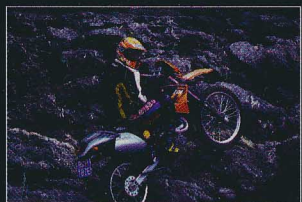


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D I R T J U N K I E S

TBM

TRAIL BIKE & ENDURO MAGAZINE

£2.20 November 1998 Issue 40

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How the Elephant's successor shapes up



1999 200s SHOOTOUT

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I can't believe people can be so cruel. For some reason, everybody who's been on the phone for the past few weeks has been trying desperately to make me laugh. You know the sort of people whose sense of humour normally rates slightly below that of a high court judge... with piles. Suddenly they've all been ringing me up out of the blue and telling me the sort of Jokes that begin 'Have you heard about the new IBM computer called the Clinton PC? And end with the punchline... it's got five and a half inches of hard drive but absolutely no memory.' Or they say things like: 'Did you hear about the woman who went to her doctor and said to him "Doc, every-time I sneeze I have an orgasm? He said: "My god woman, what are you taking for it?" She said: "Pepper!"'

I don't know if it's the silly season, or more likely that word is getting around that I crashed again, and am sitting here at my desk nursing a particularly painful set of ribs... and it only hurts when I laugh. I can't be bothered going into all the gory details of the crash (it's too painful) so I'll just say: Husaberg... tree stump... dead stop... ouch, and you'll get the picture. Anyway, having an enforced layoff has made me realise how much I miss being on a bike, and just how bad most people's jokes are.

But it was no joking matter when I finally hobbled into casualty some three days later. After spending 20 minutes helping the admissions nurse get the hang of her computer, I was more or less frog-marched to a holding area where I was given the third degree by a bored looking male nurse with a clipboard and a nasal hair problem.

'So you're the bloke that fell off his motorbike are you?' He said.

'Er... no.' I said. 'I smacked my chest on the handle-bars when I was riding off road.'

'What were you doing riding off road?' said hairy nurse.

'Enjoying myself.' I said sheeply.

'Sounds like you didn't enjoy yourself much this time.' He said with a sort of half grin.

'On the contrary' I wanted to say, 'I was having such a good time riding my dirt bike that I deliberately rode into a tree stump just to give myself a reality check.' But in fact I just nodded, and thought about offering him my Swiss army knife with its built-in tweezers so he could sort out that nose once and for all.

'Motorbikes are dangerous things.' he added for good measure.

'Yeah' I said, 'but they've got one good thing going for them.'

'What's that?' he said.

'They keep you guys in work.'

He scribbled something on the bottom of his form and disappeared swiftly off.

How come you always have to wait for hours in casualty these days...? **Si Melber**

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Enduro News

★ With the British Enduro Championship wrapped up for another year (see report on p68) it's all change in the team camps. **Rob Sartin** has confirmed that he will be retiring from the sport at the end of this year. Having won the British Championship last year and competed at the highest level in World Enduro, Rob who was badly injured in a crash a couple of years ago, will ride just a few select events next year but won't contest the championship - a big loss to anyone who enjoys watching his super smooth riding style. Also taking a sabbatical (we hear) will be wild Welshman **Carl Tiley**, who always impresses with his full-on riding style. Another Welshman **Wyn Hughes** has yet to decide whether he'll be riding the championship next year. Whatever he does he's confirmed that he'll be going all out for a good ride at the Gilles Lalay enduro in France - an event which should favour his never-say-die riding style. Meantime this year's winner **Ady Smith** has confirmed that he'll defend his championship on a Yamaha and he may well be partnered by **Tim Lewis**, who would move up from 125 to 250cc. **David Knight** will also be staying on at Yamaha and plans to contest the European rounds, while Cornishman **John Deacon** will be riding the British rounds for KTM on a four stroke.

Rally News

★ There's been a record breaking UK entry for next January's Dakar Rallye, with 11 riders signed up already, and a couple more who may yet opt to ride the tough African event. TBM contributor **Simon Pavey**, who took his Honda-sponsored XR600 to 40th position at his first attempt last year, has been signed up by CCM and will be partnered by Irish rallyist **Vinnie Fitzsimmons**. Simon P said he was: 'very excited about the prospect of riding for CCM', and anyone who's seen the state of his XR600 will understand why. It's got about as much chance of reaching Dakar for a second time, as **Blez's** van has of passing its MoT this year!

SNIPPETS

★ There wasn't room in the CRM feature in last month's issue to bring you details of this reader's special, so we thought we'd show it to you now. Although it looks for all the world like a standard CR125, if you take a closer look at the engine, you'll see that there's a CRM250 engine shoehorned in there in place of the skinny CR lump. The bike's used for enduros where the wide-ratio six speed gearbox, and torquey power delivery make for a really tractable machine. The suspension is standard CR which has been revalved for a plusher ride, and the bike weighs a smidge over 100kg. Anyone contemplating a similar project might like to know that there's a fair amount of work to make the CRM lump fit, but the results are definitely worth it according to the owner. If you've got a project bike you'd like to show us, send a pic of it to us at: TBM Projects, PO Box 9845, London W13 9WP.

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Dear Trail Bike...

The Professionals

Dear Si

Every month I read and re-read your magazine, it is by far the best off road bike magazine available. Towards the end of every month I wait for the loud splat on the doormat as the postman delivers my copy. Unfortunately this month, and for some months to come I fear, I can't quite manage my usual special test time to the front door mat (or any other special test time come to think of it). Why I hear you say? Well, because as you wrote in your excellent article about this year's Welsh Two Day Enduro, there was an unfortunate incident with a marshal in a 4X4 travelling the wrong way along one of the fast cross country sections. I was the rider involved and we hit head on at a blind bend. I ended up in hospital for nine days and still have many months of recuperation ahead of me. The bike is a total write-off, forks crushed, frame bent, engine cracked, not a straight bit in sight.

However, what I would like to add to your article are some points for all organisers and riders to consider. This is my fourth year of riding enduros. I have ridden in all types of events and never once have I been told (or even read in the regulations) that Forestry Commission fire roads are not closed to traffic during an event. That can mean any Forestry Commission vehicle (even a logging lorry) could be driving towards you. Ride with this in mind, and organisers, please make this clear to the riders.

You pay your money to race

along a marked course which you believe the organisers have cleared, however this is not always the case. It was an official of the event driving a two-ton 4X4 the wrong way down a fast, winding fire road who hit me. If they had been a competitor they'd have been disqualified immediately. The event programme advised in a list of do's and don'ts for spectators, not to travel against the flow of the course, yet this official ignored this.

Professionalism. This is what a fantastic sport like enduro needs in this country. Half an hour for a marshals meeting prior to the start of an event with a handout of do's and don'ts, including what to do if their radio breaks down or if any other unplanned situation arises, may make someone think a bit more before embarking on a decision which could cost a life. A lot can be learnt from Andy Walters and his team who run the Breckland Enduro in Thetford Forest - undoubtedly the best organised and run event I have ever entered. Everything appears to run smoothly and is professionally organised.

Anyway, enough of me ranting and raving. I hope that my incident will not be forgotten too quickly by organisers, and that lessons can be learnt from it (are you listening ACU?). I have certainly learnt mine, please don't let it happen to you.

I would finally like to end by saying a big thank you to all my well wishers, but especially to the St John's Ambulance team, to Neil, Nick, Alan, Mat and Simon for help with the bike and visiting me in hospital, and last but by no means least, to

Helen my girlfriend for putting up with me during my recuperation.

Mark Richards
Milton Keynes, Bucks

Glad to hear you're on the mend Mark. Your ideas on professionalism regarding the running of enduros are spot on, and what's more they concur with our own thoughts on the problem. I realise that the sport relies heavily on a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs who selflessly give up their spare time to run these events. That needn't change. What I'm suggesting is that we reward these guys for their commitment, while at the same time encourage them to be even more professional in their attitude. Take an average enduro with an entry of, say 100-120 riders. If each entry had a £2.50 supplement towards the payment of marshals, that would give the organisers a pot of £250-300 to pay the marshals with. If each marshal walked away from the event with £30 cash in his or her back pocket, my bet is that more would be willing to give up their day (or weekend) to help run these events. This already happens in some cases, but I'd like to see it happening in all cases. It's not a question of making money out of the sport, it's simply a matter of making sure that these guys aren't out of pocket for their troubles.

And here's another point. I believe that every event should have a riders' briefing beforehand (and a marshals briefing following this). Many already do, but some still don't. Riders' briefings allow the organisers to impart a certain amount of

Got an opinion? Then write to:
TrailBike Magazine
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Don't Change

Dear Si

I just had to comment on the parting shot to your recent WR400F test and also the previous XR400 test (TBM33 - ed). These truthful comments have probably done you no favours in selling ad space to either of the above importers. I realise how difficult it must be to put together such an excellent magazine on a shoestring when I see a prime ad spot like the IBC (Inside Back Cover - ed) of issue 36 being used for an in-house ad - in this case a subscription page. But I'd like to say that your magazine has gone up even further in my opinion because of your honest comments. It would have been so easy to have fudged some very important issues as the American mags have, just to keep the advertisers on your side. A new dirt bike is a very big deal to most people, both financially and emotionally, and an objective test is a Godsend to help point purchasers in the right direction. Keep it up.

Nigel Bull
Newport, Gwent

Thanks Nigel. You're absolutely right of course, most magazines in this country are funded by and (by implication) beholden to their advertisers. Many editors would love to speak their minds if only their publishers or advertising managers would allow it. Instead they toe the line, fudge the issue or worse still, avoid it all together. Such is the life of a journalist these days. TBM is different. Not simply because as both editor and publisher I call the



shots. It's different because I want it to be different. What's the harm in telling the truth as we find it? Our opinions are only that - opinions - after all. We test a bike, form an opinion based on our collective knowledge and experience of all the machines we've ridden, then publish the results and let our readers make up their own minds. We reckon they're smart enough to decide for themselves.

For sure we have our own opinions on certain things (electric starts etc), but that is borne out of experience and common sense. We don't say you can't kick start a four-stroke, we say it's easier to start with the push of a button. In our opinion, new models should evolve and improve upon what's gone before, in exactly the same way that a computer improves upon say a manual typewriter. Sure you can't use a computer in a power cut, but then, me... I've got better things to do in a power cut than type a letter!

So we are talking progress here. And in exactly the same way that Blez alluded to in his Rant in the issue before last, I believe that the future for off roaders is not just about developing better suspension and

Dear Trail Bike...

higher specific power outputs (which will come anyway), it's also about user friendliness and improved quality and reliability. I've never really understood why the dirt bike industry hasn't collectively embraced this idea? The competition market isn't purely performance driven. As many regular owners know to their cost, expenditure on maintenance along with reliability all play a part in the owning experience. That's partly what made clubman tools like the KDX200 so popular in the past.

On your other point about advertising; strangely enough, certain elements of the bike industry (including some major players) choose for whatever reason to ignore the opportunity of advertising into this key market instead of using it to their advantage and building up a reputation within the sport. That's their prerogative. Those who do advertise in TBM each month, do rather nicely thank you, because (like me) they've probably realised that TBM readers are the keenest and most enthusiastic bunch of consumers ever. Whenever I buy spare parts (and with a Husaberg that's generally on a weekly basis), I always buy from our advertisers. They support our sport and I try and support them. I figure that readers will use their own judgement as to whether they choose to buy from companies who aren't putting money back into the sport through advertising. Ultimately those who don't take the opportunity to advertise into this growing market will lose out in missed sales and shrinking market share. But as I've finally figured out for myself: any fool can spot an

opportunity, but it takes a real idiot not to capitalise on it!

WR-again #1

Dear TBM

Well, well, well. Haven't we all got in a tiz over the Yamaha WR400F? Opinion seems to be divided into several distinct camps. There are those who appear to be glad that the bike doesn't live up to the pre-launch hype, presumably because they don't want it to be better than the XR/DR/KTM that they currently own (after all who wants to read a report telling them that their new bike has just been totally eclipsed by a new model)? Then there are those who've already parted with a significant wedge in order to acquire a WR and who will no doubt claim that their bike starts every time, first kick.

Then I suppose there are those people (myself included) who were looking forward to the launch of the WR as a prospective replacement for their current hack. I personally am disappointed that the WR didn't thrill you to bits with its stunning performance, I don't want to follow the crowd in buying an XR400, the new TT seems to have lost the plot and I can't quite bring myself to part with a load of dosh for a KTM or Husaberg. So what do we do now?

Well might I suggest that we all just accept that your WR got on your nerves with its refusal to start when hot. We must also accept that Yamaha's Mr Marshall and existing WR owners are not happy at the content of your report, and will be deeply offended when all their mates rib them about their

bikes. Furthermore, might I be so bold as to suggest that we get on with something more constructive, as all parties (TBM included) are beginning to sound all bitter and twisted in the content of their letters and editorial replies. It has now become a personal crusade for some, as opposed to a test of one motorcycle on one day in one set of conditions. (Actually three weeks, six separate tests and loads of different conditions, but who's counting? - ed).

Otherwise, great mag but I can't say I am happy about the six week wait for the next issue. Withdrawal symptoms normally start two days after the postie drops the issue through the letter-box. You can't let me go cold turkey for six weeks surely? HELP!!!!

Mark Bishop
Melksham, Wilts

PS This is where you get to write a bitter and twisted editorial reply in as sarcastic a way as possible.

Cheers Mark, great reply, and a seriously good letter... honest

WR-again #2

Dear Trail Bike

To start or not to start... that is the question. It seems that this little question has brought out all the 'disgusted of Basingstoke' letter writers. No I don't have a Yamaha WR400. Yes I want my bike to start every time (preferably electrically), but what I don't understand is this: On the same day that I bought issue 39 of DBM (er... surely you mean TBM? - ed), I

also bought the (US) Dirt Bike Magazine which has wall to wall WR/YZ400 articles, analysing four bikes in four different off road situations. Not once was starting problems (or the solving thereof) mentioned. What gives?

Other than presumably that they don't stall them over there, is it that the petrol composition/ambient temperatures makes a difference? Certainly this is a reason often given as an explanation for poor carburetion on Italian bikes sold in the UK.

All I'm seeing in DBM (stop calling us that - ed) is a Pythonesque 'No it doesn't, Yes it does' contradiction, and what I really want is a properly balanced argument (So... do you want the five minute argument, or the full half hour? - ed). Slapping down Barry of Bristol isn't very helpful. Perhaps he doesn't get his bike as hot as yours and those of the competitors you mention, and excusing yourself and then ripping the nuts off someone who's paid for the mag seems a little lacking in social grace.

On a completely different matter, I am saddened to find that judging by magazine advertisements, dirt bike gear (like everything else) seems vastly cheaper in the USA than over here. Even stuff made in Europe. Can anyone recommend good Stateside sources of clothing and parts who will ship to Blighty. Or is the hassle, and postage just not worthwhile?

Carl Brancher
Abergavenny, Gwent

PS I've figured out how to put a boot upside down on a cone without a diagram.

PPS Why don't people use tank bags? As a newcomer to this sport, I don't understand why people strap things to themselves or the back of the

bike when the road-going fraternity put it on the tank where you also get (as a bonus) a clear map pocket (this is a serious question)?

In that case we'll give you a serious answer. Although many trail bikes still have metal tanks, a lot of off road bikes now have small, humpy, plastic tanks which are partly covered by the seat. Obviously a magnetic tank bag won't stick to a plastic tank, but even a strap on one can be difficult to position over a humpy tank - and make it stay there without slipping off. Also I tend to carry stuff like camera gear in my rucksack, because being strapped to me, it is isolated from much of the vibration and battering that the bike takes when riding at any sort of speed off road. If I put my camera in a tank bag, by the time I came to use it I'd be looking at a pile of broken electronics and glass.

Yes, stuff is cheaper in the states, and no, I don't know why either. What I do know is that by the time you've paid for the gear at the credit card exchange rate, paid US taxes, then shipping costs, UK duty and finally VAT, plus had to wait for the stuff to arrive and found out it doesn't fit you because US sizes are different, then had the hassle of sending it all back again, it probably isn't worth it. Buying stuff when you're over in the States and bringing it back with you is certainly a way of saving a few quid, but otherwise, is it really worth the hassle?

Onto the WR400! The Tank bike mags rarely get down to the nitty gritty of ownership. After all talking about difficulties with hot starting just isn't as sexy as getting serious air in the photos. Anyway, let me use this opportunity to put the record straight once and for all. I, per-

sonally think the WR400F is a great bike. Got that? It's fabulous to ride, and I like it, okay? Now let me add a couple of caveats to that. Even putting aside the problems we had with starting our bike - which were fairly important - I felt that the WR4 could have been even better. First off, it didn't match the hype - it was heavier, less powerful, and not as well designed as Yamaha had led us to believe. I still liked it though. Secondly, it seemed poorly finished - low quality graphics, plastics, muffler, bars - that sort of thing. But I still liked it. Thirdly, it had some iffy design details - dreadful sidestand, heaps of pipes around the carbs, awkward-shaped tank, sticky out header pipe. But still I liked it. And lastly of course there was that hot starting problem which we experienced, not once but on a number of occasions.

So now maybe you can see how we came to be disappointed with what was on the face of it (and still is) an excellent bike. Some people are happy with that, others aren't. But what we felt obliged to do (because no other magazine would do it) was to inform our readers that the WR400F as tested by us was not the dirt biking nirvana that Yamaha would have us believe. Simple as that. We still like the WR4, we still think it's a brilliant bike. But it isn't a perfect one. Hopefully that should have cleared up the situation now - for another month at least!

Spit & Polish

Dear TBMI have just returned to the UK after living overseas for the last eight years or so. For the past three years I was living in Poland where I bought a Suzuki DR650. I bought my bike new from an authorised dealer, picked up a two year international warranty with it and the

Dear Trail Bike...

first service was free. The price? Over £2000 less than the same model costs in the UK. Are we being ripped off over here or what?

Anyway the reason I am writing to you is not to moan, but to ask your advice on getting into the trail bike scene in the UK. I did some very easy off roading while in Poland which was great fun and I'd like to have a go over here. I have dropped a line to the Trail Riders Fellowship so we'll see what they suggest. If you have any further advice on clubs or whatever I would be grateful.

Paul Walsh
London

There's no 'big trailie' club in London that I know of (although there's one in Bristol), but the TRF should be able to point you in the right direction, and help you get out on the trail. And if you keep reading the mag you should pick up a whole load of useful tips, advice and addresses. Meantime I'd love someone from Suzuki to tell us the reason for the price differential....

Yak-etty Yak

Dear TBM

Just finished reading your article Mad Manx 2 in TBM38 with great interest. Because after years of spending TT week whizzing round and round the course like a loony, this time I decided to hit the hills. The only slight difference being that unlike yourselves I had absolutely no trail experience whatsoever.

Imagine my surprise then when the first trail I chose to

tackle was the back road that leads up to Windy Corner, a nice little 1 in 8 hill (variable to 1 in 6). Not impossible I admit, but the combination of a fully fueled Dominator with road tyres and loose rocks the size of footballs, plus the bike's tendency to go wherever it wanted, meant that by the time I reached the top I felt like I could have given Mr Lampkin a run for his money (no, it didn't occur to me that reducing my tyre pressures might help, as I have since learnt).

All I can say to Mr Blezard, is that if you managed that trail two-up, somewhere in your blood must be mountain yak genes, either that or you have a very trusting missus. Anyway, great mag, keep it up(right)!

Robert Bloxham
London

Don't know about mountain yak genes. We reckon Blez's gene pool had rocks in it!

Time-Warp

Dear TBM

Can you help? I am returning to motorcycling after a break of 20-odd years, having in those days competed in one day trials on a Greeves Anglian and a Bultaco Sherpa. I am looking for an air-cooled, large capacity engine enduro bike, preferably with disc brakes and mono-shock, for a bit of fun.

My problems are budget and choice. With two sons at university and a daughter about to follow suit, I have only £1400 to spend. With regard to choice, I find myself favouring a Honda of 500-650cc or a Yamaha of about 500cc. I've tried a Yamaha

XT600 and find the bike is a bit too tall for my legs; I've not included the Suzuki DR600 because it seems to be a bit of a petrol guzzler in comparison to the other bikes, please correct me if I'm wrong.

I gather that many engines are now equipped with balance shafts and having previously ridden British parallel twins on the road (waiting to see what would break or fall off next), the prospect of a smooth engine is very appealing. Which engines have these shafts fitted? I also find some of the model identifications confusing. I've worked out that the Honda XL series is better suited to my needs than the XR series, similarly the Yamaha XT series is better suited than the TT series. Kawasaki has the KLE, KLR, KLX and KX. What is the significance of these different prefixes?

Another unknown for me is the design of these engines. I get the impression that the camshaft in the Honda XL range runs directly in the cylinder head and presents a potentially expensive repair. However a dealer informed me that the XT600 camshaft does likewise, so is there a preferred engine to go for? Finally tyres. I'm told that the Honda XL500 uses a 23 inch front wheel, for which tyres might be rare or expensive. Am I going to have a problem getting tyres for any other models? I have spoken to a couple of dealers, who have been useful, but would welcome some informed and impartial advice.

Paul Cambata
Hitchin, Herts

Paul... We'll ring you okay?

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FF97

TALKING *Dirty*

How do you judge someone's riding ability without watching them ride? Chris Evans tells all...

