little used toy, £1900. Tel 01457 855927 (Derbys)

KTM 250EXC Racing, June 2005, taxed, 24 hours green lane use, KTM handguards, sumpguard, clutch saver and bar pad, parts kit included, exc cond, £3500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07941 535369

or 01554 821438 (Carmarthen)

Yamaha WR400F, 1999 model in YZ-F trim, new graphics/plastics/seat coevr, recent engine rebuild, lots of spares, phone for full spec, £1800 ono. Tel 07773 410280 or 01639 630607 (S Wales)

Montesa 310 Cota, 1990, monoshock, discs front and rear, in outstanding cond, £850 ono. Tel (mobile) 07739 498139 or 0191 410 0785 (Co Durham)

Husqvarna WR250, 2004, road reg'd, under 500km, 2C pipe, new spares inc plastics, £2200 for cash or may p/x cheaper bike. Tel (mobile) 07706 163776 or 0151 513 5482 (Cheshire)

CCM 4040S, 2004, only 800 miles, both sets of wheels, lots of extras, original unused plastics, immaculate cond, £3500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07870 689112 or 01822 832839 (Cornwall)

WANTED

Wanted Yamaha DT200WR, must be road legal and in good cond, no Q-plates please. Tel Nick on (mobile) 07921 78453(?) or 01604 764763 (Northants)

Wanted front brake master cylinder for XR400. Tel Andy on 07970 820098 (Surrey)

Wanted Honda XR400, 1995 onwards, must be tidy and in good cond, must start easily from cold, up to £1650, will travel. Tel 01285 860119 (Gloucs)

Wanted aftermarket tailpipe to fit Kawasaki KDX220, possibly other aftermarket parts. Tel (mobile) 07788 563410 or 01491 614262 (Oxon)

Wanted parts for Yamaha 660 Tenere, approx 1993, aftermarket exhaust, tall screen, black/blue/turquoise r/h sidepanel, front brake lever. Tel Carl on 01527 876364 (Worcs)

Wanted Honda CRF230, must be clean, £1800 cash paid. Tel (mobile) 07860 687492 or 0113 286 9991 (Yorks)

Wanted Yamaha TT600R, 2000 onwards, cash waiting. Tel 01202 421840 (Dorset)

Wanted 18in rear wheel for 1995 Yamaha XT600, disc model, or hub only. Tel 01934 823975 or (eves) 01934 625451 (Somerset)

Wanted KTM LC4 enduro wheels, for use in 2004 640 SM. Tel 01223 264531 or 01954 200342 (Camps)

Wanted YZ80 small back wheel, disc brake, 2002. Tel (mobile) 07879 267813 or 01293 401652 (W Sussex)

Wanted cam and rocker box cover for 1998 Honda XR250, please phone with details. Tel (mobile) 07720 628209 or 01384 349156 (W Mids)

Wanted supermoto wheels to fit 2005 Gas Gas EC300, big disc and caliper, master cylinder, braided hoses, Scott steering stabiliser. Tel 01905 26726 (Worcs)

Wanted TBM issues 14 and 19.

Tel 07764 814316 (N Yorks)

Wanted KTM 450 or Suzuki DR-Z400E.

Tel 01430 872265 (Yorks)

Wanted enduro bike, must be 400 or 450cc, any make considered, looking to spend around £1200. Tel 0114 220 8988 (S Yorks)

Wanted parts for Yamaha TT500, alloy swingarm plus tension bar, front and rear wheels, top yoke, early type alloy tank. Tel 07946 399072 (Sunderland)

SPARES

Akrapovic Ti MX silencer to fit Honda CRF250R or 5M, requires re-rivetting at one end from repaired crash damage, can email pic, new before tumble £65. Tel Si at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)

Budget brake upgrade or 5M 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, £95 plus courier. Tel James at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)

TBM magazines, issues 1, 2, 4, 16-112, missing 106/107, 97 mags in total, £45. Exploring Green Roads and Lanes of GB by Ian Thompson, £30 plus p&p.

All mint. Tel 01268 783355 (Essex)

Yoshimura exhaust to fit Suzuki DR350, with header pipe clamp, exc cond, not road legal. Tel 01273 503622 (E Sussex)

Cast three-spoke wheels to supermoto KTM, from CBR600, fit two- and four-strokes 1996-2002, £150 plus carriage. Tel 01825 764148 (Sussex)

Supermoto wheels to fit 1998-2000 Yamaha WR-FYZ-F, black rims, gold Talon hubs, 320mm disc, caliper bracket, rear disc, DID gold chain, exc cond, £600. Tel (mobile) 07976 075482

or 01942 711025 (Lancs)

FMF Q-pipe to fit Yamaha WR/YZ400/426F, good cond, £100. Tel (mobile) 07976 075482 or 01942 711025 (Lancs)

IMS 13L tank for Yamaha, £30. Set of full black plastics to fit CRF, £20. Various Yamaha plastics, £10. Yamaha flywheel weight, £25. Tel 07753 983918 (Herts)

