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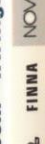
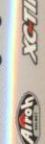
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Husqvarna



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

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Berkshire	A4 Moto	Reading	0118 9263388	Middlesex	Motorcycle HQ	West Drayton	01895 442595
Berkshire	Gary Grover Racing	Hungerford	01488 670400	Northants	Keep Biking Ltd	Brackley	01280 705100
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EDITORIAL

Winning Ways...

David Knight's historic (overall) victory at this year's 80th ISDE in Slovakia ranks as one of the greatest achievements by any British enduro rider - past or present. And the fact that David's such an approachable, unassuming sort of bloke, just makes it all the sweeter.

Although the ISDE is all about national teams competing on a country-v-country basis, as every rider knows, just to finish the event is a hell of an achievement in itself, but to finish with the fastest overall time (winning the *now* unofficial Scratch championship) is every international rider's ambition.

And if, as we all hope, Knighter wraps up his first ever World Enduro Championship (as both E3 class winner and overall winner) this month, then the UK enduro scene really will have something to crow about.

Not since 1996 when Paul Eddy (also a TBM columnist at the time) won the 250 (and overall) World Enduro Championship, have we Brits been such a dominant force in the sport.

But if this year has seen a seismic shift in the power-base at the world-enduro-level, so there has also been catclysmic regime change, a little closer to home.



Because after a mere four years of trying to dethrone his esteemed boss (ahem), TBM's deputy editor, young whippersnapper Barnicoat has overcome his 12-year age advantage to beat me fair and square in a hare & hounds enduro.

And the fact that he needed a 275cc capacity advantage to achieve this rather incredulous feat (he was on a 400, I was riding a mere 125 on a very power-sapping course), shouldn't take anything away from his Pyrrhic victory...

So while I applaud his sterling efforts and congratulate him on this rather perverse achievement, I would merely like to point out publicly that not only did I have to pit and change bike part way through my race (to complete a TBM comparison test, but that I *also* ran out of fuel - though I certainly wouldn't want to downplay James' tremendous achievement, almost certainly attained at substantial cost to his career prospects within this benevolent organisation.

Knighter! You'd better watch out... Your reign at the top may be hard-won but very short-lived. And then again...

SI MELBER

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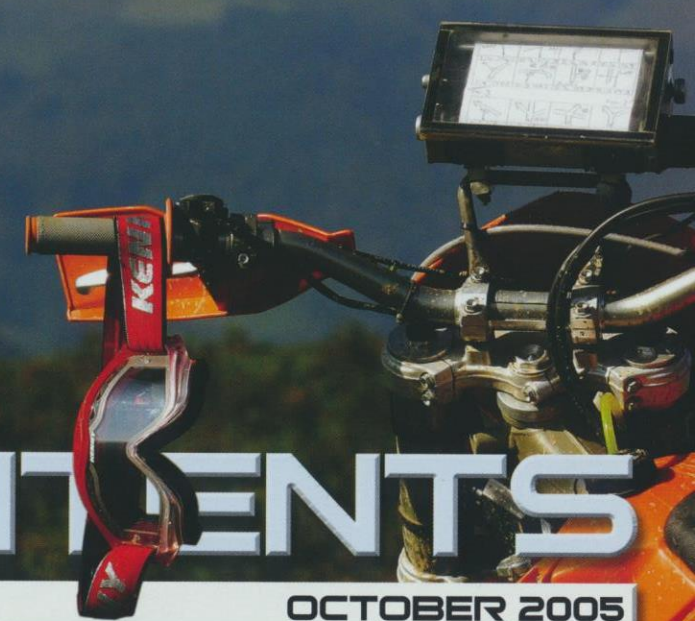
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Arthur Browning and his Jawa trials bike...?

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NO.122

OCTOBER 2005





Shark X-Trem: For the past few years David Castera (winner of the 2001 Gilles Lalay Classic) has organised this extreme race combining enduro running, rafting and kayaking in the south of France. Pic: Shark/Castera

PERPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE

The only way is up... Do not adjust your sets this pic hasn't been exaggerated by tilting the camera. Chris Evans fires his KTM 450 up a climb in the Pays Basque on one of his tours...
Pic: Si Melber



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PERSPECTIVE

Totally Focussed: David Knight fires his KTM out of a loamy special test corner trailing a plume of roost...
Pic: Jonty Edmunds



TOP OF THE WORLD!

Manxman David Knight has won the 2005 FIM International Six Days Enduro, becoming the first ever British rider to claim the overall victory.

The KTM Enduro Factory Team Farioli rider, was the fastest rider throughout the six-day event, topping the Enduro 3 class each day.

Taking place in Slovakia, David started the 80th ISDE competition in fine form, finishing the first day in second place overall and then went on to beat his nearest Enduro 3 class rival Finn Marko Tarkkala by one minute on day two to claim the overall top spot.

With a clear four-minute overall advantage by the penultimate day, TBM's columnist just had the motocross race left and yet again he dominated his class to claim his ISDE crown.

'Everything went so well all week - I didn't crash at all, my bike ran perfectly and I really enjoyed the course and tests,' said an elated Knighter.

His awesome performance also helped the British team achieve fourth place in the Trophy team competition. Check out Knighter's column on p96 and the full Six-Days report which begins on p98 for the full story...



TOP DRAW!

The 2005 Dirt Bike Show is almost upon us but there's still time for two lucky readers to each win a VIP ticket worth £20, courtesy of TBM.

This year the show runs from 17-20 November, opening to the public from 12:00pm on Thursday 17th, but our ticket winners will have VIP access from 9:00am.

All you have to do to get into the draw to win the tickets is answer this simple question: 'What did the Romans ever do for us...'

Send your silly answer in to us with your name, address and

contact phone number to: Dirt Bike Show Comp, TBM, PO Box 9845, London W13 9WP, by no later than Friday, 4 November 2005 and the winner will be the person who has the same twisted take on life as the TBM crew.

Oh, and if you're not funny enough to win, save an extra ten percent by booking in advance - check out dirtbikeshow.co.uk or call 0870 240 9019. And don't forget to come along and say hi...



RACE READY

Dakar veteran Mick Extance has unveiled his rally bike for the 2006 event. The 41-year-old Honda Racing rider's CRF450X features engine tweaks, increased fuel and water capacity, modified exhaust and all-new Dunlop Desert tyres.

Mick was the only British rider to cross the finish line in the 2005 Dakar race and is hoping for a top ten finish this time around. Log onto dakar.com for more info.



DIRTY DIGITS

Good news - latest overall bike sales figures are back on track to match those of last year.

And there's no stopping the Adventure/Sport category, now running at a full 33 percent increase on last year's sales. The only change is Suzuki's V-Strom has stolen third place away from the Trumpet, now in fourth spot.

The Trail/Enduro sector is holding steady at five percent below August 2004's figures with the indomitable Honda XR125L selling another 67 units from last month. Complete figures are as follows:

ADVENTURE SPORT

1	BMW R1200GS	1444
2	Honda XL125V	477
3	Suzuki 650 V-Strom	413
4	Triumph 955 Tiger	400
5	Yamaha XT660X	300

TRAIL/ENDURO

1	Honda XR125L	578
2	Suzuki RV125	383
3	Yamaha DT125	352
4	Honda CRF250X	260
5	Yamaha WR450F	242

PICK ME UP

The all-new 4WD Nissan Navara pick up has just been launched here in the UK, and by the looks of it, it promises to be one tough cookie.

The Spanish-built Navara replaces the Pickup model (launched in 2001) and has the largest load bed size in its class. Four models are available - Standard, SE, Outlaw and the Aventura, all with a 2.5-litre four-cylinder turbo diesel engine from

Nissan's YD series that's used in their Pathfinder SUV.

A double or king cab option is also offered - the king can seat two up front with two 'occasional' seats in the back and the enlarged double cab with its 60:40 split three-seater rear bench can seat up to five. Both have remote control central locking, tailgate lock, immobiliser and alarm.

There's a standard six-speed manual gearbox but the Outlaw and Aventura Double Cabs have a five-speed auto option. Prices start at £14,695 - watch this space for a test soon...



SNIPPETS

⊕ B2D CORRECTION

In our Dawn To Dusk report in last month's issue we said that Simon Evans partnered Si Wakely to second place for the Par Homes Fast Eddy Racing Team. However, it was actually 21-year-old British Motocross Championship rider Jason Thomas who rode with Si Wakely. Apologies for the mix-up Jason.

⊕ WARM WELCOME

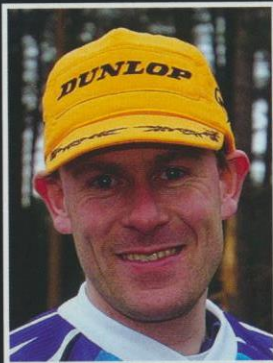
Dirtbike friendly places to stay are always handy to know so if you need digs in Wales, check out Greenfields hostel in Rhayader. Run by Kiwi Lyn Watson she can accommodate up to 20 people and has secure off-road parking - rates are £17.50 pp per night including full English breakfast. Call 01597 811101 for details.

⊕ THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Fancy saving up to 75 percent on genuine O'Neal MX gear? Cissbury Leathers have bought all the 2004 remaining O'Neal stock of clothing and helmets up so there's big savings to be had - give 'em a call on 0800 389 4219 or check out cissburyleathers.com.

⊕ FRENCH CORRECTION

There's a new UK distributor for Oxbow. MotoGear, who are also Spidi's UK agents, has the 2006 Oxbow off-road clothing range in now so call 01536 526 460 or check out oxboweb.com.



5 MINUTES WITH...

SCOTTISH VETERAN ENDURO RACER RICHARD HAY IS A TRUE 'IRONMAN'...

WHAT WAS THE FIRST ENDURO BIKE YOU OWNED?

My very first bike was a Suzuki TS100. It was a 1975 model and ten years old when I got it. I then had a KTM 125 - which always broke down - before getting an 1986 Maico 250 for my first proper season of enduros. It was an absolute pig of a bike, which blew up pre-season. A friend gave me a crank out of a 1985 Maico to put in my bike but I didn't know that the woodruff key was in a different position. The bike was a bit flat all season because the ignition was out by about 15 degrees.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST ENDURO?

I think it was a Melville one-day enduro, at the same area where the club held the world round. I was on my KTM and the big-end went. I was in the clubman class, it was a really tough event and I think I was about third at the time when my bike stopped. I only did one other event that season because I couldn't afford to keep fixing my bike.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST ENDURO YOU HAVE EVER RACED?

Probably the 1990 ISDE in Sweden on a Honda 125. I rode for a Scottish team but it was only my second season and I wasn't as good on the technical going back then. The days were nine hours in the saddle and our hotel was an hour away from the start. Getting up at five in the morning and riding all day was tough but I did get a silver medal.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ENDURO?

The Melville club used to run an event in Avimore, which ran for about five years until Red Kites decided to nest in the middle of the special test. I won the event by 22 minutes one year. I managed to stay clean on time and pulled three minutes on the test and the rest on the going. It was a really tough, rocky, boggy, technical event, which suited me down to the ground.

WHICH RIDER HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

Paul Edmondson. Although he was already riding when I started he was the rider I looked up to because he was closer to my age than most of the bigger named riders from 15 to 20 years ago.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BEST EVER PERFORMANCE?

Probably the Fast Eddy UK Cross-Country series in 2001. I did a lot of training at the beginning of the season and finished as runner-up to David [Knight] at the end of the series. That year there was only one BEC round because of foot and mouth, which was frustrating because I feel I would have had some good finishes that year.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR MOST DISAPPOINTING RESULT?

Living so far north any event that doesn't go well is a disappointment because of all the travelling that is involved.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CRASH?

Which one? Well, I had a big 'off' at a world championship race in Finland in 2003. I was already out of the event and got lost trying to find my way back to the paddock. I ended up at one of the tests and decided to have a ride around it ready for the second day. My bike kicked sideways on takeoff on a massive table-top jump. I had to jump away from the bike and luckily landed on the down slope of the jump. My bike was a real mess.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED ENDURO MEMORY?

The whole of the 2003 season. I rode the world rounds on a 450cc Husqvarna and travelled to them with Chris Hockey, who was in the same class. We had a really friendly rivalry and great banter all season.

We finished within a few seconds of each other at each race. At the final round in Sweden we both went out on Saturday night, drank too much, and both had our best results of the season on the Sunday.

WHAT BIKE HAVE YOU ENJOYED OWNING/RIDING THE MOST?

My 250cc Husqvarna in 2001. It was a motocross bike and it really suited me. I loved it from the moment I got on it. At that time Husqvarna were having financial troubles so I had to keep that one bike all season. It was a great bike.

WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TERRAIN?

I like rocky or boggy events. Or both. Basically I like tough events where you have to push and shove.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED MORE OF?

More youth coming in. Enduro is the only sport that doesn't have a school-boy scene. An interest in enduro is normally passed from father to son and more needs to be done to attract youngsters who wouldn't otherwise try it. Events are better organised than they used to be but more variety of events would be good.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED LESS OF?

Less easy events, although a mixture of easy and hard is a good thing. I guess some of the politics needs sorting but the sport is generally pretty good at the moment.

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

I think two-strokes will return in serious numbers but there will also be more environmental pressures on the sport. I think we will return to designated motorcycling forests rather than events running at new venues. And I think the class structure will change in some way.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IN YOUR CAREER?

I'd like to win a few more Scottish titles. I have seven now but I haven't raced the Scottish championship seriously for about five years now. I'd like to do the Dakar and then after that just do events that I enjoy.



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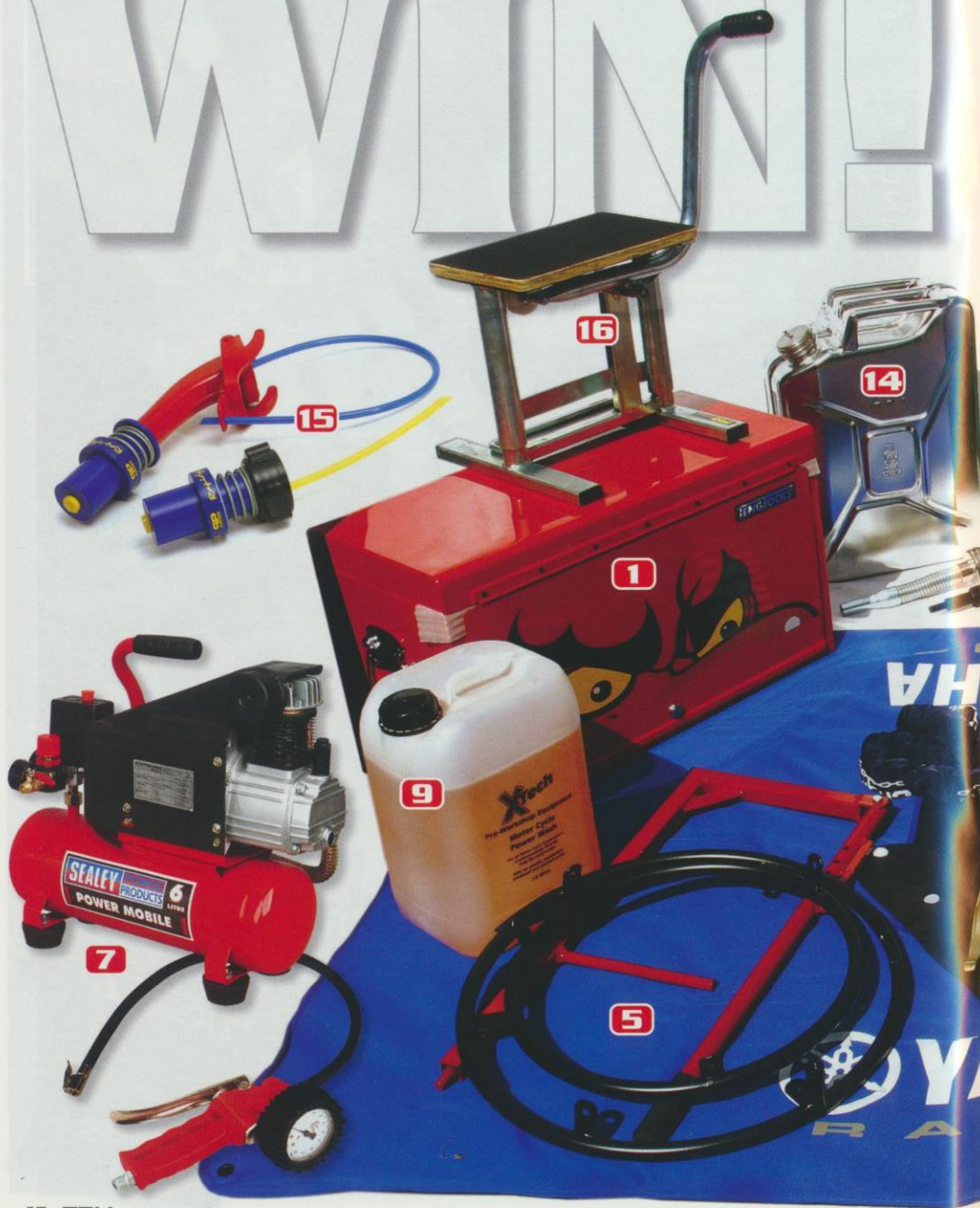
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Okay, so you've convinced the missus to let you spend all your joint-savings on a dirtbike instead of that new kitchen you'd promised her, and now there's not a penny left to equip the workshop area you'd planned for the back of the shed. Well fear not, because help is at hand. TBM has teamed up with some of the industry's leading suppliers to offer one lucky reader the chance to win their Ultimate Dream Garage. And when we say ultimate - we do mean *ultimate*. The products we've chosen are all hi-end brands, synonymous with top quality, and one lucky reader is going to walk off with the lot.

That's right we've taken all the hard work out of equipping your shed or garage by getting hold of all the stuff you need (and have always promised yourself), and we're offering it as a single prize in a simple-to-enter competition. All you need do to win yourself thousands of pounds worth of incredible prizes is to subscribe to TBM before the end of Nov '05

(or be an existing subscriber) and we will draw the winner from the battered TBM crash-helmet. Simple as that.

And don't worry if you prefer to buy your TBM from your local newsagent - you can always subscribe for a friend or other family member (as a present) and enter it that way...

TBM'S ULTIMATE GARAGE GIVEAWAY

1 So what's in our Dream Garage? Well first of all we've got a professional tool-chest from Teng Tools.

Say goodbye to those pathetic little bendy plastic toolboxes you get from DIY stores. The Teng TC706F Tool Box is a proper professional 660mm item fashioned out of steel, complete with six drawers (with ball-bearing sliders), metal handles and a locking top. Teng are renowned for their premium quality tools and tool-chests and we've managed to get one for you.



2 Inside your toolbox you'll find the best set of dirtbike T-bars we've ever come across - Beta 941s - (we've been using a set at TBM we bought five years ago and they're virtually indestructible). The Beta 941s are the dirt biker's

choice and we've got a set which includes sizes 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, & 17mm for you.

3 But in order to work on your bike you'll need it at a reasonable height, which means you'll want one of those hydraulic pump-up bike stands. We've skipped the rest and gone for the very best - the HMC Moto Lift from Surf & Turf.



Fabricated in Holland, this high-quality piece of kit is a real eye-opener and simple to operate. A single push-down bar operates the lifting ram (which is specially made for this application rather than simply utilising a bottle-jack like most stands), and lifting the bar with your foot, slowly lowers the bike back down. The HMC Moto Lift is finished in stainless chequerplate and is an absolute essential in anyone's Dream Garage.



4 Also essential in a well-stocked garage is a full range of top-quality lubricants for every occasion. The Motul brand is not only trusted around the world, it also has strong links with off-road bike sport. Motul

have supplied our lucky winner with everything he or she is ever likely to need for their dirt bike (whether it's a two-stroke or a thumper) including fully synthetic (4T) engine oil, two-stroke oil for pre-mixing, transmission oil (2T), carb cleaner, brake cleaner, air-filter cleaner, air-filter oil, silicone spray, and of course off-road specific chain lube. If you're making demands of your dirt bike, you better be sure to use a lubricant which can cope - that's why we chose Motul for you.



5 Aside from regular fluid changes another of those all-important jobs is tyre changing, and to make this tricky task as easy as possible we've got our lucky winner a proper tyre-changing rig from Bert Harkins Racing. Whether you're just

fitting new tyres or planning on changing mousers, BHR's Titax Tyre Changer makes the job a whole lot easier as it not only holds the wheel in place while you work on it, but it also features a bead-breaker, and is suitable for wheels from 16-21in. The Titax tyre changer is only one of a range of off-road-specific products you'll find in the well-stocked BHR catalogue, check it out.

6 And when you're changing tyres (and especially mousers) you'll need a quality set of BIG tyre levers. Don't mess around with other stuff, Italian company Buzzetti (imported by Venhill Engineering) make the best ones we've come across with a specially-designed rim-stop at one end. Here at TBM we use a set of Buzzetti we bought years ago and they're still going strong, so you've got to have a set in your Dream Garage.



7 And if you've just changed tyres (and aren't running mousers in them) then inflating them just got a whole lot easier. Sealey Power Products are a huge tool factors, and their website is the place to find virtually all your garage requirements. Sealey's compact and portable 1hp SA2306 Compressor is the ideal tool for tyre inflation

and an absolute must-have item for anyone's Dream Garage. Fitted with twin gauges displaying tank- and working-pressure, and anti-vibration suction feet, we've mated it up with one of their SA930 Air Line Gauges and included them here. You lucky, lucky devils.



8 Okay, cleaning your dirt bike after a muddy ride can be a time-consuming business, but thanks to Bosch, it should be a whole lot easier from now on.

With German design and engineering, Bosch are rightly renowned for their high quality products, and the Bosch Aquatak 1350 pressure-washer is no exception. With its gutsy 2400W induction motor it can supply from 30-135 bars worth of pressure and features not only an automatic motor stop for minimum power and water consumption, but also an integrated detergent tank. And this, along with their unique Roto-Power Lance, makes it ideal for cleaning dirt bikes - that's why we use one here at the magazine.

9 For cleaning your bike down properly you really need some bike wash and for your fully equipped garage we've sourced you 10L of X-Tech bike cleaner from Bert Harkins Racing. This stuff really does make the job a whole lot easier and brings the bike up beautifully. It's also fully biodegradable, which is no bad thing these days.



10 Okay, workshop security is a serious business, the last thing you need is for some low-life to relieve you of your bike and all your workshop equipment. That's why we've opted for a three-stage security system. To keep

your bike as safe as houses you need a ground-anchor to attach it to, and the Motrax Groundhog 5 is the industry standard-bearer. Sink this baby into the garage floor and it's gonna take someone with the powers of the Fantastic Four to remove it. The clever telescopic design of the Groundhog 5 means that when it's not in use it stays flush with the floor.



11 Attached to that will be a superb 1.5m long Motrax Superlink three-stage core-hardened English Chain. This chain is made from the highest-grade tensile chain available with whopping 13mm diameter links

which are zinc-plated (for corrosion resistance) and then sleeved in an abrasion resistant sheath. That is then secured by an EC130 Series Lock with a close-shackle design (allowing no room for bolt-cutters) - it's got a high-security radial cylinder mechanism, and a rotating hardened steel anti-drill protection guard - good enough to attain a 'Sold Secure' Gold rating. Motrax offers a huge selection of bike security on their website along with many other products.

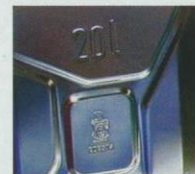
12 Okay, that takes care of your bike but to ensure the security of the whole garage/workshop, we've opted for a Meta Garage alarm from Nevis Marketing. The Meta System C11 offers instant security thanks to its easy mains plug-in (with battery back-up), 118dB siren, remote control, panic facility, two override keys and status LED. In fact it couldn't be simpler to operate, that's why we've chosen one for our Dream Garage.



13 Right, you're going to be spending a whole load of time in there so we've added some other items just to finish off your workshop and make it feel like the special place it's going to be. First of all there's a 3m-long professional Team Yamaha workshop mat which helps keep the place snug, absorbs any leaking fluid, makes working a whole lot safer (cos it's non-slip and padded) and looks well trick. Whether you ride a Yamaha or not, this addition is going to make your workshop look like one very cool place.



14 For the safe storage of fuel we've secured you a 20L Jerrycan, but not just any Jerrycan for our Ultimate Garage. *Oh no*. This one is made out of T304 stainless steel (with a screw-



TBM's ULTIMATE GARAGE GIVEAWAY

on cap) and polished to a bright finish. How good is that? Demon Tweaks Direct have supplied it for us along with a smaller 10L painted steel Jerry and a pair of matching nozzles. These are just four of the thousands of items you'll find on their new dedicated website.

15 And while we're on the subject of fuelling, we've also got a pair of the excellent Safety-Fill nozzles which automatically shut-off the fuel delivery once the bike's tank is full. We use these items ourselves and they're excellent - so you've got 'em in your Dream Garage.



16 Also when you're at the races, you'll need a push-up stand for working on your bike in the pits (or just a stand for easy everyday use). Everything Fro makes is neatly designed and of high quality, and their cantilevered Lift Up Stand is

no exception. Its zinc-plated construction features a rubber non-slip mat and a built-in tool tray. When you see FRO's catalogue you'll understand why we chose their stand.