It's a problem virtually all of us has faced at one time or another - I'll give you a 'for instance'. It's midweek and you're planning your regular Sunday run with the lads and lassies. You usually ride with the same group of mates who all share a roughly similar standard of riding ability. This time however, one of them wants to bring along a brother in law who 'used to ride moto-x as a schoolboy' 15 years ago. In principle you've got nothing against the idea, in fact you're more than happy to welcome a new convert to the fold. It's just that... well... this Sunday you were planning on tackling that particularly snotty trail and don't want to have to spend hours picking the bloke up and riding his bike through the tricky bits for him. And, if

you're honest with yourself, you don't want Johnny-come-Lately to smoke the lot of you either! So just how do you assess the riding ability of someone you've never clapped eyes on before?

Well in my case, when someone with more money than sense rings me up to enquire if one of my raids is within their capabilities, I virtually always employ the bike/fitness/experience equation. It might sound suspiciously like something extremely dry and technical, lifted straight out of the pages of US Dirt Bike and illustrated with sequential shots of Scott Summers. But in fact I'm proud to say, it is entirely of my own conception, and goes something like this:

Each element of the equation has a given value (eg big bike = -3, average bike = +1, small bike = +4) and the same goes for fitness and experience. To be able to successfully undertake a given route, the person in question has to score a given value for that route. Thus a very experienced, mega fit rider on a highly unsuitable bike like an Africa Twin (cue avalanche of letters from disgruntled AT owners), could tackle a particular raid, while a similarly mounted and equally experienced rider with the fitness level of Helmut Kohl, wouldn't have a hope in hell. Obviously a fit and experienced rider on a light bike can go pretty much anywhere. But I generally tend to weight the other factors more than fitness, and usually the system works pretty well. Just occasionally however, the Evans Ability Assessment Scale (Pat Pending) backfires in the most spectacular fashion.

Early on in what my father still refuses to call my career, two oldish geezers (no names no pack drill), wanted to sign up for a particularly challenging raid. Despite their advancing years and precarious health (I suppose you don't actually need a prostate to ride a motorcycle), they were adamant that with their bikes (small, light, four strokes) and years of experience (the sort only a geologist could measure), they'd have no problem.

Come the fateful day however, I quickly started to suspect that the famous Scott trial (in which they'd ridden numerous times - presumably when the manufacturer of the same name were still making motorcycles) might not have been as tough as everybody claimed. By 5pm when they and my sweeper Dominique still hadn't arrived at the lunch stop, it dawned on me we had a serious problem.

Now, given that to my mind they alone were solely responsible for the sorry situation in which they found themselves, I was somewhat surprised by the way they comprehensively

spat the dummy. Apparently 'the pace was too fast, the distances too long and the weather too hot.' A bit rich considering that on the phone they claimed to regularly ride 100 miles of the toughest trails in the UK - before breakfast. I consoled myself with the fact that their determined effort to walk off with my road books at least proved that they liked the route!

Obviously the major flaw in the equation is that people have a tendency to lie like flat fish, to such an extent that at one time the number of 'ex-works riders' who I was able to ride rings around started to give me serious delusions of grandeur. Happily, there is also out there a bunch of extremely modest riders who possess unpretentious machinery, and who put everybody firmly in their place.

One such individual who we will simply call Dave showed up one day on a Burgundy raid with the most knackered looking DR350 you've ever seen in your life. Fortunately I'd seen Dave ride before and wasn't duped by his unassuming manner and unlikely looking mount. Unfortunately, Mr All-mouth-and-Trousers, who'd just turned up on his brand new Gas Gas enduro hadn't been privileged enough to watch Dave in action before. Which is presumably why he sauntered up to Dave and began telling him how he too once owned a DR but had to sell it when his riding ability started to push the Suzuki beyond its performance envelope.

Of course, modest as ever, Dave just nodded and humbly admitted that he had yet to reach such a stage. A few kilometres after the start, in a moderately difficult section that Mr Mouth found rather more taxing than most, he was upset to see Dave go by him on one wheel and casually give the Gas Gas rider a friendly wave. Strangely I never saw Mr Mouth again after that weekend.

Obviously excessive modesty invalidates the Evans equation just as much as wild over-estimations of ability do likewise. And while it is genuinely difficult to assess one's own ability, I seriously suggest to you to err on the side of caution, because whatever you say and whatever you ride, your talent or lack of it will always come shining through in the end. Out on the trail, skill talks and bullsh*t walks, and even after a non-competitive day's riding, everybody can place everybody else in the pecking order with pin-point accuracy.

Sadly, as far as trying to gauge whether someone is capable of undertaking a given ride or not, there's no infallible solution. Which is why if anyone has a better way of judging ability down a telephone than my little equation, I'd like to hear from them.



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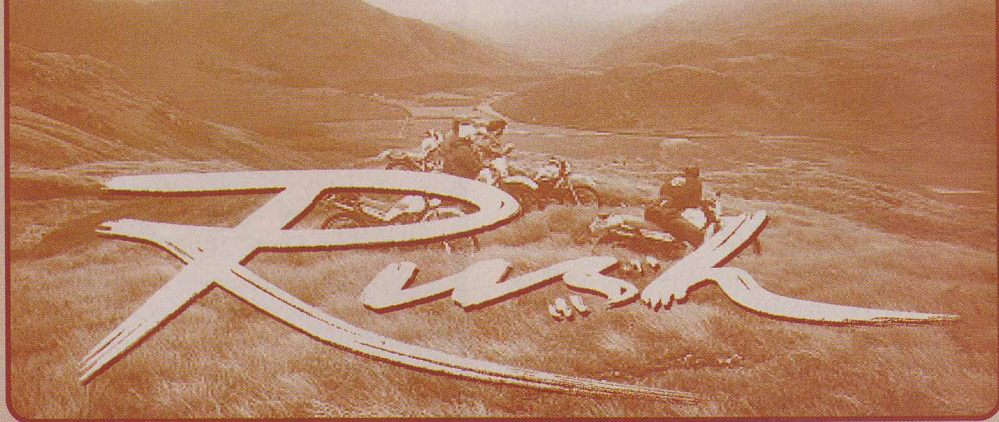
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G R O U N D



John Rushworth begins a new column with a story about the perils of trail riding alone in Scotland

Welcome to what will be (I hope) the first of many columns in TBM. Before I start, let me introduce myself and postulate why I of all people have been offered the chance to fill some valuable inches in my favourite magazine.

My name is John Rushworth, I'm 40-ish, an ex Royal Navy engineer, having also sometime worked my way from shop floor to boardroom - and back again. An exiled and well travelled Yorkshireman, I live and breathe motorcycles of all persuasions and now live in Scotland.

I don't like hard work or even working that much. I do what I like, and I generally like reading, writing and riding. If I'm not doing either of the first two, rest assured I'll be doing the third and getting as mucky as possible in the process. Computers and the Internet too are a passion, bordering on obsession, yet a necessary tool of my current trade. In terms of TBM I've been a regular contributor to the mag over the last year and a half and indeed often find myself at the other end of the editor's telephone line attempting to explain some techie dialectic or principal together with exuberant dialectic on the Internet revolution. This column however isn't about equations or Net.God solutions (though I may drop the odd gearhead and digital explanation from time to time), it's about trail riding - why,

where, how and what indeed it actually is.

In Scotland, trail riding can be best explained as a Catch 22 situation. Even if you've never read Joseph Heller's book which coined the phrase, you'll know how it works. Up here there are few designated by law or well documented vehicular rights of way, and many riders continue to ride by seeking permission from a few trail-friendly lairds. That's all well and good, but in order to establish a right of way, the law states that you must be riding a route without first obtaining permission. In other words, do the "right thing" and obtain permission first, and you effectively negate your opportunity to claim that route as a right of way at a later date.

On the other hand, if you decide not to obtain permission, you are now risking hostilities, since the right of way is not established the first time you ride it, but in fact built up over many years of continuous use by riding openly and peaceably without permission, although when you ride without permission you can be asked to leave if stopped and possibly have an interdict taken out against you. Ride with a lot of other riders and you further increase that risk. This explains in a nutshell why I often break some cardinal TRF rules: I ride on my own, and push the envelope of Scottish law, common or otherwise.

Now some years ago, I was the proud owner of

a Gilera RC600 official import which if you've never heard of it, was similar to the Northwest 558cc Supermoto, but with conventional forks, dirt suspension and dirt sized wheels. A unique bike with a lovely motor and a leccy boot, but I have to say, better on the road than off it. Incidentally, Gilera (who are Europe's oldest surviving motorcycle manufacturer - just), also produced an 'R' version of the bike with longer travel suspension and more dirt attitude (the RC600R). This was the production look-alike version of their successful desert bike which had a 750cc single cylinder motor and produced a verified 82bhp! Anyway, back to the stock UK RC600.

It was a holiday weekend and me and some chums from Glasgow were off hillwalking. Naturally I rode the RC to get to our meeting point which was Rannoch Station: a dead end tarmac road adjacent to the wilds of Rannoch moor. I arrived early at 8pm, the train wasn't due for another hour or so, and a quick pint at the pub-cum-station made a lot of sense. The pint slid down fast and as the evening looked inviting, and with time to spare, I thought I'd ride into the moor to the next train station (inaccessible by road) at Corroul (about 15 miles due East of Ben Nevis) and meet my walking buddies there instead.

This area is SSDT terrain and as it's some years since I rode the SSDT, I'd forgotten just how boggy the moor can be after the Highland holiday (it had been but a few weeks since the trial passed). The Gilera had only semi-off road tyres, and grip was interesting to say the least. It was tough going and getting cooler, but by my calcs I figured I'd meet the train no problem. Not to be. After yet another peat bog the train slipped past in the distance across the moor looking surreal as I peered through the Baskerville mist that was descending. The bogs got bigger, the light got hazier, and after stalling the RC with its high gearing yet again, I tried to urge my way out of the mother of all bogs. I hit the magic button of combustible life - but now it just whirred laboriously and then clicked instead of grrr'ed. Flat battery then - with just enough juice to fire the solenoid for the starter but no rotating sounds. I took a look at the map. I was now a good 15 miles in any direction from tarmac or human beings. My mates were probably well into the hills and snuggling into their sleeping bags sipping single malt, while I was stranded. No kick-start. No energy left and doubtful even if I had, that the big RC was removable from the bog by muscle power alone.

Of course salvation was only a 15 mile walk away so I'd be pretty quick in getting back to civilisation - to save the rescue services from

looking for me - and to prevent the ignominy of the local rag's 'Foolhardy biker stuck in hills' story. What then to do about the bike? 300+ lbs of metal to be removed from a remote area is quite a few walks with pals and rucksacks to get the disassembled bits out.

I thought about my RAC policy and the 'reasonable access' clause for off road vehicle recovery. I had my mobile phone with me, but reckoned I was outside what they would consider to be reasonable limits! As the rain started I pondered my position and began walking toward the nearest civilisation. Shelter wasn't to be found until eight miles later, by which time it was about 2:30am. It may only have been a small wooden bridge but there was enough room under there, amidst the sheep dung, to stay dry and warm. At least I had a sleeping bag and a petrol stove for a brew. Warm and refreshed I pondered how to get the bike out. Funny things happen to one's mind in such situations. At the time a friend who had just got a trials bike, happened to be the Royal Navy search and rescue pilot for Scotland. I think the helicopter was a Wessex something or other - anyhow it was a whopper chopper with great lift capacity. In my imaginings I thought it would be fun to get hold of him and get the bike winched out.

As morning dawned I came to my senses and decided it was better to keep things low profile. The sun was rising and it was getting warmer which made me think that as I hadn't absolutely canded the battery - it may just have recovered enough oomph to stir the RC into life. I trekked the eight miles back to the bike and smoked a lot of ciggies as I waited for the sun to position itself to warm the engine and battery. Renewed muscle power and light to see by allowed me to ready the bike for a powered exit from the bog. The moment of truth arrived. If the RC didn't turn over and fire on the first or second hit it was going to be another walk back and reluctant fame.

I hit the starter button and she fired up - just - and boy did I make sure I kept her going as I gingerly turned the choke off. Second gear, push and shove and also trying to limit the wheelspin and further bog digging activities. Suddenly I was out - and on my way after loading up my rucksack and donning full riding kit. That journey back to tarmac safety was the most diligent riding I've ever done and bizarrely, I enjoyed every minute of the adventure.

Would I have learned anything had I not pushed the envelope of law, reason and riding ability? Maybe, maybe not, but one thing's for sure. In Scotland, trail riding can sometimes turn out to be more of an adventure than you'd ever planned...

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TRAIL TIPS

I was thinking of renaming this month's tips page the Pennypinchers Guide after we got this note from reader Ed Hill who signs himself off as 'Ed the poor student'. We begin this month then with some tips for (how shall we put it), the financially challenged trail rider. Ed says: 'Get secondhand O-ring chains from bike breakers for a fiver each. Make a chain oiler out of any suitable container that fits your bike, fit a tap and a length of pipe, and your five quid chain should last for ages (that's always assuming it wasn't knackered when you bought it - TBM). Use secondhand enduro or MX tyres, they only cost £10 from MX shops. Buy your wheel bearings from special bearing factors (rather than bike shops), they're loads cheaper, and the world-wide part number should be stamped on the side of the bearing. Finally when you're out trail riding with your mates and you stop for lunch at a cafe, have the cheapest meal available then polish off everyone else's when they are full. Also, ride back to your mate's house together and you might get offered supper as well!'

Obviously been taking some tips from our own Paul Blezard there Ed. By the way, Ed signs off his letter with a PS. 'How about a photo shoot with your topless model Charmaine in the Peak District with me and my mates?' Peak District, Mates? Ha

ha, you should be a script writer for Carry-On Trailing mate. Well I'll ask her for you but I think she's doing her hair that day...

Dave Hawkins from Hereford offers this piece of sound advice. 'The battery on a non-electric start trail bike like a KMX200 for instance can be junked in order to save weight. To enable the voltage regulator to still regulate correctly, a capacitor must be wired in place of the battery. Obtain a 10,000 microfarad, 35 volt capacitor from Maplins electronic supplies, part number FF31J (catalogue available at WH Smiths). And solder it to the battery wires (observing polarity). Now insulate the tags with tape and cable-tie the capacitor to the battery compartment. Obviously there will be no lights or indicators etc when the engine is stopped, but everything will work once the motor is running (a similar system is used on CRMs etc). I used this mod very successfully on an enduroised KMX200.' Cheers Dave.

Finally Don Beane from Bedford writes after reading our tyre changing article in last month's issue: 'Don't bother with rim tape, get a roll of PVC tape, go around the rim at least three times then trim out the holes with a Stanley knife. Before you do this, open out the holes with a drill at least 1/16" bigger to give more to aim at when trying to get the valve in.' Cheers Don. Keep your tips rolling in and we'll keep publishing them.

**This month
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ignition and
a few tyre
tips...**

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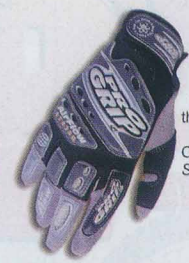
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NEW FOR '99

FROM THE '98 MUNICH BIKE SHOW AND BEYOND

Traditionally the bi-annual German show is at Cologne. Less glamorous than Paris or Tokyo, the Cologne show nevertheless is (or was) the place where the manufacturers often chose to debut new models. This year the show moved to a brand new site at Munich, and promised to be even bigger and better than any German show before it.

It was. Eight halls and 80,000 sq metres of show space dedicated entirely to motorcycles, clothing and equipment (in the past the German show had been a mix of bikes and bicycles). Disappointingly however, there was not a whole lot for dirt bike fans to get really excited about. There were the usual model updates and bold new graphics on display, but no sign of the replacement for Suzuki's sound but seasoned DR350 (the so-called DRX400). Nor was there any sign of Honda's XR600 replacement (the XR650X?). Word from insiders at Honda America is that there's a trailie version of the XR400 under evaluation in 450cc form and with an electric start - which might make a good rally bike - but again, Honda were remaining tight lipped about any new dirt oriented models. Also making a non-appearance were any of the new breed of super-light four strokes -



CCM's 604E Sport now comes with a rack and other road-going niceties

with the exception of the new KTM 520EXC-E (and 400). KTM were the first to respond to the threat of YZ/WR400 world domination, by launching their own super-compact thumper. The new bike which will not be available until this time next year (though John Deacon is rumoured to be getting one to contest next year's British Enduro Championship with), has been speedily brought to production by using a combination of existing engine and cycle parts (notably the barrel, head and valvegear from Husaberg, which KTM owns), and mating it with an all new compact (right side kick, left side drive), KTM-designed bottom end - slotted into a 250cc, two-stroke chassis.

Although lacking the double overhead cam

configuration of the Yamaha, the combination of light but powerful simplicity has resulted in a bike which KTM claims undercuts the weight of the Yam and yet puts out even more power. More significantly perhaps, the new EXC-E features both a balancer shaft, hydraulic clutch and electric start as standard on the enduro model. Expect a dry



Husky four-strokes get a new oil pump and USD forks for '99



KTM continues to refine its excellent EXC range

weight of around 115-118kg when it finally materialises next year.

Also arriving next year (although hopefully somewhat earlier) will be the new compact thumpette from TM. Slotted into their new perimeter-frame, the 250cc bike (which will

be followed a few months later by a 400), offers dohc, fuel injection, electric start and a unique new design of induction (apparently), with fuel being fed directly through the top of the head between the cams. Gas Gas too are known to be working on a 400cc thumper



Left: The Highland supermoto uses a Folan V-twin for muscle power. Above: Yuk

for launch next year, though whether it'll have a Gas Gas designed engine is not yet clear. They did show their new 200cc model (see this month's 200cc test), and a new 300cc open class bike. Also showing their own version of an open classer was Dutch firm Maico, whose 500cc, two-stroke enduro bike offers no less than a claimed 67hp - gulp.

It all seems to have gone a bit quiet at US MTB-makers Cannondale recently. The word is that testing of their 408cc electric start thumper has shown up a few teething prob-



NEW FOR '99

FROM THE '98 MUNICH BIKE SHOW AND BEYOND

lems with the design, and we're unlikely to see any sign of the new bike before the back end of next year.

Yamaha were proudly displaying a new 'long-stroke' YZ250, but next year's enduro bikes - the WR250 and WR400 - will soldier on with their existing engines with only minor changes. And it looks like there's no sign of a leccy boot for the Japanese thumper for at least another year. Kawasaki also had new MX bikes but only minor revisions to the enduro range with the KDX220 (see this month's 200cc test), evolving from their 200cc clubman tool. The KLX300 is unchanged for next year, but the big news from Kawasaki was a serious price cut across the entire



range. For Italian manufacturer Husqvarna, it was also a matter of evolution rather than revolution. New upside down forks and a new oil pump are the major revisions to their four stroke range this year, which persists with the left side kick for at least another season. CCM also showed the evolution of their 604E sport which now features a useful rear rack and other road-going niceties. But most of all they showed that with their new financial backers, they were continuing to produce British-built dirt diggers for the foreseeable future.

Some companies who did have new bikes at the show were the eastern Europeans who took advantage of



Military musce or army surplus? You decide



Pix: Ian Kerr

the general lack of new models to proudly show off their eastern blocks. The Praga 250 is a czech designed two-stroke trail and enduro bike featuring marzocchi and WP suspension. In trailbike form it comes with indicators (and other road accessories) and a claimed 32hp, while this goes



Gas Gas Showed their new 300 at Munich

up to 40hp if you want the same bike in enduro format. At around about £2300 it seems reasonably cheap.

Despite the lack of new dirty hardware, the show was a genuine success and the future for dirt biking still looks strong. It's just that we'll have to wait a little while longer before we can get our paws on the really exciting new stuff...

Top three: The eastern European manufacturers took the opportunity to show their dirt hardware at Munich. The Praga (top) comes in both trail bike and enduro form.

The 200cc class is once again alive and kicking with the introduction of two new models for 1999. We tested them out to see if there was an overall winner...



Pix: Neil Pidduck

The TBM Test Team



Clive Garnham, 34

Owens a KX125 enduro and KTM640 Rallye. Has spent years racing dirt bikes trying to perfect the ultimate crash. This year he achieved his goal, taking himself out of the Tunisie Rallye on the final day, 90km from the finish. Expert level crasher and racer.



Simon Pavey, 31

Owens the world's rattiest XR600 which is not yet 12 months old. Distinguished himself by finishing the Dakar at his first attempt, though fame hasn't gone to his head or he would've improved his hairstyle by now. Expert level racer, sportsman level haircut.

