

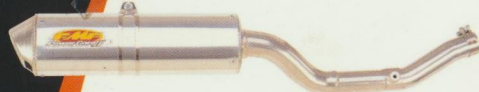
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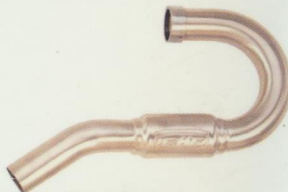
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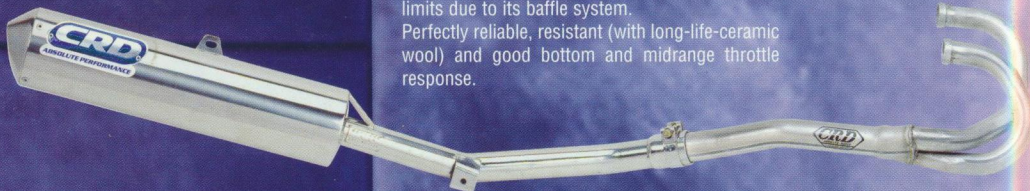


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Fear of Flying...

I've never been much good at tackling jumps. Whether it's a lack of confidence or more likely a desperate lack of skill I can't say. But for some reason as soon as the bike and I leave the ground I simply become a passenger - unable to control my trajectory or destination. I watch in awe as skilled riders, flick, whip and turn their machines majestically in mid air, while I simply wait for the thump of the ground before opening my eyes again.

It was one particular incident a few years ago which confirmed this belief in me once and for all. The day's racing hadn't started out all that well. As I unloaded my 500cc Husaberg in preparation for a multi-lap hare & hounds, I realised I'd forgotten to bring along the ignition key - it being a model fitted with an ignition switch. After a bit of bodging - twisting various wires together - I managed to bypass the switch and could once again start the bike on the electric button, though I don't think the connection was all that good as the motor would occasionally stall for no apparent reason.

With a mix of open going and a bit of woodlands, this particular course also utilised part of a permanent moto-X track with a series of spectacular and ever-increasing jumps, culminating in a huge (or what I consider to be huge) tabletop jump with a steep-faced take-off ramp.

I'd been circulating steadily all morning but was becoming increasingly frustrated by the antics of one particular rider on a CR250. I could overtake this bloke on the open going, but as soon as we got onto the moto-X part of the track he would sweep by me, usually over one or other of the jumps which he always attacked with great gusto.

This went on for lap after lap with us trading places until I decided something had to be done. If he could clear these jumps I reasoned, I was damn sure I could too. Thus I threw caution to the wind, and on the very next lap matched him jump for jump around the moto-X course, holding him off until we came to the final tabletop. I almost lost my nerve as I accelerated out of the last corner towards the face of the up-ramp which appeared impossibly steep, but I wasn't going to back off now. No sooner had I reached the base of the take off ramp however than the Husaberg chose that precise moment to falter momentarily before cutting-out altogether...

I'll never forget the eerie silence as the 'Berg and I sailed off the up-ramp, performing a graceful arc in mid-air before heading earthwards almost vertically - nose downwards. The Husaberg touched down front wheel first (way short of the down-slope) and milliseconds later I was ejected not only over the bars but down the slope of the jump as well - landing head first at the feet of some amused spectators.

The blow permanently creased the peak of my crash helmet and winded me so much that I was still there getting myself together when matey on the CR250 came around for his next lap. I remember looking up at him in mid air as he delicately stroked the rear brake to control the Honda's pitch and elevation, before landing perfectly - 30 feet away from where he'd taken off.

'He's not half as spectacular as you' said a spectator by way of consolation, after helping me to my feet and kicking the bike straight for me.

Something which I've tried to live up to ever since. I figure I may not be the greatest jumper in the world, but when it comes to spectacular... I'm a natural...



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Foot & Mouth Latest

It may be a little too soon to predict the precise ending of the Foot & Mouth crisis which has badly affected the UK off-road scene this spring, but the signs are there that the tide is beginning to turn. With the granting of permits for selected events, both the AMCA and DRPA have signalled the end of a blanket ban on competition. So far the sport's governing

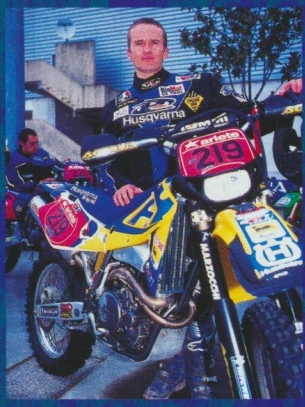
body (the ACU) has kept its ban in place, but will be reviewing its position shortly.

Green laners too are hoping to start riding again soon. Currently the advice is to stay off the lanes, but with Government encouraging county councils to reopen their networks of rights of way, we're moving closer to the time when trail riders can resume their pass-time.

MAFFia officials claim the outbreak has now peaked and the number of new cases being reported is only half what it was in late March. While it may still be months before F&M is totally eradicated, it now looks like we're seeing the beginning of the end...

Husky TE250E

Hot on the heels of Yamaha's WR250F and the TM250 featured in last month's issue, comes Husqvarna's new quarter-litre thumper enduro bike. The bike which features an all-new compact, DOHC, electric-start engine is being ridden in this year's World Enduro Championship by Frenchman Cyril Esquirol. Initial press reports of the bike however have proved somewhat less than complimentary, suggesting the Italian factory still have some way to go to get the bike on a par with Yamaha's stunning 250F. Despite starting as favourite at this year's Gilles Lalay Classic, Esquirol failed to finish the event,



and is currently lying outside the top three in the 250cc 4T class of the World Enduro Champs...

Rally Regs...

This year's Transdanubia Rally regs are now being distributed. The ride which runs from Munich to Budapest covers some 3000km - the majority of which are off-road. Open to all four-strokes (but big trailies and big enduro bikes are most popular), it runs from 25 Aug to 1 Sep 2001. Entry forms are available from: Schalber Event GmbH, am Auwald 12, D-87541 Hindelang, Germany (Fax: 0049 8324 952955, e-mail: schalber@allgaeu.org). Alternatively you could give John Ross a call on 0049 5254 808760 (e-mail: the.ross.family@alphasurf.de). He's entering on his Suzuki DR-2400S and already has a small posse of Brits keen to do the same. Why not join him. (For details of last year's event see the report in TBM62).

Fast Eddy...

Confirmation that the first round of the Fast Eddy series is set to go ahead at Matchams Park Raceway on 27 May. There will also be a 1.5hr race for clubmen, sportsmen and trail riders on Saturday 26 May. Provisionally called the Steady Eddy, the idea is to encourage newcomers to the sport to have a go at racing without encountering the cut and thrust of the main Sunday event. However riders aren't allowed to enter both Saturday and Sunday's races. For more details call 01543 466282.

COMPETITION WINNER

Okay you can stop those pestering phone calls and grovelling letters because the winner of TBM's first mega-competition has already been decided. Nick Lindley from Bishop Auckland in County Durham beat more than 2000 other



entries to the first prize, simply by having his name picked out of the editorial crash helmet. Nick who's an industrial radiographer by trade (he X-rays metal welds to look out for impurities) was over the moon with his prize, saying: 'I thought it was a wind-up at first when TBM rang me at work, I never normally win anything'. Well he has this time, because now he's got an XR250R to park alongside the XR600R already sitting in his garage - plus he got his hands on all the other goodies. Lucky beggar. 'I was thinking about getting something smaller and lighter than my 600 for off-roading and this XR250R just fits the bill' he might've said if he wasn't just so speechless about winning! A nicer bloke, you couldn't wish to meet...

Scotland Open...

Unaffected by the recent F&M outbreak, Norwest Trails (by the Kyle of Lochalsh) still has places available for riders who want to sample a bit of beautiful off-roading in Scotland. All the areas currently used are ungrazed or forested land which are privately owned, and Norwest Trails are restricting riders to using their own fleet of disinfected hire bikes (Serows). All riders must arrive with scrupulously clean kit (inc boots), and a clean car (jet washed under the wheelarches). The cost of a riding weekend using their hire bike (and insurance) and including accommodation is £240. For more details contact Gordon Brownlie on 01599 577314.

BTB National Coast to Coast Rally

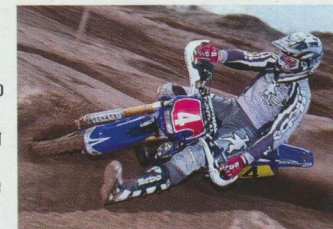
The Big Trail Bike Club have confirmed details of their new annual Coast to Coast Rally Challenge which is set to take place on 8 & 9 September this year (see Blez's account of last year's event in TBM63). The rally which relies on competitors' navigational abilities to solve simple clues (connected by fantastic roads), begins at Flamborough Lighthouse near Bridlington (Yorks), and ends on the west coast on Sunday afternoon after an overnight stop in Hawes. The event will definitely run despite F&M disease as the route will avoid using the off-road bits of last year. For further details log onto the BTBC website: www.bigtrailbike.com or send an SAE to BTBC, PO Box 1628, S20 4BR.

BMW Bows Out...

The mighty BMW factory has decided that it will no longer contest the FIM World Rally-Raid Championship with a full works team. Sources close to the factory suggest that BMW riders (John Deacon and Juan Roma) will continue to ride rallies on BMW machinery in a supported team, but without the full factory back up. John Deacon who has a contract with BMW until June 2002, preferred not to comment about the latest decision which appears to fly in the face of all the hard work and testing which has gone on recently to make the 900cc BMW twin a rally winner. It appears that the decision to bring to a halt the factory support was taken at a senior level in Germany, despite the beneficial effects that racing has had on improving the company's image.

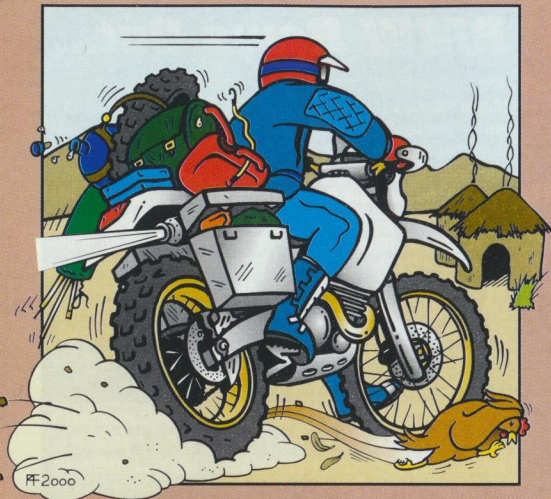
Dirty Learning...

Attention all off road beginners. ISDE gold medallist and British Championship enduro contender Wayne Braybrook is running a series of three one day schools up in the north west, teaching the basics of off-roading. The Schools are aimed at novices, beginners and trail riders who simply want to learn the essential techniques in order to progress, they are not about enduro riding or improving your speed cross-country. The schools take place on the Trax off-road course which is a non-grazed practice track (which has remained open during the Foot & Mouth crisis), and take place on 11 May, 8 June and 13 July. Tuition will include the importance of throttle control, braking and body positioning; dealing with 'stoppers' ie bogs, descents and hill climbs, in other words 'trail riding the easy way', plus a brief talk on bike preparation and maintenance. The cost of the day (including insurance) is £75 and all you need bring along is yourself and your trail bike, plus the appropriate kit. For details of booking contact Trax on 01772 731832.



Another Show...

Hot on the heels of last year's two off-road shows comes yet another one called Off Road UK 2001. The latest show (scheduled for the end of November) is the brainchild of Paul Edmondson (promoter of the successful Fast Eddy race series), and is intended to be considerably different to either of the other exhibitions. With the emphasis firmly on sport, crowd participation and entertainment, Eddy hopes that his new event will enable show-goers to truly experience the thrill of both dirt and street (there will be a strong supermoto presence), getting them to take part in fun, easy competitions on site. Set in Trentham Gardens Exhibition Centre in Stoke on Trent, the show is designed to have strong grass roots appeal, with plenty of bargains up for grabs. Given the poor start that dealers have had to this year, we'd be surprised if there weren't a number of takers for the 'competitively priced' stands said to be on offer. We'll keep you posted on this one...



Out of Africa

Alex Marr found that travelling through Africa sometimes turns into a full-blooded competition...

'How much is your room?' asked Jens, a German biker I'd just bumped into in a small Ethiopian town.

'25 birr' I replied (about £2.50), hardly a lot of money for a room with a minimum of wildlife, a private shower and sheets which didn't look like they'd been slept in by too many people since the last wash. It also had a secure courtyard where I could park my bike.

'What?' he exclaimed, 'You must be crazy - my place is 15 birr - you've been ripped off!'

Paying lip-service to overlander camaraderie, I agreed to meet up later for a beer. 'And bring your maps' Jens shouted as I walked away.

A little while later I rode to where he was staying and found him in his dingy, decomposing, cockroach-infested room. The bathroom - if that's the right word for it - was down the corridor. Its location was clear from the flies hovering around the

door and the vile stench emanating from within.

'Nice place you've got here' I said, sarcastically.

'Ja, but you know it's cheap' Jens replied.

On the way out we passed my bike.

'You're crazy - you should use an XT600 - they're the best.' Jens informed me in that slightly superior German manner of his.

'Well I like my XR' I said, it's so reliable: nothing's gone wrong in over 40,000km.'

'In Germany everybody uses XT and BMW - you're crazy to use anything else' he said shaking his head.

'Why don't you use aluminium luggage boxes?' he went on.

'Well I prefer the soft ones' I said, 'they're pretty strong and easy to repair.'

'No, you're crazy - come and see my aluminium boxes - I made them myself.'

Later, as we walked outside, we passed a place serving cold Bedele beer and I suggested we sit down and have a drink. Jens didn't look too happy and asked the price of a beer - it was 3.50 birr (35p).

'This is a rip off' he said, 'I saw another place which looks cheaper, let's go there.' We traipsed around for 15 minutes in the early evening heat and eventually found the establishment which was going to provide us with beers at discount prices.

'Ah you see, three birr here' said Jens, 'I told you that other place was a rip off - you have to look around for the best places you know.' The beers were lukewarm.

I listened as he recounted story after miserly story - how he never used Lonely Planet guidebooks, how he'd rebuilt his carburettor out of baked bean tins or something, and how he'd haggled with the woman at the market selling tomatoes, getting the price down to virtually nothing, despite the fact she probably had eight kids to feed. In turn I had been proved, in his eyes, to be wholly inferior to him because I preferred to pay 5p more for a cold beer, because I chose to order the slightly pricier spaghetti bolognese over goat gristle stew (which I'd eaten virtually every other day) and because I opted for sheets which hadn't been slept in by half the town's population of hookers.

He wanted to see my maps so he could show me how his route had been much better than mine. His route had taken him past Victoria Falls, somewhere I was planning to go when I got further South.

'How were the falls?' I asked him.

'I didn't go - it's much too touristy for me' he replied.

Now Victoria Falls (the town), is a pretty grim, touristy place I admit - full of aggressive young hawkers trying to flog you tours and T-shirts, but who in their right mind wouldn't go and visit the falls themselves if they were actually there? (They truly are one of the natural wonders of the world -

even if it does set you back about £10!). I tried to get to the bottom of precisely why he was travelling in Africa, and was left thinking that he was under the illusion he was taking part in some sort of bizarre competition where the one who spent least money was the winner.

Luckily Jens was the exception rather than the rule when it came to overland bikers. However as I moved further down into east and southern Africa I was reintroduced to the world of points-scoring travellers - I was in backpacker land.

In my youth I had done a fair bit of world-wandering with a rucksack on my back - sleeping in train stations, getting drunk in youth hostels and trying to kiss uninterested young Swedish girls. Now in my mid thirties it doesn't seem quite the same. I stayed a night in a backpackers place in Uganda - I drank some beers but was too knackered to get drunk, the young Swedish girls were even less interested than 15 years ago and the music was played at volume ten while everyone moved their heads up and down, apparently in some kind of trance.

But amongst the youthful party animals there are always those who see travelling as a competitive vocation, waiting to outdo you in every way they can.

I remember sitting round the table at a campsite in Zimbabwe as a couple of young Americans guys bored the pants off everyone else with their tales of hardship. How they'd been on the road for years, how they never took malaria pills, how they'd got malaria, how they'd treated themselves with tree bark and goat's dung or something, how they'd smoked the strongest weed at Lake Malawi, how they'd only travel in the back of a local truck (never a bus), how guidebooks are for wimps and how the way they travel they really can't be termed tourists. All related with an unsavoury mix of self-righteousness and one-upmanship.

Someone asked them what was their most memorable experience on their extensive travels?

'Must be that beach place in Mozambique' they replied. 'I mean, man, that was sooo cheap' one of them said.

'Yeah man, that was like, cool man.' 'Real cheap, man' the other concurred.

Later, an Irish girl who was evidently lubricated by a fair amount of alcohol stopped one of them in full flow and said in her cute Irish accent:

'You know (man!), you are one mighty asshole' she said. The rest of us tried to stifle our giggles.

The fact is that different people travel for a whole host of different reasons. It might be to experience other cultures, to visit special scenery or observe wildlife, to relax, to sunbathe, to challenge themselves, to party, to take part in adventure sports. Whatever, it doesn't really matter.

But I know one thing: it sure as hell isn't a contest...

Me? Well, I just fancied an 18-month trail ride...

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TRAIL Tips



This month a way of waterproofing your boots, a bearing saver, an electrical tip and a penny-pinching bashplate...

We begin this month's Tips page with a suggestion sent in by Tim Hadfield from Co Cork on how to keep your boots in tip top condition. Tim writes: Here's a good tip for those who use leather boots. Plumber's solid silicone grease (made and sold by Hepworths), rubbed well in with fingers (generous amounts - very messy), left overnight to penetrate and then brushed and finally polished up with kitchen towel ends up looking great and being very waterproof. It's long-lasting and being silicone, doesn't support fungal growth often found on boots put away when damp.

Thanks Tim we'll try that out on our own boots - once they finally dry off. Now here's another of Dave Lacey (from Bucks) useful and well illustrated tips. Dave writes: 'The needle bearings in the rear suspension linkages can take a hammering - water, dust, mud etc followed by a blast from the jet washer. A simple mod is to block the gap between the joints with a couple of 'o'-rings. It's easy to do when the linkage is apart for cleaning, but in fact it can also be done without dismantling everything. simply select an 'o'-ring which will be a fairly tight fit and then snip it apart with a pair of scissors. Pop the 'o'-ring around the joint then using some super-glue

and pointed pliers, glue the ends of the 'o'-ring back together again.' Dave adds: 'A consortium of needle-bearing manufacturers recently offered me £25 million to keep quiet about this, but for the good of trail riding I turned 'em down.' Big mistake Dave...

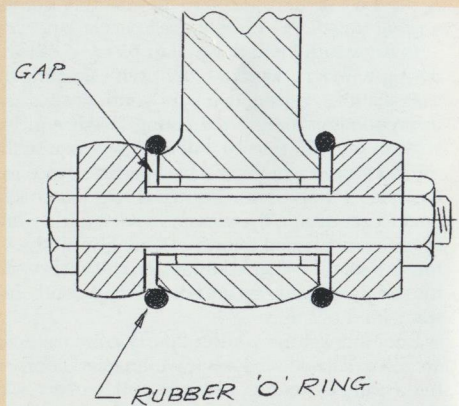
We'd like to add our own tip to this one. Before fitting any new bearings (especially wheel bearings), make sure that they've got plenty of waterproof grease in them. Most bearings these days only come with a smear of light grease, and this simply isn't sufficient to survive the rigours of off-roading. If there's a nylon seal (or two) on the bearing it's worth carefully prising it off with a fine screwdriver and working in a bit of waterproof grease. Don't over-pack it but make sure there's plenty in there before replacing the seals. That way your bearings should last much longer.

Next comes a tip from Rob Loupart in Herefordshire. Rob writes: 'Further to recent tips and letters about sealing electrics with silicone I'd like to add my own suggestion. RS components produce many products for electronics including a very handy silicone grease. It comes in a 100g tube and has high insulating and water-repellent properties, but still conducts electricity. It doesn't 'cure' like DIY silicones but stays wet and pliable so you can

wipe it off if required. The only drawback is that it can only be ordered from the website using a credit card (though it is a secure site). Visit rswwww.com (yes it is that) and ask for part number 494-124. It costs £9.50, but one tube will last you years.'

Cheers Rob and finally comes this slightly off the wall but nevertheless intriguing suggestion from Jon Wren in Blandford, Dorset. Jon writes: 'Living in the south of England the need for a bash-plate isn't that important, though I still like to fit one to fend off small stones and rocks thrown up by the front wheel and keep the paint on the frame rails. For the price of about a fiver you can buy a very strong, extra-wide plastic snow shovel, which when cut in half, fits under your bike perfectly. It can be attached to the frame by jubilee clips, and can be purchased from most hardware shops in a range of colours to match your bike.' Cheers Jon - the mind boggles...

Keep those tips coming in guys and we'll keep publishing 'em...