17 And finally, no respectable garage would be complete without a decent 'girly' calendar on the wall. Crossbow are world-famous for their bike calendars, so of course our Ultimate Garage just has to have one of their 2006 Crossbow calendars in it. And we've got nine more to give away as runner up prizes.



Terms & Conditions

This offer is only open to TBM subscribers (both UK & abroad) whose subscription is current on 30.11.2005. The winner will be notified by telephone before 30.12.2005. NB the prize-winner must collect their prize in person and agree to be pictured in the magazine receiving their prize. TBM's decision is final, and no correspondence or discussion will be entered into. No cash alternatives will be offered, and TBM reserve the right to alter, amend, withdraw or substitute any part of the prize. TBM cannot accept any responsibility for any damage, loss, injury or disappointment suffered by the winner or any other persons using any or all of this equipment. TBM employees, prize suppliers or any members of their families or households are not eligible to enter this draw. TBM reserves the right to verify the eligibility of all entrants. This draw and its terms and conditions will be governed by English law.

What do you have to do...?

Okay so you've seen the prize, now you need to know how to win it. Simple, all you have to do to be in with a chance of winning TBM's Ultimate Dream Garage is to subscribe to TBM before the end of November (or be an existing subscriber). As a subscriber you'll enjoy the benefits of paying less for your magazine, getting it delivered directly to your door, never missing an issue and right now we're currently offering every new subscriber (and re-subscriber) a free XL TBM T-shirt - so everyone's a winner! Pick up the phone right now and dial up our subscription hotline on 020 7903 3993 and talk to Mel or Roisin (if it's busy, leave your name and number and we'll get right back to you). Alternatively, log onto trailbikemag.com and subscribe securely online, anytime. At the end of November we will draw a random name from our subscriber list and one lucky winner gets the Dream Garage. Nine runners-up will also get 2006 Crossbow calendars.

TBM would like to thank the following suppliers for contributing prizes to our Ultimate Dream Garage. If you're considering putting together a Dream Garage for yourself, check these out:

Beta: UK website coming soon

Bosch: 01895 838782 boschgarden.co.uk

Buzzetti/Venhill Engineering:

01306 885111 venhill.co.uk

Crossbow: crossbow-calendars.com

Demon Tweaks Direct: demon-tweaks.co.uk

Fro Systems: 0121 559 1351 frosystems.co.uk

HMC/Surf & Turf: 0161 776 9923 surfturf.co.uk

Meta/Nevis Marketing: nevism.co.uk

Motrax: 01933 418414 motrax.co.uk

Motul/MD-Tech: moto-direct.co.uk

Safety Fill: 01529 462034 safetyfill.com

Sealey: sealey.co.uk

Teng Tools/Toolstars: 01525 711500

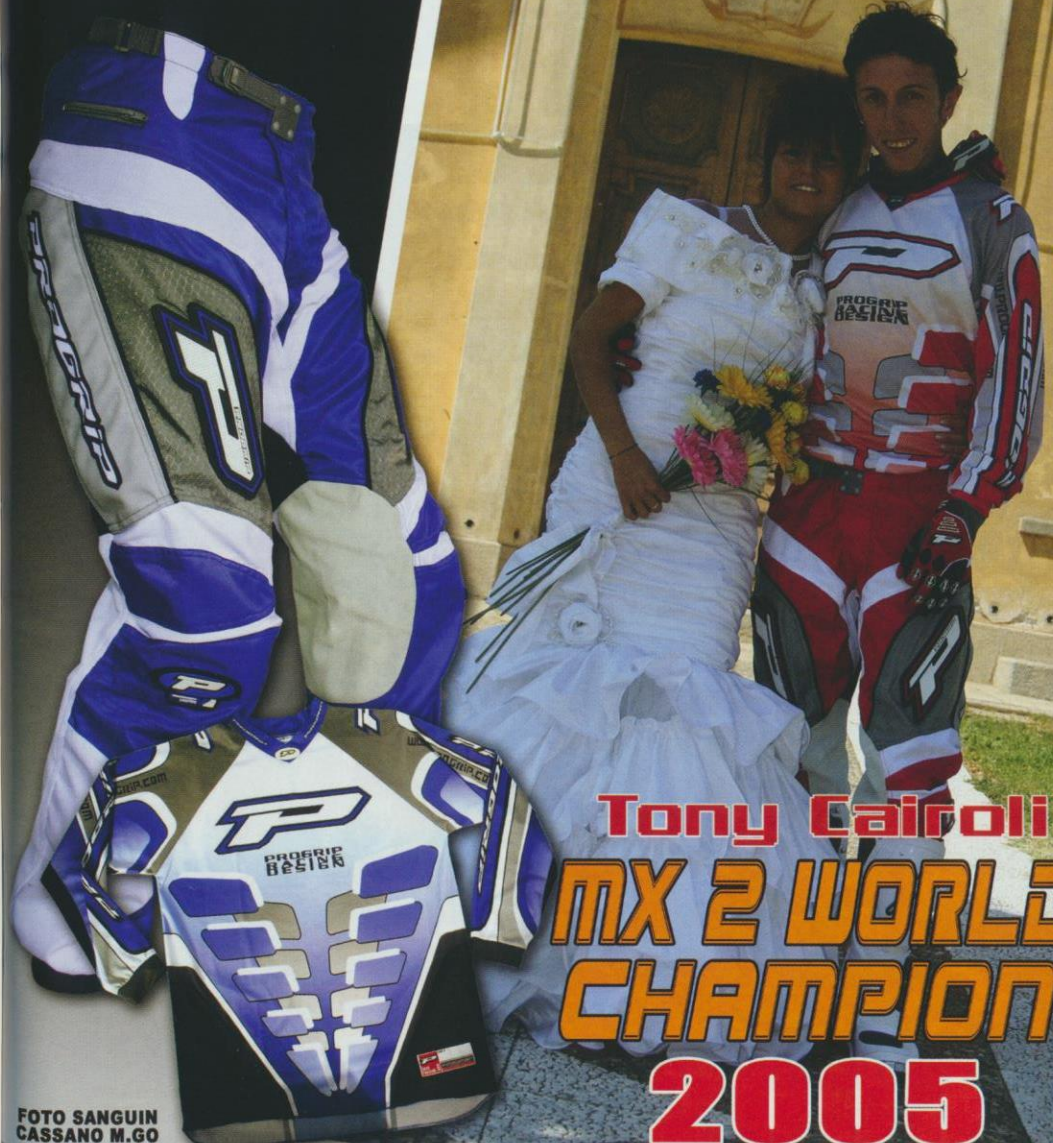
tengtools.co.uk

Titax/X-Tech/BHR: 01582 491076

bertharkinsracing.co.uk

Yamaha: yamaha-motor.co.uk

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Tony Cairoli
MX 2 WORLD
CHAMPION
2005

FOTO SANGUIN
CASSANO M.GO



Small Change

WORDS: JONTY EDMUNDS; PICS: ZANZANI & MACCABELLI

The all-new 2006 Husqvarna enduro range is here - but what's changed? TBM went to Italy to find out...



For 2006 both two-stroke Husky WRs (125 & 250) get a fresh look...



HUSQVARNA WR250

It's all about the art of refinement as far as Husqvarna's 2006 enduro offerings are concerned. The second most comprehensive range behind KTM's eight-bike line-up, Husky again offer up five models to choose from - two two-stroke and three four-stroke, for the next season - all of them up-rated and modified versions of the existing models.

Addressing the key areas of performance, reliability and handling, Husqvarna claims that all of their enduro machines have been redesigned to more closely resemble those raced by the official CH Racing Husqvarna team in WEC competition. That said, Husky also proclaim that their bikes can easily be used by novice off-road riders.

Changing Faces

The most obvious revision is the new bodywork fitted to the WR125 and 250 strokers. Despite now being fitted with the same-shape fuel tank, seat and radiator shrouds as the thumpers, the two-strokes remain virtually unchanged.

In the 125's case, it has brought Husky much success and acclaim over the years, so it makes sense not to mess with a winning formula. As a result, the minor tweaks include a little motor tuning to improve the pick-up and low- to mid-range power. New parts include the exhaust system and reed block, a 240mm rear disk plus a smaller rear brake caliper. It also comes, like all

the 2006 enduro bikes, with hand guards fitted as standard and a new digital instrument panel.

It's a very similar story for the WR250. Its most substantial change is its Centennial-style bodywork, which gives the bike a much fresher look.

The Marzocchi forks have been recalibrated to improve damping while the Sachs rear shock has also been modified to give a plusher ride. As far as the motor is concerned, a new V Force reed block has been fitted, along with a new inlet manifold between the cylinder and the airbox.

In fact, any major changes, or indeed a new 250cc two-stroke motor, seem extremely unlikely in the face of ever-tightening EU emission requirements. While KTM 'see a future for the 250cc two-stroke', the fact that nobody really knows if it will be possible to register a two-stroke after the end of 2007 has had a massive bearing on two-stroke future development for most of the leading manufacturers.

Four A Change

As a result, Husqvarna has decided to focus much of its energies on enhancing their four-stroke models. Extensive improvements to the TE enduro range are very similar to those made to the motocross models, concentrating on cylinder head alterations and on giving the bikes more power and increased reliability.

In the case of the TE250 it sees exactly the same motor changes as on the TC250 - larger



Small Change

valves, new cam profile, new piston and longer con-rod. With the intake valve diameter increased from 29 to 30.5mm and the exhaust valve from 24 to 25mm the bike's suspension has been 'recalibrated' to improve handling, plus it gets a larger rear disk.

With Husky's 250cc four-stroke engine having 'evolved' considerably over the past few seasons, changes made to this year's model are likely to be (although Husqvarna themselves haven't confirmed this), the last made before a new quarter-litre thumper model is released, possibly as early as 2007.

As there's no more room in the existing cylinder head to enlarge either the intake or exhaust ports further, and with fuel injection likely to begin appearing on more and more production bikes in the near future thanks to emission requirements, it's hard to see how Husqvarna *won't* make a new 250 thumper in the near future.

Onto the big hitters and as the TE450 and 510's were given the Centennial style treatment in 2005, the remaining changes have been made to the motor. Just like on the 250, both bikes feature larger inlet and exhaust valves and new inlet cams to boost power output.

Changes to the TE450 and 510's suspension go further than just new settings, as both are fitted with 50mm USD Marzocchi forks whilst retaining the Sachs rear shock.

Ring The Changes

I should say that the WR125 has always been (and remains) a great bike. As easy to ride along first gear tracks as it is racing down fourth gear trails, the bike's stability is superb.

And it's a similar story for the strong, capable motor. Claiming to be a touch more responsive and stronger off the bottom, it feels practically the same as before - producing smooth, easy to manage power that drives well out of both grippy and slippery corners.

And the bike's only real change,

its new, wider bodywork, is all but unnoticeable.

As for the WR250 the refurbished suspension doesn't offer a significantly improved ride in comparison to previous models mainly because there wasn't a great deal wrong with the old settings. Plush, set up for an average weight rider and giving a well planted front-end, the 250 handles well.

However, the motor is a little different to previous models. Slightly lacking right off the bottom, it has a very strong mid-range and, as such it's a very easy bike to ride, one that would comfortably suit any level of rider.

...While the four-strokes get more power...

arna Husqvarna Husqvarna



HUSQVARNA TE450

New digital instruments come fitted to all models...



Change Of Tune

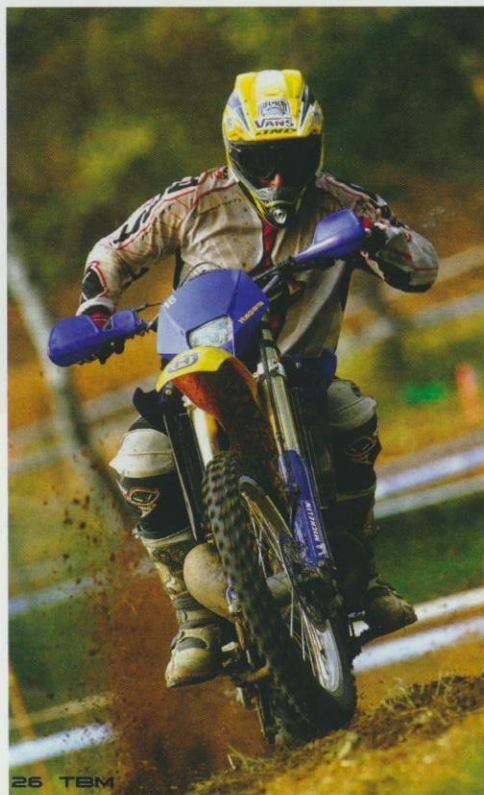
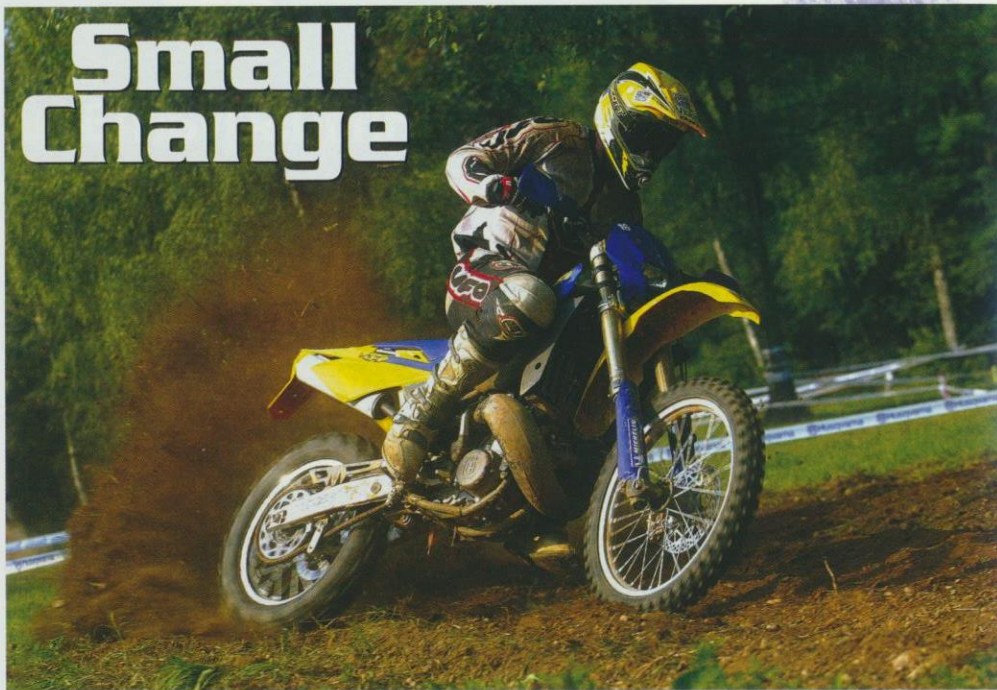
Just like the TC250 motocrosser the TE250 requires a lot of rider input to get it to perform at its very best. Noticeably more powerful than the machine it's replacing, the fact that it doesn't rev quite as high as most other quarter-litre thumpers initially gives the impression that it could be quicker still.

But the bike is deceptively fast, especially around flat mid-to-high speed turns. Although still lacking a bit of get up and go out of slower corners, the overall package is improved, with great handling and superb turning abilities.



Note single-bolt top-clamp!

Small Change



Sadly, the TE450 was a real disappointment to ride. Too powerful and with a delivery that had a real big hit in its mid-range, it didn't want to drive out of slippery, grassy corners anywhere near as well as the 510.

A little reluctant to pull off the bottom around slower corners, especially in a higher gear, once near its mid-range the bike's colossal power built quickly so it would rev out extremely rapidly.

In the past the abrupt nature of the 450's power delivery made it quite difficult to get it to drive smoothly out of tighter turns, but it's now been further exaggerated because the motor has got even more oomph. And more power unfortunately means a bike which is harder to control.

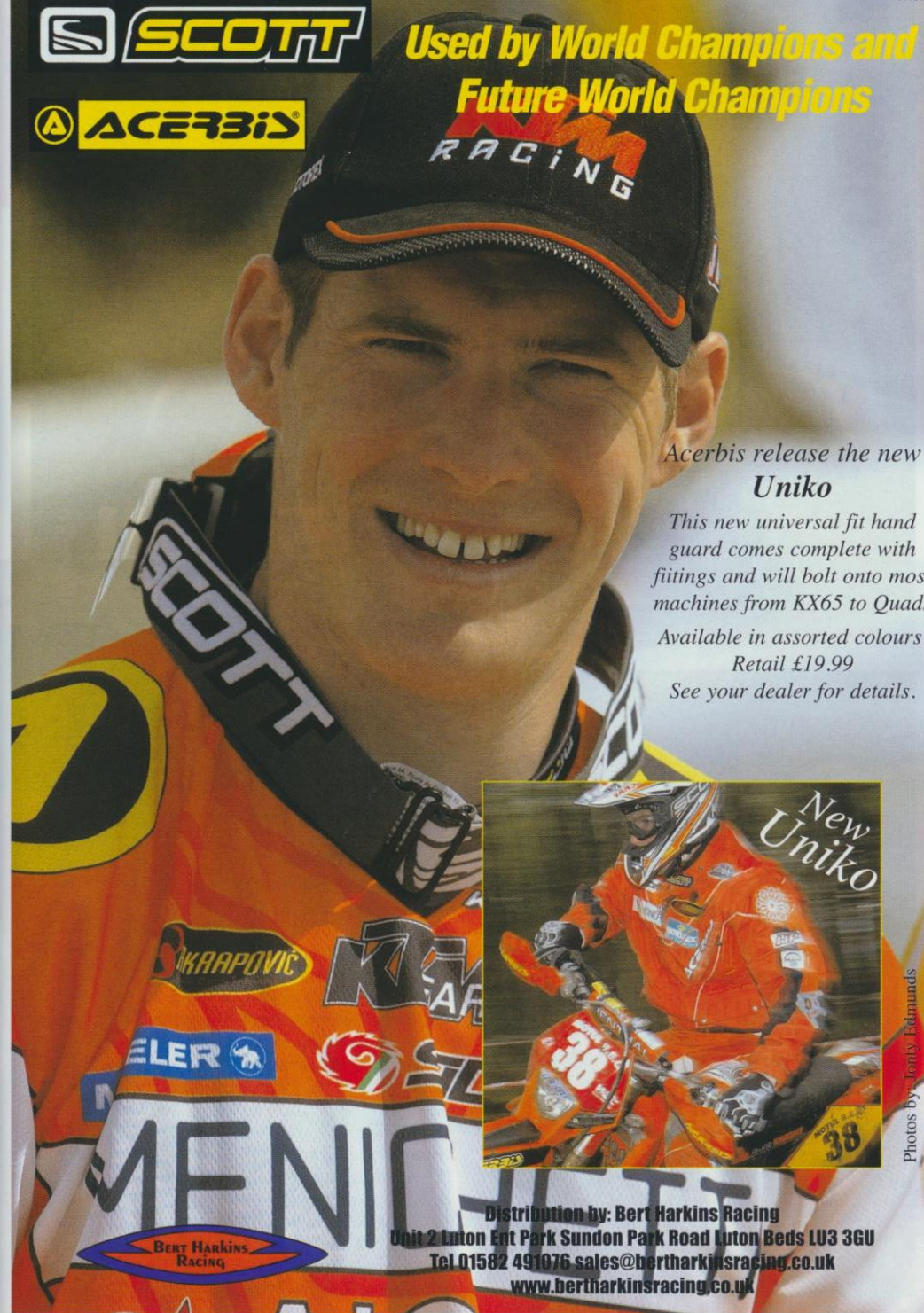
The 450 also had a tendency to push the front end on the entry to slippery corners and had to be wrestled around many of them. Whether this was a characteristic of the 50mm forks or simply because they were new and needed to be bedded in was hard to say, but what *was* clear was that the bike didn't have the best track manners.

By comparison the TE510 was a much easier bike to ride. Smoother in its power delivery, the way in which the bike handled was completely different to the 450, despite being essentially the same machine.

With the 50mm USD forks initially a little harsh, they gave a firm, strong, and smooth action that felt poles apart to the 450, suggesting



Used by World Champions and Future World Champions



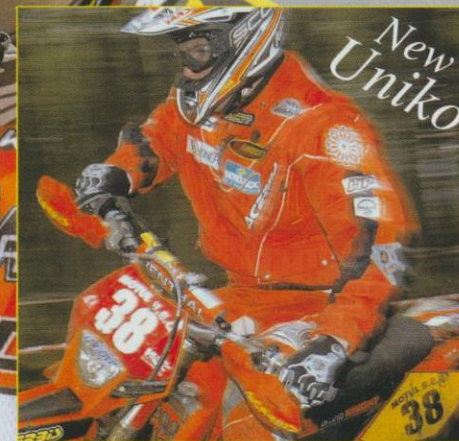
Acerbis release the new **Uniko**

This new universal fit hand guard comes complete with fittings and will bolt onto most machines from KX65 to Quads

Available in assorted colours.

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New Uniko

Photos by Tony Edmunds

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 Unit 2 Linton Egt Park Sundon Park Road Luton Beds LU3 3GU
 Tel 01582 491076 sales@bertharkinsracing.co.uk
www.bertharkinsracing.co.uk



Small Change



that if the 450's motor was calmed down it too would handle well.

The evenness of the 510's engine made the bike handle exactly as it should - predictable and reassuringly, while the spike in the 450's lump had the effect of unsettling it, making it feel bigger and heavier than it actually is.

Change Over

All things considered, Husqvarna's 2006 enduro range is, with the exception of a slightly too-powerful 450, a comprehensive and well-specified line-up. The largely unchanged WR125 and 250 are both still dependable workhorses although they are lacking some of the niceties you find fitted to some of the competition's bikes, such as a hydraulic clutch and braceless bars.

As far as the thumpers go the same pretty much applies. All three TE models are solidly built with the performance to match their peers though the 450 seems something of a brute to ride. However the 250 (which won our 250 thumper shootout this year) has been further improved and for those that need the extra power the 510 is a nicely balanced open-class machine.

Prices for the '06 models have yet to be set by Husky Sport but the UK importers hope to freeze or reduce prices for 2006. Watch this space...

STONELEIGH

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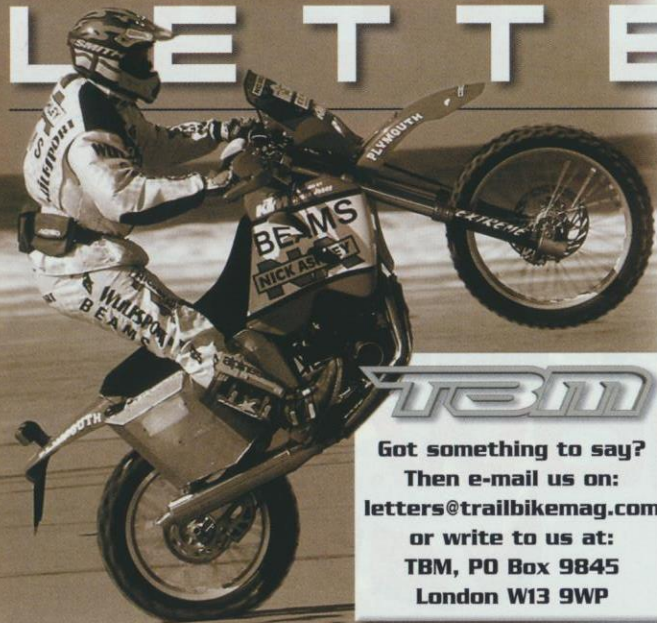


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TBM
Got something to say?
Then e-mail us on:
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Dirtbike Dementia

Dear Editor

I am a concerned reader of TBM who, after seeing the August issue's editorial 'Not National Geographic', is worried that there may be a link between dirt biking and the forgetting of where places are!

This syndrome is as yet relatively unheard of but known as Terminal Bewilderment Malady (TBM for short), and manifests itself in the unsuspecting correspondent by causing complete geographic confusion, sometimes to the extent of not even knowing where they live.

In addition to the evidence in your editorial the proof can be seen in the letter 'Jack the Tripper' from the same issue. The writer addresses himself as being from Sark, Jersey when Sark is off the coast of Guernsey!

And before anyone follows Jack's narrative about riding a CCM604 on Sark, there isn't

you're having a heart attack. Giddy-up Dobbin...

Pick Me Up

Dear TBM

I managed to get a photo of your blue Jumbuck next to my red one at this year's 12-Hour Dawn to Dusk. I went out and bought one after your first review of it, back in September 2003 (issue 97).

I was looking at changing cars anyway, and this seemed like a good compromise. Single bloke, no kids to cart around etc. I've now done 12,000 miles since October 2003, and I've got to say it's the most useful vehicle I've ever owned.

Engine reliability has been 100 percent. Handling is excellent but the ride is very harsh when it's not loaded, but then again it's a pick-up - what do you expect? Performance is okay - you need to stir the gearbox a bit to get things moving. The few niggles I have are the build quality side - I have an annoying rattle from the dash

and never have been any cars or bikes allowed on Sark. There are no garages and no petrol. Even the ambulance is horse-drawn!

Yours worriedly,
 Dave Taylor
 Barking, Scotlandshire

Bet that's reassuring when



which the dealer can't seem to fix and the plastic shrouds over the rear bars have come apart, plus the glovebox and dash drawer are very Mickey Mouse.

Also on long journeys the seats can be uncomfortable, they could do with more lumbar support. Fuel consumption isn't too bad, although I have no idea what it does to the gallon - I'm not sad enough to measure it.