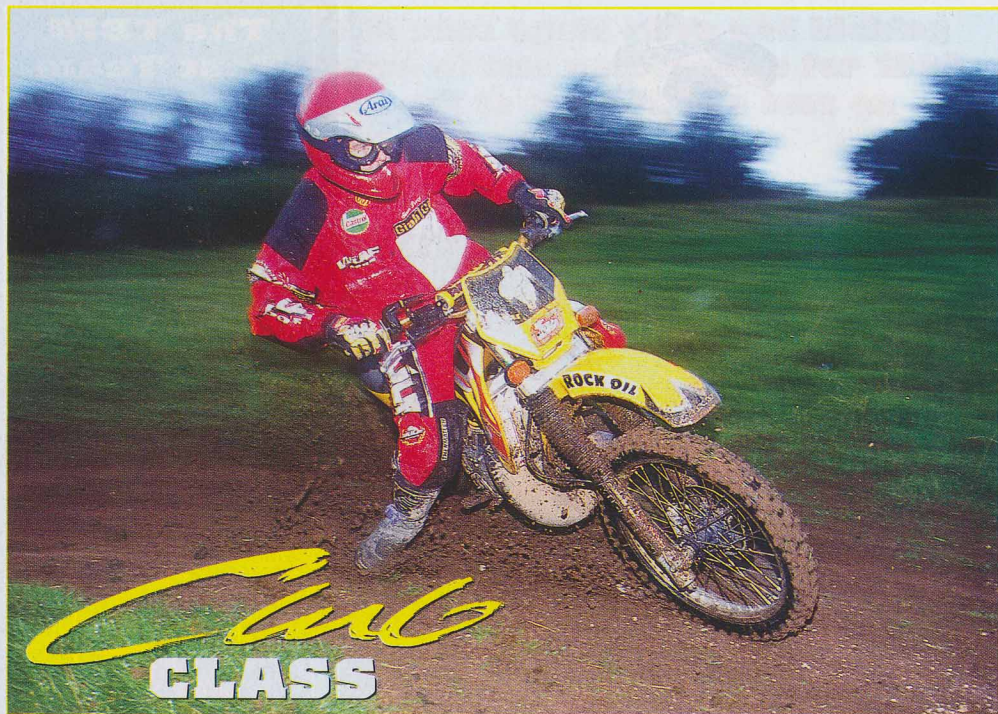


Si Melber, 33

Editor and all round charmer (ahem), owner of the UK's newest Husaberg 501 - rebuilt every week from brand new spares. Famous for borrowing a KLX650 test bike from Kawasaki and abandoning it in the middle of the Sahara Desert. Expert level ligger

**Gas Gas
EC200
V
KDX220
V
KTM
200EXC**

CLASS



It was the test we were most looking forward to. Our 200cc shootout had been planned from the moment that we heard the 200cc class was about to come alive again, with Gas Gas following KTM's successful 200EXC with the launch of their own 200cc version of the respected 250cc Endurocross. To make things even spicier, Kawasaki chose this moment to launch an updated version of the good old KDX200 - now in torquier 220cc form. The scene was set for a showdown between the three protagonists in the clubman class. We rounded them up, loaded them into the 38-ton, articulated, TBM works semi, and headed for the hills. Sometimes work and play can get just a teeny bit blurred at the edges - right?

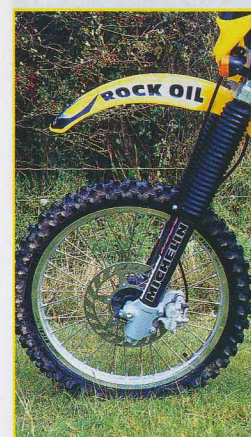
It has to be said we all love the idea of 200cc, two-stroke enduro bikes - quick enough to be fun, but light and controllable enough to use in any conditions. Don't think of them as emasculated 250s, more like burly 125s. They're easy to chuck around, and more than capable of turning in respectable lap times on a special test. But best of all they're just sheer unadulterated fun, they don't scare the pants off you and what they lose in power to a 250, they more than make up for with rideability. Many clubman riders will find they're much quicker on a 200cc machine than they are fighting the power of a full blown 250.

Being in control and working the bike hard to extract maximum speed is always better than just hanging on for the ride.

Despite all the preparation, the one thing we couldn't plan for was the weather. Weeks of rain had turned our enduro course to sludge and though the conditions cleared temporarily, the weather closed in making the test that much more appropriate to the sort of conditions you often find at enduros in this country. This is what happened...

First Impressions

With the three pristine bikes glistening in the watery sunlight we took the chance to examine each in turn while the photos were being taken; picking over the details, design, build quality and ultimately serviceability of all three. There were remarkable differences and similarities between each of the machines, so here's a brief resumé of what we noted. Two out of the three are European (KTM & GG), two out of three are under 200cc (GG & KTM), and two out of three have hydraulically operated clutches (GG & KTM). Two out of three feature a perimeter frame (KDX & GG), two out of three utilise a linkage based rear suspension (GG & KDX), and two out of three use 45mm Marzocchi front forks (KTM & GG). All use a liquid-cooled, single cylinder,



Above: Gas Gas resplendent in banana yellow. Top right: Gasser dials seem a little cheap - but at least its got some. Left: 45mm Marzocchi forks felt superb. Right: Sleeved down 250 motor had to be worked hard to get the best out of it - but had more go than the KDX



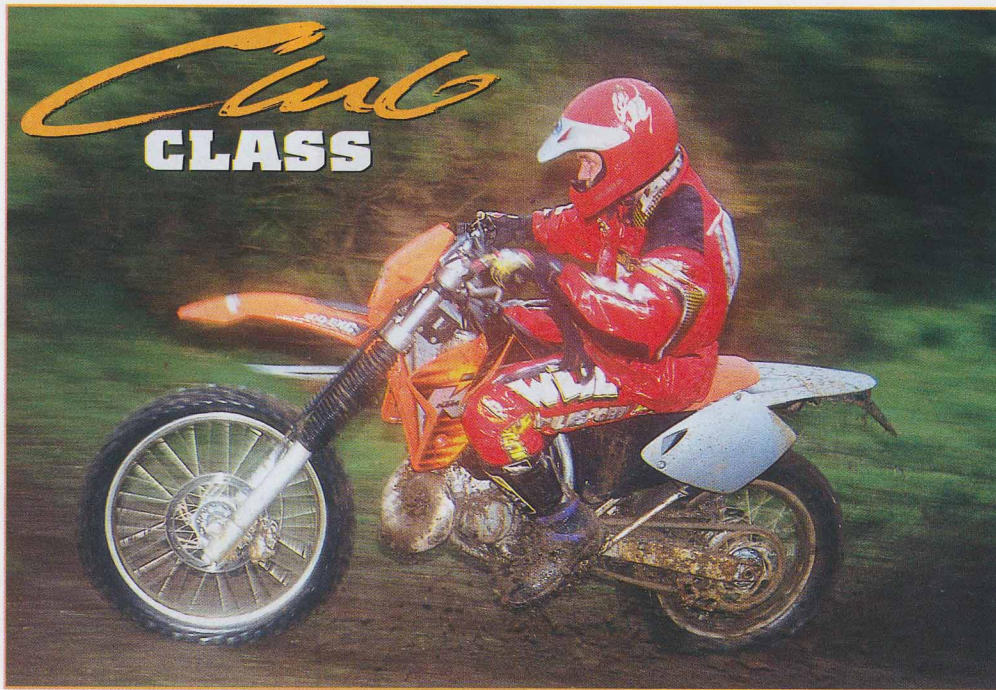
power-valve equipped two stroke motor to supply the gee gees, and a six-speed, wide ratio gearbox to transfer the power.

Build quality differs enormously between all three, and here the KTM stood out. It was superbly equipped (though perhaps not as nicely detailed as parts of the Gasser), it was the best designed, the best finished and arguably the best screwed together. Take a look under the rear mudguard and you'll find no exposed wiring, no awkward nooks and crannies, just a smooth inner guard which helps keep all of the filth chucked up by the rear wheel away from the rear of the engine. It's only a small point, but nevertheless one which shows how much thought has gone into the design of the bike. Pick any part of the KTM (with the exception of the airbox which is fiddly and lets in too much water), and you'll find sensible attention to detail.

The Gas Gas in contrast was both better and worse than the other two in a few areas. The

Gas Gas EC200

Price:	£3666
Engine:	Liquid cooled, two-stroke, single with power-valve
Capacity:	199.4cc
Bore & stroke:	62.5x65mm
Frame:	Deltabox-style, chrome-moly, perimeter frame with alloy swingarm
Front susp:	Marzocchi Magnum 45s, fully adjustable
Rear susp:	Öhlins shock with linkage, fully adjustable
Wheelbase:	1475mm
Seat height:	940mm
Fuel cap:	9.5L
Race weight:	119kg
Importer:	Gas Gas UK, 01298 25460



forks, triple clamps, frame, sidestand and swinging arm are a work of art. There's a really neat radiator expansion bottle which sits just forward of (and wraps around) the headstock and the Gasser has huge rads offering plenty of cooling - that's all good. On the other hand, the detailing around the rear fender was scruffy, with exposed wiring and an odd bolt-on rear secondary sub-frame that's just going to attract the dirt. The engine castings look a bit rough and the left side of the motor (the generator cover) sticks out a long way. There are also exposed wires to be found and an annoying mixture of fasteners - the sidepanels are held on by a mix of socket headed bolts and cross-headed ones, plus, we didn't like the fact that the clutch lever banjo bolt was in contact with the handlebar cross-brace, preventing the clutch lever from being pivoted around the bars. In the event of a bad spill it's possible it could snap off, leaving you clutchless. (It should be mentioned that the Renthal bars fitted to our test bike aren't standard equipment, but they're the sort of addition any owner is likely to make). On the plus side, the footpegs and riding position in general felt the best of all, and it did come fitted with speedo, indicators and was fully road legal - plus it was the bike we liked the styling of best. Clive summed it up when he said: 'There are areas of the Gas Gas which you'd point at and have to laugh because they're so poor, but there

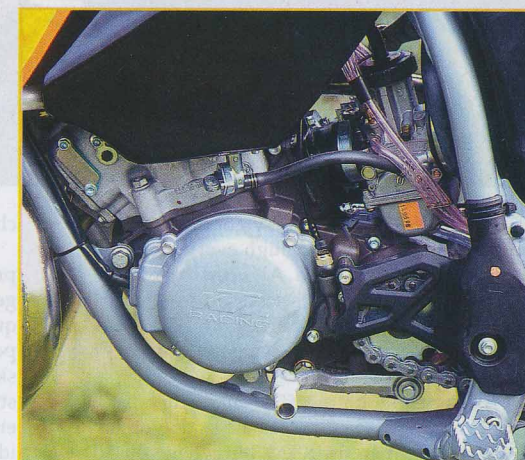
are other areas that are so nice, you'd want to frame them and put 'em on your wall.' Quite.

The KDX is somewhere in between. A no-nonsense, no-frills, well built and easy to work on enduro bike - period. There are 8mm bolts virtually everywhere (though it does require a screwdriver to remove the side-panels). But everything is easy to get to and service - just what an owner needs. It loses out to the KTM on the detailing - for example the KTM comes with frame guards and alloy bars as standard, but it's not too far behind. It's pretty well screwed together, is the only bike to come with a rear fender bag and a plug spanner as standard. On the frighteningly accurate TBM scales it weighed in at 119kg (fully fuelled), exactly the same as the Gas Gas, but the KTM was the clear winner at 107kg. In fairness, none of us felt we could notice the additional weight of the Gasser, though the KDX certainly felt a few pounds heavier, but interestingly both the Gasser and KDX have got decent grab handles which helps when it comes to manhandling them if you do get them stuck.

Finish/equip/design	Clive	Si P	Si M
1	KDX	KTM/KDX	KTM
2	KTM	Gas	Gas
3	Gas	Gas	KDX



Above: The KTM is the best designed and best built bike of the bunch. Top right: Simple electronic speedo is amazingly compact and light, but has numerous functions. Left: The KTM's Marzocchi 45s felt the hardest forks of the three. Right: Power-house motor has strength in depth

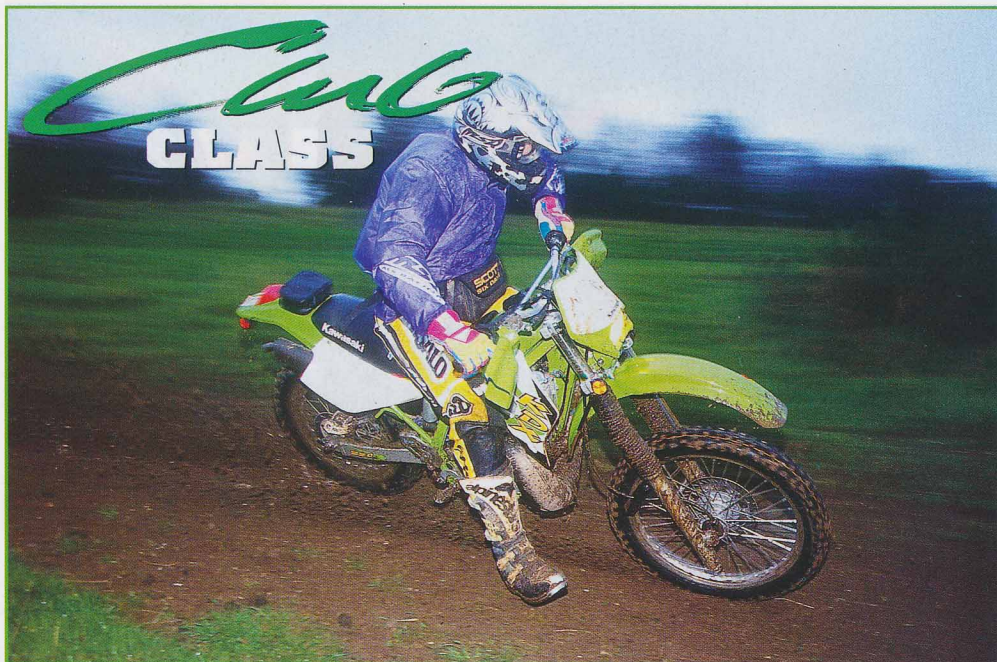


Riding Them - Gas Gas first

Specifications aside, this was a contest which was going to be fought and won in the dirt. They all start easily enough with just a kick or two to get them going - the Gasser fluffed a plug but we won't dwell on that - then it was into the mud and a chance to thrash them around before swapping bikes and doing it all over again. I started on the Gasser and loved it straight away. It felt good right from the off with easy, predictable handling, excellent suspension and superb brakes. The riding position felt just right for me allowing me to get well forward on the bike and peg the front end down. The power characteristics make for a really usable machine with just enough midrange and plenty of zip at the top end. It doesn't really impress with its power, but it'll get up to a fair pace and then really crack on if you wind it open. In many ways it feels like a bored-out 125 rather than what it really is - a down-sized 250.

KTM 200EXC

Price:	£4095
Engine:	Liquid cooled, two-stroke, single with power-valve
Capacity:	193cc
Bore & stroke:	64x60mm
Frame:	Steel semi double cradle frame with alloy swingarm
Front susp:	Marzocchi Magnum 45s, fully adjustable
Rear susp:	WP PDS, fully adjustable
Wheelbase:	1455mm
Seat height:	925mm
Fuel cap:	9.0L
Race weight:	106.5kg
Importer:	KTM Sport M/C UK 01280 705 888



Interestingly, I've never really got on all that well with the 250cc version, though every owner I've ever talked to loves them. All I can say is that whereas the 250cc always seems to have a surplus of power, the 200 has just enough (and all of it usable), and that's part of the reason for buying a 200 in the first place.

Clive agreed with me: 'The engine felt just about right with the Gas Gas' he said, 'you have to rev it more than the KTM, but when you do the rewards are there.' Though Si Pavey thought otherwise: 'The Gas Gas engine has to be worked hard like a 125' he argued 'if you can keep it on the boil it's okay, but you need to think about it a lot more than with the KTM.'

Katoom

As Si P said: 'The KTM's got that feelgood factor to the power - even for play-riding it feels superb. For a 200 it's remarkable with power everywhere you look; power at the bottom, in the midrange, and power up top. It'll comfortably outrun the other two bikes in every gear and throughout the rev range, plus it'll climb hills a gear higher than either of them. Strangely (and in contrast to the Gas Gas), because of the amount of power it puts out, it doesn't feel like a big 125 (which is exactly what it is), but nearer to a 250. Compared to the other two, you never want for any more beans and the motor spins round so quickly, even if you do manage to bog it down, a touch on the light

clutch has it screaming again.

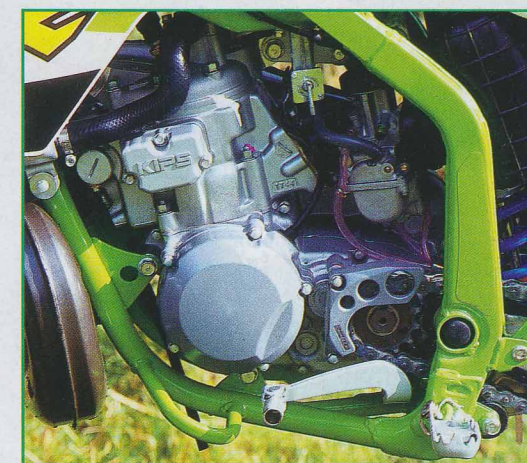
But controlling all that power means paying a price when it comes to ease of handling. Don't get me wrong, the KTM handles superbly, it's quick steering and turns easily, but remember, power is the enemy of handling and it takes a skilled pilot to keep the KTM running in a straight line in the slippery conditions we experienced. Clive summed it up for us: 'The KTM is an ideal bike for an expert rider. I don't feel I'm aggressive enough to make the most of it, particularly in a long six or seven hour enduro. It whips through the revs and breaks the tyre loose so quickly that you have to be much more precise with the throttle. If I owned one, I'd look at getting a heavier flywheel to tame down some of that rapid power delivery.' Adding for good measure: 'I don't know if I'm quicker or slower on the KTM, but I never felt relaxed.'

Si Pavey on the other hand adored the KTM: 'I just love that engine' he said, 'it gives you so much choice. On muddy, slippery climbs it'll go up either way - either grunting up out of the powerband or powering up on the pipe. It really is awesome for a 200.'

I fell somewhere between the two, I loved the KTM's power, it makes climbing hills a doddle, but it does tend to break traction easily. That's okay most of the time but it can catch you unawares occasionally. You can't really fault the KTM's handling, it's just that with a short 125-



Above: The KDX continues a long line of green enduro bikes. Top right: Steel bars and an odo are all you get. Left: KDX forks felt the mushiest, but work well nevertheless. Right: The extra capacity shows up in the KDX's lower end grunt. Smoothest, most tractable motor of the three

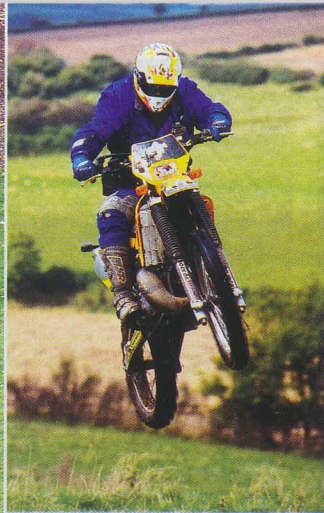


sized wheelbase, you've got to have your wits about you if you want to hang onto the thing in the slime. But given a fast dry track, it'll comfortably outpace the others.

But when it comes to suspension, the KTM has to give second best to the Gasser. The second generation PDS works fine - KTM have done some fairly major revalving to the internals of the WP shock, surrounding it with a progressively wound spring, and the end result is pretty positive. We can't claim to have tested it in a variety of conditions, but generally it felt much better than the early PDS set-up. Unfortunately, the same can't be said about the KTM's Marzocchi 45s. Although they're the self-same units as those fitted on the Gas Gas, they felt much harsher in action on the KTM, and some setting up would certainly be required to make them feel as supple as the Gassers front legs. Interestingly all the bikes had adjustable forks but the Gas Gas was

Kawasaki KDX220

Price:	£3425 inc spares kit
Engine:	Liquid cooled, two-stroke, single with power-valve
Capacity:	216cc
Bore & stroke:	69x58mm
Frame:	Steel perimeter semi-double cradle frame with steel swingarm
Front susp:	Kayaba fork, fully adjustable
Rear susp:	Uni-Trak linkage, KYB shock, fully adjustable
Wheelbase:	1435mm
Seat height:	N/A
Fuel cap:	11.0L
Race weight:	119kg
Importer:	KMUK, 01628 851000



Clive CLASS

the only one which had hand adjustable clickers on top of the fork legs (one for compression, one for rebound damping), and a similar clicker on the rear Öhlins shock - allowing for rapid suspension changes at checkpoints if conditions vary.

Green Meanie

The KDX was the oddball here. If the KTM was a pair of Linford Christie's running shoes, and the Gas Gas a pair of Nike trainers, then the KDX would be your favourite pair of tennis pumps. Comfortable, forgiving and friendly, but not the sharpest thing on the block. The KDX certainly felt the most torque of the three with soft power coming in way down low. It found grip in the slippery conditions better than the other bikes, but it ran out of steam earlier, reluctant to rev on high into the screaming zone. Despite the largest capacity, it felt the least powerful of the three,

and certainly an owner could expect to extract much more top end power from the KDX by opening up the airbox a bit and changing the pipe. In fairness the standard power characteristics will suit some people, and depending on the conditions, the KDX was either the most or least fun to ride, but it was never far behind the other bikes and in really slippery conditions would overhaul the Gas Gas and give the KTM a run for its money.

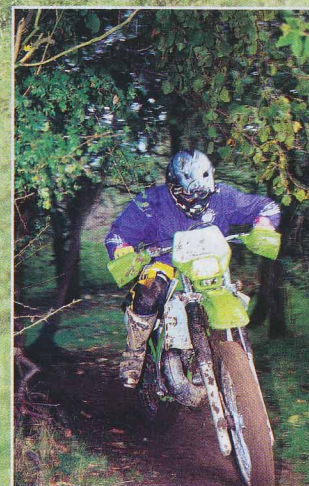
Engine	Clive	Si P	Si M
1	Gas	KTM	KTM
2	KDX/KTM	KDX	Gas
3		Gas	KDX

Finding traction in the ever worsening conditions was the KDX's strong suit. Part of that is

Main pic: It's a tough job being a test rider for TBM. Sometimes we have to force ourselves to get out of bed on a morning!
Left: Clive's been doing a lot of jumping recently!