DRZ SUZUKI 400 '4 STROKE'



KDX 200 SILENCER



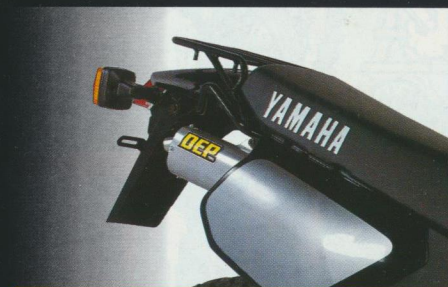
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TALKING *Dirty*

Chris Evans begins the competitive season... with a whimper...

With nothing in the way of trail riding going on last month, I was foolishly persuaded by the rest of the TBM crew to throw caution to the wind and enter a two-day French enduro instead. This annual mud bath goes under the cute and cuddly moniker of the 'Val de Lorraine Classic'. And the deal went something like this:

I lean on the organisers for a late entry for the TBM crew (His Editorship, His Garnhamship and myself). I sort out all the paperwork, book the accommodation, organise the assistance, hire an assistance vehicle and gets my butt to Nancy for Friday evening scrutineering. In return TBM lends out its prized CRM250CR and shouts the accommodation and assistance bunny (called Yasmina by the way).

In the warm comfort of my luxury apartment it seemed such an excellent arrangement. For a start I was keen to see how the revitalised CRM-CR was behaving having been given some much needed TLC (more about which next month). I also wanted to find out if the second edition of the 'Val' was any better than the severely storm damaged 2000 variant which we entered last year. And stupidly I thought it would

be fun to have a bit of a run with the other TBM boys - especially as they had promised they wouldn't take it too seriously and that we'd all ride together. Even before I'd got through scrutineering however (held at the worryingly named village of Pompey), things started looking ugly.

Standing in the car park, while Si and Clive casually repaired the damage inflicted on 'my' bike during the Gilles Lalay Classic, I get a call from the geezer who employs me to do press work for a (road racing) Grand Prix team.

Boss: Where are you? I need you to do some work.
Me: Er - I'm a little busy right now - can it wait till Monday?

Boss: No. What's that noise I can hear in the background - it sounds like bikes?

Me: Er - I'm in Nancy...

Boss: That's not what I asked - I have your schedule here and I know you're not running any trail rides at the moment, so you must have entered an enduro?

Me (sheepishly): Er... well, sort of.

Boss: What do you mean sort of?

You know you have to go to Japan on Tuesday and I warned you not to get up to anything stupid just before a Grand Prix.

Me (even more sheepishly): Er... well... I can explain...

Boss: Don't bother. If you hurt yourself - you're fired.

The phone went dead.

Oh well. At least now I knew where I stood - or rather knelt.

Amazingly, despite some distinctly dodgy paperwork (would a GP named Dr Jekyll really be able to set up a successful practice performing medicals), we all got through scrutineering and set off for the 'manor house' accommodation I'd booked and which TBM was paying through the nose for.

With the lovely Yaz map-reading, me driving and the TBM artic in hot pursuit, it took us approximately twice as long as it should have to find our three-star Gite - which as it turned out, looked less like a 'manor house' and rather more like an old mid-terraced cottage. By the time we finally pulled up outside our distinctly unprepossessing accommodation, I could tell Si was so concerned about Yasmina's ability to successfully navigate between the assistance points that he initially failed to notice that we'd been royally shafted on the accommodation front. Another terse conversation ensued:

Melber (pulling me to one side and speaking in hushed, accusing tones): It was Yaz doing the map reading wasn't it?

Me (sheepishly): Mostly.

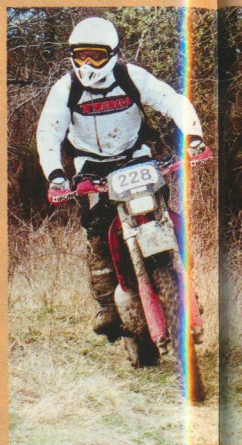
Melber: She's never going to find the assistance points in time is she?

Me (defensively): Well...Er...

Melber: Well what happens on your trail rides?

Me: How do I know - I'm not in the van with her - all I know is that she always gets there before us.

Melber (after an unconvinced grunt): Hell, I hope you



know what you're doing Evans, we haven't come all this way just to run out of fuel at the first checkpoint...
Me: Right.

Melber: By the way we've been shafted on the Gite.

If we'd been talking on the phone, at this point in the conversation, the line would have gone dead, instead we all settled in for a beer.

After a restless night in our alternately freezing-then-boiling 'luxury Gite' we miraculously found our way back to the parc ferme with time to spare, failed to get lynched by any anti-British farmers in the crowd and wheeled our bikes up to the start line.

The problem with entering foreign enduros is that the organisers and other competitors assume that if you have come all the way from another country, you must be a good rider. Fortunately I left them in no doubt that there are always exceptions to this rule.

On hearing our names and nationalities read out by the announcer, a small crowd of spectators gathered round to watch us start. They weren't disappointed. While Melber and Garnham kicked their bikes effortlessly into life, Yours Truly fell victim to that fatal combination of pre-race nerves, tall unfamiliar bike and short inside leg. When the flimsy aftermarket side stand (that I'd unwisely decided to perch the bike on), finally collapsed underneath me, Si came to my rescue and started the CRM-CR first prod. Hot with shame and sweaty with exertion I finally potted off the line - much to the amusement of the assembled crowd.

Ten minutes into the going, my arms already pumped solid, short of breath and dying for a fag I caught up with Melber, Garnham and a gaggle of excited Frenchman fighting for the chance to throw themselves off a near vertical drop. Above the din of revving two-strokes a marshal shouted the same sentence several times into my Arai before I realised what was going on. We'd come to one of the 'joker' sections: a series of technical challenges which could be circumnavigated by the playing of a 'joker' with which the organisers had thoughtfully provided each competitor. Playing the joker added a minute of time penalties to your score, but allowed you to miss out the hazard altogether. The choice was simple - very simple in my case - either wait my turn and throw myself off the cliff, or take the easy way round. I hesitated for barely a nano-second before indicating to the marshal that I had no pride and even less courage and wanted to play my joker NOW. I saw from his list that out of the 230 riders who'd already started - I was the first to do so!

About an hour and a half later I made it to the first assistance point and to my huge relief found Yasmina comfortably installed. Hugely early, I drank and smoked and drank until it was time to do it all over again. The pattern for the weekend had been established.

In retrospect it wasn't a bad event, though if we hadn't enjoyed continual bright sunshine I would have thrown in the towel at the drop of a clutch. Unsurprisingly I finished way down the leader-board and by Sunday evening felt like I'd been on the receiving end of a road accident. I did however learn one thing. You can't do French two day enduros on a nicotine-based fitness regime. In June I'll be back fighting fit and this time it'll be Melber and Garnham who'll be playing their jokers first. I hope, anyway...



LONG DISTANCE OFF-ROADING IN FRANCE

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For further information contact:

Chris Evans, Sport Adventure,
156 Boulevard Voltaire,
75011 Paris, France.

Tel: (00 33) 1 43 72 86 02

Fax: (00 33) 1 43 72 61 09

Mobile: (00 33) 6 62 48 71 90

<http://www.sport-adventure.com>
e-mail: chris.evans@sport-adventure.com

RANT!

TBM contributor, trail rider, farmer and landowner Richard Bott, sounds off with a bang...!

There is nothing quite like a good explosion. They can be thoroughly life affirming. One theory has it that in the heart of an explosion when all those millions of molecules move instantly from a quiet state to a very agitated one, the sudden molecular activity in some way communicates itself to the human mind. Particularly simple ones.

In my 'yoof' we used to combine O-level physics with some common household materials to make some pretty good bombs. All this educational activity didn't go unnoticed by the neighbours who complained bitterly to the police. The other great thing about explosions is that in terms of loudness they are impossible to quantify after the event. When the police asked 'how loud' we came over all innocent and claimed we'd used left over fireworks from bonfire night. The neighbours were made to look pretty stupid. Oh, how we laughed.

Encouraged to rehabilitate we made a cross-bow out of a Bedford lorry spring and a railway sleeper. It was a bit of a struggle to cock it, but would fire a three foot length of half-inch construction rod straight through an abandoned Transit van. I suspect I am starting to wander off the point.

Childish behaviour has always gone well with motorbikes and long may it continue. As any fool knows it's all those explosions in the heart of an engine that makes them such fun. And that's the point. Changes in the law mean that many of our favourite green lanes are going to have to be fought

over exhaustively in Public Inquiries. Currently it looks like many will be lost. Much of the impetus for this has been general prejudice, but it is usually expressed as concern over noise. On top of this we are losing venues for enduros, and in these cases it is almost entirely due to noise.

I always like to see a hooligan thrashing his 'piped and jetted' Jap four round the local bypass, not least because it makes my mother in law snort with disapproval. And there is not much she can do about it.

No one is going to ban motor vehicles from the public road. However it is all too easy to prevent someone from riding on private land. Even if the land belongs to them.

The majority of people don't mind an enduro three or four times a year in their vicinity, but amongst them there is always a 'Middle Englander' who decides to put a stop to it. These people are often retired professionals who have plenty of time and expertise at their disposal to either stop an event or severely curtail it. And there is much legislation, and general prejudice in the legal system to help them.

As a farmer who hosts four events a year, I have to deal with my very own Middle Englander and his 'concerns'. You have no idea how stressful it is being polite to a man who looks like Alan Partridge and talks like a Daily Mail leader writer, when all you want to do is give him a good slap and tell him to 'get a life'.

Two months ago I was standing in this bloke's garden, oozing oily sincerity, whilst 300m away 20 bikes on a practice day thrashed around my field. It wasn't too bad and he wasn't sounding too irate until along came the inevitable four-stroke with a noisy pipe. Four-strokes with loud pipes often don't sound too loud when you are riding them, but stand 200m behind them, or even three fields away, and they have an incredibly penetrating quality, much like a gun shot. It certainly excited the molecules in my simple mind. Unable to hit the man in the Pringle sweater, I felt like vaulting the fence

and ripping the bloody bike's HT lead off. The rider would have been bemused by my behaviour and should he enter an enduro this year and fail the noise test he would no doubt feel picked on by the organisers as well. That's the nature of these simpletons.

What is it about some four-stroke riders that compels them to fit a loud pipe? Do they seriously believe it will make them faster? If, like most of us, you are an average clubman who rides a few enduros a year and also goes green laning, not only is it a pointless waste of money but it is wrecking the sport for the rest of us. If you take your bike trail riding you just play straight into the hands of our numerous enemies.

We have a couple of RUPPs that run over our farm. Groups of trail bikes regularly use them unnoticed by the locals. However, we have one particular rider on an XR400 who can be heard for at least a minute throughout the entire village. Reminding the locals that they live by a green lane and that noisy jobs on motorcycles 'race' down it on a regular basis. This is the first step to getting it downgraded. And does he really enjoy his day out more just because he can hear his bike, and gets to the end of the lane two seconds quicker? All because his bike makes another 1hp in the mid range!

If you ride in enduros for fun (like the majority of us), does it really matter if the bike is half a second slower in the special test? It's an awful truth that no one cares if your final position is 23rd or 24th - apart from you. If you are locked in a bitter struggle with a rival for supremacy in a seven-round club championship then take a step back for a moment and have a good hard look at yourself. How important is your extra 1hp, if next year there's no championship to defend?

If you want to do better in enduros there are three simple steps to improving: get some training; go out and practice; and fit new tyres. I asked top British rider Ady Smith if he thought that fitting a loud pipe would make an XR400 faster in a special test and he reckoned it would make no difference at all.

So if you are one of these people, wake up and smell the bloody coffee. It sounds faster but it isn't. Now you know why there will be a noise meter at our Benington enduro in September. And when you get refused an entry, I just hope the above goes some way to explain why landowners and organisers are having to act this way... **RB**



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Dear Trail Bike...

Got an opinion? Then write to: TrailBike Magazine
PO Box 9845 London W13 9WP

Blez Bashing

Dear Si

With reference to the Gwent Police article written by Blez in the last issue (Doing The Rounds TBM68) - a very interesting read, but why does Blez never do any research before printing damaging comments about clubs? (This presumably refers to the mention in the article that someone who the police believed to be a member of the Welsh Trail Riders Association [WTRA] was found to be riding off the trail - ed). Blez should know by now that the mags are read by Forest Enterprise and RoW people, and yet he links illegal trail riding with WTRA. If he is going to print derogatory comments about clubs, just make sure he gets the facts right.

It is great for Blez, turning up at events, having a good time and then heading off to somewhere else. Meanwhile we in the clubs have to pick up the pieces and answer unjustified questions - it is so very depressing.

Bob Perring
Cardiff, S Wales

Oh come now Bob, this seems a little unfair. Let's set a few facts straight first of all. You could accuse Blez of many things, but in terms of fact checking, he is actually extremely diligent about being accurate with his reporting - far more so than most. I'm not saying he never gets anything wrong (we all do from time to time), but he never sets out to mislead or misrepresent anybody. In this particular case the police believed the person in question to be a member of WTRA (rightly or wrongly) - you should take it up with them if that wasn't the case.

This was sufficient information to describe the bloke as it would have been wrong to name them directly in the article.

If this turned out to be incorrect information (and here at TBM we obviously don't have access to WTRA membership details), then we apologise. But it was the information we were given by the police. Nevertheless even if they were wrong I think that it shows a certain amount of paranoia on your (or WTRA's) part, that you felt you needed to write in and criticise us in this manner, thereby drawing attention to the subject. Surely a quick call to our office would have sufficed and we could've put a snippet in the News pages confirming that the bloke in question was not a WTRA member? Job done.

The person in question may (or may not) have been riding on an illegal track (either knowingly or unwittingly), but the inference that we somehow *maligned* WTRA by mentioning them seems rather absurd. Surely even WTRA has no way of preventing members from occasionally straying onto the wrong track. Are we to assume from your letter that the penalty for the occasional incorrect bit of map-reading would be instant dismissal from the club? Even the nanny authorities who you claim to read (and presumably act upon) every little nugget of information printed in TBM (and who provided you - and thus us - with an incorrect date for the Beacons Enduro last month), might find that penalty a little severe.

Neither they, nor you (nor TBM), are above making the odd mistake it would seem...

On The Side...

Dear Si

Enclosed is a picture of yet another old codger's trail iron (which seem to appear from time to time in the letters pages). This particular piece of rolling history is currently in bits in my front room awaiting new bearings etc.

However whilst puzzling over the various bit 'n' pieces, an idea occurred to me prompted by the letter you ran about engine breathers a few months back.

As you know there are two places on a bike that have a usable source of vacuum: the inlet manifold, and the exhaust pipe at the point where the two separate sections of pipe join into one creating a venturi effect where the gas speeds up (and the pressure drops). Why not weld a little spigot onto the exhaust at this point, and connect the engine breather to it? The only downside I can see would be the ungreen effect of this afterburner arrangement (didn't Norton do this with their Rotary racer?).

By the way, excellent mag you

produce - much appreciated. I particularly like the semi-clad models you seem to find from time to time. Also any chance of getting Katrina Price to contribute a series of articles on riding technique, as this would counter the un-pc-ness of the afore-mentioned models, and encourage the female enthusiasts by giving them a female expert within the mag. She can't be as verbose as Blez - surely!

Tim Hadfield
Bantry, Co Cork

She's not - see her contribution in this month's mag (I was on Gold Until...). Onto your idea about engine breathers, I can't claim to know a lot about this subject, but the idea you suggest seems to make sense, though I foresee one or two problems. First-off not all four-strokes have twin headers, so bikes like the WR400F and KLX300R, wouldn't be able to benefit from your idea as I understand it. Also on bikes with twin headers - XR400R for example - the point at which the exhausts siamese gets extremely hot - And you'd need to have a pipe capable of withstanding high temperatures (as opposed to the simple rubber hose currently utilised by most manufacturers). As for venting the fumes into the hot exhaust, yes, why not. It's a lot better than simply venting them to atmosphere as most bikes currently do now. By the way Blez says he's not verbose, he just likes to think that the quality of his writing goes some way towards making up for his lack of off-road skills. We'll let you decide...

Gorgeous Gilera

Dear Si and the crew

Just a line to say a big thanks for the mag. It's the only dirt bike mag that I read from cover to cover. Congratulations on continuing to produce the most unique publication on the market (well, on the lower shelves at least).

I especially like the Trail Tales - the tale of woe from Blez in the

February issue was a classic. The guy is obviously highly incompetent, maybe even dangerous, but tops for entertainment value. And after all's said and done, you can't criticise him because the bloke's actually out there doing it - fair play to him.

Now some ideas - things that spring to mind for future features. A basic fitness programme to get us all back into shape (after the enforced layoff), might be useful. This could be illustrated with pictures of Natasha demonstrating each move. Well worth thinking about I'm sure you'll agree.

Second idea. I've owned my current bike - a Gilera Northwest - for the last five years, and while you're always giving the bike good press, in my knowledge you've never tested it! As it is the original road supermoto I think it is probably your duty to do so. It may be an interesting idea to carry out a back to back test with Crasher's KTM Duke, to see what if any improvements have been made to factory supermotos in the last six years. Feel free to use my bike for this purpose. Er... then again, would it have to be Crasher riding my pride and joy...?

Jonny (Dangerous) Hallett
Bristol

Nice one Jonny - thanks for the offer, Crasher is busy renewing his personal accident policy as we speak, ready for a blat on your bike. Actually it's not quite correct to say that we've never tested a Gilera Northwest; I tested one back in 1994 (I think it was) against an Aprilia Pegaso when I was working for another bike magazine, but as that was before TBM was launched (and Gilera Northwest test bikes aren't exactly thick on the ground), we've never yet managed to test one within the pages of TBM. Until now that is... Looking forward to hooking up with you for a

back to back comparo sometime soon. As for the idea of Natasha demonstrating how fit she is... We reckon she's fit enough already...!

More Natasha...

Dear TBM

It was the very early hours of Friday morning when I was reading TBM66, going through the list of items which made up the fantastic prize in your excellent competition. I had the TV on in the background, when all of a sudden I heard very suggestive noises coming from the telly. I peered over the top of the mag and had a spooky experience. I'd been staring at a picture of Natasha on p16 of that issue, yet there she was on the TV in all her glory. TBM's one and only competition glamour model - Natasha Vale.

She was co-presenting a programme called 'Chicks & Flicks' on Sky Men & Motors. So if any other readers want more exposure to this hot babe, you now know where to look!

By the way I loved the Budget Racer articles and have included a photo of me and my mate's budget DTs, bought as scrap and totally rebuilt, though I'm crossing my fingers that I win the competition. Failing that, Natasha's phone number would suffice...

Yours in hope
Gary Rutter, Isle of man

So that's what you get up to on an evening eh Gary...? Natasha's mobile is: 07711 (cont'd p112)



POWER UP!

Suzuki's DR-Z400S is a great bike, but it can be made better. Dave Cornish took a ride on a lightly breathed-on DR to see where improvements can be made...

Story: Crasher Cornish. Pics: si Welber



Niche-marketing has taken over our lives. Whether it's cars or coffee-shops, shampoos or share-dealing, the art of refining (and thus re-defining) a product in such a way that it appeals directly to a small but specialised sector of the marketplace - is one guaranteed way of shifting units. Take for instance trail bikes. Time was when a trail bike was simply a roadster with lumpy tyres, raised mudguards and a high-level exhaust. These days trail bikes fall into all sorts of categories: big and small trailies, two-stroke, four-stroke, enduro, supermotard. You name it - there's a niche which has been defined and then filled by some clever marketing exec. And let's face it, we're pretty glad of it. You see niche-marketing doesn't just help the manufacturer shift more product, it also gives the consumer greater choice.

However, over at Suzuki, someone had the bright idea of refining the idea even further. What if you could take one bike - the DR-Z400 for instance - and by dressing it up in various different sets of clothes, you could fill three niches in one go. Brilliant. And so the DR-ZS, ZE and Z were conceived. Essentially the same machine, but designed to appeal to three similar, but distinct markets: trail, enduro and masochists (not that we have anything against the kick-start model you understand). Anyway, the point is this, that an essentially similar bike can wear three different hats... er, or helmets.

All well and good then, but the thing about niche-marketing is that, just when you think you've sliced the pie as thinly as possible - along comes someone else and shaves it thinner still. Enter Phil Allen of Allen's Performance R&D. His bikes are no strangers to the pages of TBM, since Phil's quest in life is to get more power out of everything he owns. If you could supercharge a kettle or have a big-bore biro, you can bet Phil's name would be on it.

So Phil buys himself a nice new DR-Z400S for running around on, and thinks to himself: nice little bike, but a bit more power wouldn't go amiss. And then sets about hotting up the DR-Z for those customers who like him, always want 'a little bit more'. Hey Presto, a new niche is born.

POWER UP!

Stock as a rock? Well not exactly, but the Allen's DR-Z still looks fairly standard...



Now there's nothing intrinsically wrong with Suzuki's DR-Z400S dual-sporter: it's light, well suspended with a versatile electric-start, twin-cam lump, and comes with a comprehensive array of road-going equipment, not to mention a 12 month warranty. But that's not to say that it can't be improved upon. You see the big trouble is that Suzuki's own DR-Z400E enduro bike is lighter and more powerful - and that simply won't do at all!

Never mind the fact that the ZE is too spartan for a trailie, has an ear-splitting exhaust note and comes with only a very limited warranty. To a horsepower junkie like Phil it's still got more power and that's that.

Or is it?