But overall, it's a cracking bit of kit - yeah, it could be better, but for the money it does exactly what it says on the tin.

Simon Capon
 via email

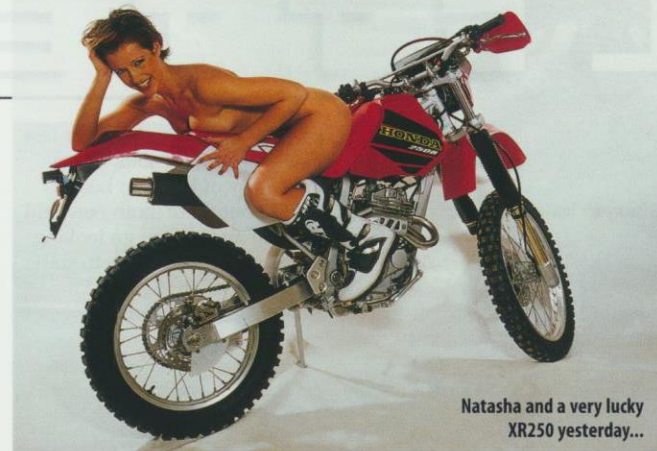
PS Mine's red - they're faster!

Under The Influence

Dear TBM

Well, it's all your fault - I purchased a copy of your fine mag back in January 2004 and ended up buying an XR250, which pleased the wife no end!

My question is this - do your



Natasha and a very lucky XR250 yesterday...

good selves or any of your readers know of anybody that offers trail riding in the Dominican Republic? After a very late night I awoke still drunk and told the wife we should book a holiday. Two hours later I'd spent my money for a new bike on a holiday to the Dommie Republic!

So, seeing as I've spent said money, if I'm going I may as well see if I can get a ride in. Any help would be most gratefully received. Cheers!

Nathan Evans
 via email

We phoned around the usual suspects Nathan, and couldn't find an organised tour as such, however if you check out drpure.com, you'll find info about hiring a dirt bike and guide and apparently the scenery is stunning...

Turning Japanese

Dear TBM

Just thought I would drop you a line to tell readers about the fantastic opportunities for trail riding out here in Japan.

It may come as surprise to those familiar with pictures of Japan's cramped ultra-modern

cities to know that nearly 80 percent of this country is mountain (67 percent of that wooded) and is criss-crossed with hundreds of ungraded roads, fast single track, rocky trails and just about every other type of surface.

Imagine no horses, hikers, 4x4s, etc. I live in Shikoku, the most under-developed of Japan's four main islands, and despite the tendency of the locals to stare at big-nosed Brits on spangly orange bikes; it is considered the cream of the crop for Japan's off-road riders.

The competition scene is a bit weak at the moment, but shows signs of improving even if my efforts don't. Of course, being Japan, parts for domestically produced bikes are cheap as are the bikes themselves. Naturally, sensible folk as they are, all my biking buddies crave the import models that the government imposes a hefty tax on!

By the way if there is anyone with desperate needs for parts for Japanese market grey import bikes they can contact me and I'll try to help.

Thanks for a great mag - it keeps getting better all the time and is much enjoyed over here.

Mike Sharpe, Japan
 via email

LETTERS

Short 'n' Sweet

Dear TBM

I would love to get into off-road bikes - however I'm a short arse, being five foot seven inches, 12.5 stone and wait for it... 29 inch inside leg!

I want to get my own bike but just haven't got a clue about what to get due to my leg length. If it helps I've been riding road bikes for seven years and can just about fit on a BMW 1200GS with a low seat.

Please help - or am I deemed to be too vertically challenged for riding dirtbikes?

Paul Haden
via email

Our own staffwriter Mel is an inch shorter than you Paul (but has longer legs!), and she doesn't have too much of a

problem riding most of our test bikes - including 450s. There are plenty of low seat height trailies out there (both new and secondhand) if you go looking for them. A good place to start would be in TBM's Dirt Bike Buyer's Guide which we publish in every January issue of the mag (back issues available on trailbikemag.com).

Start with bikes like the Gas Gas Pampera, Yamaha XT225 Serow, Beta Alp, Kawasaki Super Sherpa, Suzuki DR200, Honda CRF230, Honda XL250 Degree etc and work your way up from there. Remember three important things, however: firstly all bikes can be lowered (either by yourself or using a suspension specialist). Secondly that all dirt bikes have fairly soft suspension so they will sink down a good way once you sit on the bike - so seat heights can be slightly academic. And thirdly that it's not always important to be able to touch the floor at all times. Off-

road bikes require a certain amount of ground clearance to avoid dragging their undercarriage on all the stuff that litters the trail. As long as you can comfortably get one leg down when you come to a stop, that should do fine. Finally, watch out for another low seat height test appearing in the mag in the not-too-distant future. Best of luck...

Pinning It

Dear TBM

I noticed in the letters pages of recent issues some readers discovering that the caliper pins do not have any grease on them and consequently are prone to seizing.

I have encountered seized pins in the past and rather than try to force them (most likely resulting in rounded off Allen sockets and then having to drill to remove them), a quick blast along a lane for half a mile or

so whilst holding the brake on has the effect of heating the caliper and making the pins much easier to remove.

Great mag by the way.

Colin Moore
via email

Army Surplus

Dear TBM

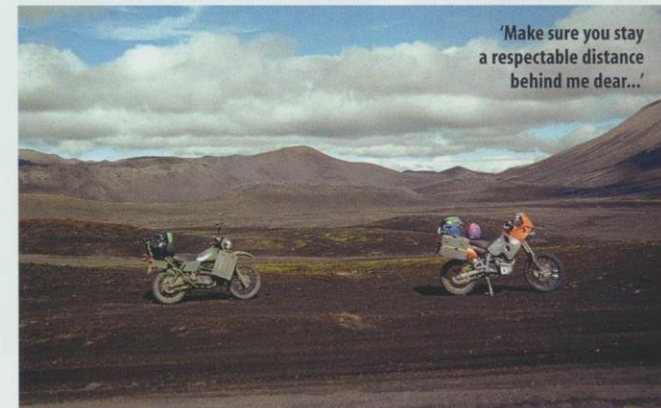
Good to see an overland article in your mag. I read your TTR600 story in September's issue and thought that you need to know that you can do the 'overland thing' far cheaper than £6000.

This summer my wife and I spent a month traveling about 3000 miles in Iceland, mostly off-roading in the country's interior. I was on a KTM 640 Adventure but the wife wanted a bike with less power and a lower seat height. After a year having a Harley MT350 as a second bike I was pretty sure it would be perfect for her for an overland in Iceland.

The truth is, we ran out of money so she had to ride what we had, but I convinced her it was made for the job whilst crossing my fingers and praying to the big bike God in the sky. Shock horror - the MT350 was great! There was nothing the KTM could do that the MT350 couldn't manage, including Force 8 gales, river crossings, sand, stones, rocks and snow.

It's not the fastest thing, but it just does anything. The MT350 is best described as the off-road Land Rover of the bike world, so use that description in your next trailbike review.

The bike's forward panniers worked a treat. Limited to 15kg



each side, I genuinely think they are better than rear ones. It's easier to foot off-road as your legs don't get smashed against the boxes and they act as brilliant leg protectors from both the elements and in the event of falls.

The only problems for the MT350 was a lost centre stand spring plus I also had to put a small hole in the auxiliary fuel tank I added due to fuel starvation at 60mph.

In all I would thoroughly recommend the MT350. It's cheap, reliable, usually has with panniers, built like most people want an overland bike to be built... but they *are* slow.

So don't think you need megabucks for an overland trip. Forget the GS; spend the money on the trip itself!

Lionel Cox
South Oxhey, Watford

We never said you needed six grand to build an overland bike Lionel - that was someone's personal choice. Just like it was your personal choice to stick your wife on an old MT350 while your swanned around on your flash KTM...

Under Pressure

Dear TBM

Having read the letter in August's issue about Nick Shepherd I thought that I would let you know about an injury I suffered. Though nowhere as serious as Nick's, I have still suffered a bit!

On 26 March 2004 during an evening trail ride I managed to break my leg in five places, which included a spiral fracture. Three ambulances later (one got stuck on the lane that we were on so a 4x4 was needed as the air ambulance wouldn't fly at night), I finally arrived at casualty to be met by my heavily pregnant wife (nine months). Upshot was I was sent home after three days with a full leg cast.

After ten days and with a return visit came the news that the bone had slipped and an operation was needed to pin the leg. I was admitted and operated on the next day, but after being taken back to the ward I developed a condition called Compartment Syndrome and was rushed back down for emergency surgery.



LETTERS

There I had what is called a Fasciotomy - basically two lines were cut up either side of my leg from ankle to knee and internally around the back to allow the build-up of pressure to be released.

Unfortunately I aspirated (being sick into my lungs) coming out of the anaesthetic and ended up on the high dependency unit for a week. At the same time the wife went into labour and we had a bouncing baby boy. But three weeks later I developed severe pneumonia and an infection of the diaphragm!

Since then I have had a wound on the front of the leg that was acquired during surgery that has not healed and I'm currently recovering from my second skin graft to try and get it to heal. All this and my new DR-Z that I had bought in January 2004 is still sat in the shed with less than 600 miles

on the clock. But I will be back riding again once the leg has healed.

Carl Phillips, patiently waiting via email

That's the most elaborate classified ad we've ever had Carl! Good luck with the new baby and best of luck with the recovery...

Haring Around

Dear TBM

G'day! Not been reading your mag long, but it's given me an idea. I've been riding off-road now for about three years, not continuously of course, but mostly on Sundays I go to Wales and I want a change.

So it has made me think about entering an enduro, but how, or where, or what do I need? And what's all this race terminology? I used to drink in the Hare and Hounds but I'm not sure entering a hare or a

hound would be a good idea, so a complete beginner's guide feature would be great.

But in the meantime a few pointers in answer to my letter might help me broaden my off-roading enjoyment somewhat. Thanks for your help.

Rob, Burton on Trent via email

Rob we've published this information periodically over the years and it sounds like it may be overdue for publication again. Essentially a H&H is the simplest type of enduro event you can enter. All you really need is a well maintained dirt bike and lots of enthusiasm. Essentially you ride around a marked cross-country course (following arrows) for a certain number of hours (usually three), aiming to complete as many laps as possible within the time. Couldn't be simpler really...

One-Sided

Dear TBM

I read with interest (and amusement) your feature 'Size Matters' in TBM 119 and I thought should write a few lines in favour of the Honda CRF230F, as I think the article may be a bit misleading for some readers.

Some context first: last year, after looking for quite a while for a bike to get back into off-road riding, I read your excellent review of the 230 in the May 2004 issue and thought it sounded ideal for what I was looking for - an uncomplicated but effective, modern (but not necessarily cutting-edge) motorcycle which would take me

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LETTERS

around Britain's green lanes at a sensible cost - and at a reasonable physical and mental effort.

I wanted a light bike, with enough (but not too much) power, a low seat which would allow me to get both feet on the ground when I got into real trouble, and an electric-start.

I did a fair amount of enduro riding back when I started riding motorcycles but for the last 25 years or so I been riding mostly road bikes. Lately, however, I found myself going to more and more off-road days, ride-outs and the like and I caught the off-road bug again. I was not interested in entering any competitions, just

in enjoying the big British outdoors on a bike that would not get ahead of me.

So I went off to Somerset to try the 230 out with Vic Vaughn and Greg Hughes at West Country Trail Tours. Just a couple of hours on the 230 and I was convinced. Incidentally, that day I rode with guys on KTMs and CRF250s who struggled in areas that the 230 managed no problem - and they told me they rode more regularly than I do.

So the following week I ordered my own 230. After a year, I can say that it is one of the most satisfying bikes I have ever owned, delivering what I expected - and then some. It's fun to ride, nimble, easy to pick up when you come off, it does-

n't require high-maintenance and can get you across anything - albeit possibly not as fast as other bikes, but always making you feel confident that you can overcome any obstacle that's thrown in your way.

I have found this is not necessarily the case with more 'advanced', competition-oriented enduro bikes, which really kind of intimidate you and make you feel that you will not be able to control them when things get real rough.

Just to complete the picture - at five feet ten inches tall, I wouldn't define myself exactly as 'short' - and I do need to bend over to tie my enduro boots, paraphrasing your metaphor. I am not precisely a beginner, but I would not classify myself as an experienced off-road rider either - I just have done many miles on motorcycles, on and off-road. And, while I have made a few very affordable changes to the bike, most of them recommended by TBM (such as adding 30mm handlebar raisers, a smaller rear sprocket, a sump-guard and hand-guards), my 230 is very much the same that came out of the factory.

I have never had any problems with the back brake; in fact, I am quite happy with it, so I decided against the disc upgrade that I was contemplating before I got the bike. I also kept the 'nasty' steel handlebars, and they are working fine. I have had no problems with the electric-start either, nor with the suspension (I weigh 80kg).

I went out on the 230 last weekend and my facial muscles still ache because of so much grinning. I was out with guys on 'proper' enduro bikes (you

know, KTMs, Yamahas, etc) and I never felt disadvantaged in any way, shape or form (but I suspect that, by the end of the first day, they did!)

I ride regularly in Somerset and Devon, where everybody seems to have a 230 - and I still have to hear anyone complain about it. You will probably say that I have found the perfect bike for my needs and you'd be quite right (nothing is perfect - but this one comes very close).

So I decided to write to you because I felt your article could prevent other people from easily (and affordably) reaching similar levels of enjoyment - and, instead, they may persuade themselves - perhaps helped by 'interested parties' - that they need to buy more of a real bike and instead go for a competition-oriented enduro machine that will cost them twice as much, will give them ten times the hassle and possibly only a fraction of the enjoyment. This letter is for them - I hope it helps put things in perspective.

Thanks again for your excellent magazine. Keep up the good work.

Miguel Ruano, London via email

Thanks for that Miguel, as you have found (and as we made clear when we went trail riding on one), the CRF230 is a great little trailie. But what I hope our more recent article made clear was that should you be considering a bike for both trail and competition use, then the CRF230 should definitely *not* be top of your list...

Forked Off

Dear TBM

I thought that I would write a letter of warning to owners of Marzocchi USD forks. I have a Gas Gas EC200 2004 model and the plastic Hebo fork guard on the brake hose side has worn a hole right through the outer fork leg and the brake hose pulls the guard into the fork leg. Damage-wise the bottom quarter-inch snapped clean off when I changed the fork seals - you can imagine I was not a happy bunny that day!

With that tube now completely knackered I



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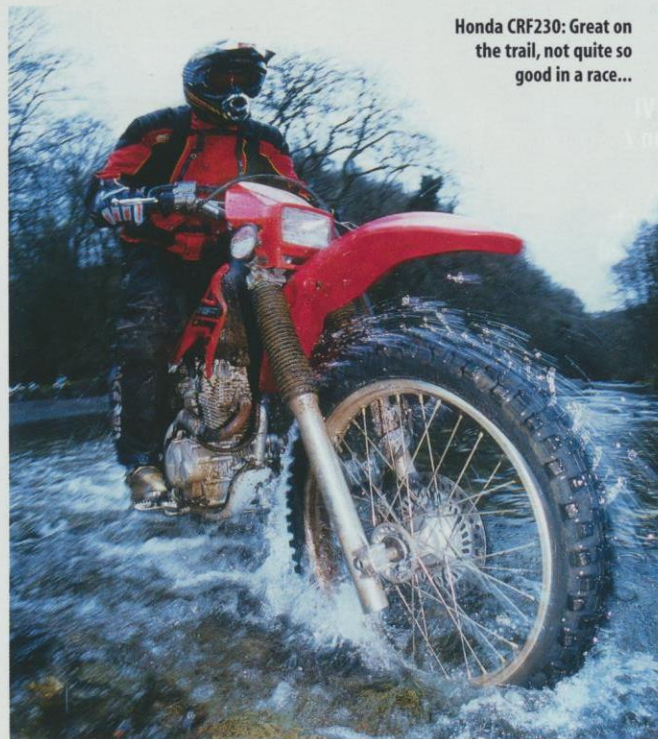
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Honda CRF230: Great on the trail, not quite so good in a race...

LETTERS



tried every fork specialist and Gas Gas dealer to get a second-hand pair of forks but ended up getting a new tube from Marzocchi UK at a cost of £240.

After talking to a few dealers this seems to be not all that uncommon a problem, although my case does seem to be more extreme than most. There are plastic protectors that can prevent this damage and cost just a few pounds - most of the top riders like Knighter etc have them fitted.

My dad has a 2001 Gasser that also has some wear on the outer tubes but has the benefit of an outer circlip that has taken the brunt of the wear. Anyway, just thought other people might like to know.

Lee Hook
Gloucester

Lands End

Dear TBM

Jamie Clarke really said it all in his letter 'Land Locked' in issue 121. I am also an ACU and a Youth Motocross Club Official. His remarks about the 'We object to anything, especially motorcycle sport,' people ring loud and true up here in Lancashire.

A group of ex-riders in South Lancashire were aware of the problems caused by illegal riding and the need for a good off-road facility for those of us who try to do things properly. In the last two years they have put in a huge amount of work into finding a piece of land, meeting all the official bodies, and I mean *all* the official bod-

ies from the local council, county council, police, ACU, AMCA et al and had complete support from all.

My own club helped with a track plan and a local kart club did the same. The plans for a full clubhouse with all the access and parking, safety and other requirements were assembled and put forward for planning permission.

After due consideration the proposal was turned down flat because a parish councillor from the local village objected. The objection was that it would bring strangers to the area - I do wonder just who the people that stop in the local services on the M6 and drive through on the A49 are then!

I had a conversation with the local authority planning director and he was in total despair, having fully supported what was an economic and sensible use for this land.

I fully understand the statement that the ACU, AMCA or whoever should buy land, but as Jamie said, the wish is only the start and the problems

grow to Everest proportions very quickly. Please remember that the great majority of the organisers of our sport are volunteers, just ordinary Joes who are willing to do a bit, spend a lot of time doing it and then getting a fair amount of enjoyment watching others use their own skills riding bikes.

Still, we can't just stop trying can we?

John Radcliff, Lancashire
via email

There's now't so queer as folk, John. Keep up the good work...

What a Mellay!

Dear TBM

Separated at birth? Check out this photo of the regional finalist in the 1967 Chris Evans 'lookie-likee' contest.

Gary Clarke

PS He's the one on the left.

Don't fancy yours much, Gary...



'...I say dahhling, have you changed the oil on the KTM yet...'

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DOING THE ROUNDS

Mark Williams heads to Toon-town for some
Geordie hospitality



Away the Lads





Away the Lads

'Big Country: Up in the north east of England there's plenty of riding...

From my introductions to these off-road travelogues you might think that my claims of intimacy with just about every county in the country are highly improbable, and even a little patronising. However if I told you that my father was a pikey, a travelling salesman or just constantly keeping one jump ahead of his creditors, you could possibly accept that I may've indeed lived in so many places... and I'll leave that choice open to your vivid imaginations. Fact is, I spent six years living in or on the outskirts of Newcastle-on-Tyne which is where I learnt to ride a motorcycle (a BSA Bantam of course, and with knobblies, followed shortly thereafter by a Greeves Scottish). So given my penchant for wobbling down memory lane, the opportunity to *Do a Round* in the far north east was one I should really have engineered ages ago.

In fact I was no stranger to the wilds of Northumberland itself, having spent many school holidays working on farms near Hexham and Morpeth which etched enduring memories of bold and unspoilt landscapes indelibly in my mind. So indeed it was about time to badger Brian Eland, a jovial authority on all things TTR250 who lives up that way and naturally runs a business supplying stuff to maintain and improve Yamaha's undersung trailbike.

And like his namesake and fellow TTR-freak, Brian Sussex at the other end of the country (see TBM November 04's DTR, 'A Watery Rave'), Brian E regularly leads ride-outs up in his backyard, so I thought it was about time I joined one.

Unsurprisingly, Brian couldn't have been more willing to oblige, even to the extent of organising a mid-week outing when he and his mates would have to forsake earning a crust to indulge yrs trly.

Mind you, with a trailer in tow it's a good half-



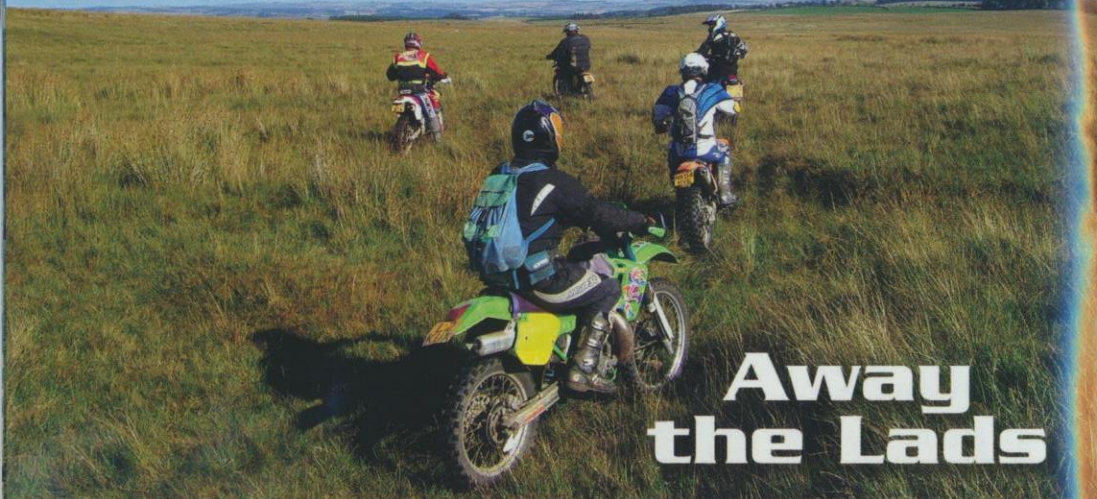
The Toon Army: Howay the lads...



day's drive from my gaff just to hear a Geordie accent, but when I set out on the Monday morning the weather forecast for the following day looked good and I had every reason to expect the long schlep would be worthwhile. And I wasn't disappointed.

So after a modest night's carousing with my sister and brother-in-law in what's become a dazzlingly cosmopolitan city, ominous leaden skies hovered over me during the short run out to our rendezvous just west of Newcastle at Crawcrook.

The six solid souls that greeted me were relentlessly cheerful and optimistic that the sun would eventually emerge from the gloom and that the previous day's humidity would finally relent. So let me introduce the Men Who Knew:



Away the Lads

Drill Seeker

Trevor Summers rides a KDX200 he's had for seven years and which bears the scars of even longer trailriding duty, plus a personalised 'KDX' numberplate donated by its previous owner that must be worth a bob or three. His day job is selling dental equipment, but sadly he said he couldn't replace any of my missing teeth, especially at a knockdown price.

Not Dead, But Very Alive

Unlike his goth namesake (well with a plural surname), Peter Burn is a builder by trade and not the ex-leader of a redundant second division goth band (that's *Dead Or Alive...* wake up at the back), and like all this lot has a wicked sense of humour. He also rides an almost too immaculate WR250, putting my increasingly dog-eared TTR to shame. But then so did his riding (and everybody else's of course).

Bricking It

Phil Irwin told me that he sells 'maintenance products' for a living - although he was worryingly elusive about what exactly these might be. And when I questioned Brian about this on the phone the following day, he joked (or did he?) that actually Phil was a bricklayer whose nickname is 'Flop'. Hmm. What is unquestionable was that he rode a EXC450 with a rather, er, idiosyncratic headlamp or 'ugly', as Brian dismissively put it.

Stroking It

Championing the two-stroke brigade alongside Trevor was Paul Austin, a software developer with a very tidy Honda CRM AR which he's had 'for five years or so' because he and 'can't find anything better'. They tend to stick with the stokers, these Geordies, and seeing how well the bike performed that day (it was the first time I've ridden alongside this final incarnation of Honda's ground-breaking 'stroker'), I can understand why.

The Drug Dealer

Well yes, but only in a strictly legal sense, for Dominic Timney manages a team which supplies medicines to hospitals and medical practices. Which obviously doesn't pay as well as the illicit stuff, but enough to afford a brand new 525EXC.

Our Mighty Leader

I've already given you some guff on Brian Eland and as well as everything else his sharp wit and robust opinions on all things off-road are often directed at his five mates, all of whom gave as good as they got, even if I didn't understand half of the in-joking. And ironically given his status as a master of the TTR250 universe, I was disappointed to find him not aboard his tricked-up, bored-out 325cc version, but a rather, er, well-used KTM 400EXC. But as one of our number joked, 'If you ever see Brian on a clean bike, it'd mean he must've stolen it!'

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Away the Lads

But enough of the jibing, let's get on with the riding. And it seems that there's something of a pattern developing from recent DTRs, namely *Let's Give Williams A Baptism Of Fire With a Long, Difficult Climb...* or at least that's how the last two Rounds began, and here we went again. In this case it was just minutes after leaving Crawcrook when Brian led us up a steep, stone-strewn gully which wound its way up (seemingly forever) towards Kyo Hall. Not exactly what I was looking for so soon after breakfast with a bit of a sore head, and once we'd topped it we came upon a couple of council workers clearing a fallen tree from the track - something unheard of on my local turf, but these two chaps couldn't have been jollier or more accommodating, even to the extent of moving their truck so's we could easily pass by. Amazing. We then descended another stony bit, across a stream and continued along a somewhat boggy track that could've been treacherous in the winter, and then back onto tarmac.