Si P fixes Clive's flat, while Clive stands around and shivers



down to the power delivery and part due to the soft suspension - perfect for finding grip in slippery terrain, but a little lacking in precision when it comes to pinning the front end in the dry. Ultimately it's the sort of bike you'd choose for a long and probably wet event like the Welsh Two Day. It might be less than razor sharp at steering, but it gets the job done, had the softest perch of all three, the biggest tank and the quietest exhaust. Advantages which make it the first choice as a trail and enduro all rounder.

As Clive put it: 'The KDX is not remarkable, but it is just great everywhere. It really needs better suspension if you're going to ride it at pace, and though it wallows a little bit, it wallows predictably and reasonably quickly too.'

Above left: the KDX has always been a good woods bike. Below. When the weather changed, the KDX rider enjoyed an advantage



Adding 'In many ways I'd rather ride it than the KTM, it's got all the good features KDXs have always had, and they're exceedingly reliable. The engine is distinctly different to the KDX200, but I'm not sure which I prefer - I think it revs slower, but it's got more torque.' Si P was also very positive about the KDX: 'If I was going to buy a bike for the odd event, a bit of trail riding and just larking around on, I'd buy the KDX before either of the other two. It's going to go forever, it's quick enough and it's easy to work on.' Say's it all really.

Handling	Clive Gas	Si P Gas	Si M Gas
1	KDX/KTM	KTM	KTM
2		KDX	KDX
3			

By mid afternoon we'd tried out each of the bikes in varying conditions. We'd repaired a puncture on the Gasser and noted down some riding impressions on each of the bikes. But despite differences of opinion, all the talk was of Gas Gas and KTM - the KDX hardly got a look in. By the time we'd scooped our sarnies and finished making notes, the weather had taken a turn for the worse. Suddenly, as the course deteriorated into mush, the KDX was back on the agenda as the bike we all wanted to ride in the worsening conditions. Strange how that happens. Here's how Clive saw it...

Clive Garnham

You could be forgiven for thinking that the KTM would be my favourite bike of the three. After all, it has an awesome engine, the best pedigree and the highest levels of equipment. I even said that if I was shelling out my hard earned for one of the three it would have to (grudgingly) be the KTM! But given the choice of the three, on the day, it was the one I least wanted to ride. So what gives?

Let me elaborate: On paper it's not a fair comparison, and indeed on the day, the KDX was often only fairly light refreshment between courses on the two race pedigree machines. Compared to the Marzocchi and Ohlins/WP-fest of the other two, the KDX has nothing on its spec sheet in its favour other than a theoretical 20cc advantage! But that is so unfair on a fine bike, it's unrepresentative and misses the point of the whole test. So don't dismiss the KDX yet.

On the other hand you would imagine the KTM and Gas Gas to be similar propositions to each other. Trim, taught, thoroughly suspended and supposedly fly-weight, they would leave the KDX literally and metaphorically wallowing in their roost. But of course as with all these things, it wasn't that simple. It even ended up polarising our opinions as we discussed their merits at half time; Si P and myself retiring to our respective corners and defending our preferred marques to the hilt, Si M acting as referee.

But later as the rain descended on a slick grass-track type course, virtually all of our arguments were rubbish as the KDX suddenly blasted through the gloom as probably the most rideable in those awful conditions. The KTM and Gas Gas would only turn the odd quick lap between bobbles, wild slides and near crashes. The KDX's slower revving torque is a different proposition entirely to the low end power of the KTM, it allowed the green machine to find almost uncanny traction; and on a subsequent ride even allowed it to tractor embarrassingly past the editorial Husaberg on a snotty uphill off camber that found the 501 unable to find any sort of purchase! Yet in true KDX style it still has a very respectable burst of speed to get it around a special



test competitively. That's why KDXs are so popular.

So how to make sense of all this? Well for a start they are all great bikes but now's not the time to be kidding yourself... If you're not a top clubman or into the Expert class, the KTM (as tested) will whip you to a frustrated pulp! The Gas Gas will help you on your way from the clubman to Expert class, but hinder you if you're not a competent clubman, and the KDX will be a joy to own for everything short of ballistic clubmen.

With the KTM I have to keep reminding myself this is a 200 I'm talking about. It has got such an awesome motor that it's unfair to be pitching it against other 200s. This thing is like a 250 compared to the other two. It has more power everywhere, but I also think that that is part of its downfall. It builds revs so quickly that it causes trouble, all of a sudden you find it wheel-spinning or wheeling or just pounding you physically as it explodes down the track! Yes I know it's only a 200, so where the hell does it get all that power from? It's got a huge piece of modern art snaking around from the exhaust port to the muffler but the Gas Gas does too, so that can't be it? Its got a rocket valve or some equally silly name but again the Gas Gas has a power valve too. They both enjoy case reed induction, so what? I don't know,

I guess the KTM just has to be a 250 and we've all been duped!

As delivered I felt the suspension of the KTM was equal worst for polar opposite reasons to the KDX. Obviously the KDX was very soft front and rear, and much time, money or effort would have to be invested to bring the suspension up to the sort of levels that the engine and chassis can handle. But at the other extreme the KTM was rigid and harsh, maybe the power tearing through the back wheel didn't help in making it react in a compliant way to bumps and ruts. Unfortunately based on this ride and despite desperately wanting to like a linkless rear suspension, I'm yet to be convinced about this PDS thing. Again the forks, though similar Marzochis to those on the Gas Gas, lacked compliance, after some harsh jolts and a huge tankslapper, I started thinking of a steering damper or some serious time adjusting or re-valving them to work.

So far I've barely mentioned the Gas Gas simply because it was such an even, predictable machine. On the day, it handled far better, was suspended far better and braked far better than the other two, and all it really lacked was some more torque to keep the others riders happy. I've been riding a converted KX125 for 2-3 years (amongst other things) and so felt far more at home with this type of engine. I'm a great





Second Opinion

I have to rate the Gas Gas last in my book, simply because I wouldn't recommend that anybody buy one - here's why. It has the best handling agreed, but for a 200 it lacks torque, and needs to be ridden with the aggression of a 125. It also lacks in the details - different sizes and configuration of fasteners will make it awkward to work on, particularly at a race. This is bad.

believer that this type of power is not necessarily a disadvantage in a lot of conditions, and indeed gives your body a break at points in a race. Perhaps the only other area that let the Gas Gas down was detailing, it's really inexcusable these days to have a multitude of different fasteners to contend with when working on an enduro bike. The KTM and KDX abounded with 8mm heads and bristled with good details - the KDX getting the nod here thanks to some extra well thought out ideas that show its years of evolution.

By way of a conclusion then the Gas Gas is my first choice, but not necessarily the bike I would buy with my own wedge. True it undercuts the Kostly KTM by several hundred pounds and were I to purchase with my heart, the Gasser is the one to go for. But my head says KTM, based on the economics of quality, a proven quantity and the fact that I would certainly either modify it (or my riding) to come up with some sort of happy partnership. I would be investigating a heavy flywheel immediately and maybe an altered exhaust pipe to tone the thing down. The unfortunate reality is that it's probably easier and cheaper to start from the top of the performance hill and work downwards back to an acceptable level, than to start from lower down and try to work up.

To me there was no outright winner, the decision as to which 200 to go for, starts and ends with you, based on how and where you ride, economics and an honest appraisal of where you want to get to with your riding. Only you can know which one is really best for you, but for me - it was banana yellow!

The KDX220 is strange. In the performance stakes the Kawasaki loses everywhere. It has the softest suspension, the most cumbersome handling, and probably the least power. However, sometimes the whole doesn't quite equal the sum of the parts, and this bike is incredibly good. For the majority of riders this is the best bike. It's easy to ride, doesn't wear you out, doesn't punish mistakes and is a bundle of fun, especially if the going gets a bit ugly. Having used one for a race in Spain recently, both Clive and I know how easy they are to work on and how little work they need. The price is good and the spares kit great. Don't hesitate to lay your cash out.

However, the KTM wins for me because of that engine. It's a killer. Loads of power everywhere. Too much - but it looks great and when you want to launch at, or over something, it makes you feel like a hero (just before it throws you on your face because you're not). It's also the lightest and its style turns heads. Don't buy this bike for any good reason other than the fact that you can.

Simon Pavey

Conclusion

So there you have it, three different opinions about three quite different bikes. We figured (wrongly, as it turned out) that splitting them might prove difficult and that the result would come down to what we preferred on the day. The truth was nothing like. Each bike was totally different in its characteristics and plus points, and really to judge them against each other is almost to miss the point. Perhaps the best conclusion would be to say that the sportsman/clubman

rider should opt for the KDX, whereas if you're a competent clubman go for the Gas Gas, and if you're getting on for expert then take the KTM200. We're not saying a clubman couldn't ride the Katoom, nor that an expert wouldn't like the KDX, but ultimately each bike fits the bill for their intended rider. Or maybe you'd break them down into a

different classification: if you mostly ride hare & hounds events choose the KTM; for a mixture of hare & hounds and enduros take the Gas Gas, and if you want to ride snotty enduros and do some trail riding then opt for the KDX. There is no outright winner (or loser for that matter), only three extremely good but quite different dirt bikes. There's a fair difference in price between the cheapest (KDX) and the most expensive (KTM), but price isn't the only factor you should consider when purchasing one of these bikes. In truth, any one of them is capable of providing you with a whole lot of fun, but it's up to you to decide which best suits your needs.



Club
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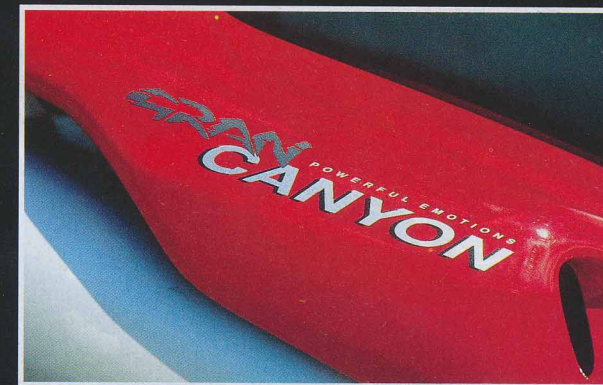
Pics: Si Melber

Gran Tourismo

Is the new Cagiva Gran Canyon a trail bike? Possibly not, but like the Yamaha TDM and Honda SL650, it can trace its shape and fine handling back to its big trailie roots. Si Melber and Paul Blezard covered 800 miles on one to ascertain whether the big Cagiva is a true spiritual successor to the now defunct Elefant. Here's what they found...

The old road which runs from Horton Common in the south west of Hampshire to the ancient market town of Shaftesbury in Dorset is as picturesque as it is unusual. Arrow straight in places, it dissects the archaic field boundaries with an elderly swathe of smooth tarmac which seems to glow in the broken sunshine of a late summer's morning. Periodically it interrupts its straight-line urgency to dance around various obstacles - an old brick hump-back bridge, a main road, and at one point an escarpment.

Hard on the brakes after a series of smooth straights, the Gran Canyon pilot chops the speed, snatching a fistful of twin front discs and chucks the bike in sideways. The old road retaliates in a series of staggeringly tight hairpin bends, carpeted with slippery leaves from the overhanging trees. Vision is difficult; dappled sunlight stabs at your visor, while dilated pupils water in protest. Around one of the corners there's a car piloted by an elderly couple. They swing wide and I'm grateful the GC can hold a line where needed; a stroke of the rear brake and a twitch on the bars and the red Yugo's dispatched as quickly as it arrived. Make no mistake, the Gran Canyon is a superb bike.



The background

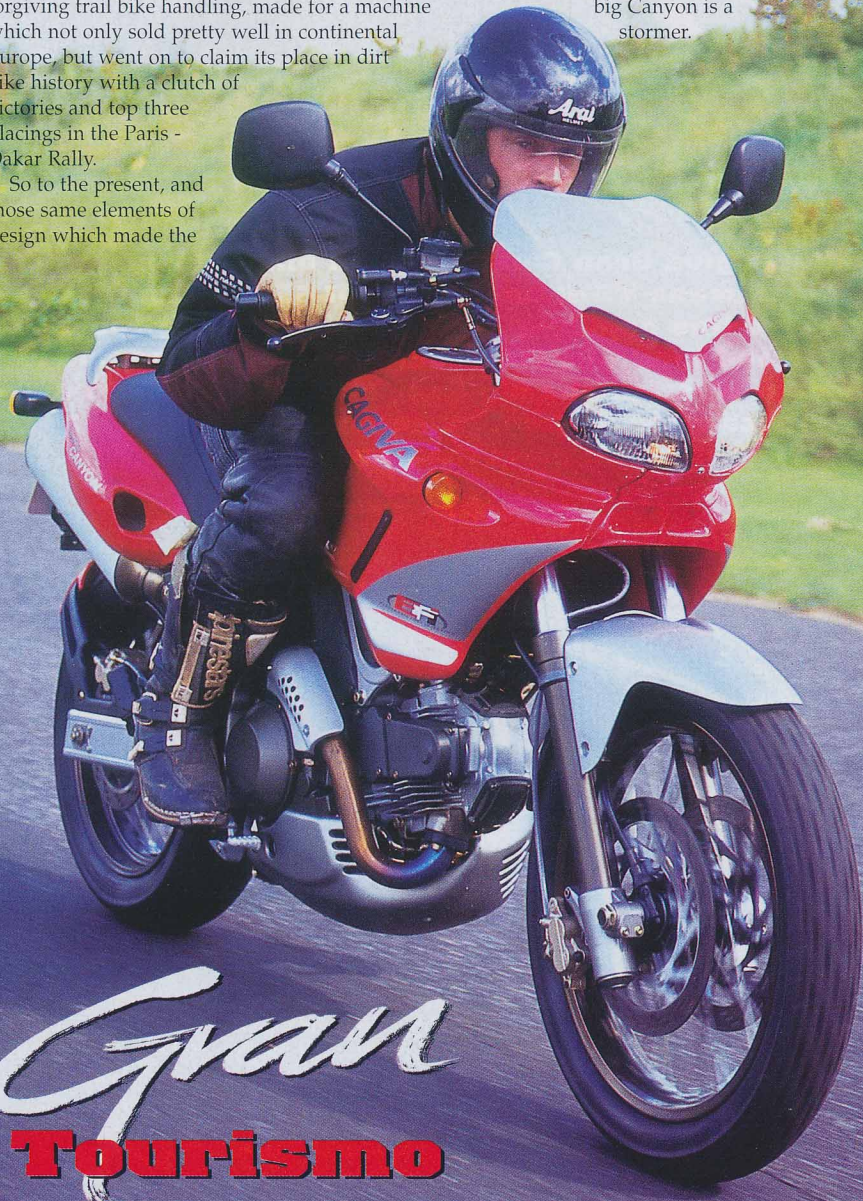
Fine handling, fast enough and foolishly easy to control, it is better than any Italian bike has a right to be - particularly one powered by a Ducati motor. In a way, that's not surprising given its lineage. It's a direct descendent of the Cagiva Elefant, itself a fine handling road bike. But the Gran Canyon, is one step on from the Elefant; better designed, better built and even better on the road. Perhaps it's not quite as versatile as the Ele (it's off road capability is

marginal), but bearing in mind that few Elefant owners will experience the thrill of dirt under their tyres, the Canyon should suit many of them perfectly.

Back in 1984, engineers at the Cagiva factory rolled out a one-off play-bike specially built for dirt bike fan, Cagiva boss Claudio Castiglioni. The factory quickly realised they were onto something big - quite literally - and so the production Elefant was born. The combination of loping Ducati muscle and forgiving trail bike handling, made for a machine which not only sold pretty well in continental Europe, but went on to claim its place in dirt bike history with a clutch of victories and top three placings in the Paris - Dakar Rally.

So to the present, and those same elements of design which made the

Elefant such a great bike to ride, have been incorporated into a totally new machine which makes no pretenses towards dirt-digging, but which builds on the off road foundation to make a superb road bike. Is it a trail bike? Probably not as such, but it's so closely related and so similar in design to many of the big trailies out there as to be worthy of a test in TBM, and I have to tell you right away the big Canyon is a stormer.



Gran Tourismo



Attention to detail and good build quality lift the Gran Can above its Ele predecessor

The spec

Let's start with the motor. The 904cc, belt-driven, desmodromic Ducati has always been a lovely powerplant in standard carburettor form, now with the benefit of fuel injection it's even better. By better I mean quieter, torquier, easier to start and one hell of a lot smoother. In fact so smooth is the power delivery (under acceleration) that at times you won't believe you're riding a V-twin, particularly not an air cooled, Italian one designed many years ago. This is Honda territory, though in reality the Canyon is far smoother than the 52° vee which powers the big Aitch's XR750. Waves of supple torque propel the bike forward with a fluidity you wouldn't have thought possible from a lumpy old Bologna motor, though if there's a flaw in the power delivery, it's that the engine has an absurdly light flywheel (as did the later Elephants). Although this means power builds quickly, back off the throttle for even an instant, and the bike responds immediately, dipping the nose and making for a slightly jerky transmission from power on to power off. Also, it's fair to say that a bit of top end has been sacrificed in the hunt for easy midrange. This is a bike which fair canters up to 100mph, then eases back for the last 15-20 clicks.

So it's real-world fast if not frighteningly so by today's litre bike standards. Keeping all that torque in check is a new chassis which uses the duke motor as a stressed member. Like the Ele before it, there's no front down tube or lower chassis rails, instead the desmo lump is slung under the steel frame which bolts to the swingarm pivot (in the rear of the crankcase) and between the cylinders. At 1548mm long (61") the wheelbase is shorter than the Elefant's though reassuringly as stable, as well as rather easier to turn - it shares the Ele's 19" front wheel. A completely new set of suspenders - beefy 45mm



Cagiva Gran Canyon 900ie

Price:	£6995
Engine:	Air & oil cooled 90° V-twin with belt-driven sohc, desmodromic operation, two valve heads, electronic Weber fuel injection, electric start
Displace:	904cc
Bore & Stroke:	92x68mm
Transmission:	Dry clutch, six-speed, chain drive, 15/45 gearing
Frame:	Single tube, box section, steel cradle frame
Suspension (F):	45mm Marzocchi forks, 170mm travel
Suspension (R):	Boge shock, adj for preload & rebound, 170mm travel
Brakes (F):	Two 296mm discs with Nissin calipers
Brakes (R):	Single 240mm disc with Nissin caliper
Wheelbase:	1548mm (61")
Seat Height:	825mm (32.5")
Road Weight:	213kg (claimed)
Fuel Cap:	20L (4.4gall)
Importers:	Three Cross Motorcycles 01202 823344



Styling wise the Gran Can is closely related to its Ele forbears. The suit may be a little sharper, but the dirt bike heritage still shines through in the look and feel of it

Marzocchis up front and a firm but compliant shock - handle the bumps, and feel pretty stiffly set up, though they do help give the big Cagiva a much sportier ride than the sometimes wallowy Elefant.

The whole is engulfed in a set of fluid-looking bodywork which gives the bike a late Nineties 'organic' look, and at a stroke relegates the slabby, flat-flanked, Elefant to the style of the Eighties. Twin bug-eye headlamps mirror twin fuel fillers (one for each side of the tank), with twin cat-equipped tailpipes exiting either side of (and just below) the rear mudguard. The curvaceous Ducati 916-esque tank is both pleasing on the eye, and (thankfully), the inner thighs, and the seat too is a bit of a revelation after years of average Elefant perches. This one is wide, comfortable and well designed for both rider and pillion, though its width makes it a little tricky to touch both feet flat on the floor. It's not that it's particularly high (it's 10mm lower than the last Ele's), but it isn't the lowest of perches either. Also, the riding position is a little unusual in that you sit fairly close to the handlebars, giving an upright stance and plenty of forward vision, though it does put you straight into the airflow at higher speeds.

In front of the rider sits a dashboard of incredible clarity, tachometer to the left and kmh speedometer to the right - though the lack of mph markings on the speedometer is not only an oversight, it's almost certainly illegal. Between them there's a simple push-to-reset trip-meter while at the far right there's an analogue

clock (good), but no fuel gauge, only a warning lamp which begins to glow after 150-155 miles are up. Overall, top marks for the dashboard layout which is very un-Italian in its sensible ergonomics, although just in case you forgot the machine's country of origin, the neutral light has a mind of its own and serves as a visual reminder that not all of the Italian character has been designed out of it.

In essence however, the Cagiva GC feels more Japanese than any other Italian bike I care to mention (Belgarda TT600 apart). In fact it reminds me more of the Honda VFR than any Elefant I've ever ridden. Whether that's a good or bad thing depends upon your love of 'characterful' Italian bikes, but I'll say one thing, it certainly won't do the importers any harm when it comes to finding new owners for their machines. This is one Italian bike that should prove easy to live with.