Well perhaps not - because rather than go down the more obvious route of converting the enduro bike to a trailie, Phil has gone the opposite way and come up with a tweaked Z400S trail bike that is both more powerful and more torquey than the enduro model, yet retains all of it's road-based versatility.

Sorted...

To look at, the modded 'S' doesn't seem to be anything special. Apart from a few sensible mods such as a pair of wraparound handguards, alloy frame guards and a lightweight Acerbis DHH headlamp unit, the bike appears on the surface to be pretty much standard. Only the lightweight White Brothers E-Series tail pipe hints at the Suzuki's potential. But it's what you can't see that's important. Phil has (with a bit of mild tuning) managed to release a whole heap of extra usable performance from the popular trailie donk.

Look closely and the eagle eyed among you will spot a trick Keihin FCR 35mm flat slide carbie matched to a modified air-box containing a free-er flowing White Bros foam filter. But the real secret of the bike's extra urge is in the head. A billet high lift inlet cam with an adjustable vernier cam sprocket has been developed by Phil. This together with a less restrictive Allen's header pipe and E-Series tail pipe combo helps boost power to an impressive peak of 40.5bhp (SAE) at the rear wheel.

Perhaps more importantly mid-range torque

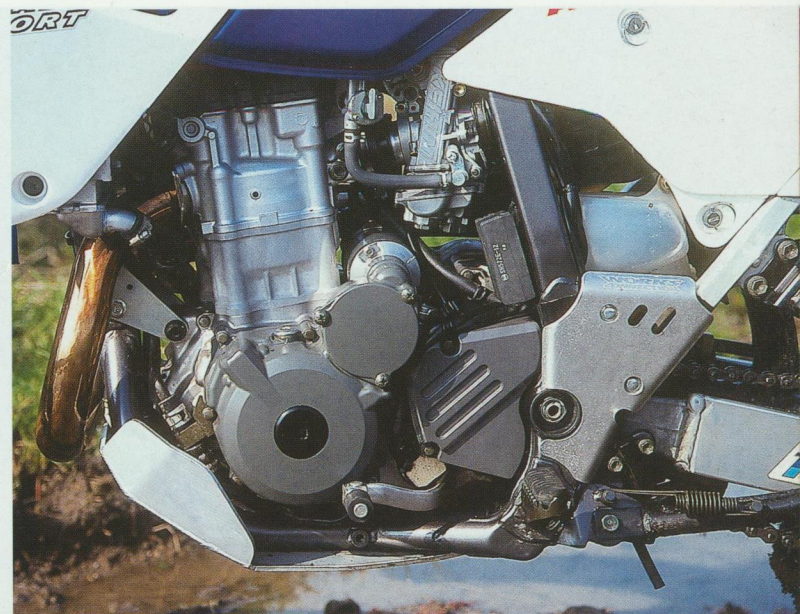
has increased by around 18% to 20% over stock. All of these mods except the camshaft (which needs properly dialling in) can be easily fitted by any half competent owner and not surprisingly gives the DR-Z a real kick up the butt in terms of performance. Just how much extra grunt the motor produces can be recorded on the dyno, but much more importantly you can feel it through the seat of your pants.

I'm not sure who was more nervous as the bike was unloaded from the back of the van - me or Phil. Because the last time I rode one of Phil's tweaked trailies (DR441) I had a spot of bother with a fast flowing river! This time I assured him that the whole plot would remain upright - mind you that's what I told him last time!

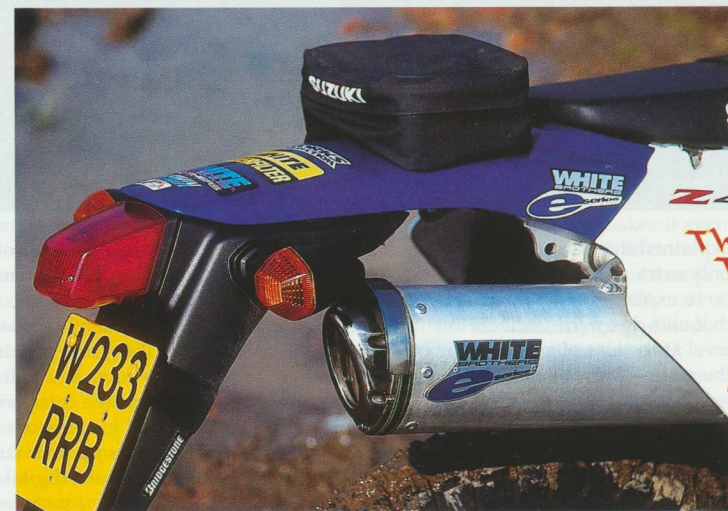
With F&M disease still rampant and the fact that Phil had purposely kept his trailie in road trim because most of his use is on tarmac, we restricted our testing to the metal-backed lanes around the picturesque Vale of Belvoir near Nottingham.

Pumping the throttle to squirt some juice into the combustion chamber (no choke on the race carb) while hitting the starter button, soon had the mild looking 400 barking into life. And bark is exactly what it does. The White Bros pipe has a tuneable disc baffle system (like a Supertrapp) and has been set up for max power at the expense of stealth.

Over the din (it's fruity but not unbearable), Phil



Above: Look closely and you'll see a tasty 35mm Keihin flat-slide carb nestling within the depths of the bike. Left: DR-Z400S retains the neat and useful standard dials. The unit strapped to the cross-bar pad is an electronic tachometer. Below: White Bros e-series pipe frees the power and the din!



On the road the boosted Z400S works well as a point and squirt machine



explained that sadly most customers demand not only extra go but extra noise to match. He went on to explain that an internal baffle is available that cuts down the decibels to a more acceptable level at the loss of a few ponies off the top end of the scale. Personally, this is the route I would go.

However I have to admit that in this state of tune the DR-Z400S performance is nothing short of amazing for such a mildly tweaked machine. Snicking up through the usual Suzuki slick shifting five speed box and working the quick action

throttle (standard throttle cables with a quick action carb linkage) my right foot had a job keeping up. In fact I was convinced the gearing had been considerably lowered to boost acceleration.

But the gearing hadn't been altered from stock and the boost in acceleration is down to nothing more than the extra power available. The grunt is delivered in a smooth and even surge - and top gear comes up in a blur of frantic gear changes. Pretty soon the digital speedo shows some big numbers. Very impressive.

POWER UP!



The only fault I could find was a slight hesitation if the throttle was wide open, chopped and gassed open again. This can probably be tuned out with a few carb adjustments and to be honest I was trying every trick in the book to catch out the normally crisp 35mm Keihin.

Under normal throttle openings, the carb copes well, picking up cleanly right off the bottom before rushing into a fat mid-range until the surge to the rev ceiling at around 9750rpm. On the road, the lower gears are dispensed with in seconds allowing top gear to be selected at around 35 to 45mph, which places the motor right in the meat of the mid-range. Then it's simply a matter of winding it on all the way to a top speed of around 90+mph (on private roads of course). Obviously the more powerful motor could pull taller gearing for a more relaxed ride, but in truth, the bike's lack of aerodynamics are more of a limiting factor than anything else.

Sweeping along the back lanes on unusually dry tarmac, the modified DRZ could either be gassed from corner to corner by revving the twin cam motor round to the rev limit, or grunted along using the lovely seam of mid-range torque. A true Jeckyl and Hyde street sleeper that can at

the tweak of the throttle change from cruise into racer mode.

Clearly the smaller 35mm carb combined with the well developed (and set up) inlet cam gives a sensible and usable spread of power without losing out anywhere in the range, and without having that cammy lumpiness of some specials. But beware, a handful of throttle is always followed by a thunderous bark from the race can's stainless tip. And any sane owner would want to refit the quieter internal baffle to get the noise down to a much more socially acceptable level.

Because as tested it would only be a matter of time before the local feds took an unhealthy interest in your bike. What actually makes it even more difficult to moderate the noise is that the quick action (quarter-turn) throttle spends most of its time either closed or wide open with very little in-between. This may be okay on a closed course circuit but not on the trail or the road. Clearly some extra care has to be taken in noise sensitive areas. Fit the baffle and lose a tad off the top end and I'm sure this wouldn't detract from the riding pleasure the hopped up 'Suki' delivers.

In the final analysis the really impressive thing about the conversion is its inbuilt flexibility from

POWER UP!



Not a proper trail, only an unmade road, but we reckon the extra oomph would be welcomed by press-on riders off-road...

low to high rpm. I can see this engine upgrade appealing to the more sporting trail rider who perhaps wants the extra performance without suffering the added (and often unwanted) engine-braking that a high-compression big-bore kit usually delivers. This way they can get more than the performance of the enduro bike without the hassle and expense of running a pukka racer.

Okay the tuning isn't cheap but it works well and shouldn't unduly affect reliability. Plus of course a tweaked DR-Z400S remains a fun and practical, fully legal (with the stealth baffle in place) day to day trailie with all of the benefits of a stock machine.

Phil has certainly achieved his objectives with this bike - ie much more usable performance, without compromising its rideability. Doubtless this is mainly down to the trick cam and not going too silly with the carb size (a 41mm is available for even more top end at the expense of mid-range).

So if you're thinking of trading your year-old 400S for something with a little extra oomph, you could do worse than dropping Phil a line and releasing some of that extra potential...

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- Top quality components
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- Great fun

Minus

- Too noisy
- Not cheap
- Can't be home fitted

Allen's R&D Suzuki DR-Z400S

- 35mm FCR Keihin carburettor (with airbox adapter) £280
- White Brothers air filter £14.95
- White Brother E-Series silencer £215
- Allen's R&D stainless header pipe £135
- Allen's R&D high lift inlet camshaft and adjustable vernier cam sprocket £175 (All prices plus VAT)

Thanks to Phil Allen for lending us his DR-Z. If you want to find out more details, call him on 01949 836733.

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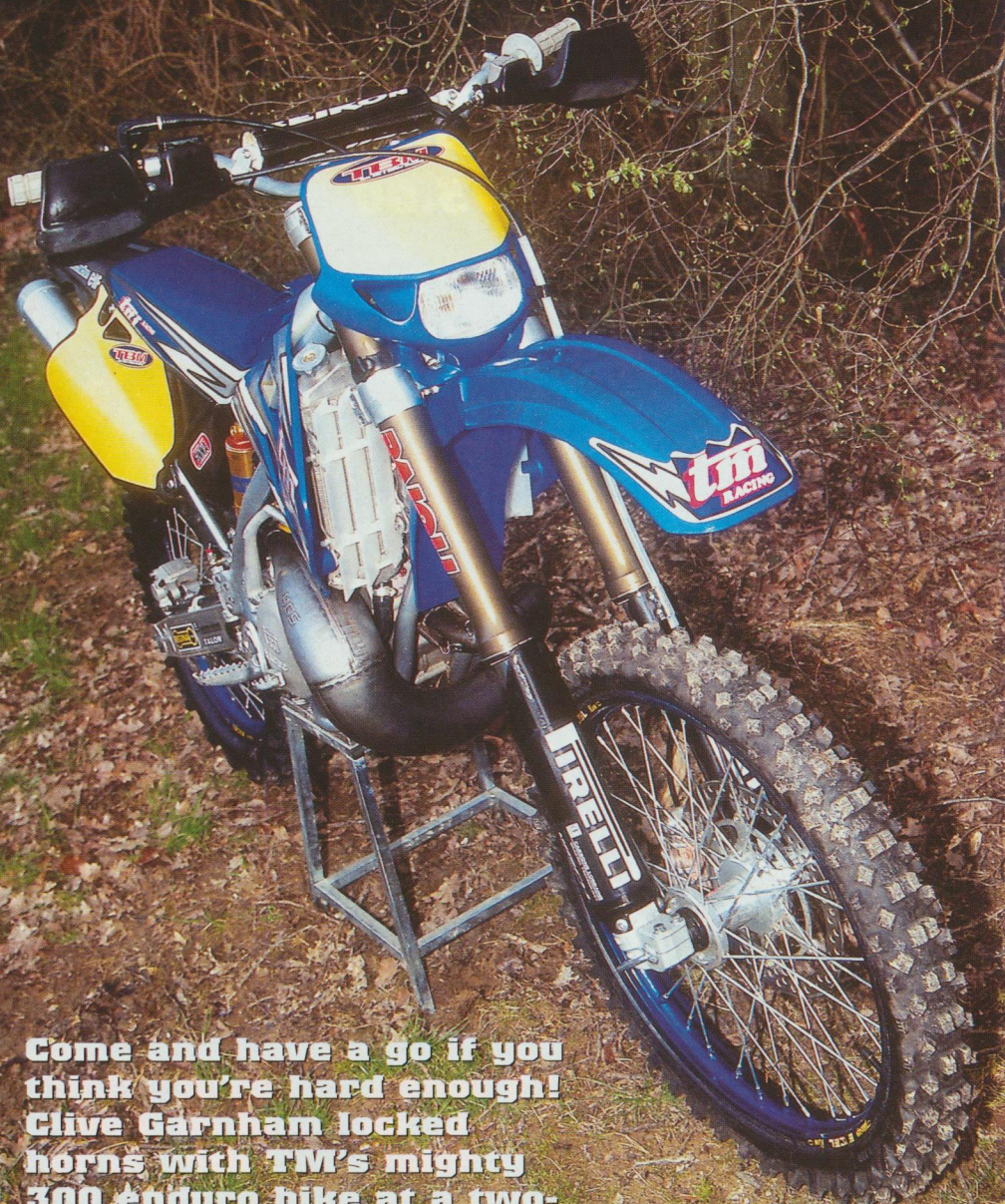


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STORY & PHOTOS: TBM

Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough! Clive Garnham locked horns with TM's mighty 300 enduro bike at a two-day French enduro...



UNKNOWN

Warrior

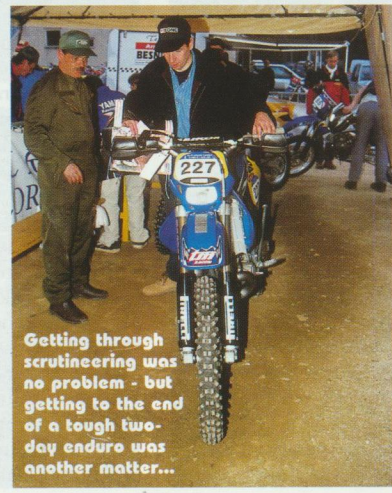
TM300E

The editor's cunningly-hatched master plan was beginning to bear fruit. We'd just reached the end of the first special test during a two-day enduro over in France and I was already five seconds down on him and his trusty WR250. A situation which wasn't so much unusual - as unique! How could I have let that happen?

'I'll let you ride the test bike' he'd graciously suggested on the way down through France, knowing full well that my soft and pampered body was in no fit condition to face the rampant TM300 on full afterburner. A winter of over-feeding and loafing around followed by a lethargic spring (for obvious reasons), had undoubtedly taken their toll. Now I realised why the editor was being so unselfish with the test bikes for a change. He fancied his chances...

With the UK decimated first by floods and then worse still by the Foot and Mouth crisis, team TBM had shrewdly entered the annual Val de Lorraine Classic enduro in eastern France to test out the bike.

All we had to do was immerse ourselves and our bikes in a disinfectant bath for 30 minutes and we were on our way!



Getting through scrutineering was no problem - but getting to the end of a tough two-day enduro was another matter...

Italian Stallion...
The two-stroke TM 300E enduro bike may not be a unique machine, but it's certainly a rare one - especially on our shores. True, TM have listed the big open-classer within their brochure for a number of seasons, but chances are you won't have come across one. Because up till now there hasn't really been the demand for

TM flew around the special tests...

UNKNOWN Warrior



Where the TM differs however is that it doesn't make the sort of compromises that both Gas Gas and KTM's 300s do. Coming from a company which produces some of the fastest, best-handling bikes on planet enduro, the TM300 was never going to be a big softy. In fact it feels much more akin to a powerful 250 but with a broader spread of muscle.

Motoring on...

That muscle is provided by an engine displacing 294cc from a perfectly square configuration of 72x72mm. It would be stating the obvious to say that this engine's got power in abundance, but less obvious perhaps is that unlike some other 300s, it's no lugger. Sure the TM will pull away from a standing start in third gear, but it doesn't really chug way down low in the manner of say the Gasser 300. Most of its power is reserved for its hulking midrange

and blistering top end, and on the standard 14/50 gearing the TM can be a real brute at times. Accelerating fast from a standing start at the beginning of one special test, the TM pulled so hard that I felt myself go slightly light-headed. This thing is equipped with one hell of a ballsy motor and its only a skilled or insane rider who abuses the throttle.

Like all TMs past and present, the 300 has a characteristic 'vibe' which can make it tiring to ride over long distances. It's not a hammering vibration (like a 620KTM for instance), nor a high frequency buzz like you get on certain two-strokes, so much as a gnawing 'rasp' which never seems to disappear. It's part of the engine's character and your best bet is to just try and ignore it.

Ridden hard the TM can be an impressive (if somewhat tiring) companion, but getting

them, and its not all that hard to understand why. If TMs are renowned for anything, it's that their products are always incredibly powerful. So why, you may ask, is there the need for anything more potent than a 250?

The answer is simple. Because people don't buy 300s for their power as much for their tyre-shredding, bowel-loosening, gut-wrenching torque. There's nothing like a good open class machine to put fibre back in your diet and make you realise that there's no substitute for cubic inches. Both KTM and Gas Gas make 300s which are a common enough sight out on the trail. Gear them up a bit, soften off the power-hit with a flywheel weight, and you have an easy-to-start, super-powerful, yet lightweight super-sport trail bike - albeit one which would leave the average DR-Z400 for dead!

Stylish lines of the TM help show off its remarkably flat and forward-biased riding position...



Main pic: Powerful 294cc donk has a merciless midrange...
Left: Check out that sexy hub, oversized disc and lightweight sprocket - all standard equipment on the TM...

French special tests were wonderful to ride. Eight separate tests ridden over two days provided an ideal workout for any test bike...



relate to this, but the TM has arguably the best riding position of any dirt bike we know. Okay riding positions are subjective, but ever since TM introduced their perimeter frame three years ago, the TM has been in our humble opinion, the class leader when it comes to ergos. It's not simply that it puts your weight exactly where you need it for enthusiastic cornering; it's not even that it manages to package a decent nine litre translucent fuel tank within the confines of a remarkably slim twin-spar chassis; it's simply that in terms of all-round ergos (seat, peg, bar relationship etc) the TM can't be bettered for the push-on rider. If all you want to do is lounge around on the back of the saddle all day long, then look elsewhere for your transport.

However in precisely the same way that owners of supersports road bikes enjoy carving round country lanes on machines with race-track geometry and lightning-quick reflexes, the TM rider enjoys race-bred handling from its superb chassis. The seat isn't particularly comfortable, but its convex shape is remarkably effective at translating rider input into instant responses.

on the thing and gunning that motor is to experience the hit of a powerful open-classer. This bike's a character builder to say the least...

What's in a frame...?

Keeping all that power in check is probably the best chassis and suspension combo currently available. I realise that if your opinion of a nice bike is a softly-sprung XT350 you won't really

The suspension is firm but well damped and of course it's fully adjustable. Brilliant 46mm USD Paiolis forks are a clear improvement on the previous 'Blue Steels' (which were themselves pretty good), and match a supple Ohlins shocker at the rear. We never felt the need to tinker with the stock settings - not something we've always been able to say about TMs in the past. There were a number of places on the course where I was closely following other competitors over the same hazards and it was pretty obvious that the TM was responding better than other machines, eating up obstacles that deflected their bikes from the best line.

Cornering the TM is a breeze thanks to a seat which lets you slide forward, back or from side to side in an instant. Powerful brakes (the front's a whopping 260mm floating rotor), work well without feeling overly fierce and the controls in general are light to the touch and easy to use. One problem with the brakes are that it's all too easy to bend the delicate alloy front disc carrier. It would appear that in our efforts to change the front tyre and mousse before the event, we'd knelt on the disc and inadvertently bent the aluminium carrier. This was easily fixed at one of the checkpoints using a small tyre lever to straighten it out, but it's worth watching out for.

Winning the war...

After a couple of hours of fighting a losing battle with the TM's powervalve I figured I'd either got to get on top of it or ride in a different manner otherwise I wouldn't make it to the end of the day, let alone two days. I simply had to slow down on the trails and then go for it in the special tests. It had become apparent that we had plenty of time on the schedule so I wound it down a notch on the open tracks and my shoulders thanked me for it. I reckon at least three or four teeth off the rear sprocket would have made an enormous difference - by taking the edge off the power delivery yet still providing plenty of spread between first and fifth gears.

If the going was tiring me, the special tests were where the TM really began to fly - quite literally in one case, as I crested a rise on a short straight and was faced by a 90-degree right hander about 15m away. I had no choice, but to go straight on into the farmer's field, at speed! The bike had accelerated so rapidly up the crest that it caught me out. Indeed I spent much of the first few tests looking like a total putz as I'd blast out of a corner with the front

UNKNOWN Warrior

wheel pawing skyward, I'd then shut off or slip the clutch to get the front down, whack the power back on and have the front wheel lofting again! What a donkey! The editor's plan was working a treat.