A bit of a dog's leg then took us further west down a cindery track, past a gliding club and onto the road at Currock Hill. After zipping through Hedley on the Hill and skirting the village of Painshawfield where we forded Stocksfield Burn - easy peasy - and up a sandy, eventually rocky track to bring us out at Broomley. There we hung a left, then a right, eventually cutting up rough again towards

Lower Fotherly along some fast, stony tracks which opened up into lush farmland the likes of which I'd see lots of that day, and just in time for the sun to make a concerted appearance that it maintained virtually all day, and without the cloying humidity. Bloody idyllic, if you ask me.

Bad Breath 'n' Beer

This brought us onto the A68 where we hung a left toward Kiln Pit Hill where we turned left and then right onto what - again rather amazingly - was actually signposted as Byway B6309. This brought us out near Airy Holm Farmyard which, as always, Brian led us through quietly, before yomping through a leafy track on the edge of Shotleyfell Plantation, just by Snod's Edge where as I'm sure you knew the world famous garlic show was due to take place the next weekend. Apparently there's a local garlic beer brewed to commemorate this, but rather you than me, mate.

Anyroadup, or rather in this case, down, we went after another little skip along the A68 to Birkenside and a somewhat slabby, rocky track which offered magnificent views of the Derwent Reservoir whose north east banks it skirted. A bit of a ford was involved in this route too, but nothing to fill anyone's boots up... that'd come later - oh dear me yes.

The route then took us along a minor road or two past Slaley Hall, a fancy-pants country

hotel/resort complex, towards Strothers Dale where the track we took narrowed into leafy overgrowth and as one of our number binned it, the stoppage allowed eagle-eyed Brian to point out that a loose bolt was in danger of relieving me of my exhaust system. Suitably chastened, I set to with an Allen key... but at least it wasn't a puncture.

Better Down Than Up

Just north of this embarrassment, and somewhere near Shield Hall, we plunged down a long, steep track that even in late summer was a tad slippery with a distinct promise of brown trousers, and heaven knows how we'd have fared in the winter, especially as Trevor informed me that they sometimes go up it. And at its base was a fairly spectacular ford, although the apparently caring council had stretched wire mesh across its bottom to provide some grip.

After scampering along a cheerful if narrow tree-lined lane we hung a right past Dotland Farm, where I spent a school summer holiday learning to stack straw bales and crash tractors, before stopping to make a mass descent down a heavily wooded track above Dipton Mill. Then suddenly a KDX200 flashed past, its rider minus shirt, crash hat and any brain cells and disappeared down before us. I did a double take, wondering how Trevor had found the time to

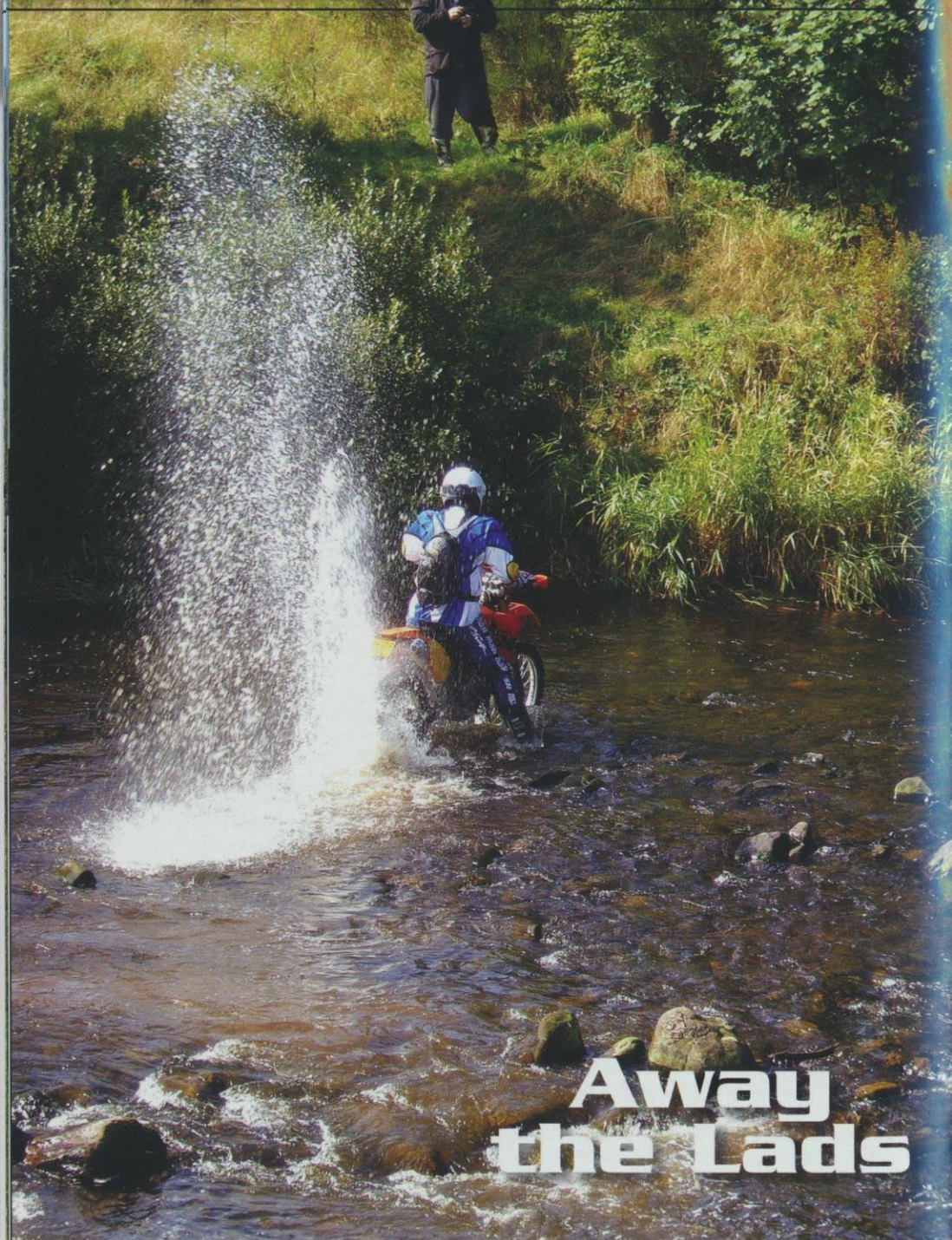
disrobe and take leave of his senses, but he was still with us and it had obviously been some young show-off who'd seen us pass by and just had to exhibit the unacceptable face of dirtbikery.

That little incident over with, we exited the eventually quite challenging lane and emerged at the top of a hill onto a road that meandered into the ancient market town of Hexham. Now dominated like so many beautiful old burghs by a bloody great supermarket rather than its fine Medieval abbey, it at least had an excellent greasy spoon where we partook of an early lunch, or *All Day Breakfast* as I prefer to call it.

Arteries suitably lagged and bellies full, we then headed south and west along the B6305 off which we eventually turned right off down a wide, grassy lane hemmed in by stout brick walls typical of the area. A few gates, of which there were many that day, led us into some typically bucolic grazing land, complete with curious cows, and onto Elrington. A fairly steep, muddy-ish track then took us down through woodland and briefly onto the A686 which we left to take us northwards along another narrow-ish track further impeded by a giant tractor, before tipping up at West Land's End.

From there we meandered along a kind of moorland lane which took us to a far narrower track we elbowed our way through before hitting tarmac again at (I think) West Deanraw. Anyway,

DOING THE ROUNDS



Away the Lads

Your scribe, Williams, demonstrates his riding prowess...



wherever it was, Brian led us right onto Plankey Mill Lane, another walled thoroughfare. A few more little and unproblematical tracks ensued as we rode through Ridley and Beltingham and suddenly found ourselves staring across the mighty River Tyne just west of Bardon Mill.

Flog it on the Tyne

In fact Brian had stopped a click or so earlier to point out the entrance to an old ford crossing 'that was now impossible because they've banked up the other side', but here, it seemed there was no such impediment to traversing the 60 or more foot-wide stretch of fast flowing water and up the other side. That is apart from up to two foot of the wet stuff bedded by algae covered rocks and a 15 foot bank that stood menacingly at the far bank. Easy-peasy wasn't going to be part of the deal on this occasion.

To his credit, or should that be foolhardiness, Brian led by example, and immediately got stuck between rocks just off the south bank. A huge plume of spray emerged from his rear wheel, an exercise that he repeated several times as he slowly staggered across the river, although he made a textbook climb up the extraordinarily steep bank after finally emerging t'other side.

The rest of us weren't so lucky with the last bit, but Dominic on his big Katosh made the best fist of it, and after watching five of my compadres

getting comprehensively soaked, both Peter and I were thinking that we might just take the long way round. However when he decided not to chicken out and ease his bike down into the water - in itself a tricky manoeuvre given the sudden drop - I could hardly be odd man out.

Initially it wasn't too bad although within moments of footing my way across the greasy rocks I had a pint of water in each boot, but I nearly dropped it just before the far bank and only with some helpful manhandling from Brian who stood staunchly in the water like some fearless Viking, did I manage to address the bank at something approaching the necessary 90 degrees.

'Go at it in second,' instructed Brian, but with no run up to speak of and a deep groove cut into the sandy soil by previous climbers, I found myself stalling and falling on my bum. After help from (I think) Phil and Dom, I picked the blighter up and chose bottom gear after the re-start (thank god for the magic button), which just about enabled me to stagger up the rest of the bank in suitably prattish style.

After squelching across a field and under a railway bridge - it wasn't muddy you understand, but I didn't have a drain plug in my boots - we eventually headed north and stopped for a very welcome remedial beverage at the Twice Brewed pub in, of course, Twice Brewed, which sits aside the Romanesque B6318, itself just south of Hadrian's Wall. After much good natured banter, we set off north and crossed the wall itself before aiming west, then north, towards Edges Green. Here we turned a smidge east along a partly metalled lane that eventually brought us to a gate, and then beyond this the mighty Kielder Forest beckoned invitingly below.

Brian led us along inconsistently surfaced fire roads north and then east through the trees, the dust kicked up by those ahead of me making pothole avoidance difficult at times. A lone equestrian lady thanked us for cutting our engines but apart from her we saw not a soul during the four or five mile trek through the forest, and then suddenly we were on the road again at Broadpool Common... but not for long. Within a click or so Brian stopped and opened a gate into what looked like wetlands to me, but his GPS informed us that there was indeed a byway through here, and off he went through the tufts of reeds and hussocks. Well at least for 100m or so at which point he got well and truly sucked into the worst of the boggy bit.

DOING THE ROUNDS

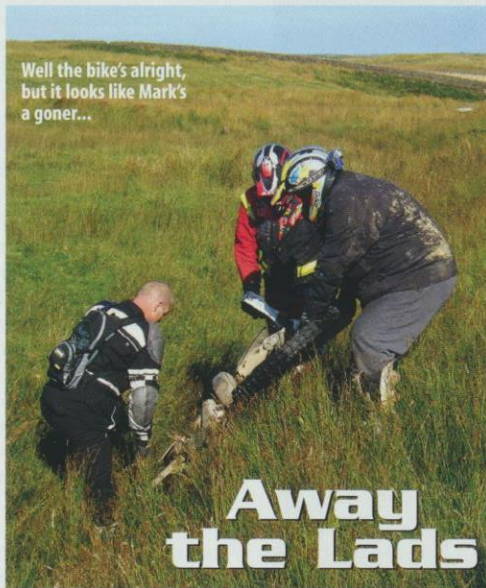
Whoop de Gloop

Smarmy as I am, I took the left-hand route - well overgrown sheep track might be more accurate - and avoided the gloop which lay hidden beneath the sod, but it was nevertheless a nerve-wracking expedition across apparently uncharted terrain until at last we reached a gate on the brow of a hill half a mile later. There was something approaching a proper track here, but Brian wasn't going to let that deter him from leading us across it and off to the left across

Simonburn Common, a route that would've been impossible to fathom without satellite technology (or at least a large degree of luck). Nevertheless we had to traverse, and with varying degrees of self-assurance and style, a succession of gullies hidden in the tall grass and reeds, the last of which Brian triumphantly wheeled across but poor Paul managed to get stuck in sideways.

At one point the GPS decided it'd had enough of this nonsense and Brian had to play it by eye, which in the middle of nowhere isn't easy and meant much aimless meandering, but eventually we found ourselves at a 'proper' green lane up by Tecket. By this time Dom's thirsty great 525 had gone onto reserve and he was anxious to find fuel, but Brian had a couple more quite amusing tracks for us to consume before we reached the B6320 east of Simonburn, and thence the two or three miles down into Chollerford for petrol and, in some cases, ice creams. These guys do not stint on creature comforts when it comes to dirtbikery.

Having crossed the Tyne just by the filling station - this time by bridge I'm glad to say - we turned left along the A6079 for a while before climbing suddenly right up a steep, slippery 'n' rocky track which turned into a narrow, slippery 'n' grassy track Brian tore along at a hefty clip leaving me to catch him up only when he'd managed to lose the central rut and collapse into the ditch. Ah well, sometimes there's merit



Well the bike's alright, but it looks like Mark's a goner...

Away the Lads

in being a slowcoach!

Following this were a succession of more open, sometimes dusty but uniformly exhilarating tracks snaking southwards and onto the B6318 where we turned right for a few hundred yards before going left towards Codlaw Hill.

Now we were once again riding through mature upland meadows along tracks that provided a few sudden washouts and in a copse by Codlaw itself, a tricky climb out of a ford bedevilled again by an algae-covered stream-bed.

A Plot Not Quite Lost

By now it was pushing towards five o'clock and Dominic was getting concerned about a 'plane he had to catch that evening - a jet-setting trailrider indeed - and I was not looking forward to the more mundane five-plus hour drive that lay ahead of me. So we pressed on at such a lick I didn't have time to dictate notes into my trusty micro-cassette 'corder, and being bereft of a trusty memory, all I can recall were a couple of amusing off-road interludes in the vicinity of Acomb Fell, a comely young woman walking her mutt in shorts and halter top somewhere west of Portgate... Oh yes, and a somewhat degrading incident where I nearly dropped the plot in a stream on an otherwise great little track near the reservoirs at the attractively-named Spittle.

With a whopping 101 miles on the odo we did indeed arrive back in time for Dom to pile into his van and make it all the way home to Durham and thence catch his flight at Newcastle Airport, and Brian sketched me a back route across the moors, down through Weardale and onto the M6 which was as stunning in the early evening sun as anything we'd ridden along that day. I eventually got home to Wales ten minutes before midnight, bleary-eyed but entirely delighted by such a rewarding return to my roots. Oh, and of course the fact that for once I didn't slow everyone down with a puncture...

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DIRTY

Just over 20 years ago I graduated from university and like any self-respecting social science graduate, immediately set about the serious business of seeing how I could prolong my studies.

In those heady, post-hippy days the possibilities were virtually endless. PhD, MSc, KFC, they all had their merits, but the option that looked the least taxing was signing on at a French

CHRIS EVANS GOES ALL MISTY-EYED AS HE FINALLY COMPLETES HIS DIRTBIKING CIRCLE OF LIFE...

university. I have no idea how it works now, but at the time anybody could get a place - there was no entrance requirement and if you didn't speak the lingo they had to give you free language lessons. Which is how I ended up in the charming provincial town of Pau, in the south west of France on the edge of the Pyrenees, doing as little as possible.

I had travelled down there on an ageing but rather beautiful series 6 BMW 'Boxer' and it was as I was charging around the mountains one sunny autumn day that I had a life-changing experience. Right up high, near the Spanish border, I came across three locals out for a ride on Husky enduros and it suddenly occurred to me that once my post graduate options had dried up, running trail bike holidays wouldn't be a bad way of earning a living.

Of course the concept didn't really

exist then and there was probably no market for it. So it was almost certainly a blessing in disguise when my old man rang me up to say that I had to come home and sort out my then girlfriend, who had moved in with my long suffering parents and was driving them quietly around the bend.

With pressure to stop messing around and settle down coming at me from all directions I eventually cracked, got a job in the 'media' (hey it *was* the Eighties), bought a flat in a scummy part of south east London and more or less forgot all about France and trail riding.

Then three years later it all came back to me. By this time I'd abandoned regular paychecks and was working freelance - in car cleaning products of all things. The money was rolling in nicely thank you (hey it *was* the Eighties) but you'll be staggered to learn I somehow felt unfulfilled.

The rest as they say is history - well my history anyway. After working for three years for an extremely dubious French 'raid' organiser, and never seeing the same punter twice, I decided to give trail bike holidays one last chance and laid out a route in Normandie. Incredibly I managed to sell most of the places and even generated some interest from the specialist press, in the shape of a young Mr Melber and his fledgling magazine.

Now they say pride comes before a fall and as I have an extremely low pain threshold I don't want to tempt providence. But I am sure you won't begrudge me the small wave of quiet contentment that swept over me last

'A SMALL WAVE OF QUIET CONTENTMENT SWEEPED OVER ME LAST WEEK AS MR MELBER AND MYSELF RODE TOGETHER THROUGH THE STUNNING SCENERY OF THE PAYS BASQUE ON MY FIRST EVER PYRENEES TRIP...'

week as Mr Melber and my humble self rode together through the stunning scenery of the Pays Basque on my first ever Pyrenees trip. Somehow the circle had been completed and I had achieved what I had set out to achieve.

Apparently you don't regret what you do, only what you don't do, but ask me would I do it all over again, and despite last week's 'perfect moment', I would definitely hesitate. I love my work with a passion but it certainly isn't the easy option that you imagine and I imagined.

It's not the bit the punters see that pees me off but all the negotiating with the local authorities to get permission to ride, the hotels messing you around, the weeks you spend away from home doing new routes, the havoc it plays with your personal life.

Okay, okay I'll stop before your tears of sympathy make your TBM too soggy to read and leave you with a couple of postscripts concerning last month's column.

Firstly and most surprisingly I have been contacted by an attractive member of the opposite sex who reads my column and likes it. Carnal knowledge looks a distinct possibility and in a moment of weakness Mr Melber has agreed to finance a no-expense spared photo session to record the historic moment for prosperity.

Secundo, concerning that young columnist Alex Hearn, I obviously wouldn't have been so heartless as to say, 'don't worry you can always come back next year' if I had known that his bike would remain in the Sahara desert. And as the UK's Dakar correspondent, Alex, I have to tell you your chances of getting it back now are looking increasingly slim.

Thirdo - Yes, I know that last month's column had very little to do with motorcycles. Anybody who felt the need to tell me this, or even thought it, should try and get out more - preferably on a dirtbike. Ever thought about going on a trail riding holiday..?



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COMPLETELY RUTTED



They say, whoever 'they' are, that moving house is the most stressful thing most people ever face in their lifetime, in which case I must be a bit of a stress-junkie because in the last ten years I've lived at as many different addresses.

Sadly, the majority of these were not out of choice and some of them, as a certain malevolent TBM reader

IS A SHED TO A MAN WHAT A HANDBAG IS TO A WOMAN? MARK WILLIAMS EXPLAINS WHY HE'S A BONA-FIDE SHED HEAD...

has cruelly pointed out, were essentially to keep the Queen of England happy.

But in any case I hoped I might never have to up sticks again and now even more so because there's an evens chance that moving house will also mean the end of my trail riding exploits.

Or at least for the six or seven months before I can move back into my own house - currently rented out to a lovely young couple and their kid - which boasts a jolly fine, properly insulated and electrified little shed. If this all sounds a bit convoluted, even perverse, that's because it is, though I won't bore you with the grubby details of my personal life.

But the fact remains is that for those vital winter months when one can't really rebuild one's rear suspension or change a pair of tyres in

the great outdoors of an evening, I can't find anywhere to move to which has a shed attached to it.

Now over the course of what I flamboyantly call my 'career' here at TBM, and having during that time travelled the length and breadth of Blighty whilst Doing the Rounds, I have been privy to many a fine shed, and indeed garage, given over to the demands of their trail riding owners.

Some of these buildings have been veritable palaces, with hydraulic work-benches, spotless stainless steel bench-tops and air-compressors nestling neatly beside Smeg fridges chock-full of Melton Mowbray pork-pies and fine German lager which, is of course, the preferred supper of off-road champions (okay, I made that last bit up. It was Castlemaine XXXX, which is neither fine nor German).

And yes, some of these sheds were dank lock-ups on suburban housing estates and others even less salubrious 8x6 foot wooden structures otherwise known as allotment sheds. But what they all had in common was tons of stuff inside them.

One of the publishing successes of recent years is a series of books under the generic titles 'Men and Sheds', the original being a tome featuring artfully gritty black and white snaps of, you guessed it, men in their sheds. And without exception what these invariably doleful looking chaps have got with them in their sheds is tons and tons of *stuff*.

And I won't even get onto the

MARK WILLIAMS

WILLIAMS' FIRST LAW OF SHEDISM IS THAT THE AMOUNT OF STUFF YOU HAVE IN YOUR SHED EXPANDS IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO THE PROPORTIONS OF YOUR SHED...

copycat volumes and websites and magazine articles and even rock bands spawned by the original book, but what it all adds up to is a helluva' lot of *stuff*.

And therein lies my particular and pressing problem. Williams' first Law of Shedism is that the amount of *stuff* you have in your shed expands in direct proportion to the proportions of your shed. Which is why the contents of my last shed now fills my current shed (well I rather grandly call it a workshop, because it actually has - gulp - central heating) even though it is at least half as large again as my old shed.

This isn't of course because I'm storing it any less inefficiently (although I probably am), but because Williams' Second Law of Shedism is that any empty shelf, cupboard or corner of a shed will fill itself when your back's turned.

So whilst I had two or three spare tyres in my last shed, I now have five or six, and a three foot-long shelf of workshop manuals and parts catalogues (whereas before they occupied half that space), three Jerrycans where once there was one, plus a pair of leaky and worn-out moto-x boots I never wear... I could go on and on, but I'm sure you get the picture: if you've got the space - it gets filled.

And of course I *need* those extra tyres, even though most of them are shagged out, just as the 2003 Race Spec catalogue cannot be thrown away in case the 2005 version is inadvertently thrown away by, well, by someone who might inadvertently throw it away. Like the catalogue hobgoblin, perhaps?

More crucially, there are plastic bins full of bits racked on the walls that weren't there in my old shed because I've replaced at least one trailbike since then, and replaced lots of bits on it and its successor since then. And of course you *never, ever* throw away bits you've replaced because you never know when you might need them again. Even if the truthful

answer is frankly 'Never'.

Plus there are some essential labour saving devices that I didn't have in my old shed because there wasn't room on the bench. And now I have two benches, of course I just had to acquire an electric grinder, a sink for cleaning components (and coffee cups) and a ghetto blaster. Okay, a ghetto blaster isn't exactly a labour saving device, but if I didn't have one I'd be obliged to play my accordion whilst I was waiting for the oil to completely drain out of the sump or a washed air-filter to dry, whereas instead I can now spend that time searching for the L&G Racing catalogue I've mislaid (which wouldn't have happened if I had two copies) whilst listening to Astor Piazzolla playing the tango. And much, much better than I can on my accordion.

But to return to the matter in hand - that is moving to a home without a shed means, well, shedding the shed of its contents. Which is a painful if not impossible process because never mind the extra Jerrycans and the shagged-out tyres, it means getting rid of my motorcycles.

Well actually it won't, because I'm not giving up trail riding that easily, just perhaps temporarily, and if I was a real rough, tough dirtbiker I'd keep and work on my bike on the street or driveway or garden patio, just like I did when I took up the sport as a naively enthusiastic youth (trailbikes didn't get stolen from in front of one's central London flat).

But of course without a shed and its vital trail riding support system, that'll be difficult especially, as now looks likely, I'll be moving back to London for six months where sheds are thin on the ground. Unless, of course, you become a member of the Shepherds Bush & Chiswick Allotment Society...

...And next month's column will be all about getting cross-rutted in the cabbage patch...



Oh good. At the time of writing this (mid-September) the weather's just on the turn, as are some of the leaves on the tree outside my window. Autumn's not far off which means in my book one thing; trail riding's well and truly back on the Hearn slab and as I've been away from it for a couple of years, I'm quite excited.

THIS MONTH ALEX HEARN TRIES TO CONVINCE US HE'S A CHANGED MAN...

I have actually tried riding the trails in the summer but found it too much like hard work - the sun-baked ruts overgrown with long grass are lethal and because it's not sloppy you go faster so when one finally does catch you out it really, really hurts!

Nah, from October onwards is when I'll get interested again and to that end, while still awaiting the arrival of my 2006 model, non-orange, two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a certain European manufacturer (hopefully imminent, but you never know) I've been in the shed, and taken stock of my net off-road worth.

Oh dear. I have one 30 quid stand picked up at the Dirtbike Show three years ago, a motley collection of tools/levers/assorted oddments in a small plastic toolbox and a jet washer that's on its last legs and so tangled up with itself I'm not sure I've the patience left to rescue it from its own entrails.

I seem to have at least half-a-dozen left-hand gloves, and at least two pairs of winter Sinisalos that I've managed to turn the inner lining out of. Obviously, it'll never go back in quite the same.

Left over from the Dakar I have an extremely smelly KTM jacket, a Shark lid and a pair of Alpinestars Tech 8 boots - everything else was cut off me and therefore consigned to the bin. I also have a spare set of wheels for a 660 Rallye (which I no longer possess), a pair of ageing Michelin mousses and three pairs of unused Michelin Deserts.