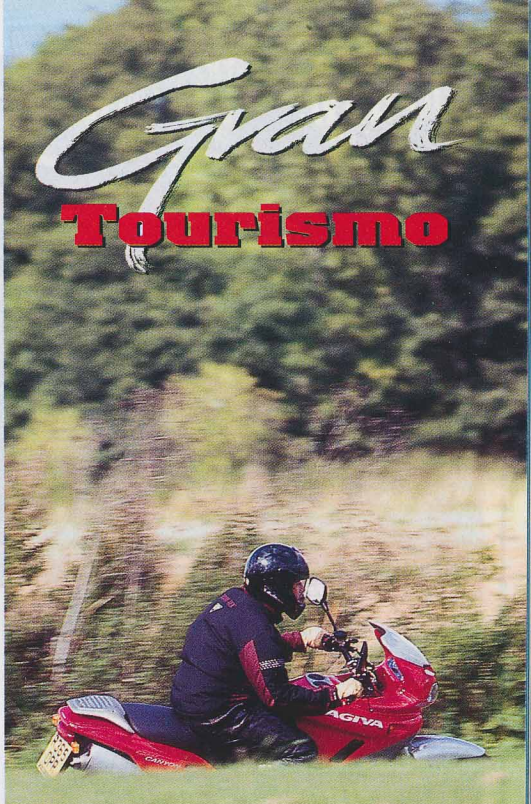
Riding it

On to the road then for a series of cross country journeys encompassing everything from narrow farm tracks to steady, high speed motorway cruising and everything in between. Through rain, wind, and mostly glorious sunshine, the Cagiva purred without a single hiccup. Like any Italian bike, the GC just loves the open road. It eats up the miles on fast cross country journeys, where the engine's willing-

ness coupled with fluid handling make for a superb and safe overtaker. The Gran Canyon will breeze past slower moving traffic and never feels anything less than totally stable, whether upright, cranked over or even crossing white lines. And if you get it all wrong, the twin front discs and progressive rear brake will help you out of a lot of trouble - though they require a reasonably hefty tug on the span adjustable lever to get them going.

Fast open country lanes are where the GC feels most at home, but it will happily chug through congested city centre traffic, or blast down a motorway when required. In town it's slim enough to slip between lines of cars and smooth enough not to require constant clutch slipping, which is just as well as the Ducati clutch has a fairly heavy pull. On motorways you quickly become aware that the fairing which works well up to the legal speed limit, doesn't really offer adequate protection for autobahn speeds. It may look stylish, but an adjustable, taller screen would make, a good bike even more versatile. The design of the fairing could easily accommodate such a device, and though it's our understanding that a taller screen will shortly become an option, ideally, we'd like to see an adjustable screen (which raked forwards and backwards) fitted as standard.

Whether the lack of fairing was a factor or not, fuel consumption on longer journeys was frankly



Second Opinion Paul Blezard

This is one nice motorcycle. I've always liked V-twin engines and Ducati's 900 desmo motor is a particular favourite. I have fond memories of a fuel-injected Ele that I rode all round England in '93, including some rather interesting trail rides.

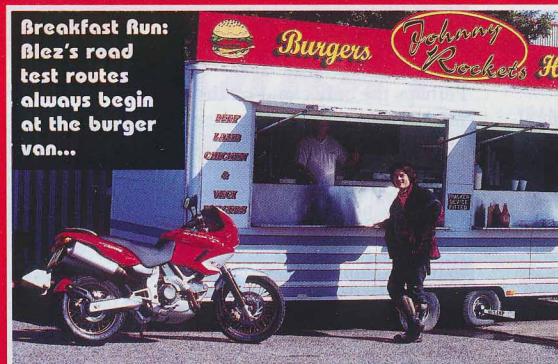
In many ways the Gran Canyon combines the best of both on and off road bikes: more 'scratch-

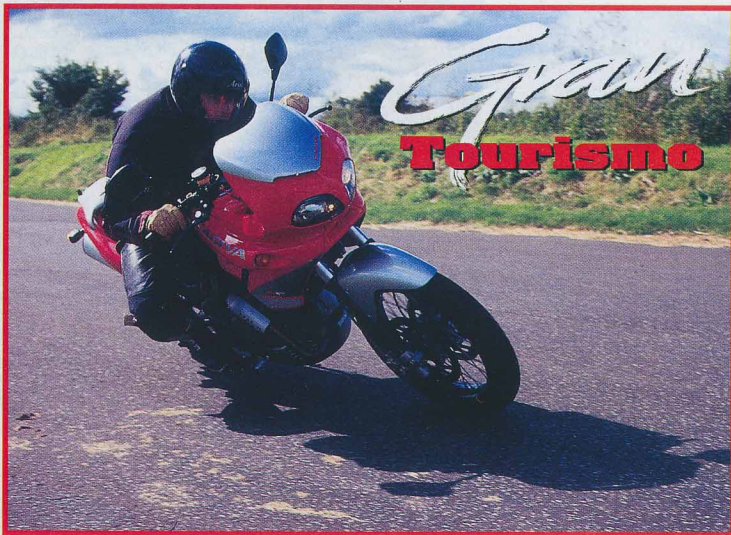
able' on the road than a monster trailie, but a lot more comfortable than a sports bike especially around town. I guess you could call it a sort of Italian TDM, and that's one of my favourite bikes ever. The GC is easy to get on with from the very first moment you sling your leg over it, and has virtually no vices that I could discern in well over 250 miles of very varied going.

The only thing that felt odd initially was the proximity of the bars to the seat, which seemed to be forcing me into a more upright position than I wanted - which is strange because the Elefant was exactly the opposite, with a real road racer's stretch to the bars. And this combined with the limitations of the low fairing, meant that it's difficult to find much protection behind that skimpy fairing. I reckon it's crying out for the sort of adjustable screen available on most BMW tourers these days.

Nevertheless, the GC impressed with its comfort, pace and sure-footed handling, and my only regret is that I didn't get to try it off road. Knowing what the Elefant's like, I reckon it would be great fun on firm-ish trails. Thumbs up all round from me - any chance of a long-term test bike? PB

Breakfast fun:
Blez's road
test routes
always begin
at the burger
van...





pretty disappointing for a lazily tuned V-twin; we averaged 42mpg, which hardly seems acceptable these days, and surprisingly, is at least 10mpg down on what we achieved from the Elephant when we last tested it.

Anything else?

But on the whole it can't be denied that the big Canyon improves on the Ele in a number of key areas. Apart from the handling, braking and build quality already mentioned, there's the suspension, reduction in engine noise and user friendliness which should all be taken into consideration.

The new suspension which uses a later generation of Marzocchi fork and a redesigned Boge shock, should be singled out for praise. Yes it's firm, but it's also supple in its travel and works superbly. The rear set-up in particular is absolutely spot on: firm, compliant, well controlled and brilliant both in solo and two-up mode. The forks too are a big improvement over the old Marzochis, though just occasionally they could send a small jolt through to the bars on sharp edged lumps and potholes. Overall though, the bike rides the bumps very well, and handles brilliantly. The suspension providing just the right level of feedback to allow the rider to seriously get down and boogie on fast, tight corners.

This is a bike which will cover distances, seamlessly, comfortably, smoothly and most importantly with a good deal of fun. You don't need to be a committed rider to go fast, nor do you need to be a capable rider to control it. The nature of the machine is to be easy to ride for almost anyone with a licence. For sure, if you really work the throttle, it

will shift at three figure speeds, but you're much more likely to take pleasure in working the generous midrange and the slick shifting gearbox (clutchless changes are a delight), than hammering the living daylight out of it. Do that and it will reward you with a rapid, yet comfortable ride from A to B.

The rear rack deserves a mention. It's larger, and even more substantial than the Elephant's, not to mention a bit more stylish. It could do with a few more bungee hooks, but otherwise works well. Other nig-

gles? The solid side-stand engages with a reassuring clunk, but unfortunately requires the bike to be tipped over-centre in order to raise it - not too clever, and I never quite got a handle on the strange starting procedure. The bike can't be started on its sidestand, so you have to raise the stand, pull in the clutch, fire it up (it starts first time), release the clutch and then lower the side-stand again if you want to allow the bike to warm up while you fetch your helmet and gloves.

But these things really are minor irritations, and certainly not ones which would discourage me from owning one. All too often we've seen the Italians trying to make up for dodgy electrics, poor quality, spindly side-stands, and flaky paint with characterful bikes and whacky designs. This time they don't have to. The Cagiva Gran Canyon can hold its head high in the company of any Japanese bike and match it in terms of design, build quality and integrity. This is a bike with a serious future.

Summing up

Perhaps the only cloud on the Canyon's horizon is in terms of price. The Japanese have been swift to introduce cooking sports-tourer models powered by detuned sports-bike engines at very competitive prices, and even though the Gran Canyon at £6995 is little more than the E900 it replaces, it's a fair old whack for a bike in this sector. Ultimately the Gran Canyon is going to sell on design, image and word of mouth rather than any pricing policy, and its our bet that a fair share of people who take the opportunity to ride a demonstrator will go on to buy one. It really is that good.

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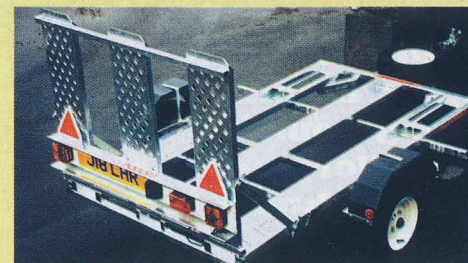
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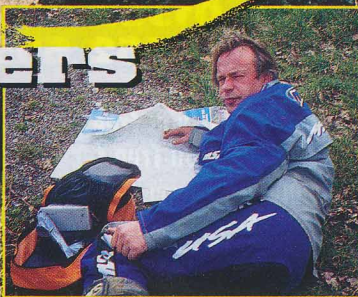
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Raiding

by numbers



Chris Evans: Slightly floored?

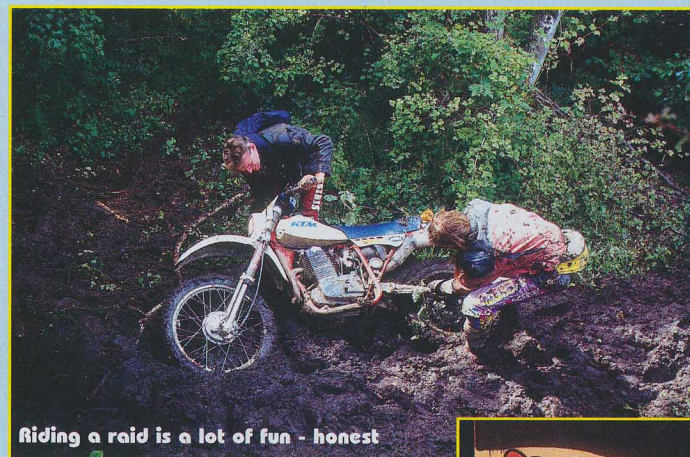
If you take your enjoyment of off road motorcycle sport seriously, there'll come a time when you need to know how to follow a roadbook. Raids, rallies and even a number of long distance trials use this form of navigation. But if you've never used one before, it's nice to know what you're letting yourself in for. Si Melber rode the recent Normandie Raid and tells you what you need to know to follow a roadbook...

Reluctant as I am to help out fickle TBM columnist Chris Evans, particularly in light of his treasonous comments in last month's Talking Dirty column (ahem), when the call came through that he required assistance in the running of a Normandie Raid, I couldn't just sit idly by and watch the parsimonious fellow suffer - particularly if there was a free trip in it.

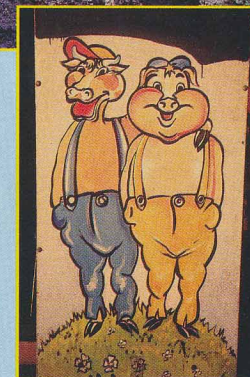
Besides I knew it would help me brush up on my roadbook skills; so that's how I came to be picking my way through the northern French countryside in the company of 20 or so other British dirtaholics taking part in one of the Sport Adventure Normandie Raids. If you've never participated in a raid before, the format is pretty straightforward; it's more or less a guided trail ride, only the person doing the guiding is you: following a rolling roadbook of instructions attached to your bike's handlebars. The organisers who will have recce'd the route on your behalf and hopefully chosen an interesting and challenging ride, supply both the roadbook (instructions) and in this particular case the roadbook reader (the actual unit which holds the instructions). All you have to do is follow it and enjoy the ride.

Simple enough you would have thought, particularly as the roadbook lists every single junction and landmark you pass by on your way to a number of checkpoints conveniently located at cafés and lunchstops along the way. But you'd be surprised at how many people actually get utterly and helplessly lost before they dial themselves into the roadbook mentality.

As I was supposed to be helping Chris out, the idea was that I'd ride at the back of the group acting as sweeper to pick up those riders who through no obvious genetic failings, were completely roadbook illiterate. Despite reasonably clear roadbook instructions I kept finding riders appearing out of hawthorn hedges, backing out of barns and turning around on driveways as they slavishly fol-



Riding a raid is a lot of fun - honest



lowed every single track or marking which they found on the ground, instead of trying to make sense of the roadbook lore.

The secret of good roadbook reading of course is firstly to try and get into the mind of the person who wrote the roadbook - though in this case, given that Mr Evans was to blame, it's arguably a dangerous not to mention pointless pursuit. And secondly to try and think one or two steps ahead. As soon as you've passed

What's a roadbook?

A roadbook is a series of directional instructions shown in a picture-box format. The roadbook is divided into boxes with one instruction per box, and the idea is to follow the instructions moving from box to box. Each box contains certain information like the direction you're coming from and the direction you need to be going, having completed the instruction. You may well ask why aren't the instructions written out, eg 'turn right at the next crossroads'? The answer is simple: roadbooks use a universal sign language that can be interpreted by anybody, be they Japanese, Russian, French or even American. And besides, the instructions are often a bit more complicated than just a straightforward right turn. Using a little diagram, the rider simply has to follow what they see on the diagram and translate it to what they find on the ground. There will usually be two distances marked on each box. One is a running total - ie the total distance from the point at which you last zeroed your odometer - and the other is the intermittent distance - the distance from the last instruction, to the next one. Following a roadbook is not only easy (once you get the hang of it), it's also great fun and a neat challenge that can add to your enjoyment of off roading.

Raids are about enjoying yourself on your dirt bike. Follow the roadbook carefully and you should end up at the lunch stop

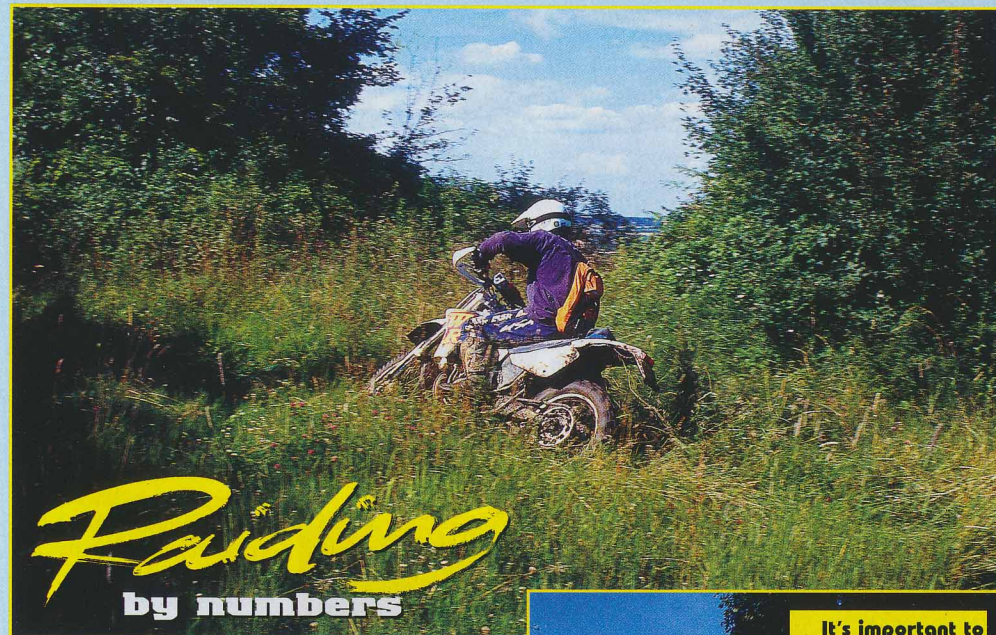
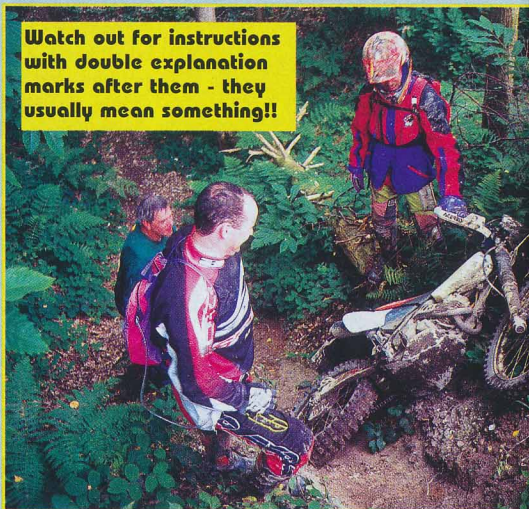


Brummie? These are arguably far more important issues to your wellbeing at the end of the day, so first of all, chill out, relax a little and then assess the problem at hand.

And the problem at hand is this. You need to get from one place to another using your bike and the only other bit of help you're given - the roadbook. It's not a treasure hunt, there are no cryptic puzzles to solve or red herrings to put you off the scent, the information's all there contained in your roadbook, all you've got to do is follow it.

Contrary to popular belief, the idea behind a raid, rally or road trial is not to disperse as many hapless riders as possible throughout the countryside, in fact, for the organisers this is positively their worst nightmare. Remember, apart from occasional exceptions, the roadbook does not tell you where you are. It's not a map, it's

Watch out for instructions with double explanation marks after them - they usually mean something!!



Raiding by numbers

a series of linked instructions to take you from A to B. If you get lost, you must either backtrack (CAREFULLY) until you pick up the roadbook again, or better still, roll the roadbook on until you find a place name, and ask directions to that place.

Most people who lose their position on the roadbook, are actually only a few hundred metres away from where they should be. A quick look around should establish that you've missed an obvious marker and put you on the right route.

But don't be fooled that the roadbook is always correct. Mistakes can and do occur - particularly in the distances. If it says: after 300m turn right onto a track by a pylon, and you've ridden 300m and can't find the track, use your initiative. Don't look down for the track, look up and see if there is a pylon nearby. It's not uncommon for roadbook writers to occasionally confuse distances when they're compiling the roadbook - they're only human. If your route isn't there after the exact distance then think logically and ride a bit further on before starting your histrionics.

Another mistake which can and does occur is when the ground situation alters; a track

It's important to be able to follow the roadbook - especially when riding on your own



France is the spiritual home of rallye-raid. France has got great food, great wine, and great big puddles



gets diverted, a new one opens up or the whole thing gets swept away. The golden rule to remember in this case is to keep going straight unless the roadbook tells you otherwise - this is never more important than when riding in foreign events such as those in North Africa.

As John Deacon found out on this year's Dakar when on one of the days the stage had to be cancelled - the roadbook instructions fizzled out after 168km and in the next box there was a single dotted line with a compass heading. Deacs and the rest of the riders followed that heading keeping straight on for the next 470km, until they picked up the roadbook instructions again!

The other thing that occasionally happens is that the surroundings change; woods get cut down, sheds get removed or new buildings spring up - or something else alters in the vicinity. It happened to us on this raid. The instructions said after so many metres turn right at a green painted metal gate. About five of us did precisely that, only to come face to face with an irate farmer running down his drive. He'd just finished painting his rusty old brown gate a nice shade of green. We hastily retreated and found another green gate just 100m further on.

Likewise don't get too hung up on the distances. They are a guideline only. No two bikes' odometers will read exactly the same, and I've ridden raids on bikes not fitted with working odos. The point is this: it's pretty easy to estimate 100m, 500m or even 5km in your head (or the imperial equivalent), and this is much easier to do than to keep checking you odo every few seconds to see how far you've gone.

So remember, the way to faster navigation is to look out for salient pieces of information, check the next box on the roadbook

(and the one ahead of that), and look for obvious landmarks. Let's suppose your instruction says: after 800m fork left at a barn, you don't need to worry about any tracks which don't fork off the one you're on. Also don't bother to keep checking your odo, just keep riding till you come to a barn, then take the left fork - obvious really.

Of course just occasionally an organiser will deliberately throw a spanner in the works just to keep you on your toes. Chris loves to do this. Like the time he 'accidentally' gave me a completely spurious roadbook which was meant for another raid altogether. To my credit I realised what the geezer was up to before I was halfway



mistake that raiders make is to just give up on the roadbook entirely and blindly follow the rider in front. Invariably at this point one of two things happens. Either, the leading rider gets hopelessly lost and then doesn't have anyone to check their bearings with; or more often than not, the bloke who's following will get a puncture or run out of fuel, while his mate who's blissfully unaware of the fact, merrily chugs off into the distance, leaving him stranded.

The roadbook is an integral part of the enjoyment of a raid. It's not just about riding the terrain, it's about using the roadbook to negotiate that terrain. Those who don't like that fact should consider the alternative - being guided at the rate of the slowest rider in the whole group. The point about a roadbook is that it allows you to ride at your own pace - slow or fast. And many's the time that slower riders who are good at navigation, have beaten much faster riders into a checkpoint.