But once I'd remembered how I used to ride my own TM250, I realised that this is a bike you've got to grab by the horns and make it work for you. Suddenly the TM began to make sense: accelerate hard up the straights then leave your braking to the last minute, squeezing the lever hard and using the momentum to slide up the front of the saddle. Once into the turn, bang the bike on its side, force your inside leg as far forwards as you can and then gently roll on the throttle to exit the turn.

Ridden this way the TM began to perform as it should and I gradually clawed back the deficit from the crafty editor - even though he block-passed me into the first turn of the final motocross on day one.

Day two was immeasurably better, the French organisers had managed to find surprisingly good conditions for the course and despite the FIM enduro tyres we were using, grip was good enough to let the big TM crank right over in the corners and power down the straights. Fantastic. I realise you may well get sick of us ranting about the layout of the TM, but sit on one, go for a ride and see what we mean. It encourages you to extract the digit and go for it - because it makes you adopt such a purposeful position.

Ten kilometres into day two however I was slumped over the handlebars, gasping for breath. We'd just ridden a monster 7km special test with uphill jumps, downhill jumps, ruts, bogs, trees, twisting flat corners, berms, and more. In fact this test had almost everything in it including an early morning dew glistening on the fresh grass. Despite the booming voice in my head telling me to 'take it easy you've got a long day ahead' I just couldn't help myself, the TM was *the* bike and this was *the* test and I was having so much fun. I was whipped at the end of it but deliriously happy.

The day was looking good and I'd even managed to take 40-odd seconds off the editor - though I felt desperately unfit. The TM certainly encourages you to renew your gym membership!

On the going the organisers were running an intriguing 'Joker' system which allowed less confident riders to bypass some of the more technical sections (called Hot Spots) by playing their jokers (costing them a minute each time). This meant the organisers could include some more demanding obstacles than you might normally expect to encounter, without having them clogged by riders failing in their attempts. A brilliant system we reckoned.

The only fly in my ointment that day occurred on one of these 'Hot Spots' which ran down a difficult and very steep stream section into the last refuelling point. This section was excellent - quite long with perhaps five or six two-foot steps to descend. The problem was that in places it was very narrow, indeed narrower than the TM's quite wide radiator shrouds. So on one of these steps where it happened to coincide with a narrow pinch point as well, when the front wheel rolled down, the left-hand rad shroud stuck in the ground. Unfortunately there was no stopping the bike as my left foot was now trapped on the peg so I couldn't even fend the bank off. The end result was that the shroud was bent backwards which tweaked the radiator in the process. As I rode into the fuel point a few minutes later my heart sank as I saw blue water dripping off the bottom of the radiator.

Fortunately after swearing a bit, straightening the tweaked rad and failing to locate any radweld in the pits we found the next best thing - a raw egg from one of the French teams. I felt a bit of a plonker cracking an egg on the shroud like I was making an omelette and pouring just the white into the radiator, but thankfully it did the job - because as was pointed out by Monsieur Evans: one egg is an-oeuf!

We had a few miles of pleasant trails to finish and then the final MX special test, with a full start gate of 40+ riders around a proper MX track. It was a fitting end to a great weekend's riding. I would love to say that I grabbed the holeshot and led to the end but of course



Clive displays some of the legendary table manners for which Aussies are renowned. Vasmino wasn't impressed...

UNKNOWN
Warrior

all I really ended up with was a face full of mud, a respectable placing and big smiles all round. You just can't beat that sort of finish to an enduro for a spot of bench racing with your mates afterwards!

The TM had been a truly awesome bike for the weekend and had reminded me of just how good my old 250 had been - though it was clear that the latest model showed significant improvements over my '99 bike. I only wish my fitness had been better and that we'd altered the bike's gearing to suit. Nevertheless I'm pleased to be able to report that the ed's cunning plan came well and truly unstuck when he grabbed way too much throttle off the start line in the final motocross, had to shut off and then got filled in by the full force of the 300TM. That'll teach the blighter...

TM 300E

Price:	£4287
Engine:	Liquid-cooled two-stroke with power-valve
Displacement:	294cc
Bore & Stroke:	72x72mm
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Front suspension:	46mm Paioli USD forks
Rear suspension:	Rising-rate linkage, Ohlins shock
Front brake:	260mm floating disc, Brembo caliper
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I was on Gold until... (Part 1)

We all make mistakes, but some people's mistakes are more stupid than others, as this collection of stories proves...

Crasher Cornish loses his spark...

Yeah, yeah we've heard it all before, excuse after excuse for not finishing an event but I can remember one particular incident which couldn't have been expected. Way back in the mid-Eighties I was an enduro regular in the Eastern Centre and I'd hit upon a cunning plan. I decided that what I needed was a larger tank for my trusty Husky WR240. I figured that another couple of litres would give me just enough gas to enable the Husky to complete a full 40-mile lap of the Breckland British Championship enduro without stopping.

Obviously this would save me valuable seconds, whilst all my fellow competitors would be scrabbling around trying to locate fuel and top up, I would simply motor on by and win a Gold. It was a foregone conclusion.

Seeing as my '83 Husky had an alloy tank, a local fabrication shop did a great job of welding an extension to the lower right hand-side. After a few careful calculations, I was pleased to note that the tank now held an extra 2.4 litres of pre-mix four-star and would easily allow a 40-mile loop to be ridden non-stop. Surely victory was now a mere formality? I topped the tank up to the brim and used the bike to commute to work for a couple of days just to check that there were no problems.

Anyway, to cut a long story short on day one of the race, I found myself on the start-line. My minute arrived, the Husky fired first kick and I set off on my anticipated race to glory. Then... disaster struck. After only a couple of miles the motor started misfiring and running really rough, before finally dying altogether. A quick inspection of the plug revealed that it had 'whiskered'. No problem, I installed a fresh plug and was soon back on the pace. At least I was for about another five minutes. Then the bike stopped again. Puzzled I removed

yet another fouled plug and inserted my last spare. The strange thing was that the Husky had never had this problem before, and when the motor died after only another five minutes I flagged down the following rider and blagged a spare plug off him.

This went on for another half hour as I spent the whole time searching for spark plugs from anyone I could find. Eventually after cleaning up my last plug I set off only to stop almost instantly. This time I had no choice but to investigate further. I pulled off the carb float bowl and to my horror found it literally full of alloy filings.

Then it dawned on me. Riding the bike on the smooth roads to work obviously wasn't a problem, however, as soon as the bike started bouncing around on the dirt, previously trapped and dormant alloy filings had mixed in with the fuel causing the jets to plug up and the sparkplug to 'whisker'.

The rest of the day saw me stopping and spannering more than riding. Any hopes of a gold were long gone and now it was simply a battle to avoid 'houring out'.

I'm sure there is a moral to this tale but I'm bugged if I can find it... **DCC**

On this particular occasion I'd entered the Bwlch Enduro near Builth Wells and was looking forward to a good ride. I loaded the van in the morning with the bike and kit and off we went. Having arrived in good time, I spent the next couple of hours chatting to friends and before long it was time to get kitted up. I put on all my gear and was just getting into my boots when... 'OH NO!' I realised I'd picked up TWO LEFT BOOTS!

Having wasted so much time beforehand nattering (instead of getting kitted up early), there was no time to drive home and pick up the other boot, and how many riders carry a spare pair of size six enduro boots with them?

There was to be no racing for me that day as I couldn't get my foot into the wrong boot, and I felt such a twit. But these days I never ever leave the house without checking my boots at least three times beforehand! **KP**

Former British Enduro Champion Ady Smith is well known for his skilful riding, but that's not to say he never made a mistake...

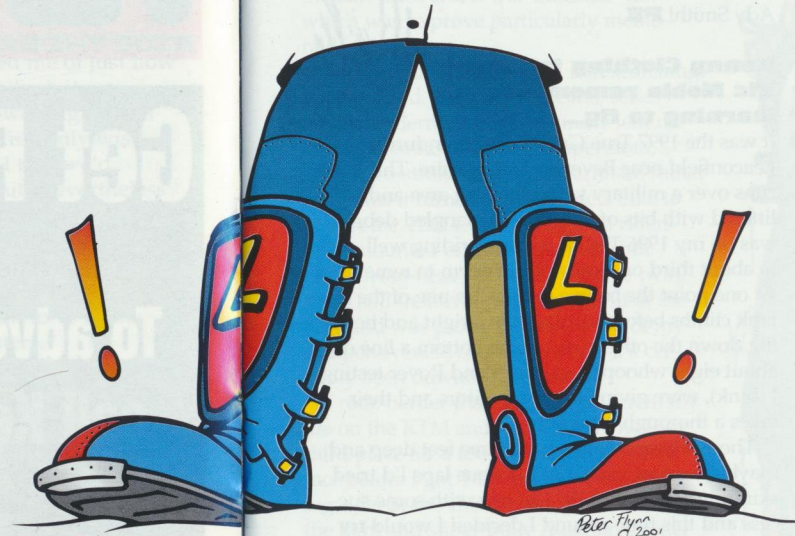
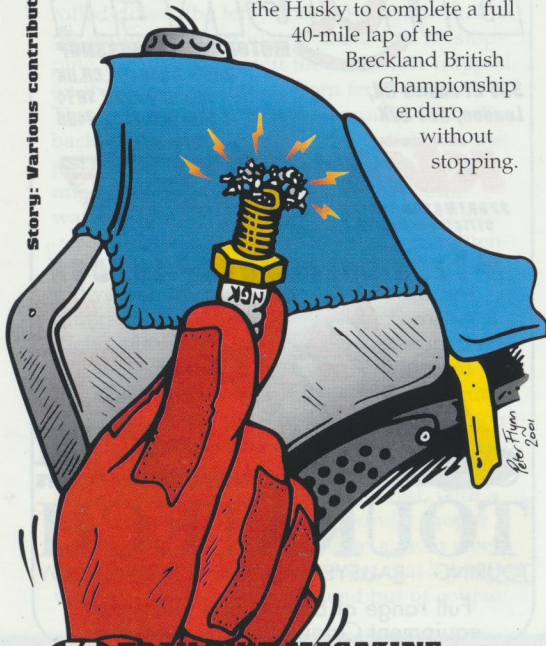
It was just after Paul Edmondson's 17th birthday, he and I were (and still are) great mates. Paul rang up to tell me he'd just got his first road bike, a shiny new Honda MTX125. 'Come on over' I said to him 'and let's have a look at the thing.' When Paul arrived he proudly showed me his new bike pointing out that it was barely run-in. 'Does it wheelie?' I asked him with a smile on my face. 'I don't know' Paul replied, 'I've just got the thing.'

'Let's have a go then' I said with a mischievous grin on my face. After a couple of slow passes up and down the road I decided to see if his new toy really *could* pull a decent mono.

I hoiked it up in first gear, slipped her into second and had just selected third as I was passing Paul. Feeling pretty smug with myself I gave it one little extra squirt of throttle to get the thing really upright, when it all started going horribly wrong.

I went for the back brake but missed it, and the next thing I knew I was on my hands and knees 20 feet behind Paul's bike which was merrily wheeling along the road on its own. I looked up to see Paul - his eyes as big as saucers - as his bike tipped over backwards and then slid down the road in a shower of sparks.

'Me old man's gonna' kill me!' Paul said with his head buried in his hands, as I tried to console him. We went and picked up the bike from where it lay in a heap, and inspected the damage. Grips, levers, numberplate, subframe, rear light, wheel-nut - all looked as if someone had attacked them with an angle grinder. My hands and knees were pretty messed up as well but I wasn't getting any sympathy from Paul.



Fast lady Katrina Price occasionally puts her foot in it...

Quite a few years ago (though I'm not saying exactly how many), I used to be sponsored by M Robert clothing. The form this sponsorship took was to supply me with two complete sets of riding gear including boots. It was great to turn up at an enduro in new kit and I always made sure I was well turned out. At least I usually was...

After a quick cuppa to steady our nerves we knew what we had to do. I went inside and raided my piggybank and between us we came up with a few quid. Then we headed down the local bike shop and said to the bloke behind the counter: 'have you got a rear light, a wheel nut and a brake lever for an MTX125 please - oh and do you make numberplates up while-U-wait?'

By the look on the bloke's face he realised immediately what had happened, and this was confirmed when he saw me putting my swollen hands painfully in and out of my pocket to get my wallet. He couldn't stop smirking.

We got back to my place, repaired the bike as best we could and Paul was soon on his way, wishing that he'd never called me that morning. For the next few days I didn't dare answer the telephone in case it was Paul's dad ringing me up to give me a b-llocking. Paul eventually passed his test and sold the bike without his dad realising what went on - at least until now.

Paul and I still have a laugh about this incident but I know he's never forgiven me for wrecking his new bike. But then again as the old saying goes: the bloke who never made a mistake, never made anything, and I certainly made something that day - even if it was just a fool of myself... **AS**

Multi World Champion enduro rider Paul Edmondson remembers making the odd mistake himself...

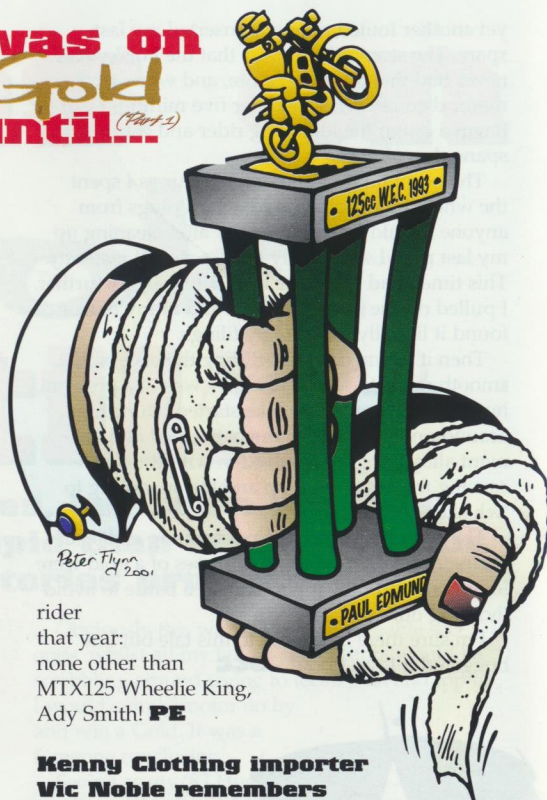
It was 1993 at the final round of the World Enduro Championships and I'd just finished the event and won the 125cc world championship. The champagne was flowing freely and the team were celebrating bigtime. To say I was pleased with myself was an understatement, I was really on a high.

After lots of encouragement from team Farioli and the Gasser boys I collected my bike from parc ferme wearing only jeans and a tee-shirt and decided to put on a bit of a show for them all.

Well it didn't last too long because after a wheelie I went for a rolling stoppie: the only trouble was I hadn't spotted all the champagne which had spilled on the ground where we'd sprayed it around. As soon as I touched the front brake the wheel locked up and down I went, much to the amusement of the collected crowd who'd been screaming encouragement.

I don't think anyone but me realised quite how badly I'd hurt myself, I had gravel rash to both my hands, elbows and knees and I ended up going to hospital to get myself patched up. Later on at the presentation, I had to shake hands with the FIM president and receive my award - all bandaged up like a mummy. All of the team thought this was highly amusing, and none more-so than my out-

I was on Gold until... (Part 2)



rider that year: none other than MTX125 Wheelie King, Ady Smith! **PE**

Kenny Clothing importer Vic Noble remembers learning to fly...

It was the 1997 True Grit multi-lap enduro at Leaconfield near Beverley in Yorkshire. This event runs over a military vehicle testing area and is littered with bits of half-buried mangled debris. I was on my 1996 TM250 and was riding well - up in about third or fourth place I seem to remember. At one point the course took us up one of the steep tank climbs before turning sharp right and heading down the other side. At the bottom a line of about eight whoops (used for Land Rover testing I think), were giving the competitors and their bikes a thorough workout.

These whoops were about three feet deep and maybe five feet apart. On previous laps I'd tried skimming the top of the last few with some success and this time around I decided I would try skimming over as many as I could. I got it slightly wrong halfway through and whacked something solid with the front wheel, but carried on regardless and thought nothing more of it.

I came to the end of the whoops, rounded a huge sweeping corner and accelerated hard through the gears along the next straight. I'd just shifted up into fourth, when the next thing I knew I was flying through the air - before landing face down in a giant patch of MoD mud!

I shakily got to my feet wondering what the hell had happened, and went over to where my bike was laying. I picked it up but it wouldn't move - the front wheel was locked solid. When I looked down I couldn't believe what I saw. The front caliper and brake hose were completely tangled up in the front wheel. Whatever I'd hit in the whoops had knocked the caliper clean off the bracket and it had been flapping around just waiting for the first opportunity to get tangled up in the spokes - which of course it did at the fastest point on the track....! **VN**

Blez Launches a new career: Spectacular Supermoto rider...

In the summer of 1989 I was working at Langbaugh Motor Sports on Teesside when it was host to a full weekend of incredible Supermoto racing. Our Supermoto circuit was specially created for the occasion by bulldozing links between the loose-surfaced rally training track and the adjacent kart circuit, which was built up on a higher level. We constructed a jump at the end of the dirt section which if hit hard and fast enough could leap you right back up onto the kart track and it was this little 'test' which was to prove particularly memorable for me...

I contested two classes on that scorching hot weekend. For the open class, series organiser Bernard Conche kindly lent me his fire breathing KTM500 supermoto, while two-stroke tuner Bob Farnham rather rashly (as it turned out) lent me a bike to race in the TDR Cup, in which all riders were mounted on Yamaha's poky but rather front-heavy 250cc two-stroke twin. I was still (relatively) young and fit at the time and was probably at the peak of my competitiveness on two wheels - it's certainly been downhill ever since!

I rode harder than I'd ever ridden in my life on the KTM and was actually holding third place for a few milliseconds in one race before I got T-boned by a hard charging rider at the chicane. Nevertheless, on the light and super-poky Austrian stroker I had no trouble clearing the uphill leap out of the dirt section which brought you spectacularly back onto the tarmac main straight in front of the 'grandstand'.

On the front-heavy TDR250 however, I was much more cautious and kept landing on the gravel

slope just below the tarmac, then having to ride up the last section of the jump. Yet the fast men in the TDR cup were jumping clean onto the tarmac every time. Among them was recently retired Grand Prix competitor and former British 125 MX champion Roger Harvey, who was no slouch, as you might imagine.

Pumped up with my (relative) success on the KTM I was determined to have a crack at leaping the heavyweight TDR clean onto the tarmac and asked Roger how he did it. 'Just give it plenty, mate' was his pithy advice, so come the last TDR race of the weekend, I did just that. I stood up on the pegs, pulled on the bars and 'gave it plenty'. The front came up, we flew through the air with the greatest of ease and landed... Well, unfortunately not on the tarmac as such, but on the junction between the gravel and the tarmac - which sadly for me was actually a kerb-sized step.

The effect was to bounce the front wheel straight back up in the air so the TDR arrived on the main straight plumb vertical, with me still aboard and hanging on

for grim death. I remember thinking 'I can still get the front wheel down, I'm gonna make it' a split second before the TDR finally flipped over backwards and the pair of us bounced down the track for the full length of the start grid in front of the cheering crowd.

I jumped up and ran over to the crashed machine with the full intention of continuing, but the bars and controls were just too badly bent. However, come the prize-giving, my efforts didn't go unrewarded. I

received a Motul paddock jacket for... (wait for it)... 'The most spectacular crash of the weekend'.

I've still got that faded old Motul jacket. I get it out and dust it off from time to time to remember not only how much slimmer I was back then, but also remind myself never to take advice from former British MX champions... **PB**



Burning BRIGHT TRIUMPH TIGER 955i

Latest incarnation of Hinckley's all-terrain
tourer gets the bigger fuel injected motor...

Tiger⁹⁵⁵ⁱ



Story: Roland Brown; Pics: Gold & Goose & Phil Masters

Never let it be said that you can't have fun off-road on a modern giant trail bike like Triumph's latest Tiger. On the revamped triple's launch in the south of France, one journo decided to test the bike's versatility by riding it into a river - where it promptly dug itself into a hole and was stuck fast. The hapless hack was forced to call for assistance from a friendly photographer who bravely waded in to help push, and for his troubles was covered from head to foot in muddy water as the Tiger roosted to safety.

That incident may've been highly amusing of course, but in reality it highlighted the way that many so-called big trailies have evolved so far from their original dual-purpose roots, that the very idea of riding one off-road is ambitious, if not slightly eccentric. True, even the original 1993-model Tiger was a pretty big, heavy bike that wasn't exactly ideal for green-laning, let alone river fording, but it did at least back up its Dakar-esque styling with a super-soft motor and suspension.

The Tiger became more road-biased when

updated and restyled a couple of years ago, and this latest model is a continuation of that process. A more powerful engine and firmer suspension emphasise that the tall triple is now very much established in Triumph's touring range. Yet even so, it still has plenty of appeal for the off-road enthusiast looking for a versatile roadster with a trail bike image.

The most important change this time round is the adoption of the 955cc, 12-valve engine based on that of the Speed Triple roadster, in place of the old model's previous generation 885cc unit.

The top end remains basically in Speed Triple spec, but the Tiger's new, more sophisticated fuel injection system includes an oxygen sensor that constantly monitors the fuel/air ratio and fine-tunes the fuel delivery to suit.