Big-bore kit for Honda XR250, new complete piston, small mark in bore, open to sensible offers, ring for more details. Tel 01772 621522 (Lancs)

Titan exhaust system for KTM LC4, brand new, never fitted, with spare carbon fibre mount bracket, £500. Tel 07802 917635 (Cheshire)

KTM parts, LC4 orange rear fender and sidepanels. Touratech 30mm bar risers. KTM 15mm bar risers. Tel 01600 861848 (SE Wales)

KTM Powerwear summer enduro jacket, orange/black, light weight, zip-off sleeves, vents, pockets front and rear, exc unmarked cond. Tel 01600 861848 (S Wales)

OSBE trials helmet, white, size S, only worn twice, as new. Also Ikon MX helmet, blue/silver, size M, vgc, offers. Tel 01600 861848 (S Wales)

KDX220 original parts, fuel cap, rear fender, handguards, seat cover, steel bars, rear silencer. Also body armour, Suomy helmet and alloy filler cap for DR-Z, ring for prices. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)

Acerbis 22L tank to fit XR400, good cond, £100. Tel 01625 668966 (Cheshire)

Acerbis 19L tank to fit 1997-99 Husaberg, blue, brand new, sensible offers. Tel 01787 223115 (Essex)

Dunlop D605 trail tyres, front 3.00-21, rear 4.60-18, as new, can email pics, £40 the pair. Also Dunlop Sports D739 MX tyres, front 80/100-21, rear 100/100-18, as new, £40 the pair. Tel (mobile) 07776 146906

or 01603 259373 (Norfolk)

Bridgestone Battlax supermoto rear tyre, BT56R radial, SS type, 160/60ZR17, very little wear, £35. Tel (mobile) 07881 668650 or 01270 882367 (Cheshire)

CRD bashplate to fit XR400R, £50. Acerbis large tank, £80. Plus p&p. Tel 07725 081514 (Tyneside)

Trail wheels for CCM 644, as new, £200. Battery, £30. Swingarm chain slipper, £25. Plus other spares. Tel 07854 064655 (Merseyside)

STM slipper clutch to fit Yamaha YZ/WR450F, 12 months use, as new, £300.

Tel 01663 735413 (Derbys)

11L tank to fit Kawasaki KX 1999-2002, £80. Flywheel weight, £50. Rads, £40. Front pipe, £50. 11L tank to fit 1998-99 CRF, £60. DEP front pipe, £60. Tel 01978 842883 (N Wales)

Breaking Honda Transalp 600, 1997 model, good exhaust, £40. Complete engine but blown gearbox, £50. Call for details. Tel 01302 859857 (S Yorks)

Parts for Kawasaki KDX125SR, USD forks with yokes, £60. Seat, £10. Front exhaust, £10. Tel (mobile) 07929 055059 or 01246 271281 (Derbys)

Black Talon supermoto wheels from 2003 CCM 6440S, c/w tyres, discs, caliper hangers, sprocket, spacers and sidestand, approx 500 miles use, vgc, best offer. Tel Neil on 01455 824565 (Leics)

Marzocchi forks and yokes from Armstrong MT500, good cond, £50 ono. Tel (mobile) 07881 668650 or 01270 882367 (Cheshire)

TBM back issues, 89-124, all mint, £20 ono. Tel (mobile) 07765 945959 or 0117 961 5768 (Bristol)

Talon/Excel wheels to fit Honda XR400R, with all fittings and AC10s, £250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07957 434316 or 01995 641290 (Lancs)

Suzuki DR-Z400S engine complete, 2000 model, elec start, approx 2000 miles, 100percent mechanically okay, regularly serviced, exc cond, £350. Tel (mobile) 07818 266521 or 01943 875056 (W Yorks)

Carb for Suzuki DR-Z400S, full working order, £60 plus p&p. Also left-hand rad, £40 plus p&p. Both in exc cond. Tel Martin on (mobile) 07818 266521 or 01943 875056 (W Yorks)

TBM back issues, various from 1-77, £1 each plus p&p. Tel 07764 814316 (N Yorks)

Lookwell enduro jacket, size XS/36, black/blue, removable lining, waterproof, full body armour, many pockets, vgc, £30. Tel 01403 741307 (W Sussex)

TBM back issues, 54-123, £2.50 each inc p&p. Tel Martin on (mobile) 07818 266521 or 01943 875056 (W Yorks)

TBM back issues, 7-121 incomplete, 79 issues in total, make me an offer. Tel 07932 116625 (Kent)

STOLEN

Stolen KTM 300EXC, reg no LF51 XCG, frame no VBKGS2032M418798, engine no 0255642862. Also stolen Honda XR70. Stolen from Parkwood, Gillingham, Kent on 23-12-05 between 00:00 and 05:00. Tel (mobile) 07748 338030

or 01634 312279 (Kent)