On the upside, I found my old Motion Pro toolkit (which I thought I'd lost in a Welsh bog ages ago, bought at the same time as the stand) and Gerber tool (blagged for Dakar, which had gone through the lining of that stinking jacket) both of which I wouldn't want to leave the house on a dirtbike without.

On the double upside I have a brand new Shark helmet and a pair of very trick looking Alpinestars Tech 10 boots. I'll confess I paid for neither, but that's a true privilege of the profession I'm in and is only a result of both manufacturers being heavily involved in the road world, where I have modest form (for what draw your own conclusions!).

So really I've got nob-all. But that's okay because you know what? With the delivery of that '06 model non-orange two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a certain European manufacturer (any day now, surely that's what the man said...) I'm starting my trail riding

hobby again from scratch and turning over a new leaf. And as a result I feel genuinely happy, almost Zen-like in my self-belief that I can change.

So I'm changing two things this year. Firstly, I'm really going to look after that '06 model non-orange two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a certain European manufacturer (it will come, it must). You know how it is - a brand new dirtbike is a thing of real beauty... the smell of crisp, fresh plastics, squiiishh of supple, unsullied suspension, the smooth-working cables and sharp-as-knife brakes, but how long before it's a piece of rolling scrap?

With you, maybe never. With me, not long. I might take the plastics off for the first jetwash or so, but that's all. I soon get bored with that and we all know full well the horrors lurking behind an untouched sidepanel - from now on I'm gonna be stripping that sucker every time. I'm buying a new jetwasher too, not the cheapest I can find but a really good one. A motherwasher, in fact.

I've never bunged up an exhaust pipe either, or dried a dirtbike with an airline. I don't have an airline or a compressor to work it, but I'm going to get both. And why does my chain always go so rusty? Why? I try to dry it but really just wave a can of WD40 in its vague direction and hope for the best. Not now. From here on in I'm gonna' clean the poor thing with a brush, dry it with a cloth and oil it with only the finest lubricant money can buy. I really am.

I'll buy a new stand at the Dirtbike Show this year too. I see they do hydraulic ones, judging by some of the ads in this very fine magazine and the '06 model non-orange two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a

I'M STARTING MY TRAIL RIDING HOBBY FROM SCRATCH AND TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF - I FEEL GENUINELY HAPPY, ALMOST ZEN-LIKE IN MY SELF-BELIEF THAT I CAN CHANGE...

certain European manufacturer (but what if it doesn't come? Then what?) deserves such a device. New tools are called for as well to maintain, nurture and improve the beast. Bodging, bashing and mullering are now methods of my past.

And if a fork seal blows (like they always seem to, caliper side of course) I'm fixing it straight away, not entering into denial about its horrible, seeping presence. Likewise I'm going to change the gearbox oil regularly (working on a clean bike's going to be soooo much nicer, I almost can't wait) and fit all

I'M ALSO GOING TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT ON THE TRAIL, FULLY PREPARED FOR ANYTHING AND WILLING TO HELP OUT RATHER THAN STAND BACK...

the appropriate protective adornments (bashplate, brushguards etc) before I need them rather than after the event.

The other thing I'm going to be is a more useful member of the trail

riding community. I'll be self sufficient on the trail, fully prepared for anything and willing to help out rather than stand back. My basic laziness has always seen other people do the route preparation and map reading, as well as fix bikes (including my own). I'll draw the line at joining any organisations or clubs, but one step at a time, eh?

In short, in this, my 37th year, I'm moving on. I like to think that my experiences last January have helped me understand myself a little more and commit to this personal off-road sea change. Or maybe it's my age.

One thing's for sure though - as a compulsive optimist (the '06 model non-orange two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a certain European manufacturer hasn't turned up yet, but I'm sure it will) I can bask in the warm, fuzzy glow of my intentions.

The reality when it comes might be a crashing disappointment, but for the time being I can at least dream...



SMALL WONDER:

Why don't more people ride 125s?

SMALL WONDER:

Why don't more people ride 125s?



Standard Brembo anchors work well on the lightweight 125!



Tiny engine...
...Big fun!



Quiet exhaust turns from a gentle burble into a serious 'Braaaaap'...

It's official... Apparently we're all getting lazier. You know the old joke about the bloke who thought *Manual Labour* was a Spaniard, well it's not a joke anymore, it's an idiom for our modern age. I'm not quite sure from whence this little nugget of information materialised, but it must be true because I heard it one morning on my digital radio alarm as I was lying in bed waiting for my hi-tech stainless-steel Frappacino maker to serve me up a frothy triple-caff-mocha-latte-cino. I reached for the remote to turn up the volume and listened intently to the dulcet tones of John Humphries on Radio Four's Today programme.

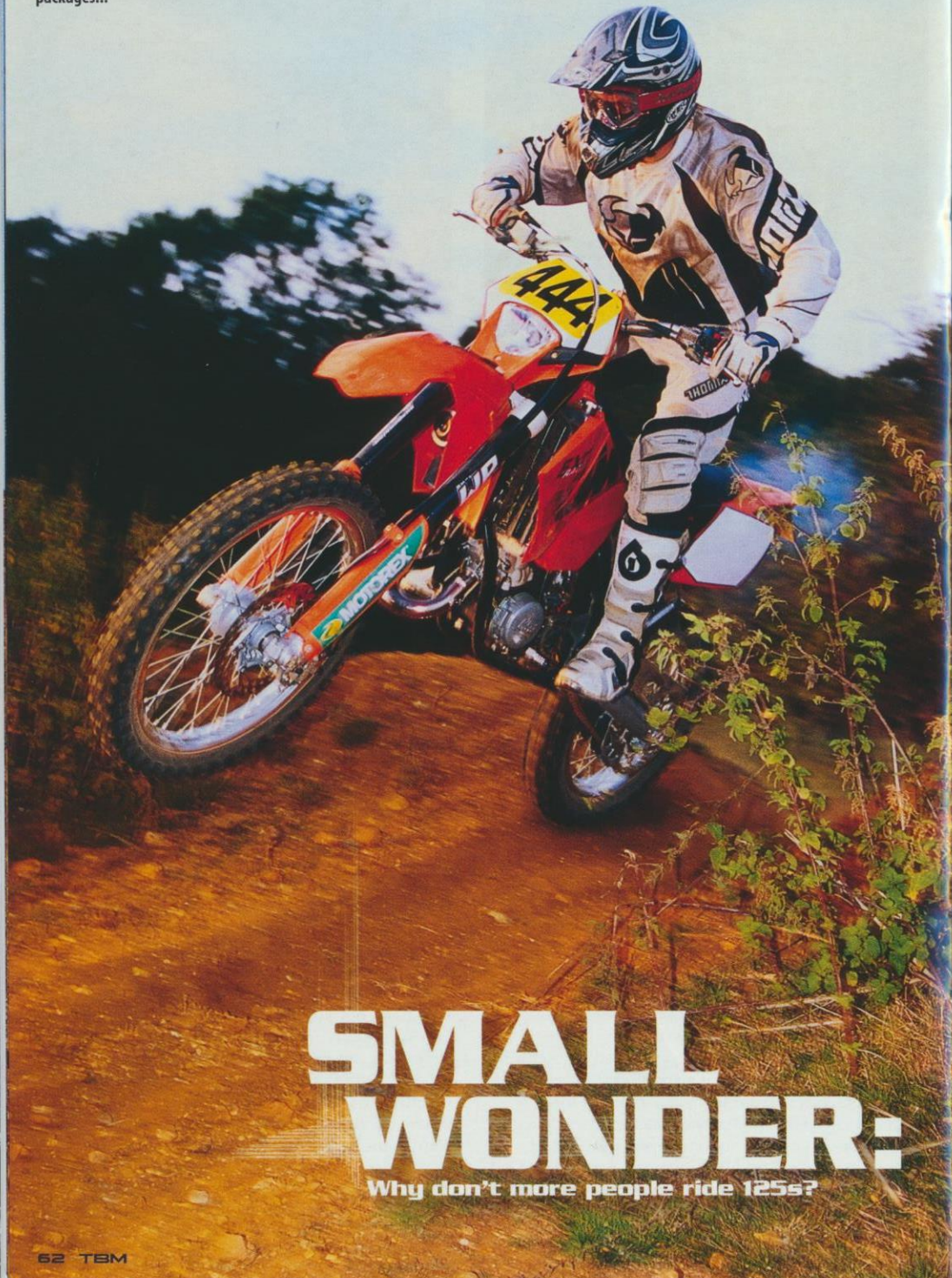
Apparently nobody can be bothered to raise their pulse past a resting 65bpm anymore, he summarised, unless they're either down the gym, having nookie, or watching politicians lie on the telly. How could this be I thought to myself 40mins later, as I stepped into my car for the half-mile drive to work.

Okay... enough already... you get the picture. It's not about laziness, it's about ease of use. Manufacturers want us to buy more of their products so they make them easier to use - that's the reason you can no longer buy a kick-start four-stroke enduro bike anymore. And thank God for that. But the decline in popularity of the 125cc two-stroke, what's brought that about? Well that's all part and parcel of the same problem...

Supersize me

You see a 125 may feel lighter than Posh Spice's lunch and more flickable than a Subbuteo Beckham, but you've still got to know how to ride it properly. You've got to be 'on it' the entire time: brave in the corners, merciless down the straights and the very last of the late brakkers. Contrast that with a modern 250 four-stroke where all you have to do is plonk yourself in the saddle and twist the grip, and you can see why most riders choose the latter. And on a modern thumpette you don't even have to stand up to start the thing - just push a little button. How good is that?

Good things come in small packages...



SMALL WONDER:

Why don't more people ride 125s?

Consequently those of us who aren't looking for an enduro bike with the power of a Dodge Viper have all got used to the feeling of riding torquey little 250 four-bangers which still feel light to us; manage to produce some quite usable power (even low down), and because they rev to the moon - they still have a half-decent turn of speed. That's how the CRF250X got to become the UK's best-selling enduro bike last year.

Well I'm here to make a case for the 125cc two-stroke, because I think that news of its demise may have been greatly exaggerated.

In order to do this I needed to get my hands on one of the very latest weapons - and KTM duly obliged, coming up with a spanking new 2006 125EXC which they offered to us as a long-terms. Erm... okay, if you insist guys.

Now I'm not a natural 125 pilot. For starters I can actually grow a real moustache if I want to, and secondly I weigh more than four stone. Hell,

each of my legs weighs more than the average 125 jockey, and as a consequence, despite starting my off-road 'career' riding 125s, I've never really gelled with the things - though I appreciate the principal of riding a bike which weighs less than a CCM silencer. But more importantly I grew up in an era when in order to learn your off-road 'craft' you *had* to be on a 125 before graduating onto something much faster and more dangerous.

Only 125s can do this because they teach you the 'principles' of riding dirt bikes fast off-road. Valuable lessons which if not learnt properly in your formative years - are unlikely ever to sink in. For instance on a 125 you should never-ever consider shutting-off, no matter what hazard is looming. Shut off and the race will very likely be over before the engine gets back into its power-band. As a consequence 125 pilots tend to go everywhere *very fast indeed*. Nor should you ever touch the brakes until you've sailed past every

A 125 worked for me...

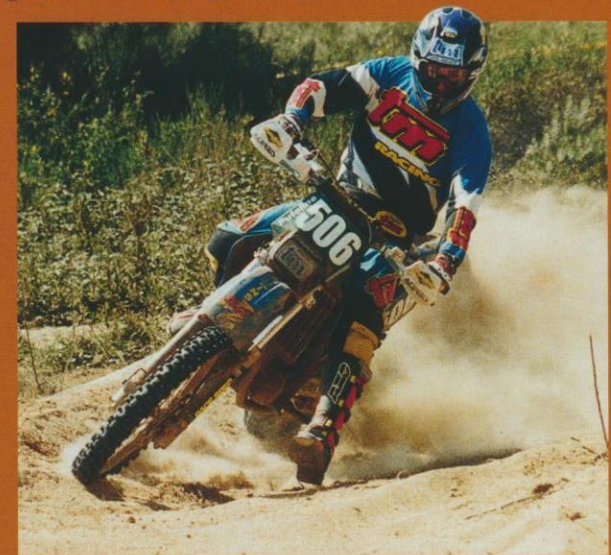
Unlike trials riders who often opt to throw their leg over bigger capacity machines when starting out in the forest game, having raced motocross on an eighth-litre screamer for several seasons before starting out in enduros, sticking to what I knew allowed me to concentrate on getting my head around things like time cards and tyre changing when I first started competing in enduros. There was never any thought of racing anything but a 125 - in my case a TM125.

In the right hands there are very few instances where a 125 *can't* be made to go as fast as any other capacity bike as far as I'm concerned. Far less tiring to ride, it was when racing long, fast cross-country special test that a 125 would put the biggest smile on my face. Being able to 'boss' the bike around, hold it flat-out across rough, rutted terrain, throw it into flat or rutted turns before accelerating hard up through the gearbox towards the next track is what made 125s my bike of choice for several seasons. Never having to worry about the bike 'biting back' is a 125's greatest strength.

Needing to work at keeping a 125 on the boil teaches skills that stay with a rider forever. Unable

to be lazy and labour the engine in too high a gear, needing to work the motor hard teaches you how to *race*, rather than simply ride, a bike. That's what makes a 125 great fun to use - the fact that you really can race them. And when you mix a well prepped 125 with fast, flowing special tests, the kind you get in World or European championship events, riding an off-road bike doesn't get much better...

Jonty Edmunds



single rider on the approach to a corner. And on no account should you sit down - ever. In fact if KTM removed the throttle, hardwired the carb fully open, then took away the brakes and the seat, they'd have a 125 for the true eighth-litre-racer. Because that's how it feels like you've got to ride it in order to go fast...

Black is the new Orange

I'm going to dispense with the details about what makes a 2006 EXC different from an '05 model because, well... we've detailed the differences at least twice in the past couple of issues, and if you didn't spot them before, you're unlikely to be paying much attention now. Suffice to say that this year the bike looks very black (and orange) and very sexy. Frankly that's all you really need to know. Our test bike arrived with an Austrian registration plate and a full 2.5hrs on the bore.

It started first kick - hot or cold - with the

easiest of prods (once I'd remembered how to use a kick-starter that is), and never stalled once during four hours of racing and a couple of hours of messing about afterwards. Better than that it felt lighter than dep-ed Barni's wallet, and it offered the potential for more fun than a stolen credit card - I was going to enjoy this.

We rocked up very late (even by our standards) at the Trail Bike Enduro Club's best event of the year (the annual - and very sunny - Benington enduro in Hertfordshire), and despite the name of the club, most of the punters were packing serious enduro weapons - though there was a smattering of tired-looking trailies at the start.

Alongside the massed ranks of burly 525s, 450s, 426s, 400s, 300s and 250 two-strokes (plus the odd XT500, DR-Z400 and CCM), our humble little 125 looked like a fly who'd accidentally flown into a spider convention. Truth be told, this was a hare and hounds course which really

You have to hit the bermed corners with the power on hard, otherwise you'll go nowhere...



A 125 worked for me...

I first started enduros in 1981 on a Yamaha TT250 then progressed on to a YZ250J (converted MX bike) the following year. After some good results a bloke called Pete Edmondson (Paul's Dad) came over and said 'He's a bit small for a 250, get him on a 125'.

So the following year (1984), I entered the expert class of the British Enduro Championship aboard a Honda CR that I had bought myself, as at this stage in my career I never had so much as a free spark plug offered to me! Anyway, I won the class and a year on I progressed to the main 125cc championship class which I also won on the Honda.

The next nine years were spent on a 250 trying to win the 250 class and the overall, twice finishing second (overall) to Paul Edmondson. So in 1994 I reverted back to a Suzuki 125 sponsored by ET James and Suzuki GB. It was an awesome bike after some mods that included a 1992 Mikuni 35mm carb, flywheel weight, long silencer and the conventional forks from the 1991 bike.

These machines were excellent - I won the '94, '95 and '96 British Enduro Championship (125 class), won the Welsh Two Day enduro twice and was twice runner-up in the overall British Championship. I also had my best ever ISDE result, finishing fifth in class in the

event which took place in Poland in 1995.

I think more riders should try the 125 as an alternative. If they are prepared to swallow their pride they might actually ride the 125 faster than their 250 or 450. A 125 is mega light and has plenty of torque. I have a KTM EXC125 that's done two years of off-road schools and it hasn't even had a spark plug out yet - 'nuff said'... **Ady Smith**



SMALL WONDER:

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Why don't more people ride 125s?



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favoured horsepower. I counted at least nine long straights, half of which were uphill and one of which must've been nearly a quarter of a mile long - put it this way the KTM recorded a maximum speed of 110kmh (just shy of 70mph) on its speedo that afternoon. Imagine how fast its little piston must've been travelling!

Ding Dong

At 10:42 I screamed off the start line in a flurry of revs and promptly disappeared backwards behind a sea of rampant 450s, then annoyingly had to sit behind them as they all went in single file through a narrow section of trees. Out into the open again and although I got on the power good and early, the pack of 450s just grunted away from the little two-stroke and blasted their way down one of the long straights. It took me

fully three-quarters of the straight to catch up with them again, but only the final 10m to sail past three of them on the brakes. That's the beauty of a 125. Apart from catching everybody napping, they can be hauled up so damn quickly on the brakes that you wouldn't've thought it possible to get braked in time.

This time I was heading into the woods with a crocodile of bikes behind *me*, and with a 'Yip-Yip-Yip' the EXC sawed its way through the trees pulling a clear 20m on the nearest bike. That gave me just enough breathing space to make up for the ground they all gained on me at the beginning of the next straight.

Meantime I was having a bit of a ding-dong battle with dep-ed Barni on board our long-term KTM400. He had blasted past me at the first long straight and I'd managed to catch him up and

overtake him on the brakes on the way into one of the small woodland stages. But he came past me again on the way out of a corner and this time I couldn't catch up with him till the end of the lap. We went through the lap scoring side by side and continued to swap places (and frame paint) three times on the next lap. Then just as I thought I might be stuck behind him, a fallen rider blocked his path for a split-second and I nipped past. At the next corner he ducked inside me and it was only by block-passing him and riding over his foot at the following corner that I managed to re-take the lead!

This time I led through the lap scoring and the lead between us changed twice more before he finally managed to make a move stick. At the end of the first two hour session he was 30secs in front, despite packing a 275cc advantage. Pah!

E1 Shootout...

To make this test a little more balanced we'd taken along our long-term (2005) Yamaha WR250F and planned to swap between bikes in the afternoon session so as to gain a true back-to-back riding impression. Fresh back from the dyno and sporting its new DEP needle, we were confident that our WR-F was now running the best it had done all year, though we had yet to prove that with a test-ride off-road.

Stood side by side, the WR looked like a dowdy low-slung trailie in comparison with the lithe and leggy KTM, and to be brutally frank I wasn't really expecting to enjoy getting back aboard the WR-F after a morning spent on the sprightly KTM. How wrong I was. Off the line the WR-F felt amazingly torquey compared with the KTM, and the fact that its motor would rev and rev, made the Yam feel pretty potent as well.

What's more you didn't have to rev it if you didn't want to - because the WR-F made decent power all the way down the rev range which allowed you to be really lazy with the gearbox and still make decent progress - no such luxury on the EXC, of course.

Thankfully the new needle appeared to have sorted out all our jetting worries and the bike pulled clean and strong right the way through the rev-range (except maybe for the merest hint of a burble right down at the bottom?). Anyway, it wasn't anything to worry about - it never stalled once and it never faltered, and the Yam was surprisingly easy to

Small-Bore War: 125 two-stroke or 250 four-stroke? Despite their obvious differences, these two bikes are a lot closer on a race track than you might think...



ride. Less vibey than the KTM and with slightly less headshake, better economy, more comfort and much more predictable brakes. In fact, it was only once I swapped back onto the 125 for the final two laps that I realised just how much easier to ride the four-stroke had been.

Yes the thumper is marginally heavier, but it rides fairly light, the suspension is arguably as good (though it's having to work harder to support a heavier bike), and the chassis seems to have the ideal combination of stability with quick steering. Not only that but the Yamaha is smoother, more comfortable, lower and even simpler to start, and I can see why legions of riders have plumped for the easy option.

Analysing my lap times afterwards there was

nothing to choose between them, with both bikes setting an incredibly similar average - albeit with one exception. Because my fastest laps of both morning and afternoon session were set aboard the KTM 125EXC, indicating *I think*, that when you're in the groove the little 125EXC is the more rewarding ride.

Truth is the 250F is the bike more riders will get on with. It's an amazing little machine which has abilities well beyond its power and capacity. Yet the 125EXC still gets my vote...

Quite simply its precisely *because* you have to work that bit harder to extract the best from it that it's so rewarding to ride. And in an age when we're all getting lazier by the minute, surely that's no bad thing...

Easy Life

However I was still coming to terms with learning to ride a 125cc bike properly. Trying to convince myself that I really shouldn't back-off on fast sweepers, getting used to knocking it down three gears for the tight corners and then having to tuck in down the straights. These are all fundamental requirements of riding a 125, if like me you happen to weigh more than 13st.

And if all of this sounds pretty tiresome to you, I don't blame you. If you're looking for the easy life when racing, then don't even bother trying to experience the thrill you get when the 125 comes on pipe, the way in which a 100-odd kilo bike can be chucked around in the trees, or the way you can sail past much faster but heavier machinery on the braking bumps going into a corner.

Not for you the intense feeling of timing your gear-changes to perfection and feeling the engine rip hard into its powerband. Better that you just dig out your ol' four-stroke mud-plugger and go twist the throttle, then feel the front end dive as you shut it off again.

I make no apologies for my obvious bias here, because this is a bias borne out of many years of frustration at failing to master that elusive 125cc technique, all the while knowing that dirt riding nirvana was only just beyond my reach. Because that's how it feels when you out-accelerate a DR-Z400E along a bumpy straight on a 'mere' 125, let me tell you.

Other great 125 feelings include: not being knackered at the end of each and every lap; learning how to push a machine much closer to its limits and still feeling in charge, and of course not forgetting the best one... the smugness of overtaking blokes on much faster machinery. Ah yes, that one feels good.

Where's me powerband gone?

Okay that's why it's great to ride a 125, so what exactly does the 125EXC feel like? Well, when it comes to getting the most out of the tiny 54x54.5mm engine it's definitely a game of two halves. If you ride it like a 250 thumper it dawdles about feeling like its 'powerband's snapped'. That is until you get it on the pipe (powervalve open) then it suddenly rips into the most electrifying delivery this side of a Jimi Hendrix riff. You feel like one of those cartoon characters where they start running so fast they leave their eyeballs behind. Nothing can describe the feeling of how fast it suddenly accelerates when it lights up, but what I can tell you is that the impression of speed is hugely exaggerated by the fact that it feels so flat and unexciting when it's being ridden out of the powerband, yet so bloody quick once in it...

There is of course an advantage to having all that soft power in the bottom and midrange, because unlike a 'cammy' four-stroke, you can (should you wish) ride the KTM out of the power and it won't bite you in the ass. This is especially good when riding through tight trees where you don't really want or need a four-stroke's innate tendency to push/pull the front every time you touch the throttle. Ridden this way the EXC really does seem to float between trees and can be flicked from side-to-side without using up any energy. Because not only is a 125EXC at least 10 kilos lighter than a 250 four-stroke (105kg fully fuelled compared with 115.8kg for a CRF250X, and 123kg Husky for the TE250), but neither does it doesn't carry any weight high up (unlike a four-stroke), thanks to its small and simple engine design, so it really can be 'flick-flacked' through trees very neatly indeed.

Chassis-wise the 2006 125EXC exhibits all the traits of a typical KTM race bike - that's to say lightning quick steering responses, suspension on the firm side of solid, and a razor-sharp seat and riding position. The 125 shares its chassis with the 200EXC which means a seat height of 925mm (the same as all KTMs) and a 1471mm wheelbase which is 10mm shorter than you get with the four-strokes.