This bike also has a new exhaust system whose balance pipe adds a little more midrange. That removes 5bhp at the top end, but the peak output still increases from the old Tiger's 86bhp to a claimed 104bhp at 9500rpm, which makes this the most powerful trail bike - if I'm still allowed to use that term - on the market.

Burning BRIGHT TRIUMPH TIGER 955i



The new Tiger retains its capabilities as a comfortable and versatile long-distance tourer rather than a true dual-purpose machine. Nevertheless Triumph have made it even nicer to ride thanks to the introduction of the bigger, more powerful motor...
 Top right: Stripped of its bodywork, the Tiger shows what a well-packaged machine it really is...
 Middle: Well equipped and easy to read, the Tiger dash tells you everything you need to know...
 Bottom: Colour-matched panniers are just one of the many factory options available - at a price...

When you consider that not so long ago many sportsbikes couldn't crack 100bhp which is still the legal limit in some countries (including France), it's a very respectable figure.

Triumph also improved the 12-valve motor with a bunch of refinements first seen on the TT600's sports bike's four-cylinder lump, mainly to reduce noise. The alternator and starter clutch are moved down to sit at either end of the crankshaft, so fewer gears are required to turn them, and some of the engine covers were redesigned to keep things quiet. The Tiger's crankcases, like those of the TT600, are high-pressure die castings,

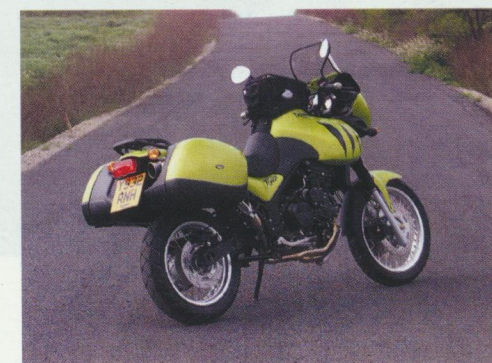
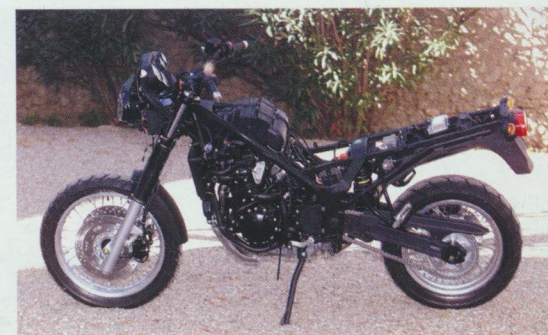
which allows closer tolerances. Other mods include a revised six-speed gearbox and two teeth taller gearing to suit the extra power.

Styling wise there's no great change, just new stripy paint schemes in black or lime green, another of Triumph's typically bold hues. Same goes for the chassis, where the old model's tubular steel frame and basic geometry are retained, but the new bike gets firmed-up suspension at both ends, plus new Metzeler Tourance radials that make even fewer concessions to off-street excursions than their Michelin predecessors.

One of the things that many people like about

big trailies is their commanding riding position, which of course comes with the inevitable drawback. By now you'll probably know whether the Tiger's 840mm seat height - and this at the lowest of the three available positions - is likely to be as much of a problem for you as it was for the tiny Japanese tester who looked distinctly nervous whenever he had to stop at traffic lights.

Being lanky I had no problems with that, though shorter riders might find the Triumph slightly more of a slow-speed handful than bikes such as Honda's Varadero or Cagiva's Navigator. At a claimed 215kg dry, it's actually no heavier



than most of the V-twins, though.

It has to be said too, that the Tiger cockpit is a pretty pleasant place to spend some time. With a fairly tall, slightly lipped screen, four white-faced clocks (big speedo and tach, smaller fuel and temp gauges) and large, wide mirrors, you're well set for some serious mileage.

Especially when the view up ahead is of the great roads and scenery near Beziers in the south of France. Triumph had laid on a varied route that included fast and slow roads, plus smooth, bumpy and even a few gravelly surfaces, so the Tiger's roadgoing versatility was to be tested,

Burning **BRIGHT** TRIUMPH TIGER 955i



Warm dry roads of the south of France let you explore the Triumph's excellent back-road manners...

travel. The Tiger is boosted by its reasonably protective fairing and screen, and more so when fitted with Triumph's optional, colour-matched panniers. And although filling the panniers with bottles of vin rouge would possibly have upset the triple's handling somewhat, without panniers it was effortlessly stable right up to its top speed.

The best of the big trail twins have pretty much similar straight-line performance, but I doubt that any of them (I haven't yet ridden Aprilia's CapoNord) cruises with quite such a pleasantly relaxed feel. I'd have welcomed the opportunity to use the 24-litre fuel tank's range of about 200 miles, though the launch route wasn't quite that long. And although the Tiger felt a bit big and unwieldy at times, it could be hustled along at a good rate even through narrow, twisty roads, as

it proved when our route headed into the hills to the north west of Beziers.

In conditions like that the triple's firmed-up suspension was a definite bonus, especially up front where the forks didn't dive too much despite the reassuring power of the twin-disc brake set-up. Under acceleration out of fast curves the rear end occasionally felt slightly vague, but the KYB shock, which is adjustable for preload and rebound damping, kept good enough control to allow plenty of power to be put down through the 150-section Metzeler. There was heaps of ground clearance too, with only the footrest blobs touching down.

That all helped the Tiger keep up a very respectable pace on the twisty French back roads, and the more I rode it, the more I couldn't help



Doubtless not everyone will approve of the Tiger's bold new graphics, but at least it demonstrates the boys at Hinckley don't take themselves too seriously...

even if its off-road ability was not, at least not intentionally.

First thing you notice, compared to the old model, is the engine's extra grunt. The previous Tiger had an admirably flat torque curve but it didn't respond like the new bike. Not only is the 955's maximum torque figure of 68ft-lbs, five up on that of its predecessor, but the bigger motor produces 90 percent of its peak output all the way from 4000 to 7500rpm.

The result is that you only have to tweak the throttle to send the Tiger leaping forward like a... well, like an Indian big cat chasing its dinner. It's hard to be sure without a back-to-back comparison, but I doubt that even any of the ultra-torquey twin-cylinder trailies would match the Triumph's surge of super-smooth acceleration at low or medium revs. The British bike was impressively refined, too. Its fuel-injection system gave a snatch-free response from below 2000rpm in top, making the smooth-shifting six-speed gearbox virtually redundant much of the time.

A tweak of the throttle in first gear was enough to lift the front wheel into an effortless wheelie, which wasn't always true of the old model. More to the point it was almost impossible to be caught out in too high a gear because, like some super-automatic, the Tiger was happy to pull top gear



at any speed from 30mph up to its maximum of about 130mph. You wouldn't want to keep up that sort of speed for long, but the tallish screen gives enough protection to make 90-100mph cruising a practical proposition (especially in southern France, far away from Gatso cameras.)

That high-speed comfort goes a long way to explaining the bike's suitability for long-distance



feeling that Triumph have succeeded in building a bike that would do a very good job both of sitting on the autoroute all the way to the south of France, and of providing entertainment when it arrived. Comfort levels en-route would be better still if the bike was fitted with a few accessories, notably the panniers-and-top-box set that adds an extra £899 to the basic on-the-road price of £7599. Other stuff such as heated grips and taller screen are also available.

Of course the one thing the Tiger wouldn't be much use for is making the most of the south of France's outstanding off-road riding potential. If you're looking for a genuine trail bike, the tall and top-heavy Tiger is frankly not your tool. But Triumph's modifications have made a competent trail-style tourer even better. For general roadgoing use it's now a very versatile and practical motorcycle.

And maybe, for riders who want a bike with some genuine off-road ability, there is a glimmer of hope in Hinckley. After all, the recent arrival of the new Bonneville will have off-road types with long memories reminiscing about dual-purpose twins such as the Adventurer built by the old Triumph firm in the Seventies. Or, better still, the Competition Sports and TT Special Bonnies that were popular in the States in the Sixties. A stripped-down, hotted-up version of the new Bonnie would be a seriously useful bike, both on- and off-road. How about it, Mr Bloor?

Triumph Tiger 955i

Engine:	Liquid-cooled, DOHC, 12-valve transverse triple
Displacement:	955cc
Bore & Stroke:	79x65mm
Comp Ratio:	11.7:1
Carburetion:	Sagem fuel-injection
Transmission:	6-speed
Claimed power:	104hp @ 9200rpm
Transmission:	6-speed
Front suspension:	43mm telescopic Kayaba
Rear suspension:	Rising rate linkage, Kayaba damper
Front brake:	2 x 310mm discs - twin piston calipers
Rear brake:	285mm disc - twin piston caliper
Front wheel:	2.50 x 19in
Rear wheel:	4.25 x 17in
Tyres:	Metzeler Tourance
Front:	110/80 x 19
Rear:	150/70 x 17
Rake & trail:	28 degrees, 95mm
Wheelbase:	1550mm
Seat height:	840-860mm
Fuel capacity:	24 litres
Dry weight:	215kg (claimed)
Instruments:	Speedometer, tachometer, water temperature gauge, fuel gauge, clock

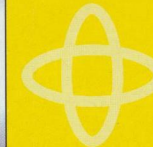
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STAFF

BIKES



Stamps: The photo Sis; Pics: Si M, Neil P, Si P

before a single piece of gaffa tape could be attached...

If there's one word to describe these types of bikes, it's 'versatile'. Touring, commuting, scratching and the occasional track day are all well within the bounds of most modern bikes, but with a big trailie the fun doesn't stop when the tarmac ends. Gravel roads and mild green lanes are easy enough in the summer, and even off-road competition is feasible given the right event and a committed pilot (and most of TBM's pilots should have been committed years ago).

Which I guess is a long winded intro' for the latest addition to the TBM long term test fleet, namely a box-fresh, silver BMW R1150GS.

Surprisingly BMW seemed only too keen for us to take one of their best selling GSs and give it a true long term test in our usual 'take no prisoners' fashion. So throughout

this year we'll be reporting on what it's like to live with the biggest trailie on the market.

Questions such as: is 85bhp enough for a trailie? will hopefully be answered, and of course a couple of long Euro trips are planned to let the bike show its true colours. We will also be testing any up-grades and modifications

that we think are relevant to the GS, and there is certainly no shortage of aftermarket goodies available for Germany's best selling big bike. But for now the bike will remain stock all bar a few popular factory fitted options.

Throwing a leg over the firm but well upholstered saddle for the first time reminded me of the original GS1100. Wide braced bars with chunky switchgear and heated grips together with a reasonably low seat (33" in old money) and perfectly placed rubber-covered cleated footrests all point to how right the original design was.

Also familiar is the digital display showing fuel level, engine temperature a handy digital clock and even a gear selection indicator. Regular analogue clocks show speed and rpm in a well-designed and easy to read dash. So far, this is almost identical to the old 1100. In fact to the untrained eye the only obvious differences between the 1100 and the 1150 are the new bike's asymmetrical twin round headlamps in place of the original single rectangular unit. However, look deeper and you'll find a whole heap of improvements and updates.

Starting with the motor the 1150 measures in at a true 1130cc as opposed to the R11's 1085cc. This together with a new catalysed exhaust and the very latest Bosch engine management system gives an extra 5bhp @ 8575rpm and more importantly an extra dollop of torque throughout the rev range.

The single plate dry clutch is now hydraulically operated and much smoother and lighter

BMW's R1150GS is arguably one of the best-handling and most rewarding litre-bikes on the market - and I don't just mean among the trailbikes either. Until you've ridden one you simply won't realise just how stable, sure-footed yet nimble the BMW feels...



Dave Crasher Cornish
BMW R1150GS
Big Is Beautiful

in use. However, perhaps the single biggest improvement is the new six-speed transmission, which features five closely spaced gears and an amazingly high 'overdrive' sixth. Drop into top gear at motorway speeds and the tach indicates a mere 4000rpm (5500rpm on the old 1100). A longer gearbox casing means that the shaft drive enclosed swinging arm is a tad shorter but the wheelbase remains the same.

As soon as a big trailie turns up at TBM HQ there always follows a rather undignified scramble for the keys. Blez usually manages to grab the bike and disappear before anyone notices he's missing - but as he was out of the country when the big BeeEmm arrived, I took my chance and made off with it



Remember when all bikes came with a toolkit? The BMW's underseat toolbox is comfortably the best equipped on the market and includes a number of CO2 bulbs and rubber 'plugs' for repairing and re-inflating tubeless tyres...

STAFF BIKES

Subtle re-styling has been carried out on the fairing and 'beak' which directs air into the oil cooler, and there's now a more conventionally styled fork (still featuring BMW's Telelever set up) - but that's about it really. Basically what was good on the old bike has been retained but with a bit more power/torque/comfort and a fresh set of clothes which makes the GS1150 a worthy successor to the popular GS11.

Styling-wise, it elicits either a love-it or hate-it reaction from both riders and bystanders alike. Personally I love the solid, functional but slightly quirky looks of the GS. Either way you can't ignore the bike and the fact remains - the Bee-Emm is certainly no wallflower.

Hit the starter and the big oil-cooled, eight-valve flat twin fires up with a shudder as the torque reaction pulses through the beefy motor. Although the controls are light in their operation, a firm hand and foot are needed to select the gears. It's not really a problem as such and you soon settle in and sub-consciously give the gear lever a little extra pressure than you might with an equivalent Japanese 'box.

It's obvious as soon as the clutch is engaged that despite weighing in at a considerable 219kg (up by 10kg from the 1100) the BMW

engineers have achieved an almost perfect balance. Feet up trickling along through the worst of the capital's snarled up traffic I found that in many ways the huge GS was an ideal city bike. Yes of course those opposed cylinders stick out a bit, but the tall riding position coupled to an amazingly low CofG and heaps of grunt just off idle allow the rider to anticipate traffic conditions and storm past on a whiff of throttle, when the chance allows.

Drivers tend to notice you much more and even pull out of your way to let you past. I'm not sure if this respect is something to do with the blue and white roundel on the tank or simply that the Bee-Emm looks so large and menacing in their rear view mirror that the only sensible thing to do is shift out of the way! Whatever, it helps the rider to make quick journey times either in or out of the city.

Once out on the open road however the bike really does start to make sense. There's effortless high-speed cruising available with only a slightly annoying turbulence from the adjustable screen to spoil the fun. Experimentation has shown that removing the screen altogether improves the situation at speeds up to about 60mph, but above that you're better off with the screen in place. BMW do offer higher screens as an option, but frankly I'm surprised that they seem to have got the standard one so wrong for someone of my 5'9" height.

In top gear the motor simply breezes along



Not everyone likes the GS's unusual styling, though it's certainly distinctive...

at around 4000rpm but still has enough grunt to lope past slower traffic. However if you want to effect rapid overtaking, boot it down a cog and the GS responds to a handful of gas with the urgency that only a big bore motor can deliver. On this subject, rapid riding is best accomplished using fifth gear - saving top (sixth) for more leisurely cruising.

Keeping all of the GS's performance in check is a set of powerful Brembo brakes which are more than capable of reigning in a hard charging bike. And unlike other big trailies, the GS doesn't dive like a U-boat as soon as the front brake is hauled on hard. Thanks to the ingeniously designed Paralever front end, the suspension/steering and brakes all act independently of each other. What this means is that under braking, the Beemer simply dips down a tad at the front (just to give some feedback) and then squats down on its haunches like a well-suspended rally car. No drama and heaps more braking stability than the conventional-forked competition. This coupled to the supple but well damped suspension action both front and rear means that on the twisties the lucky GS

rider barely needs to back off the throttle.

Talking of suspension, adjustments for spring pre-load is simplicity itself. The rear unit sports a remote hydraulic adjuster located on the left side just behind the rider which can be twiddled whilst on the move. This is matched to a damping adjuster that can be tweaked without getting onto your knees and scrabbling around in the dirt. The front shock is a basic spring pre-load adjustable only unit, which again is easily accessible from the front using the tool supplied in the comprehensive BMW tool kit located under the lockable (and removable) pillion seat.

Due to the current situation regarding riding off-road, it's been impossible to stray any further than the grass verge with the GS. Although hopefully by the next instalment this will have changed, and we can find out how the bike copes with some less than perfect terrain.

For now though I'm just going to have to content myself with keeping the GS flowing through the local tarmac twisties. Still, there are worse things to do in springtime, eh?...

DCC

The World Enduro Championship began the new season with a rider's strike, abandoned special tests, and multiple exclusions, as Jim Jones reports...



We all know that the term 'enduro' developed from the word 'endure' which according to my dictionary means: to tolerate, bear or put up with without giving in; also to: harden and remain firm under pressure. And simple logic tells you that an enduro series - particularly one as prestigious as that of the world championship - makes for a determined competitor prepared to withstand whatever's thrown at them - whether that be machine trouble, difficult hazards, inclement weather or the actions of a sadistic clerk of the course. These days however, that appears not to be the case.

The venue was the small, traditional town of Tomar in the north of the country. The town square had been set aside for the start area and was perfect. The local council even going so far as to lay on hot showers, and free electricity for all competitors. The problem however was not something which could be altered - it was the weather.

It had been raining in this part of Portugal for the previous two months, their worst rainfall for a quarter of a century. So the council went to great lengths to mark out the work area with white lines. Then it rained again and the lines were washed away. The workmen returned and did the job again followed by another team who neatly spread pebbles over the whole thing to make it look nice, covering the lines in the process. Back came the 'white liners' again. It would have been highly entertaining were it not for the fact that it was still raining and there was a serious race about to get underway.

Gradually the British riders turned up and a kraal of vans, tents and motor-homes formed at the corner of the paddock nearest the bar. There were eight competitors from the UK, plus David Knight who had entered under an Italian licence. His Yamaha-UFO team having been persuaded that the Manxman couldn't ride until the team invested in a deep fat fryer and a bag of spuds! Well a bloke can take only so much pasta, after all!

It was still raining as I headed out to pre-ride the course on my trusty CRM (teams are allowed an outrider to report back on the course to the competitors).

World EINDURO CHAMPIONSHIP 2001

Round One, Tomar, Portugal, 24-25 March

World ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP 2001

Look carefully and you'll see that this is Gas Gas's new thumper...



The course itself was varied with sand, mud, rocks, horrendous climbs with hairpins and a deep river section more than a mile long over moss-covered rocks. Did I mention that it was raining? The best description of it would be that it was difficult without being dangerous and there weren't any 'stoppers' at that stage, but with the rain continuing to fall, anything could happen. The competitors faced four laps on Saturday and three on Sunday with two enduro tests and one MX test per lap.

Because refuelling and servicing was restricted to the start and finish area, the course had to be less than 60 kilometres - FIM rules state that enduro bikes must have this range. This particular Clerk of the Course (CofC) had settled on 58km, however it was clear that this was going to cause problems among competitors - even my CRM went onto reserve during the pre-ride. You should bear several things in mind, the CRM is less thirsty than an enduro bike, it has a larger tank, and most importantly I am renowned as an unenthusiastic throttle opener. If I was in difficulties with fuel then the riders were going to have greater problems. And they did!

Back at the paddock it was obvious that the petrol situation was uppermost in everybody's mind. The no-servicing, no refuelling rule on the course was about to be broken - big-time.



Knighter shone in the gloom of north Portugal

Servicing wasn't a problem because 'servicing' hadn't been defined. Was it possible to give a rider a drink or a Mars Bar? If so, why couldn't he have a spanner or a filter? Providing a rider with petrol however would mean disqualification - if they were caught.

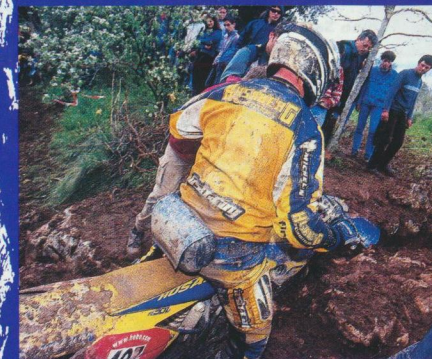
The strategy for Saturday was that I would keep an eye on our three 125 riders, not that they needed me. Edward and Robert Jones along with Stevie Roper are capable of taking care of themselves but I know that a friendly face can help. They soon settled into the conditions with the KTMs of Edward and Stevie sticking with the timing, while Robert on the Yamaha dropped back a little. Very quickly it became obvious that the larger capacity bikes were running out of fuel, rumours abounded about some of the stars who had ground to a halt. Despite this they were all still circulating, obviously they had taken on fuel somewhere, but no-one was telling. Back in the paddock it was impossible to find anyone who would own up to having been refuelled on the course.

One of those who was definitely affected was Euan McConnell whose KTM 300 stopped well short of the start and finish - and he retired. No such problems for Richard Hay who coped without any drama, while his cousin Chris watched from the sidelines. Relegated to a 'non-starter' role by injuries from a fall at a GNCC in America the week before. Trailing at the back end of the field, Rhys Jones kept his Suzuki going despite breaking his clutch lever and losing time.

As the day progressed the weather took its toll on the course and the MX test was cancelled on lap two. It was an impossible quagmire. The other tests weren't easy to observe as they were both long and ran through woodland. In the 250 2T class Juha Salminen was pulling out a lead over David Knight who was having rear shock problems. Taking the time to change it on his first visit to the working area paid off. He was able to close up on the flying Fin but didn't beat him on any test. Defending world champ Stefan Merriman (Husky 400), wasn't having a good time on his birthday either. The difficult conditions and the lack of an electric starter had cost him 14 minutes by the end of lap two, and there was worse to come.