So here are a few more golden rules. Don't ride any faster than you can safely navigate - the French call this 'Riding to View'. The organisers will have spotted any obvious dangers and marked them on your roadbook with a number of exclamation marks (from 1-3 depending upon the severity of the hazard). Make sure you spot them on your roadbook rather than finding them in any other way.

Rally roadbooks are often written with cars in mind, this tends to work in the bikers' favour as terrain that may be punishing on a car - a ditch

to Belgium, but it's always worth checking to see if your roadbook matches that of your mate's, and to check that there are no pages missing or extra ones added.

Of course the most common

for instance - might be easily and safely navigated by bike. A number of rally roadbooks contain CAPs (compass headings), and sometimes GPS waypoints for you to follow.

Unless the roadbook suggests otherwise, always keep going straight on. If the organisers want you to turn off the route, they'll tell you to do so. Learn a little bit of French. Many of the roadbooks have French abbreviations in them (as additional information); for instance M for Monter (uphill), D for Descender (downhill), or SLCF for Suivez Le Chemin Principal meaning follow the main track. When you know what the organiser means by an abbreviation, it makes things a whole lot easier.

And finally have fun. The idea is to make the ride more enjoyable, not to tie you in mental knots. Not only does the roadbook make the riding safer (by warning you in advance of impending hazards), but it can also make it quicker and much more enjoyable, allowing you to ride at your own pace safely, without having to keep up with (or slow down for) riders of a different ability. Once you accept the challenge of reading the roadbook at speed and interpreting it consistently, it'll open up a whole new vista of off roading challenges to you. And remember, an average

The roadbook can tell you most things, but it can't tell you how to avoid big rocks - and punctures



rider who's an expert navigator will always beat an expert rider whose navigation is poor. Using a roadbook levels the playing field and allows you to compete against better (or braver) riders simply by using your head. Of course, there's nothing to stop you and your mates making up your own roadbooks for your local lanes and weekend runs and then swapping them between groups from different areas. Get out there and enjoy it...

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Riding with Rob

More riding tips from top British enduro rider Rob Sartin



Uphills

- ★ It's important when riding enduros to look a long way ahead, so that you're prepared for any hazard - like a tricky hill - when you arrive. This will allow you time to select the right line and choose the correct gear.
- ★ If the hill you are approaching has a corner at the bottom, try and take a wide line to allow you to generate some extra speed before you hit the hill. To gain speed as you approach the hill, stand up and lean back slightly, then as you start to climb the hill lean forward again.
- ★ On slippery hills use this extra speed to give you the momentum to roll up the hill, rather than attacking the bottom of the hill with a flurry of revs and a spinning wheel.
- ★ Stay in one gear, stay standing up, flex your knees and try to keep your weight forward enough to prevent the bike finding too much grip and looping out (especially as you crest the top of the hill). Roll off the throttle at the top and look ahead to the next hazard. **Rob**

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Mister MUSCLE

What does a Husky 610, KTM 620 and Husaberg 600 all have in common? They all make less power than this Armstrong 'squaddie supermoto'. Blez rode it, and lived to tell the tale...



Like it or loathe it, it's certainly different

There I was, going pretty quickly down the A359 on a Cagiva Gran Canyon 900 we had on test, when it happened. There was a roar like thunder, as if Concorde was about to overtake me, when an army Armstrong came past my right elbow going like an F-15 Tomcat on full afterburn. I was more than a little surprised - to say the least.

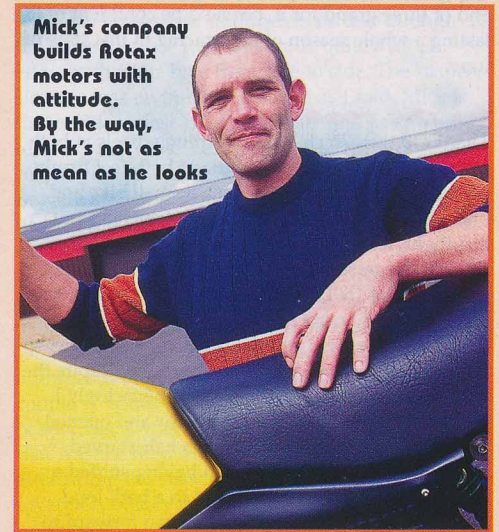
Yes indeed, this old army bike has thrown away its khaki fatigues and been transformed into a rather special supermoto-style machine by Mick Keogh of Sportax Racing. Some of you may remember that we featured one of Mick's mildly massaged ex-squaddie bikes in TBM25 last year, but this beast blows that one into the weeds. This baby has no less than 71 dyno-measured gee-gees at the rear wheel! Not bad for an army special!

Mick's Devon-based company specialises in race-tuning the venerable air-cooled Rotax engines which were (and in some cases still are) fitted, in various states of tune, to Armstrong and Harley Davidson Army bikes; not to mention SWMs, Jawas, MZs, Matchless, early Aprilia Pegasos, CCMs, Barigos and ATKs. Most of his engines are used in single cylinder road race machines and sprint bikes, but he thought it would be fun to put one of his full-on race-tuned engines into a road-legal, Armstrong-based supermoto bike, spiced up with the front end (and wheels) off an MZ Skorpion. We liked the idea too, especially when we saw a couple of snaps of the beast, which is how we came to be thrashing down the lanes of Somerset together.

MT wallet

But don't kid yourselves that this is a bargain basement bike. For sure the basic chassis and many of the components started life as a common or garden MT500, but the engine certainly didn't come from an army surplus sale. And while you could certainly make something that looked very similar for only a couple of grand - it wouldn't have anything like the same amount of go as this one - you can't make an

Mick's company builds Rotax motors with attitude. By the way, Mick's not as mean as he looks





Whichever way you look at it, the Sportax Supermoto certainly stands out from the crowd

engine with triple the rear wheel power output of the squaddie bike without spending some serious dosh. And even if Mick could tune your old Army engine to put out 70bhp, he would have to strip it right down to the last nut and bolt and replace every component that wasn't 100%.

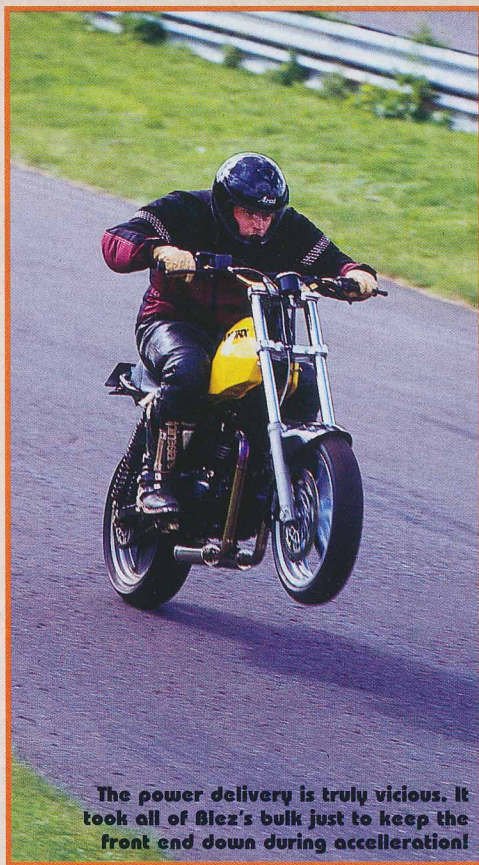
No, for this reason Mick reckons he's better off starting with a brand new lump. If you want that sort of thunder from one of these engines, then you need to start with something fresh, and better still, one that comes in a slightly hotter state of tune than the standard army offering. If you wanted a 662cc engine like this, Mick would charge you the thick end of three grand for it, but he'd be confident of it lasting a whole season of road racing in this state of tune.

On the road again

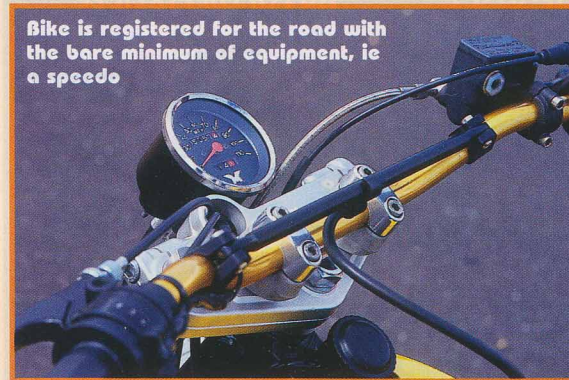
Thanks to the 17inch MuZ Skorpion wheels at both ends, the seat is low enough to get both feet firmly on the ground. Though for such a small bike and one which didn't have the luxury of even a front headlight, let alone indicators, we were surprised when it depressed the hi-tech TBM bathroom scales to the tune of 150kilos (330lbs) with less than a gallon of juice on board.

The next surprise was the (relative) ease with which the beast could be kicked into life despite the 12:1 compression. As it ticked over menacingly I nervously snicked the lever into gear and opened the throttle. The Sportax felt like a half-starved guard dog straining at the leash having sniffed a mobile meal. As its growl turned to a bark loud enough to raise the dead, I had to lean forward to

stop the front wheel pawing the air in the first three gears. The bike continued to accelerate in a seemingly endless rush of power and the scenery flashed by in a blur - this was without doubt the fastest and most powerful single cylinder machine that I have ever ridden - and that includes the KTM500, YZ490 and Cagiva 500 strokers that I used to campaign in supermotard races all over the UK and France.



The power delivery is truly vicious. It took all of Blez's bulk just to keep the front end down during acceleration!



Bike is registered for the road with the bare minimum of equipment, ie a speedo

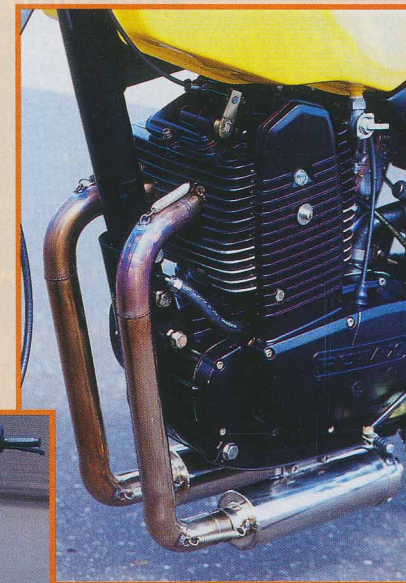
Breaking the law

As Mick struggled to keep up on the Cagiva 900, I understood why he'd been able to scorch past me with such ease when riding his own creation. Not only did the Sportax go like hell, but it actually handled very well and tracked through the twisties with a reassuring stability. The dinner-plate sized 320mm disc tugged by a four-pot caliper provided more than adequate stopping power when it came to scrubbing off speed, which was just as well since the rear caliper wasn't working!

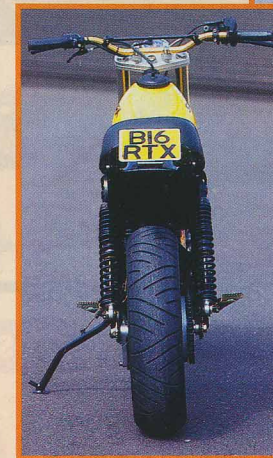
I'm usually a pretty responsible citizen on the public highway, but even I couldn't resist tweaking the throttle and hoisting the front wheel in third gear as I accelerated past an unsuspecting car driver at about 50mph only seconds after taking off from a standing start.

When we arrived at the nearby autobahn, I wound the Sportax out in fifth gear and was astonished to watch the speedo top out at nearly 120mph while I hung on for grim death. My rucksack was nearly wrenched off my back and I was seriously concerned that a contact lense might be sucked off my eyeball as I looked behind and my usually stiff Arai visor blew open.

Having established the answer to the question 'Wot'll it do Mister?' and not wishing to endanger my licence any further, we adjourned for more testing to the conveniently located kart track behind the Haynes Motor Museum at Sparkford for some steady laps. It must be said that with its huge power, minimalist road equipment and frankly downright delinquent exhaust, Mick Keogh's creation (as tested) is actually far more suited to the track than the public highway. I actually missed the rear brake more on the track than the road though because the tightest turns were so slow and natural-



Above: Motor pumps out 71bhp! Those pipes may look the biz, but boy are they loud!



ly lent themselves to sliding in sideways, Stephane Chambon style (in your dreams, Blez - ed).

Track - and field?

The track test confirmed the fundamentally sound handling of the

Sportax, although if we'd had more time it would have been interesting to experiment with sliding the Skorpion forks a few millimetres further through the yokes because it actually took quite a lot of effort to flick the bike from side to side. The suspension too was on the firm side but as I said, Mick is first and foremost an engine tuner and has no pretensions as a chassis expert - and this was only the second time that the bike had been used in anger. Bearing all that in mind, the handling was pretty damn good for a 'suck it and see' first attempt and surpassed all expectations.

Yet for all its gob-smacking power, the engine remained relatively smooth even at high revs. Smoother than the 'balanced' motor in a KTM Duke, for example. And talking of KTMs, remember that outrageous SuperMoto KTM that the ed tested a couple of issues back? Well I rode that bike too, and believe me, it was a pussycat compared to the tiger that was the Mad Max Sportax. As my notes say after riding the beast for the first time, 'Cor, phew, luvaduck, blimey missus! That was a memorable experience!'

Taylor
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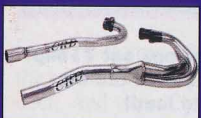
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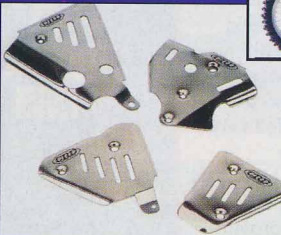
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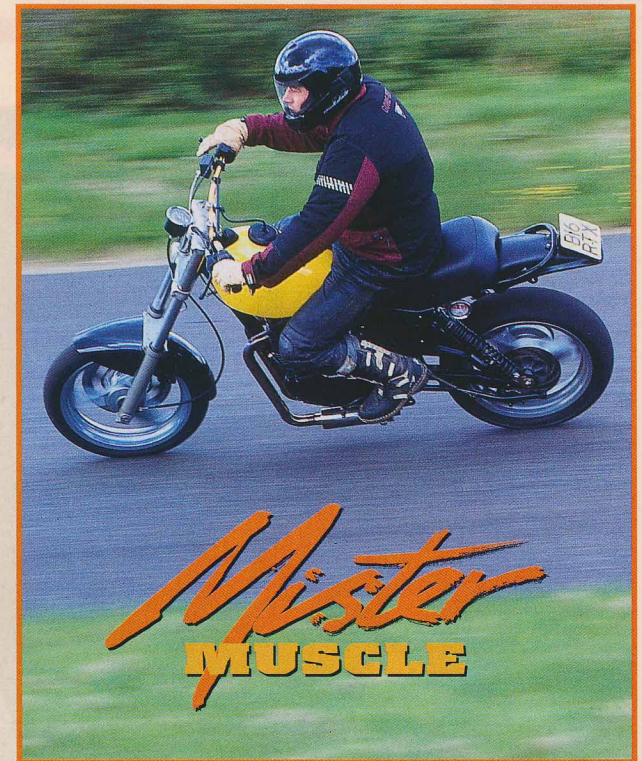
Mick himself admits that you wouldn't really want to have a bike in this state of tune as an everyday road machine let alone an off roader, but in the right hands I reckon the Sportax would make a highly competitive supermoto racer or hill climber with hardly any modifications from the spec in which we tested it. And while beauty is (as always) in the eye of the beholder, I think the Sportax looks pretty cool too, which is amazing when you consider how many of the standard Armstrong parts have been retained.

Conclusion

For an eye-catching but more practical road machine I'd say try this variation on the theme: specify a more gentle (and much cheaper) tune for added reliability, (say a 'modest' but still neck-wrenching 60bhp); add some tasty lights, complete with small fairing/screen, and above all sort out some socially acceptable silencing, and you have the makings of a superb back-road scratcher and high street posing pouch. My only regret? Yup, you've guessed it - the lack of electric start, and the fact that it didn't come fitted with knobbles. Nice one, Mick.

Thanks

Many thanks to Haynes Ltd, for use of their splendid test track. The Haynes Motor Museum is located just north of Sparkford (at the junction of the A303 trunk road and A359) and has a fascinating selection



of two and four wheeled vehicles - entry costs £5.

Thanks to 'Mad' Mick Keogh. Sportax are on 01822 841063. If you're not bothered about going around corners or running further than a quarter of a mile at a time, Mick can build you a sprint motor with 82bhp at the rear wheel - now that really would make a trailie fly!

Recipe (for muscles)

- 1 Take one standard Armstrong squaddie bike.
 - 2 Throw away the forks and wheels and replace with equivalent 17 inch items from the MuZ Skorpion, shod with Metzeler MEZ1 race radials. (For the rear wheel to fit, you will have to 'cut and shut' the left side of the swinging arm to make it wider, then add bracing for peace of mind - see pic.)
 - 3 Strip the engine right down and modify as follows: Bore and stroke up to 662cc (from standard 482cc). Fit bigger inlet valves: (37.5mm instead of 30mm). Fit huge 44mm Mikuni carburettor.
 - 4 Rebuild motor with head/barrel junction carefully lapped for a precision join so a head gasket isn't necessary.
 - 5 Refit engine in re-painted frame, but without standard head steady which can cause sealing
 - 6 Repaint tank and panels in black and yellow.
 - 7 Chrome standard footrests and controls for that bespoke look.
 - 8 Fit Rental bars.
 - 9 Re-cover standard seat and re-fit.
 - 10 Concoct yourself a tasty lightweight 2-2 exhaust system with silencers underneath.
 - 11 MoT for daytime use only, avoiding need for lights. (Standard Armstrong 190 watt alternator has ample power for lights if you want to add them later)
 - 12 Raise gearing for 120mph in top.
 - 13 Fill up with super unleaded and go out and make your eyeballs bulge!
- Approximate cost per serving: £4,000, (feeds one to two persons).

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Neglect your bike's airfilter and a serious loss of horsepower may be just the beginning of your problems. TBM takes you through the task of keeping your airfilter clean

Two-stroke or four-stroke, of all the regular tasks which require doing on your dirt bike, cleaning the airfilter is probably the one which needs doing the most. Forget to clean it after your last dusty ride and the chances are you're going to find yourself piloting a rough and grumpy bike, which hates starting and feels down on power. Not only that but you can risk doing some serious damage to your engine if you're not careful.

So what should you do about it? Well the first thing you should do is to check the thing regularly - not just at the service intervals (Blez!). If you compete on your bike, the chances are you're going to have to clean the airfilter after every event. Otherwise, a quick visual check is all that's required to make sure everything's still okay. Most airfilters are located behind a side-panel or under the seat (or both), though some bikes like Husabergs and Yamaha Teneres have them positioned under the tank. Wherever they are, before you ride your bike take a few seconds to have a little visual check and ensure that it hasn't come adrift, and that it's still roughly the same colour as it should be. Don't worry if you can see a bit of dust or the odd leaf or bit of debris. What you're looking for is a complete change of colour to muddy/dusty brown. A bit of mud or dust won't matter, but if it's covered, then it's time for a clean.

If you're a smart rider, you'll have a spare filter that's already cleaned and oiled which you can pop straight into the bike so you're ready to go in a couple of minutes

flat. If not then it's time for a clean up. You may want to start this stage by pulling on a pair of latex gloves or applying some barrier cream, that way you'll keep the worst of the goo out of your pores (or paws).

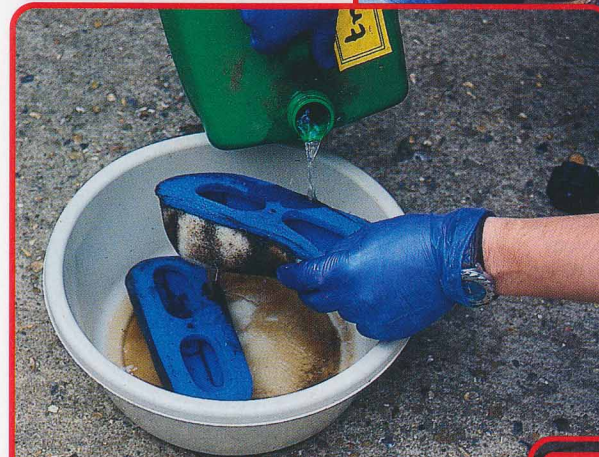
The majority of trail and enduro bikes are fitted with a foam element which can be easily cleaned and re-used following these guidelines. If your bike comes with a paper element, then you only really have two choices. One: you throw the air-

Your filter should look dirty on the outside, clean on the inside...



Pix: Babs Clough

majority of them contain a metal cage. Remove the metal cage carefully and look inside your filter. It should be spotlessly clean in there. If it isn't, then dust and debris is getting through the filter and being sucked into your engine. Chances are your filter's had it, so replace it with a new one. Otherwise, check the outside of the filter for any cuts or tears and again if there are any holes, or the glue's coming unstuck, replace it.