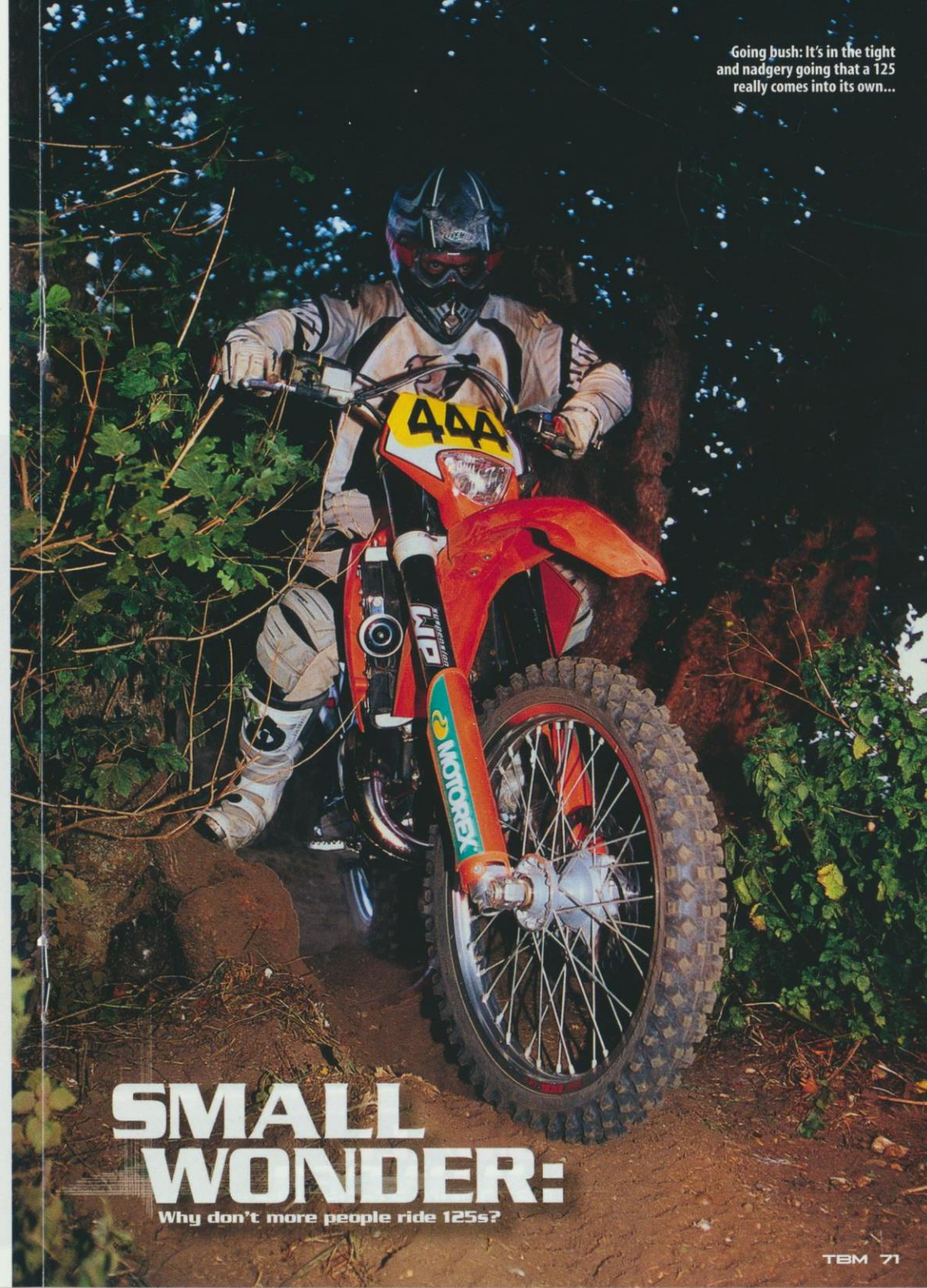
And although this difference might seem insignificant, you certainly notice the extra manoeuvrability it affords - though fortunately it doesn't suffer the same 'excitability' which you get with the 200. In fact the only time the 125EXC exhibited any instability was at the end of the very fast flat-out blast across a stubble field, where on the braking bumps it would shake its head from lock to lock - and that's no exaggeration. If that sounds scary then I should point out that even the notoriously stable WR-F did a similar sort of thing, yet on the 125 it didn't seem all that threatening - or maybe I'm just a bloody hero! Nah, thought not.

Brembo brakes? Not bad actually. The lever still came back to the bar but because you're always trying to haul up something lighter than the average TBM lunch, the brakes felt pretty good. One of the things I wasn't prepared for however, was the 125's voracious appetite for fuel. Halfway round the last lap of the two-hour morning session the bike went onto reserve - which meant that by the end of the session it had drained eight litres of juice (from the 8.5L tank) in just 43 miles - an average of 24mpg! Ouch.

Part Two

The afternoon session began on the Yamaha WR250F (see sidebar), but finished on the 125EXC when I switched back to the little stroker

Going bush: It's in the tight and nadgery going that a 125 really comes into its own...



**SMALL
WONDER:**
Why don't more people ride 125s?

partway through the session. Once again I had to get used to the KTM's relative lack of torque and zero-to-hero power delivery. But try not to read into that last sentence that the KTM has a narrow and difficult to use power-supply. It doesn't, it just has a distinctive two-stage delivery depending upon whether you're 'on-' or 'off-the-pipe'. This also has the advantage of letting you ride the thing in full-on attack mode or simply dawdle about if you want to: 125EXC trailbike anyone? Why not, it's amazingly quiet, leaves little evidence of its passing, and has plenty of power on offer when needed, and (as it had already proved) can easily cope with speeds up to at least 70mph.

But when all's said and done, the thing which impresses me most about the 125EXC is how well focussed it is. Take a look around the bike and

there's not an ounce of fat anywhere - it can't afford to carry any flab. The rads are narrow, the tank and seat are slim and the EXC has an air of purposefulness about it which you simply don't get with a thumper - even other KTMs.

I'm completely smitten - not least because I had an absolute hoot caning the 125 around a fast enduro course in very hot conditions and wasn't completely exhausted afterwards. But also because it reminds me that when it comes to riding dirt bikes, I've still got so much to learn.

And also... well because I guess it opens the door to another world of riding possibilities. Bikes which are light, easy on the body and just soooooo much fun. Or maybe it's another reason. Maybe after years of campaigning big old power-houses of machinery around the tracks and trails I'm just getting lazy after all...

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A 125 worked for me...

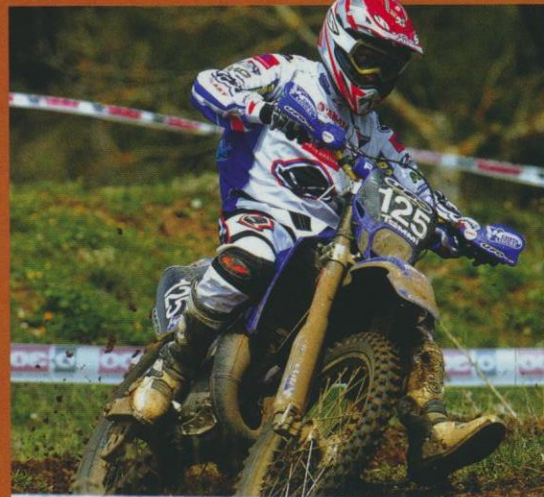
As far as I'm concerned my 250cc two-stroke world title in '96 stemmed directly from being a good 125cc rider. Having raced nine seasons of World Enduro Championship competition on a 125, and having lifted one European and three world titles during that period, I honestly think that there is no better bike to start enduros on - especially for youngsters.

Having less power, rather than too much power, is really important when starting out in enduros although it must be said that modern day 125s have a great spread of power. I actually started on an 80cc bike in British championship races, which allowed me to just race each event rather than having to learn how and when to apply the power. Basically less power equals more confidence.

Being able to ride a 125 to its full potential, something few riders can actually do, is so important. With a 125 you are always the boss of the bike, rather than it being the other way around which is usually the case with bigger bikes.

With a 125 you can be aggressive in the wet or the dry and have fun in both conditions, which is also important as a youngster starting out in the sport. When you then move to a bigger bike, a bike with more power, riding and racing is easier because you don't have to work as hard.

Of all the 125s I raced I think I'd probably say that my '89/'90 KTM was my favourite bike because it featured a full factory engine and prior to that bike I'd been riding a standard 125cc Yamaha (see picture) during the season before... **Paul Edmondson**



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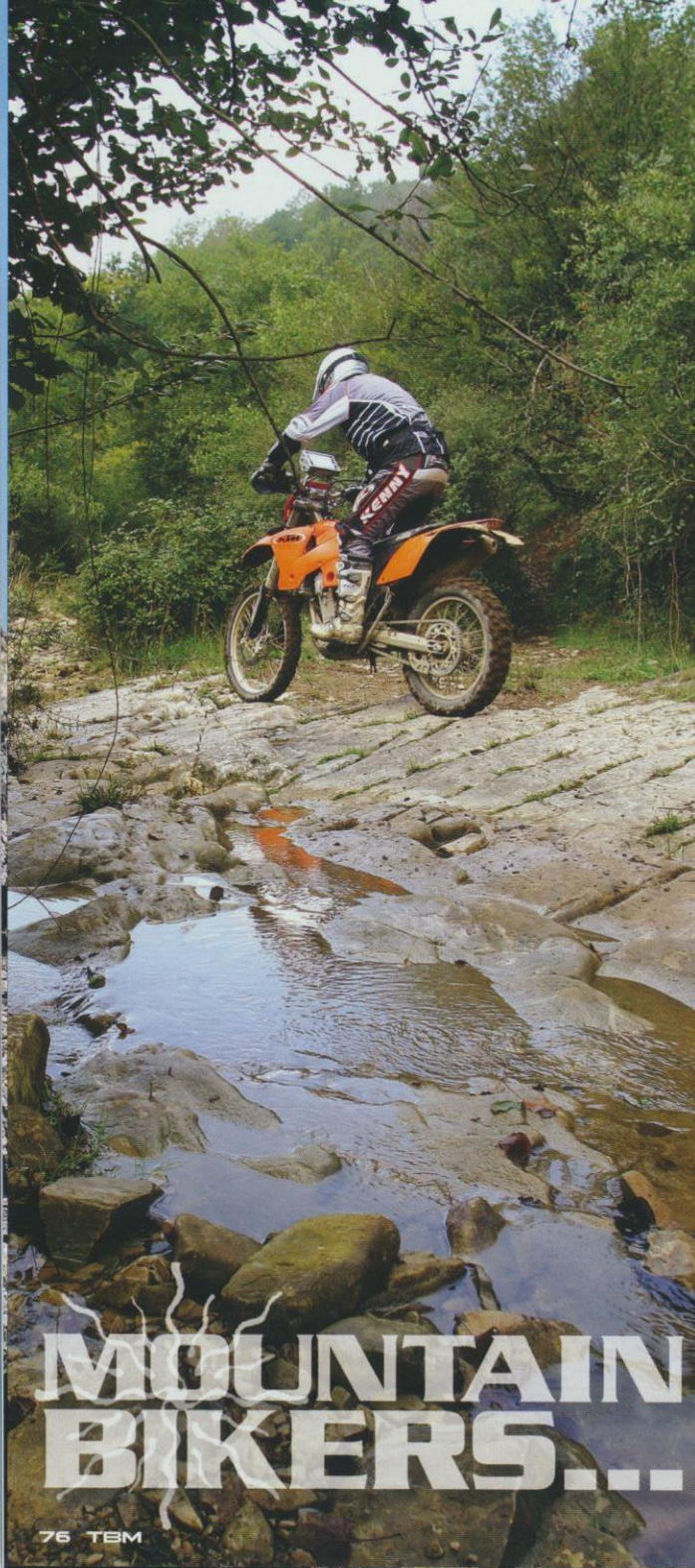
Trail riding doesn't come much better than this: TBM heads south for a Pyrenees Up...

STORY & PICS: SIMELBERN

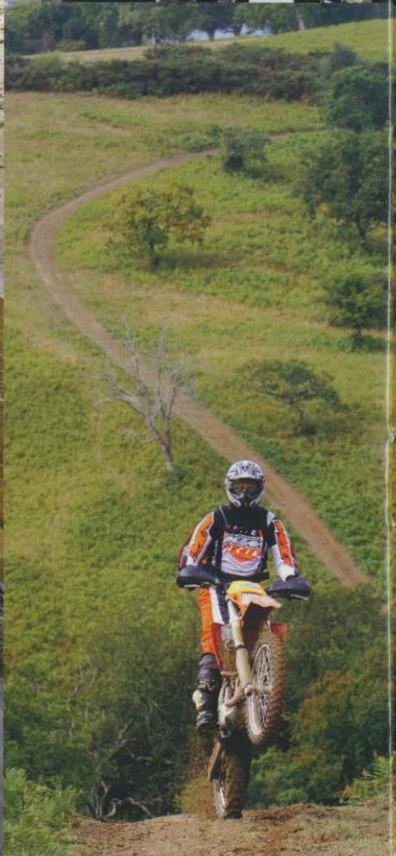
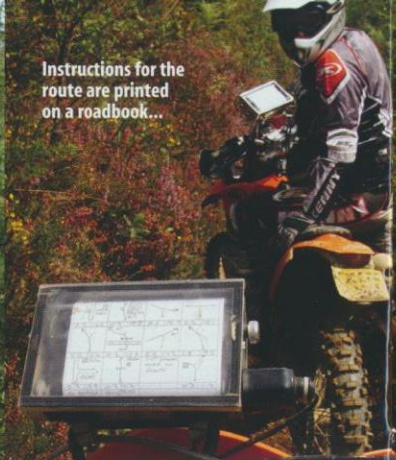
Despite more than ten years working in the dirt bike industry, I've never actually come face to face with a Vulture before now. But then again I've never ridden in the Pays Basque region of France before - that little corner of SW France which borders the Pyrenees and Spain to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. But that's exactly what happened as I rounded a corner on the very first day of the latest Sport Adventure trail riding holiday in the Pyrenees. There it was, all bald and ugly - I thought I was looking at a picture of Chris Evans at first, until with a few gentle beats of its gigantic wings it took off on a low trajectory and sloped off to find a thermal to play on. I almost felt like whistling that song out of Jungle Book...

Mistletoe and Whine

Rather like the annual release of the specially-brewed Carlsberg Elephant Beer, or a dodgy Christmas single, the periodic announcement of a new Sport Adventure route is both a pleasure and a pain... A pleasure because Chris Evans (for it is he who runs Sport Adventure) has a knack of finding the very best regions of France in which to ride dirt bikes. And a pain because after ten years of running such tours, Chris knows exactly what it is that British riders want - a technical and interesting challenge that they'll remember for a very long time...



Instructions for the route are printed on a roadbook...



And with his new route, Chris doesn't disappoint. Before the ride began, Chris said to me that: 'If afterwards, you've had three better days of trail riding anywhere in the world, I'll eat my KTM, Si.' Well to save Chris from indigestion, let's just say that although I've been lucky enough to ride dirt bikes all over the world - from Iceland to South Africa, and from New Zealand to Brazil, I've never encountered three continuous days of trail riding in such amazing scenery as this.

And at the risk of blowing a bit of smoke up Chris's backside for a moment - let me inform you how this tour came about. Most readers know Chris as TBM's couch-potato columnist, some will be aware that he's employed every year on the Dakar Rallye as a competitor-liaison agent, and some might also know that he 'manages' a French rider by the name of Cyril Despres (yes, the same Cyril Despres that won the Dakar this year). That gives Chris an enormous amount of credibility among the dirt biking fraternity in his adopted home of France. So when Chris went looking for a new 'route' late last year, he was offered help by none other than David Castera - former winner of the Gilles Lalay Classic (the world's toughest one day enduro).

Not only does Monsieur Castera live and work in (and help promote) the Pays Basque region, he also has access to large amounts of the landscape (for his Shark X-Trem Enduro). Land which he's made available for Chris to use. So you can see how it is that the riding was not only very spectacular, but also very intense.

Allo Allo

Like all Sport Adventure tours, this one began with the dishing out of 'road-book-readers' and numerous pithy insults as we congregated at a hotel not far from the resort town of Biarritz.

Chris's riders' briefings are legendary and consist of an extended period of insults (as he gets to know you), followed by just enough information to keep you abreast of what's happening. Each rider gets issued with a daily 'roadbook' which is a long scroll of paper containing the route directions (in the form of printed mini-diagrams). Each of these mini-diagrams has a distance (marked in KMs) from the last instruction as well as a running total distance. And each schematic diagram consists of a set of arrows showing the direction you're coming from, the direction you want to go, and any distinguishing landmarks (a cross-roads, derelict barn, a



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chained-up dog, that sort of thing).

The beauty of this system is that it allows riders to team up with their mates and ride at their own pace without having to play follow-my-leader at the speed of the slowest. To ensure that no-one gets horrendously lost there's a sweeper who can help riders with broken bikes/bones etc, and during the course of the day there are usually two or three checkpoints (CPs) manned by Chris's long-suffering and hardworking (not to mention easy on the eye) assistant Yasmina ('Papa...? Nicole?'). These allow the riders to re-group and grab any spares/fuel/sustenance they need from the back-up van.

Mousse no Chocolat

I'd like to say that day one of our three day adventure began with a gentle introduction to get us all in the swing of things, but I'd be lying. Beforehand, Chris had confessed to me in the hotel room we were sharing, that a lot of the going was on clay soils - 'it'll be alright as long as it doesn't rain' he said. So when I awoke early on the first morning to the gentle thrum of rain-drops on the hotel window I knew we were in for a tricky time. Of course that was the least of my worries - first of all I had to prep both mine and Chris's bikes.

Being the week before TBM's deadline, it was

impossible for me to find enough time to drive down (and back) from this inaugural event, so Chris had generously agreed to loan me one of the mounts from his vast (and expanding) stable of KTMs. What he'd neglected to tell me beforehand was that neither bike would be prepped for the job in hand. So before we even went near a trail, myself and a couple of other 'punters' found ourselves changing four mousses and prepping his bikes. Plus ca changes.

La Tour

The day began in earnest with a tricky loop through a very slippery and rutted forest

culminating in the first of the day's climbs which crawled its way out of a muddy stream and then straight up the side of a rutted hillside. A climb which would no doubt have been far easier had Chris not stalled right in front of me, half-way up. As it was this was the first of a few parts of the route where it was necessary to get off and push...

Once clear of the rutted forest, the going opened out to magnificent soft rounded peaks with spectacular views. Unlike almost anywhere else I've ridden, the route took you not only towards the peaks but actually right up and over the summits. One of the climbs just after lunch

Believe it or not this was the view from the hotel balcony on the second night...

It doesn't feel like a proper ride unless there's been a bit of pushing and shoving...



required a tricky little scramble over some large quartz outcrops to a remote summit offering magnificent views towards where we'd been riding all morning.

In fact the scale of the place was amazing, not just in its vast open beauty, but also in the sheer 'verticality' of many of the climbs, not for nothing is this part of the world a skiing region. And

frequently our climbs would take us up to a summit from where you could see the power-lines for a chair-lift disappearing over the horizon. And of course where there are climbs there are also steep descents, and Chris had chosen a route which tested brakes, suspension and nerves to their limits.

As Chris pointed out at the first day's briefing -

Basque & Ride

Sport Adventure's Pyrenean tour costs £320 for the three days, which includes the cost of two nights' (half-board) accommodation. You ride your own bike, so on top of the initial cost you need to budget for getting there and back (most people team up with mates and share a van), the cost of fuel for three days, plus the cost of lunches and a few drinks (Chris pre-arranges lunch which usually costs €10-12 a day). You'll need to own any modern and reliable single-cylinder trail/enduro bike (two-stroke or four-), which needs to be registered (duh!), nice and quiet (standard pipes only), and preferably fitted with road legal FIM enduro tyres and mousers. Most riders take a small selection of spares (levers etc), and a decent toolbox for carrying out any repairs on their bikes. Obviously you need to have European-wide third-party insurance, a valid driving license and a passport.

Although you don't have to be an expert rider to take part in a Sport Adventure trail riding holiday, it helps if you are fairly competent on a dirt bike and self-sufficient enough to look after yourself out on the trail in a foreign country. Having ridden all of Chris's holidays I'd say that this particular one is arguably the most challenging (especially if you elect to do Chris's optional extreme loop - which is at the discretion of Chris). NB it's likely that this loop will only take place in summer when drier conditions prevail and the hours of daylight are greater. It's also looking likely that demand will outstrip supply for next year as Chris is planning to keep the price the same for 2006 (though the non-refundable deposit part will rise from £120 to £150 next year).

To book yourself a place on one of Sport Adventure's tours, log onto the website sport-adventure.com or call Chris on 07900 826719, and tell him we sent you...



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one of the best things about riding the inaugural trip is that a lot of the technical stuff gets 'tried out' on the punters. Stuff which I'm happy to report will be staying in the roadbook and which drew plenty of praise from the assembled riders. And of course gave 'em lots to talk about at our hotel in St Palais on the first night, as we tucked into the speciality of the region - potato soup, followed by roast duck, and then tarte Basque (a sort of apple flan).

Va Va Voom

Day two was the hardest, and longest of the planned route (especially so, given that Chris had mentioned the possibility of adding an extra 20km 'extreme loop', for those that wanted it). The day began with some incredible climbs followed by more incredible climbs, so that at times you felt like you were up in the gods. Most of the time the trails consisted of open tracks on a mixture of grass, clay or rock but with a good sprinkling of chunky boulders just to make things

interesting. At one point the trail headed straight through a boulder-field, where you had to pick your way across and around the smooth boulders as best you could. It's fair to say that the navigation on this first tour was (at times) a little tricky, but none of the riders seemed to have any problems following the route and the standard of riding was universally high.

One excellent trail turned off the road and straight up a short, steep climb over an outcrop of vertically-bedded metamorphosed rocks on which tyres seemed to find no grip whatsoever. As the sun was by now, starting to climb fairly high in the sky, the combination of warm weather, high humidity and technical trails meant that more-or-less everyone chose to ride in just a race-shirt, but still managed to get a sweat on.

The descent was just as spectacular, forming part of the route of the Shark X-Trem enduro (they go up it); with boulders, stream crossings, narrow paths and fallen trees just some of the hazards encountered. After a great lunch

(consisting of potato soup, followed by roast duck and then tarte Basque - speciality of the region, monsieur!), we headed out for the afternoon on a lovely trail which began with a track consisting entirely of polished rock steps worn smooth with the passage of wheels over hundreds of years continuous use. This trail gradually deteriorated into a fantastic washed-out gravel track which crossed and re-crossed the new road the French authorities had replaced it with.

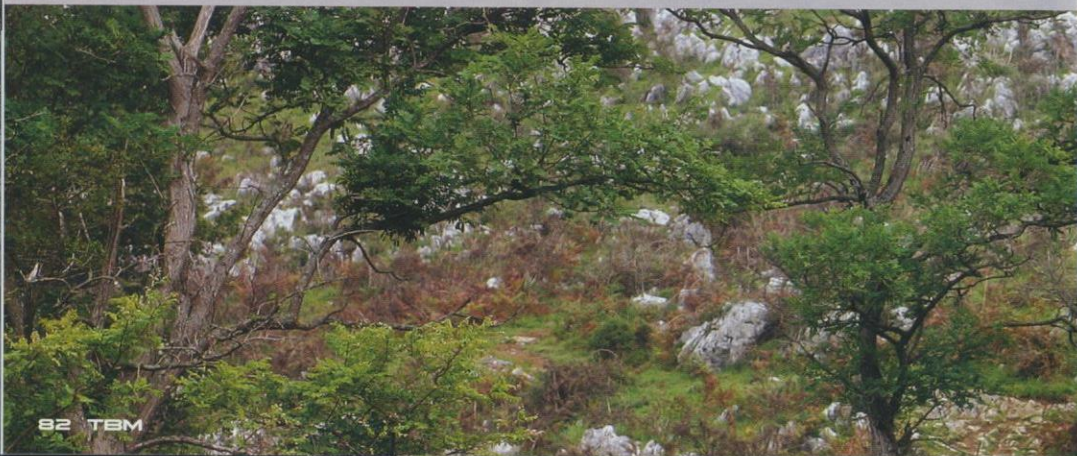
Re-grouping at the top, riders divided themselves into those who wanted to do the 'extreme loop' and those who didn't (about half 'n' half), and we headed off on our respective ways.

Perrier? No Perrier

So began one of the most memorable afternoon's trail riding I've had in a long time. Carrying my camera equipment on my back I was unable to use a hydration pack - something I was to come to regret that day. The ride started ominously

enough when Chris led us down a bracken-covered slope which was in excess of 45 degrees (yes, really), albeit we were traversing. And we were barely a third of the way down when Chris realised we'd somehow missed the goat track we were looking for, and everyone was forced to back-track. After half an hour of sweating, pushing and cursing, we finally got all the bikes back up the hill again and picked up the right track which meandered its way down and across the hillside, and which was at times so steep that my left boot (hill-side) was often dragging through the rocky soil.

But if the descent was memorable, the climb back up was truly challenging. Large boulders littered the path and made keeping up any sort of momentum virtually impossible. It wasn't long before the first of the bikes boiled up and progress was slow and tortuous as bike after bike got stuck and began to steam. But the severity of this climb was nothing as to what was to come. Rounding a corner we were faced with a second



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(steeper climb) and then a third (even steeper climb) to reach the true summit.

I think it's fair to say that everyone was looking well-worn by the time we all made it to the top, but now we had to get back down again. The trail led across the top of a few rounded grassy summits before following a knife-edged ridge (with drops to both sides) to a tiny peak from which the only way was down. Vertically down. About three metres. After which the descent shallowed to just a steep curve. And it was followed a few minutes later by a second drop and curve - only this one had a dog-leg in it halfway down, which meant that you had to brake (back brake only, otherwise you'd wash the front), and then flick the bike sideways. Awesome stuff.

The rest of the 'extreme loop' was equally as spectacular though fortunately not quite as challenging, and after two and a half hours we eventually got back on the main roadbook for the final couple of hours run back to the hotel.

But even this had some amazing highlights including a couple of very long rocky descents, some great single-track going, and one trail which approached a craggy summit through which two giant granite intrusions towered above you. The trail took us right up and in-between the twin peaks before dropping down the other side again through a boulder-field. Unbelievable.