Two hills on the course had deteriorated very badly requiring assistance for most riders. One was by-passed by the CofC while the other, the worst one was ignored. This is where the endurance bit comes in: top class riders should be able to cope with any conditions, but in this case they didn't. Some decided to strike and block the approach to the hill on lap four. I arrived to find Stefan Merriman, Kari Tiainen and 26 other riders in a party mood, they were obviously satisfied with their decision. The strike affected only 400 4T and 500 4T competitors but not all. Some had gone up the hill without any trouble. David Knight on a 250 2T couldn't understand what all the fuss was about as he had ridden up on his last lap without help. Mario Rinaldi pulled a face when asked about it, but had only needed a helping push. He won his class having got through just before the protest started.

The situation was resolved when marshals arranged a



After two rounds (and three day's competition) the championship is in good shape with no manufacturer dominating the series. Martin Lind, the only 500cc class points-scorer in Portugal holds onto his lead which he will almost certainly lose at the next round. David Knight is in a creditable second place in the 250s with a bit of work to do if he is to catch Salminen. When he joined the Italian Yamaha-UFO team it was expected that he would benefit from having Peterhansel and Rinaldi as team mates. The benefits have been so great that so far he's beaten them on every outing!

RESULTS

(after two rounds)

125			
Silvan	70pts	(Finland)	Husqvarna
Germain	45pts	(France)	KTM
Pohjamo	45pts	(Spain)	Gas-Gas

250 2T			
Salminen	75pts	(Finland)	KTM
Knight	56pts	(GB)	Yamaha
Boano	47pts	(Italy)	Honda

250 4T			
Peterhansel	70pts	(France)	Yamaha
Bergvall	61pts	(Sweden)	Yamaha
Sala	46pts	(Italy)	KTM

400 4T			
Rinaldi	66pts	(Italy)	Yamaha
Laaksonen	41pts	(Germany)	Gas-Gas
Merriman	41pts	(Australia)	Husqvarna

500 4T			
Lind	46pts	(Sweden)	Husaberg
Ahola	45pts	(Finland)	VOR
Tiainen	41pts	(Sweden)	KTM

Juha Salminen proved once again just how difficult he's going to be to beat in the 250cc 2T class...



detour and the 28 riders headed directly back to the finish. Their expectation was that the last lap would be scrubbed. Unfortunately the jury, sitting later that night, didn't take that view and they were (correctly) excluded. The results for the day gave Petteri Silvan the 125 class win from Fausto Scovolo, with Juha Salminen dominating the 250 2T from David Knight in second place.

Nowadays everybody seems more interested in the four-strokes, and the 250 4T class was won by Peter Bergvall from Stephane Peterhansel, while the 400s went to Mario Rinaldi from Jani Laaksonen. In the big thumpers, Martin Lind was the only 500 rider to complete the course, so he had a page of results to himself.

They say that tomorrow is another day and cutting out the two offending hills plus another steep winding climb at the back of a village should have solved the problems. Except that... it rained during the night. The MX test (the first to be cancelled the day before), was in even worse condition. The first enduro test couldn't be used either because a fallen tree prevented the ambulance from arriving, and the second enduro test was unrideable. When the early numbers



arrived back at the paddock having ridden the first lap without attempting any special tests they decided that conditions were too bad for them. That 'endurance' thing reared its head again and they blocked the start area, preventing those that wanted to go from starting. The event was stopped.

For some the weekend's results were a bonus. Martin Lind found himself leading the 500cc 4T championship - with 25 points and no other rider earning points. Leading the 400 4T championship gave Mario Rinaldi cause to smile. But Stephan Merriman had been excluded and Eric Bernard retired with a bad back from a previous injury. The overall win went to Petteri Silvan with Juha Salminen ten seconds behind. David Knight finishing in an excellent fifth place.

In the 125s Edward Jones picked up a point in 15th place, while Stevie Roper finished in 20th. Richard Hay's 14th place in the 250 2Ts and Rhys Jones's 19th completed the British results. But Robert Jones and Ewan McConnell retired when they ran out of petrol. Although he was best British performer, Ed Jones wasn't happy with the results. Cancelling a check that he had already cleaned, benefited riders who had lost time, thereby moving them ahead of him. The decision probably cost him five places.

The downside to the competition was obvious, the top riders seemed determined to control the event. They weren't prepared to retire individually, preferring to seek safety in numbers, even

intimidating others who wanted to continue. To be fair to them a narrow stage that is tightly timed can rob them of the results that are their livelihood, but this seemed ridiculous. Our sport is run under unusual rules that allow professionals and hobby-riders to compete with each other. This is not going to be an easy situation for the FIM to resolve. If it rains in Spain next week for round two (isn't there a song about that?), we should see some interesting developments.

In Portugal the organisers were unprepared, no riding numbers were recorded by officials making disciplinary action difficult. A wise Spanish CofC will be well prepared for any eventuality...

World ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP 2001

Round Two, Ourense, Spain, 31 March - 1 April

I have seen the future (of enduros) and I'm not sure I like it. Martin Lind (Husaberg 500) also saw the future and definitely liked it. After the first round where he was the only 500 rider to complete the course on day one, he collected maximum points. So Martin found himself in the fortunate position of being 25 points clear in the 500 4T class after the first round. There is only one better situation: being 25 points ahead after the last round. The future for him looked good.

To me the future looks very uncertain, enduros are set to change forever. We are all aware of the proposed changes to accommodate professional promoters and to make our sport television friendly but this is too much. Here at Ourense the start, and the working area, was inside an exhibition hall, which I can live with, but the hall was over ten miles away from the course. Each morning the riders set off along the dual carriageway, negotiating roundabouts, flyovers and traffic lights whilst dodging commuter traffic. On their return at the end of each day the riders travelled down the main street, past fashionable stores while dodging the shoppers. Now if this was a small market town it wouldn't be too bad, but Ourense is bigger than Chester and much busier. Far from promoting the sport, this simply meant that the competitors clogged the town traffic, get-

ting in the way of busy shoppers and commuters - not good for public relations.

Have I mentioned that the sun was shining? I rode most of the course on Friday during the official pre-ride and found it technically demanding but not difficult except for one hill. This was a 100m metre rocky climb over uneven boulders which every rider would get up with sufficient effort. During the event I saw Merriman, Rinaldi and many other top riders struggling here. Some of the harder parts of the course had already been deleted following the involvement of a rider committee. This is a new way of running enduros where the protests are heard prior to the event

without any protest fees being paid. Unlike the Portuguese officials, the Spanish organisers sensibly positioned plenty of marshals on tricky hills so that blockages could be avoided.

The course itself was figure-of-eight shaped with an out-leg on main roads as already described. The checks, a refuelling and service area and a motocross test were located at the crossing point of the figure-of-eight. This meant that there were two checks at exactly the same place. It was expected

that some riders would get confused by going into the wrong check. Only one rider managed this and rode the same loop twice. It was Fabio Farioli's misfortune to be that rider, and the 500cc KTM pilot was excluded on Day One for this error but didn't make the same mistake the following day.

The 250 2Ts were first away and Juha Salminen immediately got back into the pattern of the previous week. He led the class in all but one of the tests, though Jarno Boano and David Knight were snapping at his heels. Once again the four-strokes were the centre of attention - and justifiably so. At every test at least one of them, be it 250, 400 or 500cc were among the top five. Surprisingly the fastest times on some tests were dominated by four-strokes - the 125s bringing up the rear.

In the 125s last week's leader wasn't having his own way. Petteri Silvan found that local rider Petri Pohjamo was a few seconds faster, perhaps he had some local knowledge of the conditions. The day ended with Peterhansel (250 4T Yamaha), Stefan Merriman (400 Husky) and Mika Ahola (500 VOR) leading their respective classes. It had been an uneventful but hard day without any protests or problems. Apart from losing Fabio Farioli when he took the wrong loop, the Farioli KTM team also lost Arnaldo Nicoli (250 4T) with

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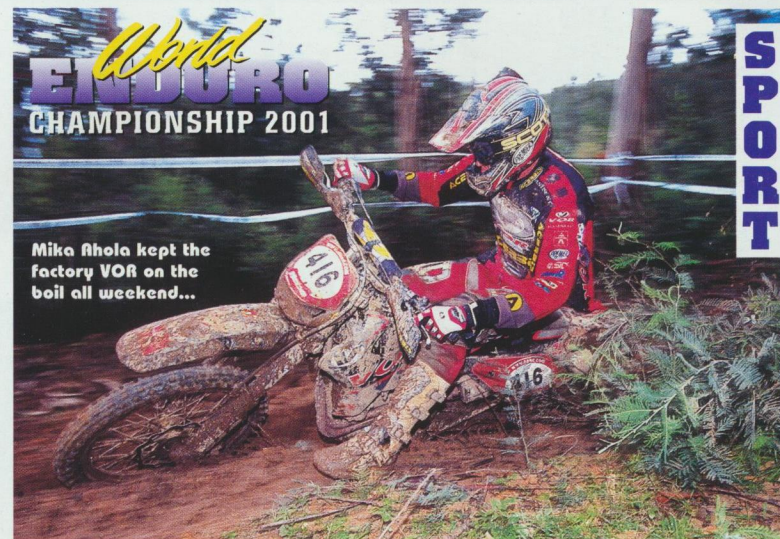


a knee injury while a broken wrist sidelined Giovanni Gritti (500).

British riders, Edward and Robert Jones, Euan McConnell, Richard Hay, Stevie Roper and Rhysian Jones had a relatively good day. Euan McConnell was best of the bunch in 54th overall, that is allowing for David Knight who finished fifth as an (honorary) Italian entry.

Day two was a re-run of the first except the competitors rode two laps instead of the previous day's three. Even the weather was the same which brought out thousands of spectators. The steep rocky climb was lined all the way up by hoards of friendly locals enjoying a good day's sport and a picnic. On the tests it was impossible to say which class was fastest overall. The fastest times were shared by 250cc two-strokes and 500 thumpers, with the other sizes all represented except the 125s which only posted one top ten position. The course remained unchanged from the previous day without any problems.

The day's results showed that Petteri Silvan (Husky) had done enough to relegate Petri Pohjamo (Gas-Gas) to second position in the 125s and take the overall scratch win. Once again Juha Salminen (KTM) won the 250 2T class with David Knight (Yamaha YZ) less than half a second behind. But it very nearly went the other way. On the last test David arrived with an eight second deficit and in that single test reduced it by seven and a half seconds. In the paddock there was a lot of talk about David being the next Paul Edmondson - or maybe even better. The 250 4T battle between Stephane Peterhansel (Yam) and Giovanni Sala (KTM) went to the wire with the Frenchman just taking the honours. At one stage he had opened up a 17 second lead but a fall on one of the enduro tests enabled Sala to pull back ten seconds. In the 400 class 'Super Mario' Rinaldi (Yam) managed to hold off Eric Bernard (KTM), while in the big thumpers Kari Tiainen (KTM) beat Mika Ahola (VOR) in the 500s.



MIKA AHOLA kept the factory VOR on the boil all weekend...



The Italian team struggles with David Knight's name...

Several riders were excluded for having noisy exhausts including Ricardo Fermi on a Kawasaki 250 2T who couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. Meanwhile Richard Larsson (TM 300) was heading for a fourth in class until he overshot a corner in a special test,

went through the tape and missed the exit gate.

Instead of turning around and riding back through the hole in the tapes to complete the test, the likeable Swede went the wrong way through the timing beams, then did a U-turn to break the beam for a second time. Exclusion duly followed which Larsson dismissed with a simple shrug of his shoulders.

All six British riders finished both days and enjoyed the event. Although Euan McConnell (KTM 300) was lucky to finish after filling his engine with water at a river crossing. He had to resort to up-ending the bike to drain it, yet still managed to stay on time. In the final list he was 'best Brit' just ahead of Edward Jones (KTM 125). As usual Richard Hay rode both days without any drama, illustrating how competent he can be when the events are hard. Rhysian Jones seems to be settling down, and taking things a bit more cautiously. Despite declaring himself 'knackered' he admitted he was looking forward to his next ride in the Czech Republic, as are we, the casual observers of what has turned out to be a dramatic championship series so far... JJ

LITTLE Treasure

For his last year of international enduro competition, Stephane Peterhansel has given himself a challenge - to become world champion on a 250cc four-stroke. TBM was offered a quick spin on his bike - well how could we refuse...?

Story: Bernard Jagenaud; Pics: Jean-Marie Pouget



I arrived in the hills above Carcassone just as Peterhansel was putting the finishing touches to his 250 thumper - fine tuning the carb for the altitude. This test session included the cream of the world enduro scene - Peterhansel, Rinaldi, Scovolo and Bergvall all from the UFO-Yamaha team - so I stood and watched as these multi-world champs circulated the course specially laid out for us. How do these guys ride so quickly I wondered? Wheelie after wheelie coming out of the corners - and with a smile on their faces too!

Finally Peterhansel handed me his bike, saying: 'You'll see, it is really easy to ride, let me know what you think.' Next to riders of his calibre I feel distinctly average. I only hope they've brought along a few spare sets of handlebars!

The starting procedure is typical thumper: pull in the decompressor, ease it over top dead centre and kick (with the hot starter button pulled out when necessary). The 250F is relatively easy to start, and a few twists of the throttle allows me to appreciate just how quickly it builds revs. The exhaust note is fruity without being too loud - just 89dB according to CRD

LITTLE Treasure



Sexy, isn't it...?

who've supplied a number of the bike's trick parts. The stainless and titanium exhaust system has been tuned not just for power, but also smoothness - Peter' prefers a bike with a linear power-curve rather than a big hitter, apparently.

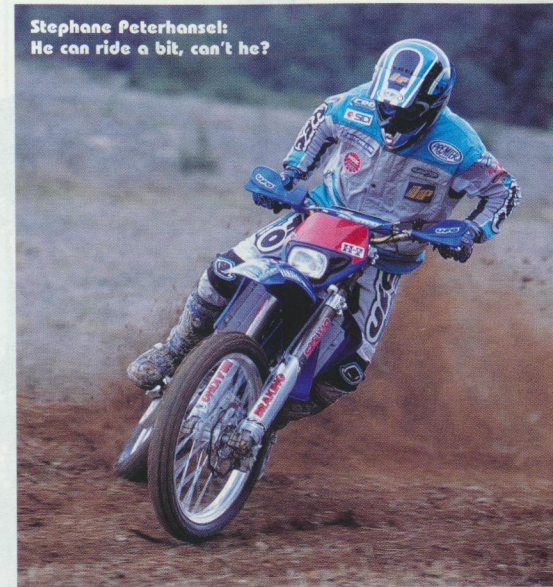
I set off on a rocky, red earthed special test and marvel at just how light and manoeuvrable the bike feels straight away - more akin to a 125cc two-stroke than a typical thumper. Only the noise emanating from the engine confirms

that this thing is in fact a four-banger. And as I discover, there's little point in trying to ride it in the torque at low revs. Once again it reminds you more of a 125 than anything else - everything falls into place when you start twisting the throttle and working the gearbox.

Grip is fantastic and there's no problem coming out of corners with the front wheel skywards thanks to the linear nature of the power delivery which causes very little rear wheel break-away. Even if overall power isn't enormous (it is *only* a 250cc four-stroke after all), the power that's available is easy to use. You can accelerate hard out of a turn and hold onto the gear until the rev limiter cuts in. Sometimes there's no need to change up between corners, but when you do the bike slices through the ratios effortlessly.

'We thought long and hard about the gearbox', explains Peterhansel afterwards. 'With a close ratio moto-x gearbox the bike revs quicker and you have the impression of going faster, but thanks to the extra power we've managed to extract from the engine, the wide ratio enduro

Stephane Peterhansel:
He can ride a bit, can't he?



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Weight Loss

Much of the preparation for Peterhansel's unique bike involved weight saving measures. The air box is made from carbon-fibre, the nuts and bolts, extra wide footrests and silencer are fabricated from titanium, while the yokes and Talon hubs are billet aluminium. We didn't get to weigh it, but take it from me Peter's bike felt like it had been on a serious diet.

Suspension

On an enduro bike good quality suspension is essential. For the moment Peter's 250 is equipped with Solva front forks (1kg lighter than the stock Yamaha items) and a revalved but standard rear shock - though a Solva shock will also be fitted during the season. Supple on the little bumps but extremely progressive on the big hits, this provides comfort on the going as well as the ability to attack the specials.

Brakes

'The cookie-cutter front disc is a revelation' says Peterhansel. 'when you look at it you think it isn't going to work, but in fact it's extremely efficient.' The use of the Braking disc meant a special

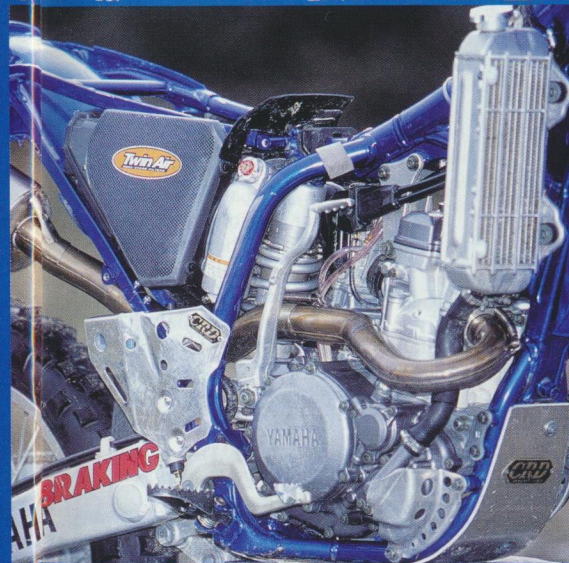
mount for the front caliper had to be machined up. The master cylinder is the latest generation Nissin, while a cookie cutter rear disc is on the cards. One which will allow the caliper to stay put during rear wheel removal.

The Cockpit

'The older I get the more I like an armchair riding position' admits Peterhansel. The bike is fitted with high Tomaselli bars supported by billet bar-clamps. Stock radiators (and rad-shrouds) are more than up to the heat of world-class competition claim the UFO-Yamaha team.

Motor

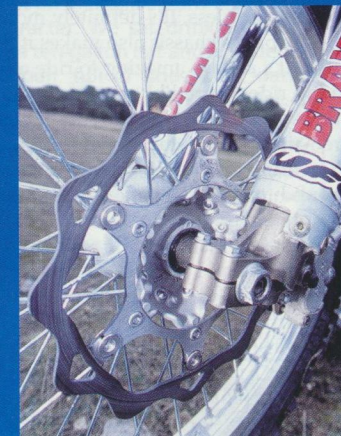
The engine is essentially standard (camshaft, crank and carb), but development has concentrated on two aspects - the ignition and exhaust. Different ignition programmes allow the rider to choose alternative engine characteristics (depending upon the terrain), though development has concentrated on midrange at the expense of top-end power. Likewise the modified exhaust system which has produced an increase of 5bhp in the midrange (though max power is unaffected). The stainless header pipe is narrower than the original but increases in diameter towards the silencer. The titanium silencer has been designed to increase torque, yet keep the bike well below the maximum 92db currently allowed in enduro regs. The bike's stronger mid-range allows the stock enduro ratios to be utilised.



There's a carbon-fibre air-box, titanium exhaust and all manner of trick parts fitted to Peterhansel's 250F, but at the end of the day it's the skill of the pilot that makes the difference...
Right: Peterhansel likes a high set of bars - note the size of the risers he uses...



Above: That is one trick-looking bike. Right: Super lightweight oversize disc is incredibly potent...



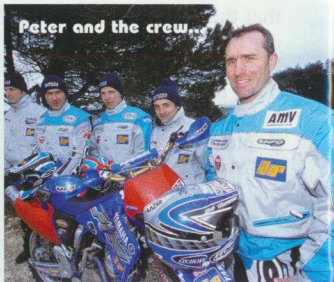


LITTLE
Treasure

gearbox works better in this bike. Not only do you lose less time changing gears but the rear wheel spins less. It's definitely more effective.'

The bike's chassis also makes it very easy to ride. It's always amazing to ride a bike set up by a top rider. Incredibly reassuring, Peter's WR250F turns swiftly through the twisty bits while remaining stable through fast bumpy corners. You think to yourself that it's so easy to turn, it's bound to go into a tank-slapper just as soon as you hit a fast straight. But no, the front end tracks predictably thanks to the Solva forks which work as well as any I've tried. Thankfully the rear end grips and drives efficiently using just the standard (though revalved) rear shock, but in future a Solva shock will be fitted to the bike.

There's just one thing you have to be wary of on this machine - the front brake. It isn't that it's overly fierce, but the power of the Nissin caliper



linked to the oversized cookie-cutter Braking disc can take you by surprise and I consistently found myself braking way too early at the end of the straights. No doubt the lightness of the bike contributes to this.