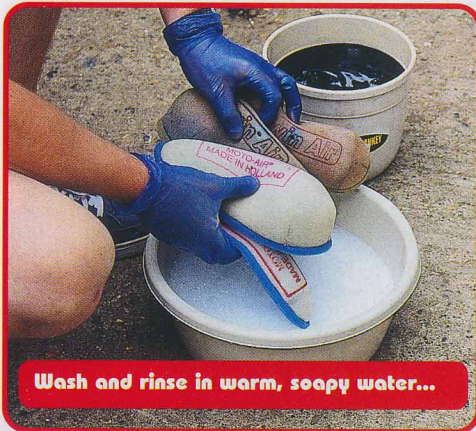
Pour the solvent through from the inside outwards...

filter away and replace it with a brand new element. Or Two: remove the paper airfilter, tap it on a wall or hard object to remove any loose dust and then get along to a garage and using the compressed air line, blow air through it (from the inside out) taking care not to rip it at all. If there are any tears or cuts, then you're back to just one choice - binning it. Cleaning a paper element is at best a short term fix. Don't try to keep re-cleaning one, it won't save you a penny in the long run.

Okay, back to the regular type of foam filters. Most are secured in position with either a spring clip or a bolt (or wingnut), or sometimes, just slide into place. Remove the retainer (if there is one), take out the airfilter and you'll find that the

Rinse the filters in solvent...





Wash and rinse in warm, soapy water...

The majority of you though will be holding a filter which is filthy on the outside and spotlessly clean on the inside, but otherwise fully intact - good, this is the starting point. Now, find yourself a suitable container like an old washing up bowl (it's not a bad idea to save up three or four dirty filters) and wash them all together at the same time. Okay, apart from being caked in dust, your filter is also soaked in filthy oil which needs to be removed using a solvent. There are a few suitable solvents like mineral turps or specialist products like Pro-Filter which are designed for the job - or of course the one which falls readily to hand in most people's garages: petrol. If you plan on using petrol as your cleaner, I seriously recommend using gloves (washing up Marigolds will do), but remember that while petrol will do the job, it's not the ideal substance to work with.

So take your solvent and holding the air filter

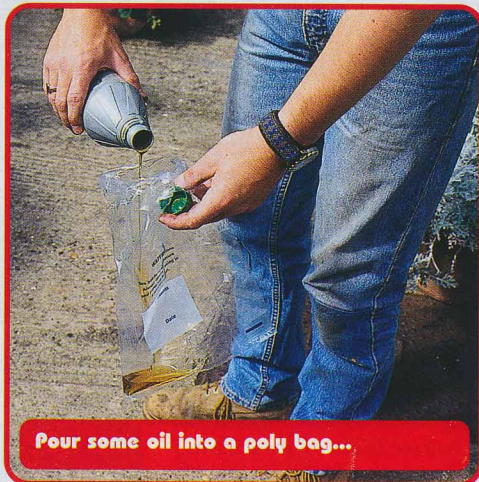


Allow to dry properly...

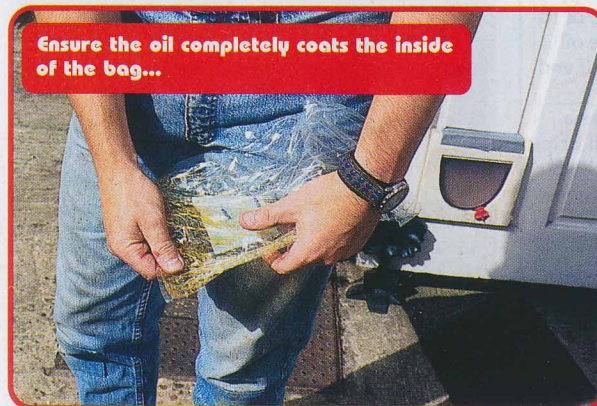
bowl, fill the bowl up again with warm soapy (but not too soapy) water. Now wash the filters out thoroughly remembering to rinse them out afterwards and then hang them out to dry. It usually takes a good couple of hours before all the moisture's disappeared (or less time in the airing cupboard), but you

in one hand, pour it through the filter (again, working from the inside out). Do the same with all the filters and you should end up with a bowl full of dirty solvent and some slightly cleaner looking filters. Rinse the filters back in the solvent ensuring that all of the oil has been dissolved and then wring them out - carefully. Remember, don't pour your solvent down the drain, because ultimately you'll end up drinking it again in the water system - besides, it's an offence to dispose of it this way. Instead if you tip it into another container, cover it with cling film and leave it overnight, you'll find that most of the dirt will have settled out and you can decant off the clean solvent for the next time you need it.

Leave your filters to dry for a couple of minutes and having removed the solvent from your



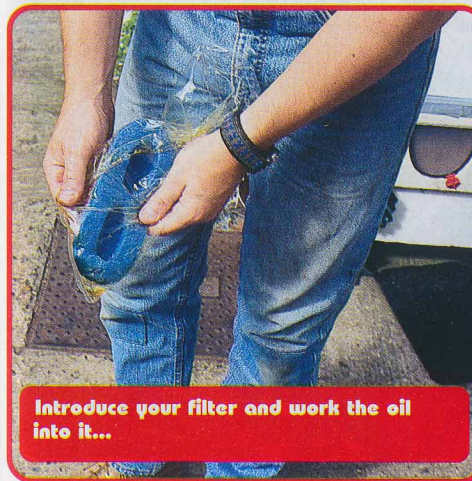
Pour some oil into a poly bag...



Ensure the oil completely coats the inside of the bag...

must make sure they're completely dry before proceeding to the next stage.

Once dried you need to apply a fresh coating of oil to the filter. Opinion is divided in this office about whether you need use a specialist filter oil or not. Ultimately proper air filter oil which is tacky and slightly stringy works best, but I've always got along fine using just a light gear oil instead. For sure, the easiest way to apply filter oil is by using one of the brands which come in the form of an aerosol spray. You simply spray it on and leave it to dry - couldn't be simpler. If you're using regular oil or filter oil from a bottle, the easiest and cleanest way to apply it is to find yourself a small, clear polythene bag and pour a lidful of oil into it. Then, keeping the open end of the bag tightly closed, scrunch the bag up and



Introduce your filter and work the oil into it...

Cleaners

Pro-Filter: Filter cleaning solvent - from good off road shops (details on 01305 760707)

PJ1 Foam Filter Cleaner: Aerosol based, biodegradable, water-based solvent, £5.00 from good off road dealers

Denicol Filter Clean: Bio-safe solvent - from good off road shops (tel 01327 301322 for nearest dealer)

Silkolene Foam Filter Cleaner: 4L tin, water rinsable solvent cleaner, £11.84 - (details on 08701 200400)

Filters

Denicol - made by Multi-Air (Pro-Racing 01327 301322)

XL-Air: Dual stage filter (Apico 01483 450560)

Twin Air: Dual stage Filter (Axo Sport 01462 475480)

Finna: Dual & triple stage filter (MD Racing 01935 429646)

Oils

Denicol Air Filter Fluid: Dust & waterproof double protection.

Silkolene Foam Filter Oil: Super tacky water repellent, 500ml or 1L tin, £3.81/£6.56

PJ1 Foam Filter Oil: 16oz bottle, £3.30; also Foam Filter Treatment aerosol spray £5.00

(NB Silkolene also make a Foam Filter Treatment Kit comprising of 1L of filter oil, 4L of filter cleaner, a 10L filter cleaning bucket with strainer & lid, and a 5L filter oiling bucket with lid, plus six pairs of protective gloves and some Silkolene stickers - £31.70)

work the oil so that it completely coats the inside of the poly bag. Next, take your filter and pop it inside the bag, seal up the top and give it a good old squelch around. Your aim should be to apply a thin film of oil to the filter over the whole of its outer surface. If you need to add a bit more oil then pour a few drops into the bag, re-seal it and keep squelching.

You should end up with a filter which has a nice even coating of oil. Not so much that it drips out, but enough so that your fingers look oily if you touch it. Finally leave the filter to dry for a further few minutes (particularly if you're using filter oil which contains flammable solvents of its own), before re-fitting the metal cage. Lastly apply a thin smear of oil or grease around the air-box/airfilter interface to ensure a good water-proof seal, and reinstall your nice clean filter in your bike. Don't worry if the bike doesn't start

first kick, the filter will need to flow a bit of air before it's working at full efficiency. Now you're ready to ride.



FILTER FACTS

Your airfilter has to work in a pretty hostile environment. Apart from the vibration and heat from the engine, there's petrol fumes, water, dust and a constant vacuum sucking on the filter. And when you come to clean it, it has to be able to resist more solvent, more water, wringing out, possibly heat from the sun as it's drying. It's not too surprising therefore that foam filters may only last a matter of months, particularly if they're being cleaned every week-end.

Some filter manufacturers insist their products should only be washed in specialist cleaners as anything else may compromise the strength of the glue which holds the foam together. Using the proper cleaning materials will certainly prolong the life of your filter, and is a lot safer than using petrol, though our experience is that most riders will use whatever comes readily to hand. If your filter looks tatty after a lot of use then throw it away and buy yourself a new one. The cost will only be a few quid, yet the savings on the price of an expensive engine rebuild could well be enormous.

Most bikes use a regular single-

foam filter as the air cleaner element, but there are any number of aftermarket filters available which claim to filter out more of the smaller particles, yet improve airflow to the carb. They do this by having a double (or even triple) layer of different densities of foam designed to catch different sized particles. A coarser open pore outer foam is lined with a much finer (but still open pore) inner core designed to remove even the smallest particle of dust. These filters may cost a little more, but ultimately offer your engine better protection.



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NATTERJACK ENDURO

Sixth & final round
1998 British Enduro Championship



Report & pix: Neil Piddock

Ady Smith rode his PJ1 Yamaha to third place at the two-day Natterjack Enduro near Borden, Hampshire at the end of September, to secure overall honours in this year's British Enduro Championship. The event was won in dominant style by David Knight, with Wyn Hughes taking a superb second. But Ady's third place, ahead of Sartin in fourth spot, sealed victory for the man from Burton-on-Trent, regardless of the outcome of Sartin's pending Hafren appeal. After 14 years of trying, and many runner-up spots, a jubilant Smith said afterwards: 'It gets harder each year, I'm so pleased to have won, for me it's better than winning the lottery, I can't describe how happy I am.'

It was the end of a perfect week for Smithy, with his partner Mandy giving birth to their first Baby the previous Sunday. Ady confirmed he had been feeling the tension in the second half of the season: 'The pressure was getting to me and I found myself thinking too much about the championship and not just riding the bike. But it all came together today. A baby last week - British Champion this week - what a week.'

Starting from the airstrip at Weavers Down, the championship riders had to complete four 30 mile laps, with the warm weather adding to the difficulty. Staying on time wasn't a problem however, so the long, sandy special test was to be the decider. It was a test that required total commitment to achieve a quick time with nasty ruts and bumps to catch the unwary, resulting in many riders coming to grief on

David Knight won the event in some style but was too far behind Smith to claim the overall championship



Ady Smith and partner Mandy had a lot to celebrate with the birth of their first child in the same week that Ady won the British Championship. Question is, will Ady be able to change a nappy in the time he can swap a tyre and a mouse?

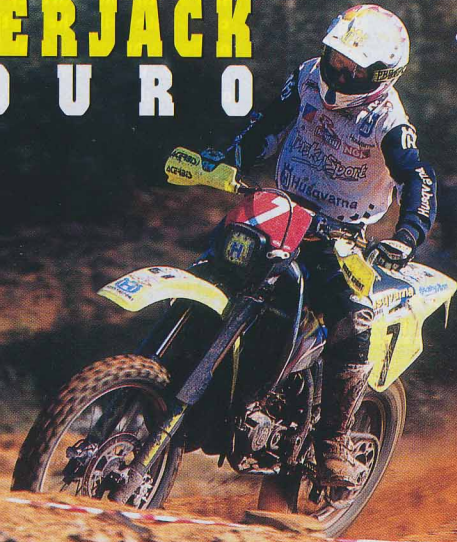


the test.

David Knight went quickest on the first test on Saturday and continued that trend throughout the weekend. Carl Tiley was second at the end of Saturday (37 seconds down on Knight), but was limping after clouting his foot on a stump. Wyn Hughes started the weekend with a couple of tumbles on the first two tests, but put in a rapid final two tests and finished Saturday in third spot. Smith and Sartin were both having a torrid time on the tests, each falling a couple of times, Sartin ending

NATTERJACK ENDURO

Tim Lewis fought his way to a creditable eighth position in the dry and dusty conditions



the day in fourth spot, 12 seconds ahead of Smith. Mark Vaughan gave his Honda 125 a damn good thrashing in the power-sapping sand and was rewarded with sixth spot overnight. Meantime John Shirt was going well just 1.5s further back and Tim Lewis was still in contention, back in eighth. John Deacon wrapped up the overall four-stroke championship at the end of Saturday, so didn't ride the Sunday.

Carl Tiley was also a non-starter on Sunday, unable to walk on his damaged foot. But David Knight was in fine form and continued to extend his lead over the chasing pack, winning the second day by 25 seconds. Knight, who had problems with his bike's front tyre after his mousse began to break up, said afterwards: 'I don't mind sand, so I really enjoyed the test.' Wyn Hughes too seemed to find the conditions to his liking, riding superbly on the Sunday and clinching second overall: 'I was trying very hard to catch David, but he's just Superman round here' said Wyn afterwards.

Another fall for reigning champ Rob Sartin on Sunday, left the door open for Ady Smith to clinch third spot, 12 seconds clear of Sartin, who was less than a second ahead of John Shirt, with his best result of the season. Mark Vaughan clinched the 125 championship with another superb ride to be first 125 home, rounding off an excellent second half to his season. Richard Hay (RMX250), Terry House (TM125), Derek Little (WR250) and Mark Chapman (WR125) rounding out the Natterjack top-ten.



Si Higgins (250 Yam) won the Expert class (and the championship) comfortably beating Steve Saunders, who was giving the new Gas Gas 200 it's first competitive outing; while Mark Gammons came home in third. The Clubman class was won by Chris Hockey with Edward Jones in second (which was enough to give him the championship) with James Newstead in third.

So a brilliant end to the season once again, with a new champion in the form of quiet achiever Ady Smith. Ady's a popular figure in the paddock and for so long has been the nearly man with five runner up spots. Now he's claimed overall victory and nobody's more pleased for him than we are. Next year he plans to defend that title and we'll be there reporting on it for you in full glorious technical colour. In the meantime we'll be bringing you all the gossip and team changes during the closed season, as well as reporting from the ISDE in Australia. Watch this space.



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Yamaha YZ250, 1997, P-reg, maintained regardless, vgc, house forces sale, £2500 ono or p/x for 94/95 YZ250. Tel Dylan on 0123 981 1287 (Dyfed)

Kawasaki KX250, 1991, good orig cond, runs well, trail use for last 3 yrs, £750. Tel Pete on 0145 527 3163 (Leics)

Armstrong MT500, resprayed white/red, rebuilt engine, Dell'Orto carb, mint cond, £1300 ovno. Tel 0120 479 4735 (Lancs)

Honda XR400, 1997, powder coated frame, Tecnosel graphics, brush guards, bashplate, many extras, well maintained, best looking XR4, £3000. Tel Barry on 0166 485 7427 (Leics)

Kawasaki KLX650, black, 1993, T&T, 15,000m, 100% orig, road use only, Datatag, vgc, £1995. Tel Bill on 0178 425 2634 (Middx)

Honda XR600R, E-reg, FMF exhaust system plus spares, very clean, must be seen, £1650 ono. Tel Danny on 0132 261 5641 (Kent)

BMW R80G/S, 1987, T&T, Dakar style special Acerbis tank, Yamaha forks, stainless pipes, raised subframe, progressive suspension, Bikini fairing, Akronts, £2150. Tel Steve on 0151 513 1467 (Merseyside)

Honda NX650 Dominator, red, 1989, MOT, 22,000m,

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Honda XR600, 1997, P-reg, Renthal bars, Acerbis hand guards, frame protectors, new sprockets & tyres, £2800 ono. Tel 0151 632 1497 (Merseyside)

Honda XL500S, 1981, lovely cond, £850; KDX200, 1989, new engine, good cond, £950; also KDX250, immac import, Autolube, £1950; also XL600R, 1985, immac, £1300. Not a trader, all my own bikes. Tel Julian on 0171 652 2269 (London)

Honda CR580cc outfit, with log book, not for the faint hearted, fair cond, £550 or swap for why. Tel Barry on 0197 882 0828 (S Wales)

KTM 400LC4, N-reg, 5300 road miles, 4-stroke, quality trailie, White power forks & rear suspension, £2990 for quick sale. Tel 0192 087 1988 (Herts)

Kawasaki KMX200, 1990, MOT, 8500m, good cond, new battery and brake pads, trail use only, £950. Tel John on 0146 274 2439 (Herts)

Kawasaki KLX650, 1995, T&T, 7000m, Dynojet, K+N filter, Supertrapp, vgc, £2195. Tel Glen on 0181 505 6971 or (mobile) 0802 584747 (Essex)

Suzuki TS185ER, 1981, twinshock, MOT, new c+s, hand guards, Michelin knobbles, lovely cond, £595; also unused Suomi 'Troy Corser' helmet, £195. Tel David on 0176 848 6185 (Cumbria)

Yamaha DT175MX, T&T, used daily, stock rewire, graphics & paint, vgc, £550 ovno. Tel Jim on 0125 888 1220 (Dorset)

Suzuki DR350, 1994, L-reg, 2600m, immac cond, maintained regardless, some spares inc tyres, £2000. Tel John on 0152 473 4775 (Lancs)

KTM 250GS Enduro, 1978, S-reg, v orig, some new parts, race or play, now needs nothing, more details available, £650 ono. Tel 0196 453 2184 (E Yorks)

Gas Gas EC250, 1998, little enduro/trail use, immac cond, must sell, £2950 ono. Tel Steve on 0124 269 7494 (Glos)

Suzuki DR350, 1993, T&T, low mileage, new c+s, tyres, Renthals, exc cond, £1800. Tel 0120 346 1842 (Coventry)

Aprilia Pegaso 3, 1997, P-reg, 20 mths full warranty remaining, 5000km, as new, Scottolier, £3950 ono. Tel John on 0194 387 4608 or 387 0772 (W Yorks)

KTM Adventure, 1998, R-reg, immac cond, never used off road, very reluctant sale, £5295 ovno. Tel Matt (day) on 0137 222 7979 (Surrey)

Husqvarna WR125, 1997, P-reg, 12 ltr tank, Full FMF, full Werx graphics, spares, no expense spared, new bike forces sale, £1995 ovno. Tel Paul (day) on 0161 355 5717 or (after 6 pm) on 0161 487 2569 (Cheshire)

Honda XL600LM, C-reg, MOT, average cond, very reliable runner, reluctant sale, some cosmetic attention req'd, £1000 ono. Tel 0186 587 2843 (Oxon)

Yamaha DT200R, Power valve, F-reg, RSV pipe, alloy wheels/swingarm, '520 drive' steel sprockets, DID 'O'-ring, 'Dial in' rear shock, Renthals, twin radiators, hand guards, £1395 can deliver. Tel Brian on 0120 624 1730 (Essex)

Honda XR600, 1994, L-reg, T&T, 13,000km, Acerbis extras, DEP pipe, vgc, must sell, hence £2400, genuine callers only please after 6 pm. Tel Stewart on 0118 975

6692 (Berks)

Honda XR600RV, Dec 1996, 2000 road kms, large tank, Renthals, B/busters sump guard, White Bros filter, Hot-Tip, Datatagged, £3250 ono. Tel 0181 551 4041 (Essex)

Aprilia Pegaso 3, blue/silver, Oct 1997, R-reg, 12,700km, as new, new c+s, luggage, £3950 or p/x KTM620; also RMX250, 1991 model, good cond, still on orig chain, £1200 ono. Tel Martin on 0144 379 0858 (Mid Glam)

Yamaha XTZ660, red/white, J-reg, never used off road, £1700. Tel 0831 496070 (Surrey)

Honda XR600RV, P-reg, 5500km, new tyres, c+s, spare Acerbis large tank, good cond, £2850 ono. Tel Karl on 0169 888 9590 (Lanarkshire)

Armstrong 560cc, 1986, (ex White Helmets Display Team), recon engine, many new parts, £790 ono or swap + chain for 4-stroke single, elec start! Tel Alison on 0118 939 4312 (Berks)

TM 125E, 1998, £POA, used for marshalling duties only, taxed and reg'd, full spares kit, vgc, price definitely negotiable. Tel Robbie on 0144 320 3077 or 0163 329 0800 (Mid Glam)

Honda XR600, P-reg, road use only, big tank, looked after like a baby, £2800. Tel Richard on 0163 976 0467 (W Glam)

Yamaha DT125R, white/purple, 1996, P-reg, 9500m, recently serviced + fsh, new back tyre, Renthal bars, DEP exhaust, de-restricted, £1700 ono. Tel Tim on 0179 376 5589 (Wilts)

Suzuki DR200 Trail, T&T, £800; also DR200 Enduro, £600, lack of time forces sale, excellent green laners. Tel 0173 246 1530 or (mobile) 0958 654298 (Kent)

Suzuki TSX250, MOT, 14,000m, vgc, standard, £1125; also DR350, 1990, MOT, clean & tidy, £999. Tel David (eves) on 0152 523 7093 (Beds)

Yamaha YZ250 Enduro, 1993, reg'd, flywheel conversion, lighting kit, SPES pipe, new parts, some spares, superb cond, £1375. Tel Adam on 0138 444 0775 (W Mids)

Armstrong MT500 Rotax, 4-stroke, MOT, 6500m, exc cond, you won't find better, £1500. Tel Rob on 0134 128 0684 (N Wales)