Those of us who'd elected to do the extra loop



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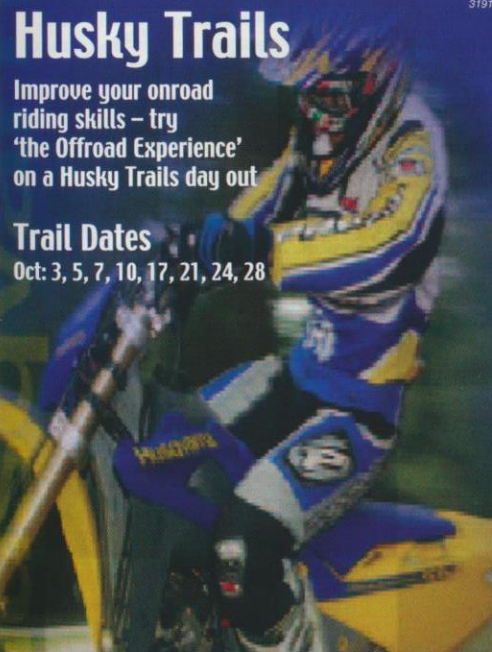
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The quality of light was amazing...

MOUNTAIN BIKERS...



didn't reach the hotel that night until nearly 8:00pm and after a great supper of (yup, you guessed it) roast duck, albeit preceded by a plate of Serrano ham and Chorizo, and followed by a rich chocolate pudding, we fell asleep to the sound of a waterfall as the nearby mountain stream cascaded over the rocky substrate...

Menage a Trois

Day three was warm, sunny and spectacular in the extreme. And although there were plenty of good challenging trails to ride, it was a day for sight-seeing and enjoying the ride. Away from the hotel we rode first around, and then across the nearby peak before descending steadily back down to the road. After a short section on tarmac and another good climb and descent across fields and down a goat track, a sinewy road took us to an excellent long grassy climb straight up the side of a valley to a rocky outcrop from where you could view the whole valley.

But the best was yet to come. A tiny tarmac road at the top of the climb revealed spectacular views of the surrounding high peaks which glistened and shimmered in the late summer sunshine. As the road became a track, the roadbook revealed one final surprise. Another long, bumpy grass-covered climb led to the summit of a peak - on top of which a large rock outcrop provided the foundations for a tiny chapel. The views from this chapel were sublime and as we stood and watched the vultures circling hundreds of feet below us, there was a sense of having ridden in a truly wondrous landscape.

Fortunately no ducks were injured during the making of our lunch, and afterwards as I headed off for the airport leaving the rest of the party to follow the final few kilometres of track back through the forest to the rendez-vous at the hotel, I marvelled at where we'd ridden for the past three days and what you could still do on a dirt-bike in mainland Europe. Long may it continue...

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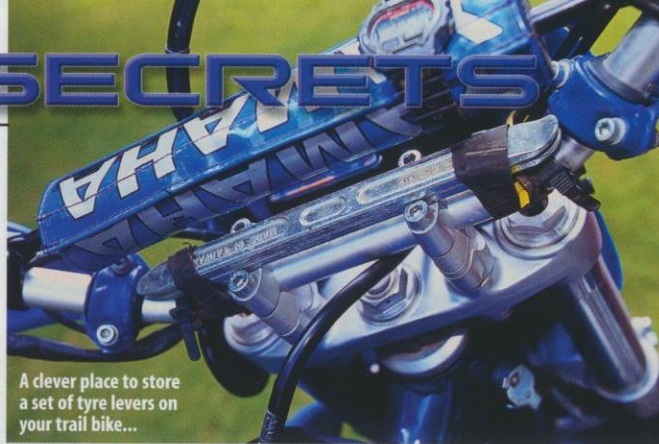
as featured on men & motors Nov 2004

TRADE SECRETS

Be prepared...

One of the problems with riding off-road is the need to carry a certain amount of equipment with you - equipment such as tyre levers, tools, pump and a replacement tube etc. Some riders get around this problem by fitting their bike with mousers, but mousers are expensive and awkward to fit, so the fact of the matter is that the majority of trail riders still use inner-tubes, and that means having the wherewithal to effect a replacement out on the trail. On top of that there's all the other gubbins you might need with you such as tow-ropes, tools etc. Obviously you never go out trail riding without your bum-bag, do you! So you might be able to stash some of this stuff in there or even in your hydration-pack.

But there is an alternative to carrying heavy and bulky items around with you all day (which might be potentially dangerous in



A clever place to store a set of tyre levers on your trail bike...

the event of a crash). And that's to attach them to the bike and let your bike take the strain...

Tools which you (hopefully) use infrequently (such as tyre levers) can easily be stashed on your bike - it's just a matter of knowing where to put them. Over the years I've seen all sorts of locations chosen for storing these, from the obvious (a tool bag bolted onto the rear fender) to the unusual (strapped to the swingarm), to the downright mad - strapped to the

fork guard (I kid you not).

Obviously there's always an opportunity to stash a certain amount of kit beneath the seat, but it really depends upon the configuration of the airbox on your bike.

But here's a really good alternative which we spotted on TBM columnist Mark Williams' TT-R250. He straps his tyre levers across the top of the bar mounts using part of an old inner-tube. And it works whether you use braced bars like Mark, or braceless

bars such as you get with KTMs.

This has a number of obvious benefits. First of all you can see them, which means you can spot if they start to come loose, so you won't lose them out on the trail. And secondly it keeps them out of harm's way ie not rattling around in your air-box.

In order to make these straps all you need do is to cut up an old inner-tube - cutting across the radius, making a number of small hooped rubber straps.

Carrying a few of these spare straps in your bum-bag (together with some cable-ties) is a good insurance policy. The problem with carrying cable-ties is that they can be difficult to contain.

One of the best places we've found for carrying cable-ties is tucked into either end of the bike's bar-pad - in our photo we've pulled them out slightly to make them easier to see - but once again this works with braceless bars as you simply lay the cable-ties along

It's always worth tucking a few cable-ties into the end of your bike's barpad...



the bars (under the bar-pad) and then secure them with a couple of short re-usable cable-ties.

When it comes to carrying a spare tube remember that you only need to carry a single 21in tube which will fit both front and rear wheels in the case of an emergency. And having tried all sorts of different ways of securing a tube on a bike (inc gaffa tape, cable-ties, bungees - and having lost a few in the process) we reckon the best way is to buy a specific front fender bag. These things are a universal fit and use four little hooked metal catches which attach the bag to the top of the fender - put your tube into the bag and position it as close to the

headlight as possible before tightening the securing straps. In years of using one of these things I've never lost one yet.

Finally, if you're tempted to carry around a can of foam sealant then don't just let it rattle around in your bum-bag or fender bag - I've lost count of the number of times I've seen these things burst because a tool punctured the can.

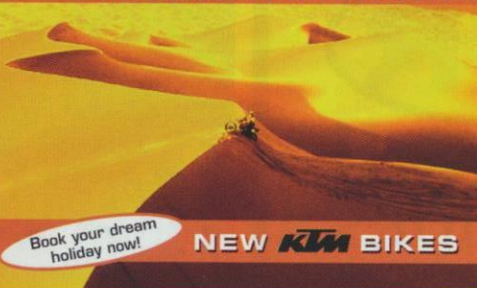
Instead use the can as a way of storing a length of duct tape by wrapping tape around the can two or three times over, making sure that it just overlaps the end of the can - that way you can easily peel off a strip of duct tape if you need to use it, and you've got much less chance of puncturing the can...

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PRETTY WOMAN

Following on from MSR's ladies off-road kit we reviewed (and Mel's been wearing) since June, another manufacturer has also realised the demand for female friendly gear.

MX clothing firm Thor have just announced their designed-specifically-for-girls Phase range. Constructed to the same high standard as the men's kit, it has been manufactured to flatter and fit the female shape whilst still being comfortable to wear.

The tapered cut micromesh jersey has a V-neck collar and features lightly padded elbow areas whilst the riding pants have been designed to

allow for female curves and have padded knee protection plus spandura stretch panels in key areas for better mobility.

But where this kit wins hands down is the availability and comprehensive range - it will be stocked in the UK and comes in both women and girl sizes. The adult 26-36in pants cost £69.99, the XS-XL jersey is £24.99 and the S/M/L gloves are £19.99. The junior 16-24in pants are £59.99, XXS-XL jersey £19.99 and XS-L gloves are £14.99.

Available colours are the neopolitan (pictured here), blue/grey, and aqua brown and all should be available from now. Mel will be testing some out in the coming months to see how it compares with the MSR stuff - to order yours call Madison on 0845 603 4612 or see ultimatepursuits.co.uk.



1 JUST IN CASE

Protecting your err, valuables whilst out on the trail is always a top priority. This Micro Case from Peli Products should do just that - they claim it's indestructible!

The range of cases are used by scuba divers, the police and military and are supposedly crush-proof and watertight. They come with a built-in automatic purge valve to allow for pressure equalisation (handy if you get your bike stuck in a flood of biblical proportions), and also an elastomeric lining to absorb impacts.

The 320g Micro Case can fit a wallet and small digi camera / mobile phone in - perfect to pop in a rucksack although a little big to carry around in a bum bag.

At £28.50 they're not cheap but if you do manage to break one it's covered by a lifetime replacement guarantee - pretty handy. To get hold of one call West Country Trail Bike Tours on 01460 281173.



2 STORMING AHEAD

American helmet manufacturer KBC has just launched their 2005 winter models including the new TKX Storm lid. Made from advanced power-core polycarbonate (plastic to you and me) there's a washable and fully removable Duralux liner and a double D-ring strap.

There's two adjustable under-peak air vents plus the normal chin outlet, but no ventilation at the back or sides. At 1502 grams it's a bit on the weighty side but at £69.99 it's amazingly good value and nicely finished.

Available in blue/white, green/white, black/white yellow/white and red/white colour schemes, it comes ECE 22.05 approved and an ACU gold label - call 01283 763120 for details.

3 GOOGLE IT!

The latest addition to the Kenny goggles range is the Optimax. New for 2006 these goggles are similar to the Titanium Pack ones we featured back in February this year, but slightly cheaper.

They also feature a biomorphically designed plastic frame but no frame vents. The tri-composite face foam looks to be fairly substantial although where the foam's stuck together with glue the finish does feel a bit rough.

But the fit feels pretty snug and they've been nicely styled too. A useful touch carried over from the Titaniums is the three-line silicon backed strap, which has worked well on our test pair all year. Oh, and they also come with a goggle bag.

All in all at £25.99 these goggles are great value and definitely worth a look - phone MotoGear on 01536 526460 to get hold of a pair.

STAFFBIKES BMW F650 GS DAKAR

Okay, so I know what you're thinking, 'have TBM got their long-term Beemer muddy yet?' And the answer is? Why yes... and no.

'Yes', inasmuch as I took it out around some tracks when we headed over to Tommy's Farm in Wales recently. And 'no', because the ground was pretty dry and there wasn't much mud to speak of. So perhaps it would be a little premature of me to comment on the bike's mud-plug abilities just yet...

That's not to say that the 650 hasn't seen a fair bit of action, though, and the fact that the odometer is now just a whisker shy of 3000 miles pays testament to this. The bike's been all over the country, and proved almost faultless.

I say 'almost', as on my way back from the aforementioned trip to Wales, whilst I was merrily cruising back east down the M4, I noticed something amiss. With the sun low in the western sky my shadow was stretched out in front, and I could see something flapping around. That 'something' turned out to be the weird plastic chainguard-come-mudguard attached to the swingarm. Only now it was half attached and flailing against the wheel. Both mounting bolts on the left-hand-side had come loose and fallen out, and with nary a cable-tie about my person, I was a little stuck. Just as I was about to put my Ray Mears hat on, and fashion some fixings out of the roadside flora (does anyone know the tensile strength of a daisy-chain?) I remembered that I was carrying my trainers in my rucksack. So I relieved a shoe of its 'lace and effected a makeshift repair. Blez would've been proud..!

Other than loose bolts, I do have to report a couple of niggles with the GS. I can live with the mirrors which turn 'soft-focus' at 70mph, and have learnt to 'ride around' the slightly lack-lustre brakes. But one thing which never fails to get my goat is the proximity of the ABS and hazard warning light switches (located on a chunky plastic panel across the 'bar mounts) to the ignition. With an ignition key and the alarm zapper on the same key fob, the panel makes it particularly awkward to release the steering lock and turn the ignition - hardly the mark of Teutonic efficiency and attention to detail.

With my whinging out of the way (well, for this instalment, anyway..!), I'll crack on and tell you what's new with the GS. Rather than a much-needed weight reduction program, I've actually added a few kilos with the fitment of a Metal Mule rear rack and aluminium topbox (as mentioned in TBM119's Trick Bits). Fitting the rack required the existing pannier frame to be removed and a small 'Mule subframe added. But everything lined up just fine - once I'd figured out that the kit came with a 'surplus to requirements' bracket for Metal Mule panniers - and the 'box has proved pretty handy, despite the somewhat predictable 'pizza boy' jibes from my friends. I've yet to really test out its ruggedness or its waterproofing, but looking at the overall quality, things bode well for long-term use.

Anyway, so far so good, but by the next instalment we promise to have got the thing properly dirty - even if we have to park it by the mud hole at our next enduro... **Barni**

Thanks to: Battersea BMW (020 7819 2670) for the servicing. And Metal Mule (01273 842094) for the luggage.



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PROTON JUMBUCK



Under normal circumstances, if a member of the opposite sex tells me I've got a 'cute little ute', I start looking frantically for a way outta' there. But when the remark comes from a strapping hunk of Antipodean handsomeness staring all misty-eyed at the traffic lights I know my 'Jumby' has scored yet again. Oh well.

And, as well as being far more adept than I at curbside pickups of homesick Aussie guys, it seems as if everybody else adores our little blue pick-up truck as much as we do. Now, I can easily understand the Australian love affair with the Jumbuck, seeing as it's a utility vehicle and no self-respecting sheep farmer would be without one, plus it's almost as cheap as a few slabs of Castlemaine XXXX. As a result, Proton's down to earth pint-sized pick-up has been a big seller Down Under.

But over here in the sheep-free streets of London, the 'Jumby' still attracts admiring glances everywhere I go. And at first glance it does look pretty cute and a bit more butch than the average Smart car. But its beauty isn't just skin-deep for me. After nearly 4,500 miles, our Jumbuck is definitely pulling its weight, with its latest mission being official TBM transport to the annual 12-Hour Dawn to Dusk 12hr enduro down in South Wales. It carried two dirtbikes plus the Ed and I down the M4 and back again without a hitch, and even though it was fully loaded it could still overtake and cruise at motor-

way speeds quite comfortably. The ride quality was greatly improved too, much softer than normal, thanks to being fully loaded.

However, last time around I did say the Jumby has a small tank but with a full payload, the fuel consumption suffers. And, as petrol now costs about the same as one of the Sultan of Brunei's divorces, it was just over £60 for the whole 420-mile round trip - though that's still nearly 32mpg, loaded! There's no doubt that a more powerful diesel lump would be an advantage, but there is a LPG conversion available, so I'd be interested to see whether that would be a viable alternative in terms of cost-savings.

And while there's plenty of storage out back, there's not a whole heap inside the cab, especially when carrying a passenger. As the Jumby didn't come with some sort of rainproof cover we had to squeeze our bags in with us in case of inclement weather, and let's face it, in Wales that's pretty much a certainty. So that's number one on my priority list for next time. It'll help on the security front too, as it is a bit of a pain having to lock what you can in the cab when you need a motorway comfort break and you're on your own.

Ah yes, alone again. Not content with stealing all the sexy sheep-shearers from me, the Jumby also found a friend at the aforementioned D2D - check out this month's letters pages for the photographic proof. As for me, I think the only option is to phone a friend... **Mel**

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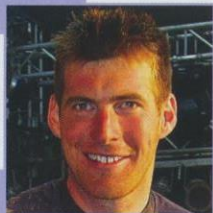
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'THIS SIX DAYS WAS PROBABLY THE BEST ISDE I'VE RIDDEN IN - THE TESTS WERE GOOD, THE FINAL MOTOCROSS WAS A PROPER MOTOCROSS AND I REALLY ENJOYED IT...'

I

signed off last month saying that I hoped everything would fall into place for me at the 80th running of the International Six Days Enduro in Slovakia, and it did. Not only did I manage to top the Enduro 3 class but I also finished as the outright fastest rider in the competition. To be honest the week couldn't have gone much better for me!

The Slovakian event was one hell of a race for me - one that started well,

KNIGHTER ENJOYS THE SWEET TASTE OF LONG-AWAITED SIX DAYS VICTORY...

continued to go well and finished well as I won my motocross race on day six. Not only did I get the result I wanted, the British Trophy team placed fourth and the competition was one of the best Six Days for many years.

Winning it means a hell of a lot to me, as it is one of a handful of special events, like the TT and the Scottish Six Day Trial, which is steeped in history. Winning it in its 80th year, ten years after I first went to watch the event makes my victory all the more rewarding. Also, being the first UK rider to win the event outright makes my result all the more memorable.

Arriving in Slovakia on the Tuesday night before the event I spent the days leading up to it walking tests and setting up the bike - a new bike arrived on the Thursday and I spent about half an hour trying to work out exactly where I wanted my bars set!

Unlike WEC events many of the tests weren't fully marked out, which didn't bother me too much because they change so much anyway at the Six Days because of the large number of competitors.

The first day of the competition is one that I simply like to get out of the way.

With my bike being new I spent the day making it feel like *my* bike rather than a brand new factory bike and took things relatively steadily. Having not written myself off I opened up a pretty good gap in the E3 class and felt good about the week ahead.

Knowing the tests exactly, on day two I pushed a bit harder where I could and again won the E3 class quite comfortably. Because I felt I was riding well I was able to back off on the really rough sections of the tests and just ride within myself.

On day three I had another good ride and, with the day bringing new tests, being behind the E1 and E2 classes meant that I got the tests at their best. I took the first lap pretty steady but then pushed hard on the second lap. It turned out to be a very good day because I topped the Scratch class [overall - ed].

I wanted to try and break away at the top of the overall results on day four but got caught out by a few rain showers that morning. With the tests having gone in my favour on day three, on day four I arrived at a couple of them just as it started to rain, which peed me off no end.

So I then rode as hard as I have all season in the afternoon as I tried to pull back the time I had lost to Stefan Merriman during the morning. Managing to produce test times that I didn't think I would be capable of by pushing hard and making no mistakes meant that I was right back up with Stefan at the top of the overall results. Having started off being a bit of a disastrous day it ended up being pretty good.

The two enduro tests on day five were the best two tests of the event as far as I was concerned. Fast and flowing and with the majority of them in the trees I only got to walk them for the first time at the end of day four because they hadn't been ready before that.

The only problem was that they were

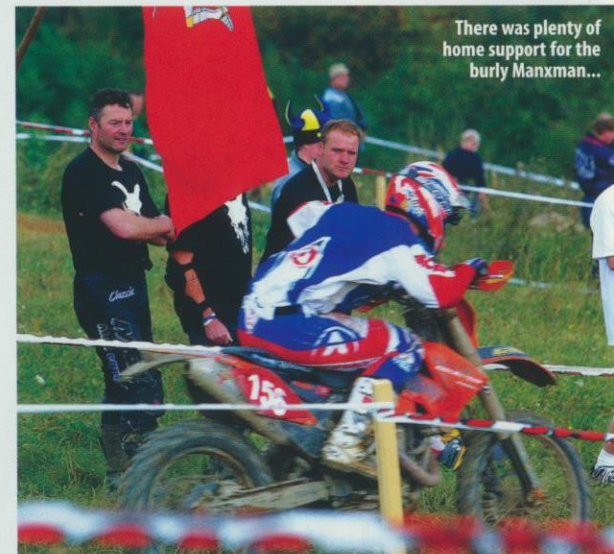
only timed on the second lap. Day five was also the wet day, which made the event more interesting because up until that point it had all been pretty dry. Enjoying every minute I knew that if I could have a good day I would make things much easier for myself during my motocross race. I was also concerned that the tests might get more slippery as each bike rode them but thankfully all the tests were as wet and muddy for the other riders as they were for me.

As usual there were a lot of riders whinging about the conditions, especially the Italians. With their Trophy team riders having not performed that well in the afternoon they wanted to get the tests scrubbed. The Clerk of the Course had other ideas though, which was great to learn because too often anything difficult gets thrown out. All in all the day turned out to be a cracking one as I increased my lead in the E3 class and also pulled ahead of Merriman in the overall standings.

On the final day my objective was to stay out of trouble during my race so that I could claim the results I'd worked hard to achieve all week. Having to watch seven or eight races before it was my turn to go to the start line made the day drag on a bit, but thankfully the weather stayed dry.

Gating second I soon moved to the front and pushed hard for a few laps before relaxing with a good lead. Everything went well apart from some of the Italian Trophy team riders trying to slow me down as they weren't sure if Finland might beat them if I put in a good race time for some reason. I decided to get my head down and push hard and ended up winning comfortably.

Although it wasn't one of the most interesting Six Days - the first four days were a bit samey - it was probably the best ISDE I've ridden in. The Clerk of the Course did a great job, the tests were good, the final motocross was a proper motocross, there were only a few accidents and I really enjoyed it.



There was plenty of home support for the burly Manxman...



Before going, the event was starting to become a bit of a ball ache, what with it being only three weeks before the penultimate round of the WEC but I'm really glad I went. The Six Days is a classic event that needs to be supported so that it will continue to exist and although it does cost me quite a lot of money to compete in, I'm already looking forward to the 2006 one in New Zealand.

One other thing that made the event enjoyable this year was the good British Trophy team performance. The week didn't start brilliantly for Paul Edmondson, Euan McConnell or Ed Jones but it got better and if the event had been wet, well, I think GB would have been battling with Finland for the Trophy team win.

Still, placing fourth is still a great result. When you consider that the winning Italian Trophy team had a budget of 130,000 euros we didn't do too badly at all.

All the helpers involved with the British team effort worked hard all week and although Britain has far fewer helpers than the nations that finished ahead of us, without their help, winning would have been a lot, lot harder for me. So thanks to everyone that supported the British team effort.

And hopefully by this time next month I'll have a world championship title to go with my first Six Days win...



PADDOCK POINTERS

✓ Despite having retired from WEC competition at the end of '04 the ever popular Italian Giovanni Sala proved he still has what it takes to produce good result by finishing third in the E3 class on day three and placing ninth in the end-of-week class results.

✓ Riding someone else's bike, competing for a team he wasn't expecting to be a part of and in a class different to the one he entered the event in, Kev Murray deserved a pat on the back for stepping into the British Trophy team at the last minute, riding very consistently and finishing the event.

✓ The final motocross races on day six were held on a purpose built, former GP, motocross track, which ended the event on a high note. Cancelled because of dust and safety fears last year, this year's motocross races brought a great event to an even better finish.

WORDS & PICS: JONTY EDWARDS

80TH INTERNATIONAL SIX DAYS ENDURO

POVAZSKA BYSTRICA,
SLOVAKIA,
13-18 SEPTEMBER



The event...

The Slovakian Six Days was, as many riders described it, 'a bloody good event'. Well organised, challenging, featuring good motocross and proper forest based enduro tests, the final motocross race brought the event, as it should do, to an exciting and enjoyable climax - and not a controversial and disappointing close, as has been the case at several recent events.

With the paddock situated on the outskirts of Považska Bystrica, a town of around 43,000 inhabitants situated 170km from Bratislava, the event used three main courses - one for days one and two, one for days three and four and another for day five. On day six a short 51km loop took the riders from Považska to the former GP motocross track of Sverepec.

On days one and two the course was all but identical to that used in last year's Slovakian

world championship round proving that the organisers certainly weren't interested in putting on an 'easy' event. Passing through some 40 villages during the six days, each rider spent about six hours in the saddle each day with two laps of each day's course being ridden by all. Each of the first five days saw riders complete around 250km per day.

On day one the event featured three special tests - two grassy motocross tests and one enduro test. Ridden on B schedule, as soon as the grass had been removed from the tests dust soon appeared with the Slovakian soil remaining hard and unwilling to rut up. On day three and four, two motocross and one enduro test were again the order of the day with the motocross tests again being grassy and the enduro test laid out on a steep, picturesque slope featuring a central wooded area as well as some spectacular jumps. On day five two motocross tests and one motocross test decided the winners.

Of the six days it was the Thursday that proved to be the tightest on time with most Club team riders only having a few minutes to spare at each check-point. Being the tightest day on time, and also the first wet day, several riders crashed out of the event having lost control of their machines on the fast, slippery tracks between checks.

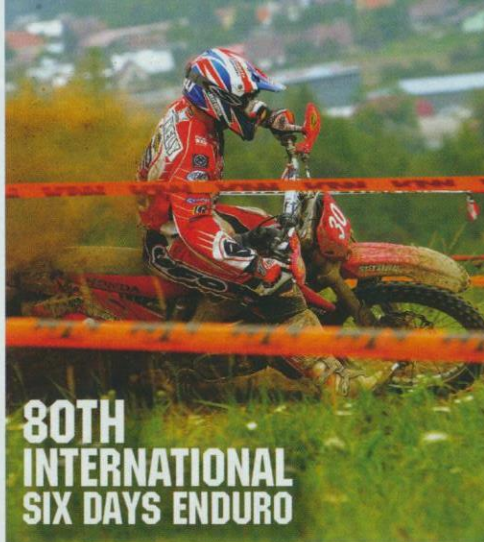
During the six day event the weather remained dry for the first three days with light rain first appearing on day four. On day five however conditions took a turn for the worse, or the better as far as most British riders were concerned, with heavy overnight

rain resulting in an extremely muddy day. With tests and check penalties often scrubbed when conditions take a turn for the worse, Dr Peter Smizik, the event's clerk of the course, stood firm and let the penalties stand, which pleased the British riders.