After a number of laps of the special test I headed off to some rock-infested tracks to see how it felt on the going. There the bike's light weight and supple suspension were major allies, though the lack of an electric start proved frustrating at times. Imagine how difficult it must have been for Peterhansel during the tough Gilles Lalay Classic this year. He confessed that several times the public came to help pull him up hills and unintentionally pressed on the manual

decompressor, stalling the engine. Combine this with the fact that the bike picks up revs quickly, and it means you have to be delicate with the clutch in technical going. For this reason the next development session (with CRD) will concentrate on refining the ignition even further, to help prevent stalling at low revs and further boost the bike's low and midrange torque.

Come the end of the day I could see why Peterhansel reckons this is one of the best enduro bikes he's ever ridden. The combination of smooth, free-revving (four-stroke) power, coupled with a superbly competent chassis, make for a bike which is truly impressive to ride. Team that up with arguably one of the most versatile riders in the world and it's not hard to understand why Team UFO-Yamaha are currently leading the world 250cc four-stroke enduro class. One thing's for sure - you wouldn't bet against them...

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We crossed deserts-rivers-climbed mountains. Mornings up in the snow-afternoons in a "hot spring" The scenery-varied-stunning-something you have to experience to appreciate. Views, absolutely awesome. From day one I was absolutely gobsmacked by the sheer beauty of this vast wilderness. The mountains were magnificent! We mere mortals can only stand in awe when privileged to witness such scenery. Preconceptions of Nevada as "Death Valley" quickly dispelled.

This trip was not all biking. Saloons always had at least one character. We sat drinking with a cowboy wearing a ten-gallon hat and a loaded six gun. Another saloon, full of bric-a-brac, dating early twenties, run by a 70 year old WWII pilot. He was great! Kept a shotgun behind the bar.

There is much more I could say about this trip. If you have even a drop of Castrol R in your blood then get out there and experience it for yourself. Me, I'm going back just as soon as I've got enough brownie points with the wife.

From a story "Welshman Out West"

by Mike Rees from Wales -
Published in Off Road Review

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1999 KTM 125EXC



READER'S REPORT

Reader Tristan Anderson has plenty of experience with KTM's tiddler...

Three years ago I decided to start riding enduros. I was 28 and too old for motocross. Besides I didn't want to have to walk round wearing NO FEAR baseball caps backwards anymore. I hadn't started riding off-road earlier (apart from a DT125) as my parents didn't have much money and up till now, neither had I. So I looked through all the magazines and papers etc, read all the advice, looked at all the gorgeous competition machinery, ignored it all and bought a DR350. Great trail bike, but it damn near killed me in the tight woods enduros.

So what next? Aha, a Yamaha WR250. Brilliant: torquey, smooth, reliable, easy to start, flickable and damn quick when needed - just ask the editor. I rode the Welsh Two Day on it and only had to adjust the chain. I did the Natterjack on it, and simply filled the thing with fuel. And I did the Devon round of the British Championship, and knocked the water-pump housing off - Doh! But still I thought the thing was the dog's danglies.

Then I went to a mate's farm and had a go on his Honda CR125. Oh dear, oh dear. Suddenly my WR250 became an overweight, slow-steering, arm-wrenching bucket. This thing turned, stopped, leaped and flicked like a six-stone ballerina. I was hooked. A 125 for me then, but which one? The best MX 125 was the YZ, but it was still a crosser, and I was sure that I could get a ready-made weapon - purpose built for enduros. Then I saw it - a brand new 1999 KTM 125EXC. A little slip of a thing with ginger hair. I had to have it.

My first ever brand new bike, in a box no less. I fitted the front and rear wheels and bolted on the handlebars. The only tweaking I needed to do was fit a set of wraparound handguards, then I was ready for a practice day at a farm down here in deepest Dorset. I was in lurve - it carved and sliced like a surgeon's scalpel, and as TBM report-

KTM's 125EXC is a versatile enduro bike claims reader Tristan Anderson



ed with their own 2000 model long-termer - it may be a 125, but it's got more bottom-end than any other tiddler. I was sure I'd made the right choice. Turn up at any enduro nowadays and you'll notice a sea of orange KTMs - now with Japanese electrics and teutonic engineering they are a match for any Jap bike.

So it was off to my first event on it - the notorious Brass Monkey Enduro - supposedly dry that year and hey ho, if I didn't manage to sneak fifth in the clubman class. Yes, I was suitably smug! And then little things started going wrong. I knew it couldn't last, a fling with a flighty Euro bike was bound to have its ups and downs. So here are some of my tips if you own or are thinking of buying a 99-2001 KTM 125EXC.

First off replace the rear sprocket bolts and nuts. KTM don't supply nyloc nuts but I'd advise using them, otherwise the sprocket can loosen off resulting in a damaged hub. I've seen it happen a few times and it nearly happened to me, but I spotted it before too much damage was done to the hub. Anyway watch out for it.

In the woods, a light bike like a 125 is a definite advantage...



READER'S REPORT

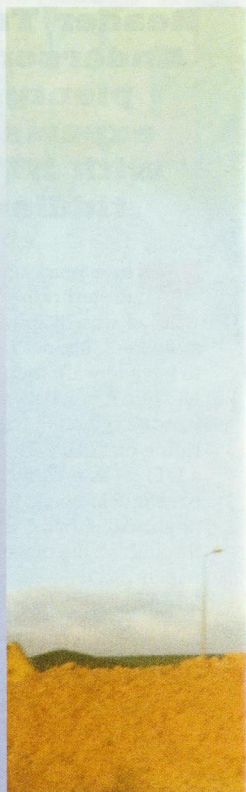
Next on the agenda are the clutch plates. After a while my clutch started making strange noises, and when I opened it up, I found to my horror that one of the alloy plates had begun to break up. Half the plates are steel and half are aluminium, so I decided to replace the alloy ones with steel items. KTM original clutch plates (friction and drives) are about 80 quid plus the vat, so I used Honda CR125 ones instead - exactly the same but easier on the wallet, and better quality I reckon. Apparently the

with the original rings bridging the exhaust port). Anyway a genuine piston kit costs nearly 90 quid, but I'm informed that you should be able to get three sets of rings per piston out of it.

Be careful when tightening the front or rear axles. The front axle nut can strip its thread whereas over-tightening the rear one can put excessive loads on the captive wheel spacers. This will lead to premature knocking of the rear wheel bearings.

200EXC is the same so if you've got one of these, it'd be worth checking the the clutch also.

Six months into the relationship I decided to freshen up the top end. Wiseco make a piston kit (which I fitted), but it's a single ring jobbie and the bike didn't seem to like it (I think it's got something to do



1999 KTM 125EXC

One thing that can be easily overlooked and cause much damage to the wallet, is the routing of the front brake and clutch hoses. If they rub against each other it will wear through the clutch hose (as mine did), and cost you £54 to replace. Also the rad shrouds can catch on the top of your boots. Extremely irritating when you're trying to ride feet up through nadgery wooded sections. However if you elongate the mounting holes in the shrouds you can push them in a bit further. Alternatively the 2001 plastics have been modified and will fit older bikes no problem.

Another item I recommend purchasing from the 2001 model is the gear-lever. Earlier bikes like mine had a shorty lever and this can be awkward to use if like me you've got big feet. Also if any of your mates ride Jap tackle, try and cadge an old gear lever off them and keep it in your bum-bag for emergencies. They press onto the KTM shaft without damaging the splines and will get you home (or to the end of a lap) if necessary.

Also when performing a gear-box oil change, be careful undoing and tightening the drain bolts. The left hand side 13mm hex-head is okay (the one with the magnet on it), but the smaller 10mm bolt has a fine metric thread and can strip easily -

Up, up and away...



just like my girlfriend after one too many vodkas! Ha ha.

I strongly recommend fitting some kind of exhaust guard, such as a carbon-fibre or ally one. Even though the pipe is up high out of the way, it does dent quite easily. Also the rear light undertray assembly isn't really strong enough for the job. It collects mud under there like a New York tramp collects old newspapers, and eventually the whole lot will snap off if you're not careful. If you use your bike for racing, and it doesn't need to be registered, remove the rear lamp and number-plate cluster and use a lightweight aftermarket one, or simply bolt a tail lamp on top of the old mudguard. You can always bolt it all back on when you come to sell it again.

Brembo brakes. Don'tcha just love 'em? Er, no... actually. The little R-clips that keep the retaining pin in place in can go walkies if not lockwired, and this is a pain in the butt if you go through brake pads like I do. My solution is to use hard pads and stainless steel split pins. The pins don't rust, don't snap and don't disappear in deep ruts. I also recommend using plenty of waterproof marine grease on the caliper sliders.

So there you go, my experiences with the 125EXC. I hope these tips can help other KTM 125 owners. I'm made up with the bike overall and I'd definitely have another. Now all I've got to do is start saving up again!

Do you have a wealth of experience with a particular dirt bike? If so TBM would like to hear from you. If you can write 1300-2000 informative (and preferably amusing) words on your own bike, including some helpful set-up tips and five or six decent photos (no blurry snapshots thanks very much), then send them into us together with a stamped self-addressed envelope. The best ones will get published as part of the Readers Report series, and the rest will be returned in the SAEs provided.

Good luck Matt Copeland & Rich Knowles - Optic Tunisian Rally - D.L.Prepped XR400's
Still time for preparation for the Atlas Rally - Morocco (23rd-29th May) be quick!



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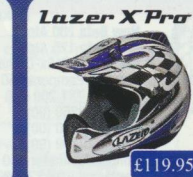
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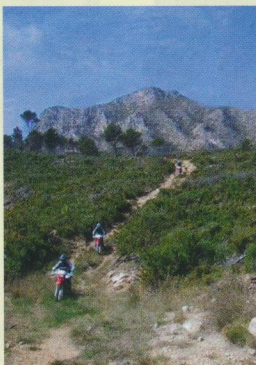
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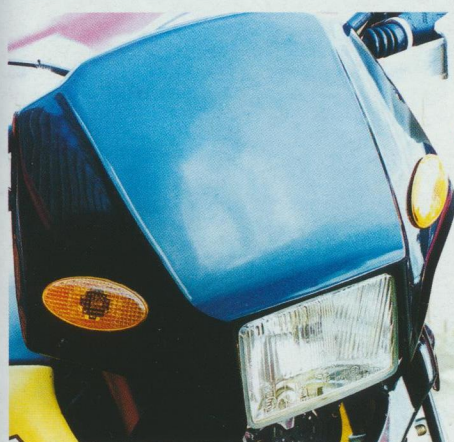
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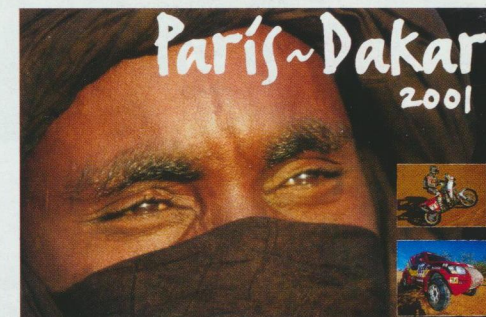
Given the current state of affairs with off-roading right now, we reckon plenty of people will appreciate the availability of a new dual-sport trail tyre, for those who need to use their dirt bike on the street. Continental's new TKC80 Twinduro now comes in a 140/80 R18" size just perfect for slipping onto the rear of your XR600/650R or KTM Adventure - and matching up with the 90/90 S21" front hoop.

In fact Conti informs us that there's a fitment for virtually every trail bike from learner-legal 125s right up to BMW's mighty 1150GS. The new tyre works out at about £58 (inc vat) and if you want more information check out the website which gives a fitment and pressure guide on: www.conti-tyres.co.uk

Blinking Clever...



The guys at Pro Racing have come up with these universal mini indicators which can be attached to any headlight unit. While some aftermarket headlights already come with indicators in place, the Pro Racing boys find that plastic-lensed enduro headlights simply don't provide the intensity of beam required for riding home in the dark after a full day out on the trail. For that reason they tend to use glass-lensed headlight units (then attach these mini-indicators to them, for extra safety on the road after dark). Also in their repertoire is a new numberplate holder designed



Diesel & Dust...

The sight and sounds of this year's Dakar Rallye may be a fading memory, but you can re-live all the excitement and action by buying the official book of the rallye. Not perhaps as glossy as some previous editions, the 2001 book is nevertheless a colourful reminder of all the goings on at this year's event. It costs £31.95 + P&P from JD Racing on 01752 848888, and both signed and unsigned copies are now available...

for the four-stroke WR range (where the rear light is on top). This unit bolts under the existing rear fender, and provides not only a numberplate holder but also a numberplate light - vital for that MoT certificate. If you want to know more details about these or any other parts in their range of products give 'em a call on 01327 301322.



PROJECT KLX300R *(Part Two)*

With the first part of our project KLX already completed, it was time to turn our attention to the engine to see where improvements could be made, before testing the bike out and assessing the benefits...

PROJECT KLX300R (Part Two)

The project KLX300R had so far been a complete success - largely because we hadn't had chance to try the bike out yet! But all that was about to change. So far the improvements we'd made had been confined to the suspension and footpegs with a view to raising the KLX up out of the dirt, next it was the turn of the motor to get the treatment.

The beauty of the 300R is that it's blessed with a little jewel of an engine. In terms of power it doesn't make all that much: say 23-25hp at most (measured with a knobbly tyre). But the seamless way that power is delivered and matched to six well chosen ratios is what makes the KLX so much fun to ride. In fact we were adamant that we didn't want to do anything which would jeopardise this aspect of the machine.

Preserving the Kwacker's fluent power delivery would therefore be top of our agenda, but we had a few ideas we wanted to try out. Word had it that the KLX's DOHC cylinder head could benefit from some gas-flowing work and that a tad more power could be found by altering the timing of the inlet cam. But before we did anything, we stuck the bike on a rolling road and measured the power output - that way any changes made could be assessed accurately.

We'd purchased a Keihin flat-slide (pumper) carb, a White Bros header pipe and been given an Absolute Power silencer courtesy of French company CRD (marketed in the UK through Taylor Racing), and we figured these would all help the Kwak breathe a bit better. Meantime, Egg at K&S Racing who'd offered to help us with our project, removed the motor and took it along to his local tuning shop for the head to be gas-flowed and skimmed slightly. Whilst there, the inlet cam was slotted and advanced about eight degrees - though it was noticed that the stock cams are pretty softly profiled by race-bike standards. Finally the motor was bolted back together with the new carb and pipe in place, before being run on the dyno once more.

It's fair to say that the results were slightly disappointing. There was on average only a two horsepower gain across the range (about eight percent), though the bike responded quicker to

the throttle, and the important midrange had been bolstered slightly. But right at the bottom there was now a small dip in the powercurve which we put down to the new carb's jetting not being quite right. Because we didn't have any alternative jets to hand, the easiest way of filling in this hole was to put the stock CV carb back on and ride it like that. That did the trick and once the bike was fully assembled all we had to do was wait for an opportunity to test it.

This finally came four weeks later at a private test-track facility well away from any grazed land or infected areas. And seeing as the bike hadn't been ridden since long before the F&M outbreak started, we could be confident that we weren't posing any risks (well, not to anyone but ourselves).

The bike fired second kick and the first thing we noticed was the gorgeous muted rumble emanating from the compact CRD muffler. There's no doubt in our mind that thumpers can still be made to sound fruity without the necessity of being overly loud - something which the CRD pipe manages to achieve to perfection. Undoubtedly more power could be liberated if we were prepared to put up with more decibels, but frankly we're not.

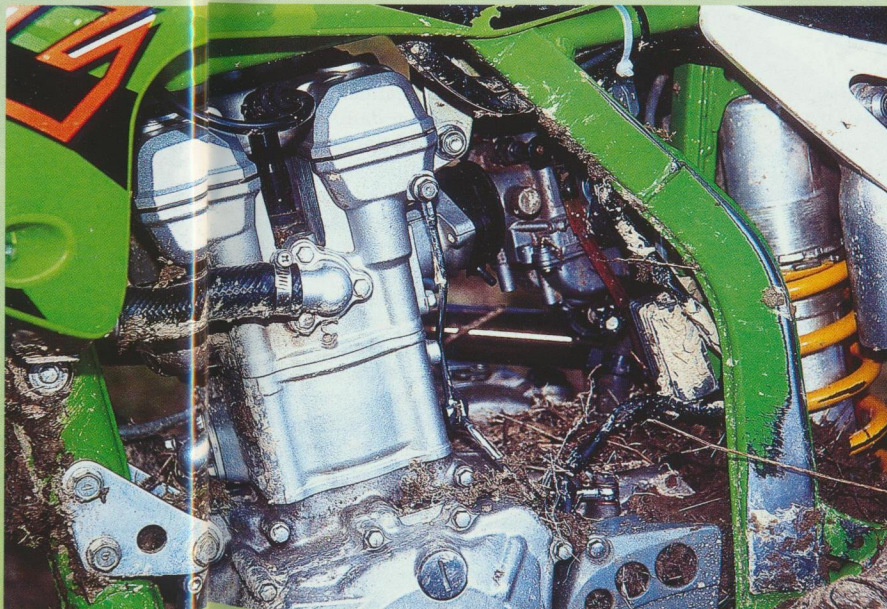
The WB header pipe also looks nice and works a treat though it's devoid of a heat shield as I found out to my cost when I reached down for the kickstarter and melted my gloves. But as this was Clive's bike for the season I let him get on and test the thing out...

Clive Garnham...

Well it didn't look all that much different from when I'd last seen it some months earlier, though the sexy looking pipe hinted at the changes that



KLX is still the king of the woods, but now enjoys a little more midrange punch thanks to some modest work on the head



had occurred beneath the surface, as did the reluctance of the kick-start to swing through its full stroke quite so easily. The compression ratio had been increased slightly (to 12.5:1), adding to the effort required to move the piston past top dead centre.

We wanted to have a look at the engine - as much to aid hot starting as to improve the bike's already impressive responsiveness. Like all thumpers it seems the little 300 can be afflicted by a flooded engine, preventing restarting when the bike is hot. Unfortunately there is no manual de-compressor or hot start button on the stock KLX. Instead all the rider can do is simply kick and kick. And kick and kick... etc. We hope, initially anyway, that a finely tuned carb, a free-flowing pipe and a properly flowed head



PROJECT KLX300R (Part Two)

will keep this problem to a minimum and help build on the super engine characteristics of the stock KLX. However if you see me at the side of the track kicking and cursing, cursing and kicking, expect to see a hot start button or manual de-compressor appearing on the project bike shortly afterwards!

Time to go riding

The KLX burbled into life easily enough - as always it was a piece of cake to start from cold. The exhaust note with the new pipe and muffler was purposeful without being at all offensive. There were barely any more decibels yet it sounded noticeably fruitier and was still well within the new 'zero tolerance' TBM noise guidelines.

The lovely surge off the bottom was still there and this was complimented by what felt like a much fatter midrange. Perhaps due to the higher compression and a bit of tightness after the

engine work however, I felt it was slightly more reluctant to rev quite so high at the top end as when I last rode the stocker. Time will tell if that frees up with more riding.

The suspension had received 'stage one' of our intended modifications so we could see just what the stock components are capable of delivering. Egg was confident that there was enough scope in the standard equipment, once fettled, to keep us happy, for the time being at least. If necessary though as a stage two treatment, we may revisit the suspension at a later date, with some new hardware so we can take the susses up to the next level.

Bouncing on the bike in the car park (as you do!) the suspension felt a bit weird. The back seemed rock 'ard while the forks felt about right. However just to prove that the car park is no place to appraise suspension performance, out on the track the rear suspension felt good while the forks appeared slightly too soft - bottoming off a small jump. So there's a bit more to be done yet to try and effect a more progressive ride.

The bike still carved a fantastically tight line through the corners but this also highlighted the shortcomings of the seating position and the ergos in general. The big red gouge just above my knee, testament to the cramped riding position - and specifically the impossibility of getting your leg up and forward enough through the corners. The ridiculously old-fashioned

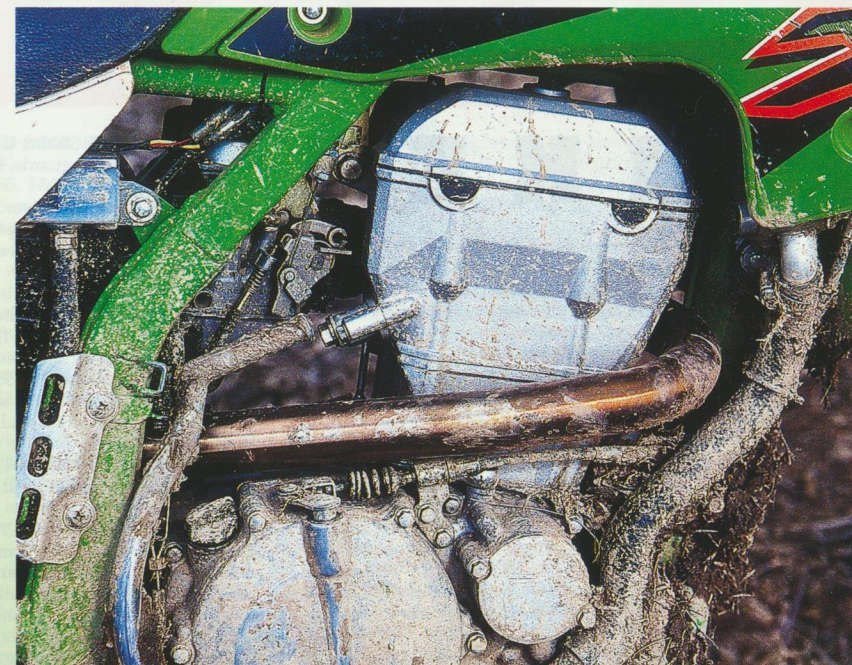
Kawasaki hand-guards (with the big sharp bolt protruding through the lever perch) are thus destined for the nearest bin (not that I bear a grudge at all), and these will be replaced by more practical wrap-around units.