Jialing JL125 (similar to Honda XL125) trail bike, in very good cond, taxed and in manufacturer's warranty, 2900km. Tel Gordon on 0178 271 0607 or 0153 838 3181 (Staffs)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 1996 Mk1, lovely cond, new tyres, c+s, ultra lightweight, £1900; also Honda Dominator NX650, 1989, 14,000m, tidy bike, recent tyres, c+s, £2100. Tel Ian on 0164 289 2602 (Teesside)

Cagiva E900, blue, R-reg, 700 miles only from new, absolutely mint cond, must be seen, £4500. Tel (day) on 0168 538 4341 or (eve) on 0168 587 5791 (S Wales)

Yamaha XT350, black/yellow, Aug 1992, T&T, 13,000m, immac cond for year, "SOG'it", needs ES, £1650 ovno. Tel Alan (after 5pm weekdays) on 0177 670 4166 (SW Scotland)

Honda CRM250-2 Mk2, 1993, K-reg, T&T, hardly used, vgc, superb fun, £2200 ono; also Trailer, suitable for two bikes, never used, exc cond, £160. Tel (after 6pm weekdays, otherwise w/e) on 0116 275 3875

(Leics)

Kawasaki KDX200E3, Sep 1989, J-reg, FMF pipe, £1175; also KDX200E2, 1990, T&T, full details available, £975. Tel Carl on 0152 473 2791 (Lancs)

Honda XR600, 1997, P-reg, 1600km, Hot-Tip exhaust, White Bros air filter, immac, £3250 or p/x for CRM250/2. Tel Mark on 0797 019 3740 (Glos)

Cagiva Elefant E900, 1995, M-reg, 15,000km, fsh, mint cond, superb giant trailie, road use only, £3500 ono. Tel Tony (after 7pm) on 0161 366 6813 (Cheshire)

Yamaha 250YZ, 1991, 3 gall tank, brand new, lights, lots of spares, this bike is hardly used, £895 ono. Tel Pete on 0143 822 6588 (Herts)

Yamaha IT175, 84, recent c/s, bearings & tyres, exc reliability and light weight, £600. Tel Nigel on 01302 702766 (S Yorks)

Kawasaki KDX200 H4, 97, P-reg, taxed, new tyre, FMF, Renthals, immac, hardly used, £2400, no offers, kit avail. Tel 01327 842420 (Northants)

Suzuki DR125, 91, 12,000m, T&T, good learner bike, vgc, £900. Tel Nick 01483 418037 (Surrey)

Honda XR250 Baja, J-reg, MoT, excel cond, low mileage, new c/s, Renthals, Pirelli MT16s, spare tubes plus car rack, £1800. Tel 0802 925609 (Tyne & Wear)

Honda XR400RV, 97, official UK model, extras Renthals etc, £2995, no offers. Tel 01764 655050 (Perthshire)

Honda XL250S, T-reg, lods of new parts, tyres, quiet exh, spares, fun bike, house forces sale, offers around £500. Tel eves 01462 490277 (Herts)

Honda XR600R, 98/R, UK bike, Taxed 99, exc cond, new c/s, brakes, tyres, dealer serviced, injury forces sale. Tel 01442 248499 (Herts)

Yamaha TT600, 85, fully orig end bike, B-reg, recent rebuild costing £600 (receipts), offers around £1700. Tel 01845 525937 (N Yorks)

Armstrong MT500, ex-army, reliable 500cc Rotax, T&T, £875. Tel Don 01257 263137 (Lancs)

Suzuki TS125X, complete and total rebuild, hundreds spent, T&T, tons of spares, £950 or swap 500cc trail. Tel 01823 661072 (Somerset)

Suzuki DR385 enduro, K-reg, USD WP forks, Supertrapp, oversize header, powder coated frame, Acerbis frame guards, h/light, f mudguard and tool-bag, £1850 ono. Tel 01530 271455 (Leics)

Suzuki DR200, exc cond, no competition use, sale due to medical cond, full MoT, £900 no offers. Tel 01295 780526 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KDX200, 98, enduro, R-reg, sub 1000m, sensible extras, superb cond, £2350 ono. Tel 01733 465818 (Bike Mag Peterborough)

Kawasaki KLR600, 89/G, 18,000m red/black, good all round cond, swap or p/x smaller trailie bike or sell £1495 ono. Tel 01536 763179 (Northants)

Fantic 247 trials, well maintained, exc cond, ready to ride, reliable bike, £750. Tel eves 01703 464632 or 0860 614326 (Hants)

Honda XL500S, 1980, V-reg, VGC, MoT, Scottolier, O-ring, everything powder coated, Micron exhaust, new tank, £995 ovno. Tel 01296 688542 (Bucks)

Suzuki DR350, M-reg, 16,000m exc cond, CRD exh, MoT, Renthals, recent top-end service, move forces

reluctant sale, £1900. Tel day 01494 887834 or eves 01296 482550 (Bucks)

Suzuki RMX250N, 93, T&T, good cond, £1450 ono. Tel 01302 328516 (S Yorks)

KTM 620, 95, 10,000km, purple, 20L main tank, 20L rear rally tanks, ally b/plate, screen, new c/s, giving it away at £3750 or p/x for tidy 2-stroke eg CRM250-III. Tel Jim on 0131 315 2647 (Edinburgh)

Honda CR250, 93, road reg, best example available, spares & receipts, £1500. Tel 0973 683849 or 01225 461291 (Bath)

KTM 620EGS-E, R-reg, 2800m, brill dual purpose machine, 10mths old, e/start, Acerbis h/guards, £4400 ono. Tel 01347 838272 (Yorks)

Suzuki DR750, 89/F, 19,000m, T&T, VGC, e/start, road use only, fast & reliable, quick sale, £1350 ono. Tel 01189 624297 (Berks)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 98, showroom cond, 1900km, used mainly on road, £2600, £1000 cheaper than new. Tel Colin 01443 435904 (S Wales)

KTM 620EGS-E, 98/R, taxed, 1100km, never raced, v reliable, exc cond, new house forces sale, £5200 ono. Tel 01495 711744 (Gwent)

Kawasaki KDX200 E1, F-reg, SPES & DEP pipe, new p/valves, new rally h/guards plus spares, good clean bike, £895. Tel 01223 570816 (Cambs)

Suzuki RMX125, 92/J-reg, T&T, full enduro trim, fully maintained, all usual extras & more, £1250 ono. Tel 0161 950 3908 (Manchester)

Honda XR600RV, large & small tanks, Acerbis guards, bash plate, spare sprocket, 1300 dry road miles, £3000 ono. Tel 0181 550 8360 (Essex)

Armstrong MT500, T&T, Simpson h/light, dual seat Dell'Orto carb, Rickman top-box, O-ring, Acerbis DS brushguards & deflectors, £750. Tel 01793 766276 (Swindon)

Suzuki DR350, N/96, e/start, yell/wht, 9,000m, Renthals, bark busters, Supertrapp, tank cover, new c/s, vgc, £2300 ono. Tel 0181 641 1291 (Surrey)

Kawasaki KMX200, H-reg, green/blue, low miles with pro rebuild, many extras, exc cond, ftswh, £1225 ono. Tel 01737 554149 (Surrey)

Honda XR400RV, R-reg, 2500km, new rear tyre, UK bike, £2950 ovno. Tel 01142 831258 (S Yorks)

Honda XR250, 96, T&T, new r/tyre, O-ring, h/guards, v low mileage, exc cond, £2395 ono. Tel 01298 72987 (Derbys)

Honda CRM250R-I, 89, good cond, Acerbis b/guards, Renthals, O-ring, MT21s, £1350. Tel 01203 618183 (Coventry)

Suzuki PE175Z, enduro, almost mint cond and orig, hardly been used from new, perfect working order, enduro tyres, T&T, £875 ono. Tel 01380 726972 (Wilts)

Kawasaki KLX250, L-reg, 9000m, lge tank, DEP exh, T&T, mature owner, £1800. Tel 01604 832162 (Northants)

KTM 400SC, 96/N, excel cond throughout, trail ridden only, rare US graphics kit, new Excel rims with gold Talon hubs, £3300. Tel 0498 776598 or 0191 456 4696 (Tyneside)

Honda XLR250 Baja, H-reg, exc cond, light green lane use, T&T, O-ring perfect trail bike, £1350 ono. Tel

Terry on 01482 802365 (Yorks)
 Kawasaki KLX250, enduro, 93, T&T, new tyres, ideal all round bike, mortgage forces quick sale, £1400, bargain. Tel day 04682 78466, 0181 505 0129 (Essex)
 Honda CRM250-III, 94/L, 3k, T&T, mint, £2200; also p/x my Kaw Zephyr 750, 94/L for 4str supermoto. Tel 01189 831695 (Berks)
 Gas Gas JT250 Fortuna 93/L, vgc, fun use only, swap for enduro pref XR etc consider 2-str, or sell, £1350. Tel 01388 765392 (Durham)
 Kawasaki KLX650, N-reg, black, FSH, 7000m, Datatag, Renthal bars, Goodridge hoses, Regina chain, road use only, exc cond, £3000 ono. Tel 01553 631715 (Norfolk)
 Cagiva Canyon 600, 5000km, 95, green, chain oiler, vgc, £3000 ono. Tel 01162 864638 (Leics)
 KTM 125EXC, 94, T&T, profess' lowered, many new parts, great trail/end bike, £1350 ono; also KTM 400EGS-E, e/start, 98, WP susp, taxed, brill dual purpose bike, £4250 ono or p/x diesel Transit. Tel 01452 728609 (Glos)
 Honda XR400RW, 98, 3 weeks use only, 450km, injury forces sale, £3200. Tel 0181 427 0427 or 0956 555666 (Middx)
 Honda CRM250-I, F-reg, 8000km, mostly road use, vgc, all orig, red/wht, T&T, £1600 or p/x older 250cc trailie + £1000. Tel 01761 437207 (Bath)
 Cagiva E900, 95/M, 17K kms, FSH, 2-owner, mint cond, £3500 ono, may p/x XR400, KLX300 etc. 0161 366 6813 (Cheshire)
 Honda CRM250-II, J-reg, T&T, good cond, £1750 ono. Tel 01229 464635 (Cumbria)
 Suzuki XF650 Freewind, P-reg, 7000m, vgc, Datatag, £2900, more fun than a funduro! Tel Danny 01276 475835 (Surrey)
 Aprilia Tuareg Wind 600, 91, T&T, new predator exh., lovely cond, 21,000km, £1700. Tel 01206 841332 (Colchester)
 Aprilia Tuareg 600, 89, T&T, 22,000km, stainless exh with performance can, e/start, vgc, reluc sale, £2100. Tel 01246 204164 (Derbys)
 Honda XR250, 92, good overall cond, new sprox & O-ring, some spares inc plastics and w/shop manual, £1395. Tel 01438 861024 (Herts)
 Husqvarna TE410, P-reg, 97, just serviced, vgc, bargain, £2900. Tel 01222 891808 (Cardiff)
 Honda XL500S, MoT, vgc, Scootiler, O-ring, powder coated, classic insurance, reliable, fun use only, £995. Tel 01296 688542 (Bucks)
 Honda XLV600 Transalp, F-reg, T&T, good cond, £1800 or offers. Tel eves 01487 831852 (Cambs)
 KTM 620LC4, 94/L purple/white, direct from police hence no serious off road work, good cond, T&T, £2150. Tel 0151 420 7975 (Cheshire)
 Kawasaki KMX200, 91, black, MoT, vgc, £1050 ono. Tel Darrell 01229 585626 (Cumbria)
 Kawasaki KDX200, 85, rebuilt with many new parts, good cond, some spares, £675 ono. Tel 01242 602751 (Glos)
 Honda CRM250-II, 93, FMF, Renthals, Acerbis, good cond, excel runner, £1950 for quick sale. Tel 01443 208846 (Glam)

Kawasaki KX420, 82, green plastics, easy to start, reliable, fun bike, must sell, £400 ono. Tel 01895 834498 (Bucks)
 KTM 350 Six Days, 4-str enduro, M-reg, MoT, good cond, many new parts, £1995. Tel 0973 395288 or 01202 723403 (Dorset)
 Honda CRM250-I, F-reg, T&T, bash plate, DEP t/pipe, disc guards, rack, spares, £1650 ono. Tel 01359 231018 (Suffolk)
 Kawasaki KMX125, R-reg, vgc, taxed, ideal commuter bike, cheap to run, regularly maintained, mature owner, £2050. Tel 0181 660 9802 (Surrey)
 Kawasaki KLR250, R-reg, black, 7k, tax, warranty, FSH, just serviced, rim locks, £2400. Tel eves 01772 467023 (Lancs)
 Yamaha DT125R, T&T, history, 8500m, de-restrict, exc cond, £880. Tel Martyn 9-5pm 01203 644255 or eves 01789 842216 (W Mids)
 Yamaha XT600Z Tenere, B-reg, T&T, new tyres, c/s, good cond, £1300 ono. Tel 01179 446624 (Bristol)
 Husqvarna WR250, 91 but R-reg, exc cond, trail use only, new Gas Gas forces sale, ftswb, £1500 ono. Tel 01934 623820 (Somerset)
 Yamaha XT350, vgc, sensible trail mods, very clean, maintained regardless, offers around £100 or p/x reg'd twin shock trials. Tel 01773 831751 (Derbys)
 Suzuki DR350SEW, e/start, 98, 1900m, Renthals, Acerbis, Pirelli, CRD b/plate, vgc, £2950. Tel 01249 443632 (Wilts)
 Yamaha XT600, 87, genuine 15,000m small tank model, red & white with gold wheels, MoT, outstanding cond throughout, £1800 no offers. Tel 01299 879508 (Worcs)

WANTED

Wanted DR650, set of f+r wheels, complete or otherwise. Tel Rob on 0116 271 9059 (Leics)
 Wanted help & advice on DR800 pipe & carb set up, save me, they can't be this slow! Tel Dave on 0181 856 7687 (London)
 Wanted Bultaco Sherpa or Alpina 250/360, reg'd & vgc, 1970 onwards, within Sussex area ideally. Tel Stuart (eves) on 0127 346 3097 or (day) 0127 329 2718 (Sussex)
 Wanted Arai black dual sport helmet DS, size XL, 61-62cm; also wanted back issues of Trail Bike & Enduro Magazine, Nos 3, 4, 5, 11, 12 & 14, name your price, within reason Tel Glenn on 0190 824 2678 (Bucks)
 Wanted air box and filter for DT250MX, 1980, urgent. Tel Ray on 0118 973 4851 (Berks)
 Wanted Kawasaki silencer for KLR250D, must be orig item in good cond, also workshop (or owners) manual for same. Tel Tim on 0120 971 3905 (Cornwall)
 Wanted workshop manual for Kawasaki KLR250 or a photocopy. Tel Ray (after 6pm) on 0124 225 0711 (Glos)
 Wanted performance parts for Suzuki DR350, exhaust, Supertrapp or similar, flatslide carb, big bore kit, or complete engine, will travel; also trail riding

companion wanted for East London/ South Essex area. Tel Nick on 0181 532 2520 (London)
 Wanted KLR650, s/s exhaust, Desert bars, big tank, bashplate, anything to improve '89 Tengai for off road use, why? Tel Barry on 0163 556 9729 (Berks)
 Wanted Acerbis petrol tank to fit Yamaha XT600E, also white body panels and full performance exh system, must be in good cond. Tel 01472 236424 (Lincs)
 Wanted FMF Gold exh syst or similar for mk3 CRM. Tel 01472 601287 (Lincs)
 Wanted TY175, good bad or indifferent condition considered, maybe even TY250. Tel 01785 716652 (Staffs)
 Wanted Honda XR600, 1990-94, cosmetics not important, but must be good mechanically and serviced. Up to £1500 cash. Tel 01179 784954 (Avon)
 Wanted for XT600Z, 86 model headlamp unit (rectangular) and fairing, plus Motad alloy twin can or any other complete exh syst, plus rectifier. Tel Jim on 0131 315 2647 (Edinburgh)
 Wanted XR200 Pro-Link, good cond only, cash waiting, please help, can travel. Tel 01993 878172 (Oxon)
 Wanted Yam XT600Z Tenere 1VJ, kick & e/start, 86/87 model. Tel 0467 428042
 Wanted PE175T parts, speedo & rear tail light, must be orig, cash waiting, I want to start PE owners club. Tel 0181 594 2850 (Essex)
 Wanted Gilera Northwest basket case, cheap or p/x my Cagiva Canyon, cash either way. Tel 01162 864638 (Leics)
 Wanted Help, desperately need KLR650 w/shop manual esp wiring diag for 87 model. Tel 01506 855646 (Edinburgh)

PARTS

Honda CRM Mk1 alloy sump guard, vgc, £40; CRM rear carrier with two grab handles, vgc, £40. Tel Ian on 0116 277 6582 (Leicester)
 XR600 Super Moto 17" wheels, red Talon hubs, Akront polished rims, 3mths old, Bridgestone BT90s, cost £950, sell £600, no offers. Tel Vince on 0190 321 1213 (W Sussex)
 KTM 300EXC engine, 90% repaired/rebuilt, new bearings, seals & con-rod, £300 ono; '92, rear shock, £40; '98, 250/300 manual, £10. Tel Neil on 0152 639 8854 (Lincs)
 Dominator f+r wheels with tyres & discs etc, £160 pair. Tel Andy on 0161 789 3332 (Manchester)
 Honda XR200 tuning parts, alloy Supertrapp exhaust, Mikuni carb, only used once, £60 each or £100 the pair, P&P free. Tel Chris on 0120 971 6765 (Cornwall)
 KLR250 CDI unit, brand new; s/h carb. Tel 0193 586 3684 (Somerset)
 Suzuki DR350 front disc rotor, absolutely brand new, never used, still in box, purchased in error for £95, will accept £80, can post. Tel Adrian on 0181 789 9673 (London)
 DT400 f+r wheels, pretty good cond, inc hub & spindle, £30 ono. Tel David on 0163 327 3567 (Gwent)
 Honda XL600R shock, £20; swing arm, £5; rear wheel

complete with 80% MT21, vgc, £55. Tel Eddie on 0188 957 4235 (Staffs)
 Kawasaki KDX200 E1-E4, standard exhaust system, £25; brand new seat cover for air cooled KDX, £10;
 Rally brushguards, red, brand new, £10. Tel Carl on 0152 473 2791 (Lancs)
 SuperMoto wheels, Gold Excel rims, Talon hubs, c/w sprockets & tyres, 500km old, immac, £500. Tel Mark on 0797 019 3740 (Glos)
 Yam XTZ660 wheels (pair), as new inc discs sprox etc, also CDI unit unused and some plastics, offers. Tel 01438 861024 (Herts)
 Bieffe crash helmet, HiTech model, large, yellow, only used twice on the road, unused spare lining, as new, £95 inc box & cover. Tel 0374 800736 (Cambs)
 Marzocchi forks 40mm, complete with clamps & wheel, £120, 40mm Dell'Orto carb suit KTM 560, £30. Tel 01684 773257 (Glos)
 XR4, upgrade your 96 bike's clutch to later spec, new springs & clutch lifter, £25, inc p&p, also new swingarm, offers. Tel 01764 655755 (Perthshire)
 DR350, 96 std rear silencer, as new cond £50. Tel 01159 223030 (Notts)
 Supermoto XR400/600? Beautiful Beringer (Monnier) 4-pot caliper and floating disc inc braided hose, superb, nearly new, not cheap but the best, offers. Tel 01764 655755 (Perthshire)
 XL1255 eng, excellent head and cam, new rings etc, fitted in TL125 bitsa trials bike, sell eng £60 or complete bike £170. Tel 01785 716652 (Staffs)
 Trailers, two bike £160, or one bike £120, exc cond, lights and legal. Tel 01295 780526 (Oxon)
 New trail tyres, Dunlop K750 120/90/18, Mich Sirac 90/90/21, £35 each, Continental Twinduro, 4.00x18, £40, some part worn Metz 18" rears and 21" fronts from £20; also wanted oversize piston for Rotax 250cc. Tel 01462 626008 (Herts)
 DR350 brand new unused silencer for 93 bike, £80 (retail £238), also std b/plate £20, rear subframe £10, front indicators £10. Tel 01225 443200 (bath)
 Bike Rack, Dave Cooper Senior, inc light board & ratchet straps, £45. Tel 01793 766276 (Swindon)
 Boeri Splash full face off road helmet size small, Wulf MX boots size 5/6, assortment of Wulf kit waist 30/32, offers, Fieldsheer jacket (small), waterproof with armour, and white leather jeans small, offers. Tel 01452 728609 (Glos)
 DR350 DEP exhaust, vgc, £95. Tel 01629 580569 (Derbys)
 KTM f & r discs, as new, plus rear s/moto hub, purple with sprox, £100 for q sale. Tel 0976 366221 (N Yorks)
 Honda CR500 rads, tank, (1992), '86 CDI, YZ250 kick-start lever (1991+), rad scoops, new gear lever, RM400 unfinished proj. Tel 01462 673414 (Herts)
 DR350 f&r mudguards, wht/yell, £20, front mud-guard KLR600 scratched £5, tyres MT17, 90/90/21 £15, Twinduro 130/80/17 £20. Tel 01162 864638 (Leics)
 Super Tenere tank, red £60, leather kidney belt, 40-42" £20, DT125LC eng spares, forks £40, SP370 various eng parts. Tel 01245 353297 (Essex)