However that won't get to the root of the trouble. The handlebars are simply too low and set too far back for racing. This is a bit of a problem as the KLX's handlebar mounts aren't adjustable and it looks like we're going to have to get a new top yoke. But if we end up going to this length, why not tie this in with a better set of forks and be done with it - perhaps a second-hand set off a KX250 can be made to fit?

The seat is also too low and amazingly too soft - you can actually feel the seat base biting into your buns in the corners! This despite it being about six inches deep at the front. But again - if we're changing the seat then we may as well change the tank as well, which is larger than it needs to be and feels excessively tall and wide. A lower, slimmer tank together with a new firmer (and longer) seat would certainly improve rider mobility.

And finally the foot-pegs still drag on the deck despite having extensions welded on top. Although the rider's boots are now 20cm higher than they were before, obviously the bottom of the peg is still in the original location. The angle grinder beckons!

So despite the big improvements over our original 300 there is still a long way to go to get the 300KLX up with the best of them.



Above: White Bros header pipe works well but needs a heat shield...



CRD pipe looks really smart and sounds much fruitier yet keeps the decibels well contained

There's going to need to be a lot of further thought, development and testing (not to mention cash) put into this project before we get the bike working as well as we'd like.

However we now know we've got a good basis for a great little dirt bike. If only improving our own performance was as easy as bolting on a few little aftermarket goodies...

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Honda CRM250R MKIII 1996, low mileage, excellent bike, very little use off road, close to new, £2400 ono. Tel 01286 881 115 (Gwynedd)

Honda XR400 1999 UK, White Bros E series, CRD sump-guard, Acerbis h/light/disc cover, brushguards, frame protectors, vgc, £2500. Tel 01963 326 09 (Somerset)
Suzuki SP370 V-reg, MoT, new parts, original paintwork, good condition and runner, £775 ono. Tel 0208 313 1613 (Kent)

Honda XLR250 1987 fair condition but recent MoT failure for bearings and brakes, hence £500 only. Tel 07720 846 959 (Oxon)

Suzuki DR350 Enduro excellent cond, road legal, only 2500m, new c&s, pads & tyres, trail use only, owned since new, £2300. Tel 01323 832 696 (E Sussex)

Suzuki DR350SEW 1997, UK bike, e/start, white/purple, 13,500km, MoT, tax, Renthals, Acerbis b/guards, mostly green lane use, £1850 ono. Tel 07939 221 396 (Derby)

Honda CRM250AR R-reg, 4200km, DEP exhaust, sump-guard, recent major service, unused original exhaust, many other extras, excellent condition, £2800. Tel 01407 749 144 (Anglesey)

Honda XR250R S-reg, CRD sump-guard, Acerbis hand protectors and frame guards, Renthal bars, sprockets, 6000km, good condition, £2495 ono. Tel 01843 297 036 (Kent) eves

Honda XR250R 2000 model, mint condition, taxed, ready to ride, £2600. Tel 0117 964 9282 (Somerset)

Honda CRM250R MKII J-reg, MoT, h/d inner tubes, rebuilt shock, O-ring chain, new plastics, very reliable and quick, £1300 ono. Tel 01494 474 807

Kawasaki KLX300R, R-reg, MoT, not used this winter, spare tyres & exhaust, £2000 no offers. Tel 01242 513 944 (after 6pm)

Yamaha TDM850 R-reg, 6000m, service history, one owner, £2799. Tel 01279 501 187 (Herts)

Yamaha XT350 1992, MoT, tax, fully serviced, new parts, stainless steel exhaust, no dents or scratches, road use only, £1295 ono. Tel 01462 630 227 (Herts)

Bultaco Sherpa 250T 1972 (tax exempt) beautiful condition, good runner, has daytime MoT so ride road or trails, £750, can deliver. Tel 01223 207 837 (Cambs)

Gas Gas Pampera 250 R-reg, 11,000km, brushguards, tax, MoT, fsh, maintained regardless, UK bike, very clean, £1900. Tel 01376 323 047 (Essex)

Honda CRM250R MKIII 19,000km, good cond, new full FMF system, loads of new parts, rear shock needs rebuild hence £2000 no offers. Tel 0208 303 3761 (Kent)

Suzuki DR250S Aug '98, one owner, 6800m, e/start, good cond, well maintained, masses of extras, can deliver, £2295 ono. Tel 01749 679013 (Somerset)

Kawasaki KMX200 showroom cond, very original,

red/black, new Bridgestones & spare road tyres, find one better! £950 ono. Tel 01394 275 028 (Suffolk)
Husqvarna TE410E Y-reg, 2001 model, 200 miles road use only, mint cond, £3100 ono. Tel 07748 184 324
Gas Gas EC300, V-reg, blue, vgc, £2000 no offers. Tel 01959 562 296 (Kent)

Honda XR250R Baja J-reg, 20,000km, Prolink rear, factory fx new seat/graphics, Acerbis/ rear bag/ pegs, Renthals, well maintained, vgc, £1650. Tel 01202 387 883 (Dorset)
Suzuki DR200 1990 UK supplied new, immaculate original cond, MoT + all previous, 3700m, unused for 3 years, injury forces sale, £795. Tel 01438 716 333 (Herts)

Honda XR600 P-reg, Acerbis lights, Supertrapp Dynojet, good cond, 7500m, MoT, £1495 or p/x for 1994 onwards KDX 200/220. Tel 01271 342 136 (Devon)

Yamaha XTZ750 Super Tenere 1989, vgc, recent new tyres, c & s, rack & top box, £1495 ovno. Tel 01282 703 701 (Lancs)

KTM 620 Duke 1997 series 3, 1900m, mint original, Dragon Corsas, yellow/black, £3600. Tel 01524 732 160 (Lancs)

Honda X600LM B-reg, e/k/start, MT21s + road tyres, fair cond, ultra reliable, handguards, top box, T&T, large tank, £1250 may p/x DR350/XT350, cash either way. Tel 0207 625 5634 (London)

Honda CRM250R MKII powder coated frame, purple/white, vgc, Renthal bars, £1500 or swap for DR350. Tel 01493 442 090 (Norfolk)

Armstrong MT500 1986 T&T, Dell'Orto, spare tyres, bags, toolkit & manual, new wheel bearings f&r, regularly serviced, all receipts, good starter, £900 ovno. Tel 01709 324 502 (S Yorks)

Honda Dominator NX650 N-reg, UK bike, red, MoT, 15,000m, cosmetics, spare wheels, £1950 no offers. Tel 07941 200 234 (London)

Kawasaki KDX220R, very clean, many extras, £2400 ono. Tel 01332 701 908 (Derby)

Montesa 315R trials 1998, £1500 ono, good condition, desperate to swap for a good green laner, four-stroke preferred. Tel 01952 595 302 (Shrops)

Kawasaki KLR650 Sept 2000, excellent standard cond, 3800m, still under manufacturer's warranty, £3000. Tel 01524 262 754 (N Yorks)

Suzuki DR350 enduro for sale S-reg, good cond, 800m, bark busters, new tyres, £2200 ono. Tel 01543 570 452 (Staffs)

Honda XR250RY V-reg, red, 4000km, new c&s, bashplate, handguards, fully serviced, new sets of tyres, lovely bike, offers around £2600. Tel 01677 424 894 (Yorks)

CCM 604E 1999, tax, race core, stainless sprocket guard, only 1600m, new back tyre, over £150 spares and manuals, immaculate. Tel 0956 393 322 (Middx)

Honda CRM250R MKIII P-reg, tax, MoT, new c&s, wheel bearings & swingarm bearings, DEP tailpipe, lovely clean bike, trail use only, would p/x Yam WR250Z, £2495. Tel 01634 687 421 (Kent)

Honda CR125, 2 hour's use since full rebuild, new piston, c&s, DEP pipe, Renthals, spares, immac cond, £1950 ono. Tel 01522 793 853 (Lincs)

TM 250 enduro 1995, £1200 ono. Tel 01489 583 525

(Hants)

Kawasaki KLX250R four stroke enduro, tax, MoT, ideal commuter green laner, possible p/x CRM MKIII, KDX220/250. £1295 ono. Tel 02392 367 509 (Hants)

Yamaha TTR250 L-reg, e/start, T&T, h/guards, Renthals, new c&s, new MT21s, very clean green lane use only, £1850 ono. Tel 01925 264 010 (Cheshire)

Yamaha XT 225 Serow 1995 7K special edition, gold rims, Renthals, front/rear carriers, frame guard, braided hose, headlamp saver, superb bike, £2100. Tel 01626 36586 (Devon)

Yamaha WR400F Nov '99, good condition, little used, consider p/x with large trailie A/twin Tiger etc, WHY £2850 ovno. Tel 01803 855 268 (Devon)

Cagiva Elefant E750 blue, only 16,000km, best condition, new May '97, Ducati powered, £2450. Tel 01706 371 042 (Lancs)

Honda CRM250R MKII DEP tailpipe, Boyeson Reeds, barkbusters, bashplate, O-ring chain, 7000km, cood cond, £2150. Tel 01539 738 986 (Cumbria)

Honda XR650 Africa Twin 1990, good standard cond, 12,500km, r/w/b, new tyres, oil filter & battery, £2350. Tel 0794 154 2215

Kawasaki KLX300 Y2K model, stoker carb & header pipe, £500 of mods, well cared for first bike, faster than standard bike, spares, £2950. Tel 01353 741 773 (Camps)

Gas Gas EC250 enduro W-reg, green lane use, good cond, brushguards, rear fender bag, £2300 ono. Tel 01629 581 500 (Derby)

Husky WR250 S-reg, excellent cond, Husky sport bike, spare black Excel wheels, new bike forces sale, £2000 ono. Tel 07957 880 371

Yamaha XTZ750 G-reg, 901cc, big bore conversion, MoT, tax, 15,500 genuine miles, just had full service, new tyres, exhaust, many extras with spares, £1950 ono. Tel 01890 818 171

Honda XR400 S-reg, 1400km, no green lane use, some spares, very clean, £2800 ono. Tel 07747 116 185 (Surrey)

Suzuki DR350 P-reg, Renthals, Acerbis tank, new chain, c&s, hand guards, clutch, new tyres, brakes, forkguards, good cond, bargain £1875. Tel 0973 436 166 (Herts)

CCM 604E 1600m, fully serviced, includes gold Excel Supermoto wheels with Corsa tyres, sensible offers. Tel 01756 790 340 (N Yorks)

Husaberg FE350 N-reg, MoT, good cond, Renthals, barkbusters, manual, recent engine rebuild, excellent runner, must sell hence £1150 ono. Tel 01258 454 216 (Dorset)

Kawasaki KLX250 full stoker kit excellent machine, very fast, new bike forces sale, £1800 ono. Tel 01789 550 960 (Berks)

Suzuki DR-Z400S W-reg, blue, e/start, 750m, immac cond, dry road use only first genuine buyer will purchase, £3100. Tel 01865 872 835 (Oxon)

Honda XLR200 S-reg, 2300m, Rental bars, bashplate, handguards, good tyres, e/start, nice clean bike. £1950. Tel 01706 352 585 (Lancs)

Yamaha DT125 1986 frame up rebuild stripped down for off road use, white, new sprocket, bars, ideal first bike, £375 ono. Tel 01279 731 333 (Essex)

CCM 604E sport, 2000m, green lanes only, comes with Supermoto wheels, vgc, £3200. Tel 07970 621 120 (Lancs)

Honda XR500 fourstroke enduro R&B '84 model but very competitive, excellent mechanics, new tyres & plas-

tics, £1145 ono. Tel 07977 099 020 (Lancs)

Yamaha XT225 Serow WE S-reg, 1999 green/white, only 700km, as new condition and original, tax, £1850. Tel 01270 650 883 (Cheshire)

KTM 125EXC new 2000 plastics and seat cover, some spares, first to see will buy, £1950. Tel 01869 248 633 (Oxon)

Honda XR600 vgc, '94 model, MoT, Acerbis extras, £1900 ono. Also Alpinestars Tech 6 still boxed, perfect condition, £120. Tel 01475 791 467 (Scotland)

Yamaha TTR250 raid, L-reg, e/start, new battery, £1650. Tel 01789 450 189 (Warks)

Yamaha XT350 D-reg, 23,000m, tax, MoT, used daily, £750. Tel 0208 300 8832 (Kent)

Yamaha XT600 Tenero 1988, black, twin h/light, e/start, vgc, MoT, tax, £1350. Tel 01892 525 622 (Eves)

Yamaha XT225 Serow L-reg, T&T, blue/white, 12,000km, road use only, front & rear disc, £1500. Tel 01209 831 969 (Cornwall) (after 5.30)

Honda CRM250R MKII J-reg, road use only, fitted with Sportmax tyres, 16,000km, T&T, good cond, £1299 ono. Tel 01920 877 408 (Herts)

Honda XR650R 4 months old, tax, Renthals, good cond, £3450. Tel 01672 870 777 (Wilts)

Honda XR600R P-reg, totally original except for Acerbis fork/frame protectors and Werx graphics, one owner from new, mainly road use, £2299 ono. Tel 01920 877 408 (Herts)

CCM 604E sport 1300m, all usual extras, Paioli WP Talon Brembo, excellent cond, must sell hence £3300 ovno. Tel 01296 425 207 (Bucks)

Yamaha WR400 Xreg, 500km green lane use only, good cond, FMF pipe, Renthals, brushguards and frame protectors, £2950. Tel 07967 717 651 (Dorset)

Kawasaki KLR250 L-reg, white, MoT, new c&s, DEP, Renthals, Polisport spare tyres, well maintained, low mileage, many new parts, £1500 ono. Tel 01795 535 418 (Kent)

Honda XR200 M-reg, immac cond, very little use, Acerbis plastics, low mileage, £1500. Also Suzuki DR350 S-reg, very low mileage, Rental bars, Acerbis brushguards, immac cond, £2300 ovno. Tel 07976 931 184 (Staffs)

Kawasaki KLX650 K-reg, T&T, Acerbis tank, Renthals, Devil exhaust, Dynojet, K&N barkbusters, MT21s, plus all standard bits, loads of spares, £1895. Tel 01803 520 804 (Devon)

Honda Dominator NX650 X-reg, new only 40m, showroom condition, £3500. Tel 07775 881 166

Yamaha XT600E 1991, T&T, new c&s, fully serviced, new exhaust, excellent cond, MoT, tax, £1495 ovno. Also Suzuki DR350S 1994, little use, well maintained, perfect cond, low mileage, light trail use, loads of goodies, Supertrapp etc, £1595 ovno. Tel 01255 831 133 (Essex)

Kawasaki KMX200 H-reg, green, 9000m, garaged, new tyres, road use only, vgc, £875. Tel 01305 853 889 (Dorset)

Gas Gas Pampera 250 1998 taxed, 2400km, mainly road use, excellent cond, £1650 ono. Tel 0114 274 8717 (S Yorks)

Honda XL500S W-reg, T&T, disc front-end conversion, yellow, good cond, £850. Tel 01884 242 089 (Devon)

Honda CRM250R M-reg, T&T, hand guards, new c&s, discs, fully serviced, £2300. Tel 07968 867 225 (Surrey)

Honda XR250 late '96, sumpguard, Werx decals, excellent cond, £1895 ovno. Tel 01386 452 97 (Worcs)

KTM 250EXC W-reg, vgc, looks & sounds good and goes like stink, yours for £2300 ono. Tel 01535 631 374

Honda TLR200 N-reg, brushguards, X-ring chain, good cond, road and long distance trial use, £1250. Tel 0771 351 5521 (Yorks)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid 1994, vgc, new c&s, recent service, Rental barkbusters, green lane use, 32,000km, £1400 ovno. Tel 07850 013 954

Armstrong MT500 original, taxed, MoT, low mileage, ideal low cost on/off road bike, £1800, delivery possible. Tel 01360 620 225 (Glasgow)

WANTED

Wanted CRM250 MKII chainguard and engine sprocket cover. Got to commute, 2nd hand Gripsters anybody? Tel 01484 861 608

Wanted seat or tank for Maico 490 1983/4 and any spares considered, must be good condition. Tel 01269 822 443 (Swansea)

Wanted w/shop manual for 85-86 YZ250, also exhaust and silencer for same and both side panels, cash waiting. Tel 01543 685 129 (Staffs)

Wanted Supertrapp silencer EAR series in good condition. Tel 01539 433 470 (Cumbria)

Wanted RMX250SN 93 aftermarket exhaust DEP FMF etc, plus speedo drive or complete wheel WHY. Tel 01757 700 444 (N Yorks)

Wanted Moto Guzzi NTX or TT project bike or similar. Tel 01992 560 338 (Essex)

Wanted Ohlins rear shock for XR400, must be good cond, top money paid, will travel. Tel 01689 848 921 (Surrey)

Wanted Fantic Caballero 125 approx 1978, anything considered. Tel 07860 653 448 (Devon)

Wanted Husky TE610 rear wheel, 18", to suit '95 model, decent nick please though bearings immaterial. Tel 01252 640 310 (Surrey)

Wanted Honda XR650L large tank, plastics etc, must be vgc, cash waiting, will collect. Tel 07775 842 500 (N Wales)

Wanted Yamaha XT225 Serow good/excellent late model, Surrey or near, cash waiting. Tel 01932 872 578

Wanted Honda CR500 stainless steel exhaust pipe, 1988, plus lighting kit, coil, flywheel, advice. Tel 0161 775 6614 (Cheshire)

Wanted Complete exhaust system Suzuki SP370 1979. Tel 01264 366 686 (Hants)

Wanted Four stroke, dual sport sidecar outfit, ideally registered, would consider converting/modifying anything interesting. Tel 01273 292 718 (Sussex)

Wanted Yamaha TT250R/raid specs, service info, w/shop manuals, good photocopies would suffice. Also recommendations of good reliable parts supplier. Tel 01397 702 733 (after 6pm)

Wanted KDX200 250 K-reg onwards, swap for my 1988 VFR750, vgc, value around £1950. Tel 02476 364 894

(Coventry)

Wanted Honda XR250 or something similar for first time trail rider, must be in excellent cond, will pay up to £2000, clothing if poss. Tel 01282 864 427 (Lancs)

SPARES

XR Honda oversize front disc, conversion bracket and pads hardly used. Tel 01334 473 882 (Fife)

Africa Twin tank cover and bag, white/red/purple, only used for three weeks, like new, £50. Tel 07940 538 299 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400 stainless tailpipe, excellent condition, cost £225 new, only used twice, will sell for £150. Tel 07775 881 166 (Middx)

Stealthy 12oz flywheel weight for RM250 99/00, brand new still in box with all fittings and instructions, first good offer secures. Tel 01978 860 763 (Shrops)

Suzuki TS185 for spares or repair, has been standing, run when last tried, includes new OE w/shop manual, £50. Tel 01992 560 338 (Essex)

Suzuki RM125 19" rear wheel, sprocket and new Vee rubber tyre. Tel 01453 520 180 (Glos)

Trailer 2 + 1, tows well, £130. Tel 0118 977 1926 (Berks)

Yamaha XT600E most parts available ring for details. Tel 07949 639 606 (London)

Suzuki SP370 will sell for spares or for project, requires engine rebuild, holds current MoT, £250 ono. Tel 01282 842 082 (Lancs)

Kawasaki KMX125 seat vgc £10, Honda MTX125 fork legs, spindle, speedo drive £15, suzuki TS250ER forks and front wheel £35. Tel 0208 894 1108 (Middx)

Yamaha DT175 twin shock model 1976, complete engine for breaking. Tel 01538 703 244 (Staffs)

Yamaha XT350 Micron complete exhaust system, brand new, never fitted, £70. Tel 01902 759 616 (W Mids)

Honda XR/XL600R electric high power alternator, new in wrapper, £50. Tel 07979 906 578

CRM MKII bashplate for sale, brand new, £40 inc p&p. Tel 01494 474 807 (Bucks)

Suzuki DR-Z400 new forks/yokes £200, headlamp £50, original tyres, 1800km £30/pair, Bridgestone 19" M26 £15, lots of small parts. Tel 0115 913 1938 (Nham)

Suzuki DR200 parts, as new, clutch/throttle cables, rear sprocket cover, oil seals, rocker cap, sump/drain plate, Tympan voltage regulator £18. Tel 01268 413 136 (Essex)

Kawasaki KD175 Enduro air-cooled rolling chassis complete with exhaust system, some engine parts also included, original green meanie, £150 ono. Tel 01246 271 281 (Derby)

CRM250 MKII full DEP chrome exhaust, vgc, £100, White Power usd 91 just serviced, have insert to fit CRM, much better than std, £100. Tel 01494 474 807

KTM 640 end can JT sold by John Deacon, cost £200 sell £100, Acerbis tank and other spares. Tel 01279 501 187 (Herts)

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