Bringing the event to an exciting close, the final MX was run at the National Motocross Centre track of Sverepec. Hilly, a little wet for the first few Enduro 1 class races, and featuring several exciting and spectacular jumps, the track was a full blown GP MX track lined by several thousand spectators who all came to watch the climax of the racing.



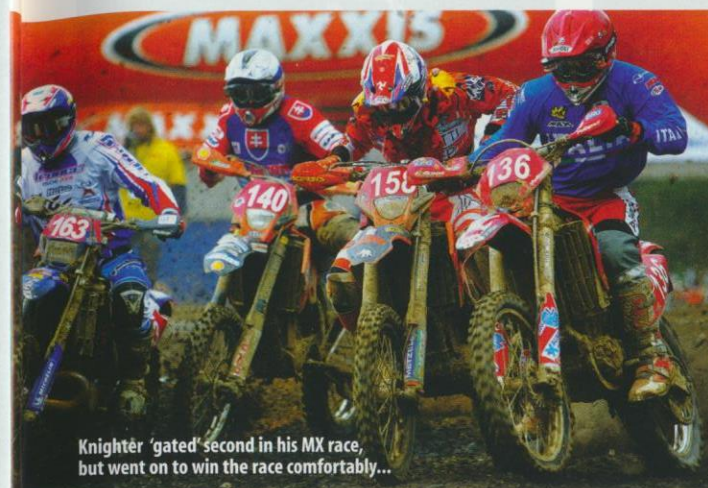
Aro gave it his all, but could only manage second to Merriman in E2 ...



80TH INTERNATIONAL SIX DAYS ENDURO



Mika Ahola (on a 125!) kept the fans entertained...



Knighter 'gated' second in his MX race, but went on to win the race comfortably...



And the winners are...

Italian riders Simone Albergoni, Alessandro Botturi, Alessio Paoli, Alessandro Zanni, Guiliano Falgari and Alessandro Belometti claimed victory in the World Trophy team competition in Slovakia defeating pre-event favourites Finland by just over one-minute. Despite only a handful of their Trophy team riders claiming a capacity class win during the week, the six riders performed consistently throughout the event to claim Italy's first Trophy class win since 2000 in Spain.

But it was France who topped the Trophy team competition at the end of the first day finishing ahead of Italy and Finland after all its team riders placed well within their respective classes. Disappointingly for France their placing at the top of the Trophy

team results didn't last long as on day two they lost Raphael Andre through injury and the team never returned to the top.

For Italy though things went well on each and every day of the event and they extended their advantage to three minutes over France at the end of the fourth day. Looking all but assured of victory with just two days to go Finland fought back on day five to close in to within one-minute of Italy while France dropped out of the reckoning having seen two more of their riders retire.

Despite Finland's best efforts on the final day Italy did exactly what they needed to do to win the event and even managed to extend the advantage they held over Finland at the end of day five. While a little over one-minute separated Italy and Finland, Sweden, who placed third, some 10 minutes adrift.

Sixth at the end of the first day's competition behind France, Italy, Finland, Sweden and Australia, team GB then slotted into the Trophy team results right about where most expected them too on days two, three and four - between Sweden and Australia.

Then on day five, the wettest ay of the competition, Britain's Trophy team riders upped their pace and with France dropping out of the reckoning moved into fourth in the Trophy team rank-

Paddock Pointers

British Trophy and Junior Trophy team riders formed the worse dressed nation in the event. With all other nations, including Venezuela and Greece, wearing shirts and painted helmets decorated in national colours, British riders wore a mixture of all different apparel, which gave them absolutely no team image whatsoever.

With Finland having withdrawn as host nation of the '07 ISDE, and with Italy and Germany having both said 'thanks, but no thanks' to staging the event, Iran is the only country that has officially applied to host the Six Days in two years time.

The Wales A team would have likely placed third in the Club team competition had Dylan Jones not run into problems on day four. Third on day one, the team placed in fourth on days two and three and then again performed well on day five.

ings not too far behind Sweden.

With Sweden just over one minute ahead of Britain everything was still to play for on the final day of the competition but despite the best efforts of the team's riders, fourth was where Britain ended up - two and a half minutes behind Sweden and comfortably ahead of Australia.

Of Britain's Trophy team riders KTM factory pilot David Knight produced by far the best performance, topping the Enduro 3 class on each and

Everyone's talking about...

...David Knight. This year's Six Days result (DK first overall) marked Knighter's coming of age and demonstrated his standing as arguably the world's best enduro rider right now. Although the Six Days is a competition for national teams, winning the overall (scratch) is what every rider dreams of...

As far as the British Trophy team and their support crews were concerned the number one topic of conversation PRIOR to the 80th running of the International Six Days Enduro held in Povazska Bystrica, Slovakia was the eleventh-hour withdrawal from the competition of Welshman Rob Jones.

With his bike already impounded inside parc ferme, and with tests walked in readiness for the week long event, Rob, who had been suffering with breathlessness since arriving in Slovakia, wisely decided to withdraw from the

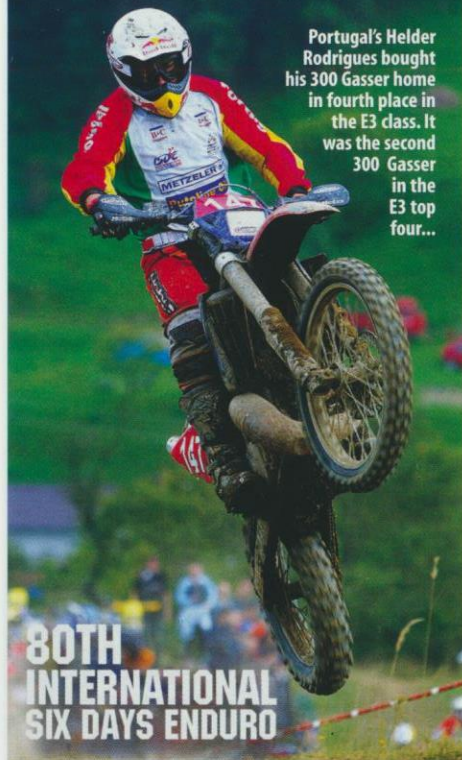
event. Having been advised not to compete by a Swedish Doctor, and knowing that starting the competition feeling less than 100 percent would be foolish, Rob's disappointment was clear to see.

Selected as a Trophy team member for the first time, and having spent large amounts of time and money preparing himself for his senior British team debut, Rob's departure left British team manager Gwyn Barraclough looking around for a replacement rider on the eve of the event.

But a rider was found - BAFMA Army A Team rider Kev Murray - a rider that has competed in several Six Days prior to the Slovakian event. Kev and his team agreed that he would step into the Trophy team as Rob's replacement.

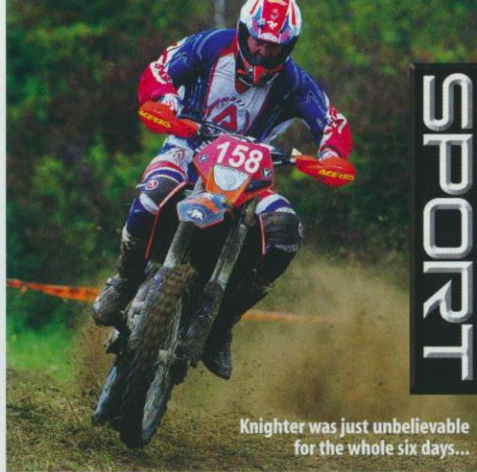
With the international jury accepting the last minute change on the eve of the competition, Kev started the event on Rob's bike - a bike 125cc smaller than the one he had entered himself into the competition on.

SPORT



Portugal's Helder Rodrigues bought his 300 Gasser home in fourth place in the E3 class. It was the second 300 Gasser in the E3 top four...

80TH INTERNATIONAL SIX DAYS ENDURO



Knighter was just unbelievable for the whole six days...



Club team competition...

The Finnish RiMPKK 2 Club team of Jani Laaksonen, Kari Tiainen and Pekka Viljakainen looked likely to be the team to beat in the Club team competition at the Six Days but just as the Finnish Trophy team failed to win so too did the RiMPKK 2 squad. Hitting a tree stump and holeing the ignition cover of his 525 KTM, seven-time world champion Kari Tiainen failed to finish the first day of the competition ending his team's hopes of a good result.

Topping day one was MotoKlub Jiretin Pfanner from the Czech Republic. Finishing ahead of Motoclub Lumezzane's three Italian former world champions Mario Rinaldi, Stefano Passeri and Giovanni Sala, it wasn't long however before the Italian squad moved ahead of the Czech team and to the top of the results where they stayed for the remainder of the week. Placing in third, Wales A team members Dylan Jones, Andrew Edwards and Rowan Jones started the event in the best possible way - dropping just one position to fourth on day two. Maintaining their fourth place spot on day three, on day four things went wrong for the Welsh team as Dylan crashed on the going and put a hole in his

water pump cover. Dropping half an hour the team dropped to 19th, which was a bitter disappointment but 'one of those things'.

At the end of the week Sala, Rinaldi and Passeri claimed victory in the Club team competition ahead of MotoKlub Jiretin Pfanner with KTM Polska & Motoklub Olsztyn finishing in third. Wales B team of Tim Foreman, Tom Knill and Craig Bounds eventually placed as the highest finishing British team in eighth with Wales A seven minutes behind in 10th. Team England was the only other British Club team who managed to get all three of its riders to the finish of every day and placed in 18th place with Chris Hockey and Andy Frost earning silver medals and James Yearly a bronze.

Of the remaining British teams Whitley MCC finished in 43rd with Robert Carey and Peter Batt getting to the finish. Rydale Motor Club saw only Jim Wright go the distance while Sheffield District ACU had just one finisher Philip Fallows. Chris Matthews from TORC 1 finished the event, BAFMA A Team rider Neil Hawker and BAFMA B Team rider Darren Wilcock also finished as did TORC 2 rider Robert Lynn. The majority of those that failed to finish did so due to injury with a few suffering mechanical problems.

every day as well as finishing the event as the fastest overall rider. Making no mistakes during the event, Knighter did what no British rider has ever done before and topped the event outright.

Paul Edmondson also had a good Six Days although his week didn't start as well as Knight's. Opting to compete on a 250cc two-stroke and not the 250cc four-stroke he'd been competing on in WEC competition Paul placed 10th in the Enduro 2 class on day one. Improving to sixth on day two, dropping to 14th on day three and finishing in ninth on day four... on day five Eddy smoked his E2 rivals finishing close to one-minute ahead of his nearest competitor Samuli Aro. In doing so he lifted himself into third position, which following a third place finish in his MX race would be his final position in class. Edmondson also placed fourth overall in the event.

The next best placed Brit was Si Wakely who finished in 15th in the Enduro 1 class. Starting steadily and performing very consistently during the week, Si recorded his best finish on day five before getting caught out by fallen riders in the final motocross.

Just one place behind Si was Ed Jones aboard his 125cc KTM. Having a disappointing start to the event placing much lower in class than he expected he would, Ed, like Si, steadily improved before placing in ninth on the wet day.

Meanwhile stand-in Trophy team rider Kev Murray did incredibly well to adjust to another capacity of bike. Kev kept plugging away to finish 22nd in the Enduro 1 class and like all Trophy team riders was rewarded with a gold medal.

Euan McConnell, by his own reckoning, didn't have the best of events and finished 20th in the Enduro 2 class. Performing best on days two, three and five, McConnell's below par results on day's one and four meant that he didn't finish as high in the E2 class as he should. Nevertheless

McConnell, like all the British Trophy team riders, gave the event his all helping the squad place in a respectable fourth.

Italy had more reason to celebrate at the end of day six as their Junior Trophy team also claimed victory in Slovakia having controlled the junior class from day one. With France having come closest to beating the Italian juniors on day one, Italy extended their advantage on day eventually winning by seven minutes with Finland placing not too far behind France.

For Britain's Junior Trophy team a steady start was followed by three quarters of the squad failing to finish through injury.

Despite some spirited performances on days one and two, Greg Evans and Oliver Moyce both crashed and retired with injuries. With Greg dislocating his wrist and Oliver damaging ligaments in his shoulder, Tom Sagar, who struggled during the early stages of the event decided to call it a day and withdrew on day four.

Leaving just Lee Edmondson to uphold British honour in the junior class, the Honda rider got his head down and despite wrapping his gear selector around his left foot-peg on day four and losing three minutes, got on with the job and placed 29th in the Enduro 1 class.

Better luck next time...

The 80th ISDE was a bitter-sweet event for France as they went from leading the World Trophy team competition and the Enduro 1 class at the end of the first day to finishing 15th best nation and 12th best in the E1 class.

With just two World Enduro Championship regulars within their squad - roughly the same number as the British Trophy team, France showed that despite having no former or reigning world champions that they had a strong team with no apparent weak riders.

But no sooner did France begin to look like the nation to beat, revelling in the slippery, grassy

special tests on day one, than they found themselves down to five men as Raphael Andre, who had placed second in the E1 class on day one, crashed out of the event on day two.

Dropping to second behind eventual Trophy team winners Italy on the second day of the competition, France kept up the pressure on the Italians during days three and four helped in no small part by Marc Germain's class topping performances in the E1 category.

But on day five, the wet day, the day that France should have pulled themselves back to the top of the Trophy team results, their hopes of victory disappeared as Germain retired with mechanical problems along with fellow E1 class rider Damian Miquel. Down to just three riders - Seb Guillaume, Jordon Curvalle and Emmanuel Albepart, the team vanished from the first sheet of the results leading only Canada, Venezuela and Greece.

Surprise, surprise

On paper Finland looked like the team to beat in Slovakia. And prior to the start of the event few would have bet against them winning. But Finland came up short and could only manage the runner-up spot.

So why did Finland, with some of the world's highest paid professional enduro riders in their team, fail to repeat their '04 success? Well... too much pre-event merriness certainly didn't help their performances at the beginning of the week, and according to seven-time world champion Kari Tiainen they simply 'rode like sh-t'.

But there were a couple of other reasons. Firstly, they didn't seem to have the desire to win that they've had in previous years. Secondly, Mika Ahola deciding to race a 125 for the first time in umpteen years having raced a 500cc four-stroke for the past five seasons resulted in the three-time overall ISDE

winner failing to be properly competitive until day five when it was too late.

But without doubt the main reason was because Marko Tarkkala, the rider that would likely have finished as runner-up to David Knight in the Enduro 3 class, failed to finish - crashing out on day three. The team also missed Juha Salminen's presence. Not only as a rider capable of contributing minimal daily scores but also as the squad's guiding influence. Without Juha the Finnish team seemed a little disorientated.



RESULTS WORLD TROPHY TEAM COMPETITION

- 1 ITALY 25:22.40 (ALESSANDRO BOTTURI, ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI, SIMONE ALBERGONI, ALESSANDRO ZANNI, ALESSIO PAOLI, GIULIANO FALGARO)
- 2 FINLAND 26:34.37 (SAMULI ARO, PETRI POHJAMO, MIKA AHOLA, JARI MATTILA, PETERRI SILVAN, MARKO TARKKALA)
- 3 SWEDEN 36:03.81 (BJORNE CARLSSON, RICHARD LARSSON, NIKLAS GUSTAVSSON, ANDREAS TORESSON, DANIEL PERSSON)
- 4 GREAT BRITAIN 38:30.56 (EDWARD JONES, KEV MURRAY, SI WAKELY, PAUL EDMONDSON, EUAN MCCONNELL, DAVID KNIGHT)
- 5 AUSTRALIA 48:10.76 (STEFAN MERRIMAN, JAKE STAPLETON, ANTHONY ROBERTS, JEHI WILLIS, BRAD WILLISCROFT, DAMIAN SMITH)
- 6 SLOVAKIA 52:13.65 (ROBERT KAPAJCIK, IVAN JAKES, JAN HREHOR, RADEK MATOSKA, STEFAN SUITKO, JARASLAV KATRINAK)
- 7 CZECH REPUBLIC 1:00:31.59 (ROMAN MICHALIK, VITA KUKLIK, RADEK TOMAN, MICHAL RUDOLF, KAREL SCHEDER, BOHUMIL POSLEDNI)
- 8 PORTUGAL 1:26:10.88 (HELDER RODRIGUES, PAULO GONCALVES, CARLOS SANTOS, PEDRO ENES, FERNANDO FERREIRA, PAULO FELICIA)
- 9 NETHERLANDS 1:29:31.49 (RALPHI HUBERS, ERIK EGGINS, ERIK DAVIDS, ERWIN PLEKKNIPOL, PEDRO TRAGTER, MICHAL VISSER)
- 10 USA 1:32:05.38 (KURT CASELLI, JIMMY JARRETT, FRED HOSE, AARON KOPP, JASON DAHNERS, JOHN BARBER)
- 11 BELGIUM; 12. HUNGARY; 13. GERMANY; 14. POLAND; 15. FRANCE; 16. CANADA; 17. VENEZUELA

WORLD JUNIOR TROPHY TEAM COMPETITION

- 1 ITALY 29:42.87 (ANDREA BECONI, MAURIZIO MICHELIZ, PAOLO BERNARDI, MANUEL PIEVANI)
- 2 FRANCE 36:47.39 (JULIEN GAUTHER, MARC BOURGEOIS, JULIEN DUBAC, SEBASTIEN DENIS)
- 3 FINLAND 38:35.28 (VALTTERI SALONEN, EERO REMES, PATRICK WIKMAN, OLLI TURMA)
- 4 SWEDEN 49:18.73 (JOAKIM LJUNGREN, PATRICK WIKSELL, RIKARD WRESSEL, CALLE SJO)
- 5 SLOVAKIA 1:03:52.03 (JURAJ DOZSA, FILIP KVACKAJ, MAREK GIERTL, TOMAS CIPKA)
- 6 CZECH REPUBLIC 1:05:55.36 (ROBERT SIP, JAKUB HORAK, TOMAS CISAR, LUKAS SEDLACEK)
- 7 AUSTRALIA 1:06:40.44 (BLAKE HORE, ADAM LEES, DARREN LLOYD, SHANNON LEWRY)
- 8 USA 1:18:31.70 (WALLY PALMER, RUSSELL BOBBITT, RYAN POWELL, CODY MASTIN)
- 9 PORTUGAL 1:25:18.45 (GUSTAVO GAUDENCIO, ANTONIONIO MAIO, GONCALO REIS, BRUNO ALVARINHAS)
- 10 NETHERLANDS 2:01:43.03 (MARK WASSINK, HANS VOGELS, RICK KOCK, MIKE KOCK)
- 11 GREAT BRITAIN 14:31:51.1 (LEE EDMONDSON, TOM SAGAR, OLIVER MOYCE, GREG EVANS)
- 12 VENEZUELA 34:02:28.0 (NICOLAS CARDONA)

CLUB TEAMS

- 1 MOTO CLUB LUMEZZANE 39:05.56 (GIOVANNI SALA, MARIO RINALDI, STEFANO PASSERI)
- 2 MOTOKLUB JIRETH PFANNER 50:43.38 (MARTIN GOTTVOLD, ZDENIK GOTTVOLD, MARTIN MALLET)
- 3 KTM POLSKA & MOTOKLUB OLSZTYN 54:45.88 (LUCUS KUROWSKI, SEBASTIAN KRYWULT, KUKASZ BARTOS)
- 4 SNF CLUB TEAM 1:00:02.01 (EMIL CUNDERLIK, IVAN CERNY, ZLATKO NOVOSAD)
- 5 MOTORCYCLING NEW ZEALAND 1:00:35.44 (PAUL WHIBLEY, SEAN CLARKE, KELLY PATTERSON)

- 6 TEAM ITALIA UNDER 21 1:09:57.34 (IVANNI COMINOTTO, MAURIZIO FACCHIN, CARLO CONFORTI)
- 8 WALES B 1:21:16.55 (CRAIG BOUNDS, TOM KNILL, TIM FOREMAN)
- 10 WALES A 1:28:15.86 (DYLAN JONES, ANDREW EDWARDS, ROWAN JONES)
- 18 TEAM ENGLAND 2:44:18.97 (CHRIS HOCKEY, ANDY FROST, JAMES YEARLEY)
- 43 WHITLEY MCC 18:17.58 (ROBERT CAREY, PETER BATT, LAWRENCE CAIT)
- 57 RYEDALE MOTOR CLUB 13:50:42.2 (RICKY MAIR, JIM WRIGHT, MICK SEWARD)
- 60 SHEFFIELD DISTRICT ACU 15:43:52.9 (PHILIP FALLOWS, ROBERT POULTON, JULIAN CRIMP)
- 61 TORC 17:54:24.3 (CHRIS MATTHEWS, NIAL STAPLETON, PHILIP NOONE)
- 64 BAFMA B TEAM 19:17:07.7 (NEIL HAWKER, JOHN NELSON, PAUL HEARIN)
- 68 BAFMA A TEAM 21:02:55.3 (DARREN WILLCOCK, DAVID JOHNS)
- 72 TORC 2 24:35:58.5 (ROBERT LYNN)

ENDURO 1 CLASS

1. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 2:29:19.26; 2. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 2:29:30.83; 3. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 2:29:42.25; 4. MIKA AHOLA (HUSQVARNA) 2:30:08.48; 5. RICHARD LARSSON (TM) 2:31:17.67; 6. ROMAN MICHALIK (TM) 2:31:37.81; 7. NIKLAS GUSTAVSSON (KTM) 2:32:38.03; 8. ROBERT KAPAJCIK (KTM) 2:33:46.05; 9. PETERRI SILVAN (KTM) 2:33:49.11; 10. MICHAL SZUSTER (HONDA) 2:34:19.81; 11. SI WAKELY (GOLD) 2:38:12.78; 12. EDWARD JONES (GOLD) 2:38:48.69; 13. KEV MURRAY (GOLD) 2:42:10.40; 14. LEE EDMONDSON (SILVER) 2:46:32.53; 15. ANDREW EDWARDS (SILVER) 2:47:35.29; 16. CHRIS HOCKEY (SILVER) 2:48:52.17; 17. ROBERT LYNN (SILVER) 3:02:32.66; 18. DYLAN JONES (SILVER) 3:16:05.67; 19. DARREN WILLCOCK (SILVER) 3:20:55.23; 20. PETER BATT (BRONZE) 4:11:01.74; 21. PHILLIP FALLOWS (BRONZE) 4:31:22.70; 22. NEIL HAWKER (BRONZE) 4:32:02.97

ENDURO 2 CLASS

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 2:25:39.24; 2. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 2:27:11.62; 3. PAUL EDMONDSON (HONDA) 2:28:22.28; 4. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 2:28:22.58; 5. PETRI POHJAMO (TM) 2:29:51.91; 6. KURT CASELLI (KTM) 2:30:15.02; 7. VALTTERI SALONEN (HONDA) 2:30:25.58; 8. BJORNE CARLSSON (HUSABERG) 2:30:27.55; 9. GIOVANNI SALA (KTM) 2:30:47.86; 10. JACOB STAPLETON (TM) 2:32:09.54; 11. PAUL WHIBLEY (GOLD) 2:33:01.07; 12. EUAN MCCONNELL (GOLD) 2:34:52.09; 13. ROWAN JONES (SILVER) 2:41:56.30; 14. ANDY FROST (SILVER) 2:45:23.10; 15. TIM FOREMAN (SILVER) 2:49:27.11; 16. TOM KNILL (SILVER) 2:52:38.21; 17. KELLY PATTERSON (SILVER) 2:53:59.03; 18. CHRIS HOCKEY (BRONZE) 4:23:36.91; 19. JAMES YEARLEY (BRONZE) 4:25:04.69

ENDURO 3 CLASS

1. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 2:23:35.17; 2. SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 2:28:29.88; 3. ALESSANDRO ZANNI (HONDA) 2:30:03.32; 4. HELDER RODRIGUES (GAS GAS) 2:31:01.74; 5. ALESSIO PAOLI (TM) 2:31:15.36; 6. VITA KUKLIK (KTM) 2:31:56.16; 7. THIERRY KLUTZ (GAS GAS) 2:32:13.66; 8. MARCUS KEHR (KTM) 2:33:56.87; 9. DANIEL PERSSON (HUSABERG) 2:35:15.95; 10. MARIO RINALDI (HUSABERG) 2:36:20.16; 11. CRAIG BOUNDS (SILVER) 2:51:13.32; 12. ROBERT CAREY (BRONZE) 3:26:47.71; 13. JIM WRIGHT (BRONZE) 3:30:37.81; 14. PETER CAMPBELL (BRONZE) 3:38:22.91; 15. BERNARD MCKEVITT (BRONZE) 4:38:02.05;

MANUFACTURERS

- 1 FARIOLI KTM 8:05.88 (DAVID KNIGHT, ALESSANDRO BOTTURI, ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI)
- 2 HM HONDA ZAMARDO 15:48.45 (SIMONE ALBERGONI, ALESSANDRO ZANNI, VALTTERI SALONEN)
- 3 TM FACTORY A (PETRI POHJAMO, ALESSIO PAOLI, RICHARD LARSSON)
- 4 HUSABERG 28:09.36 (BJORNE CARLSSON, JOAKIM LJUNGREN, DANIEL PERSSON)
- 5 YAMAHA UFO CORSE B 31:44.08 (ANDREA BECONI, MAURIZIO MICHELIZ, MANUEL PIEVANI)
- 6 TM FACTORY B 53:39.63 (ROMAN MICHALIK, JAKE STAPLETON, DARREN LLOYD)

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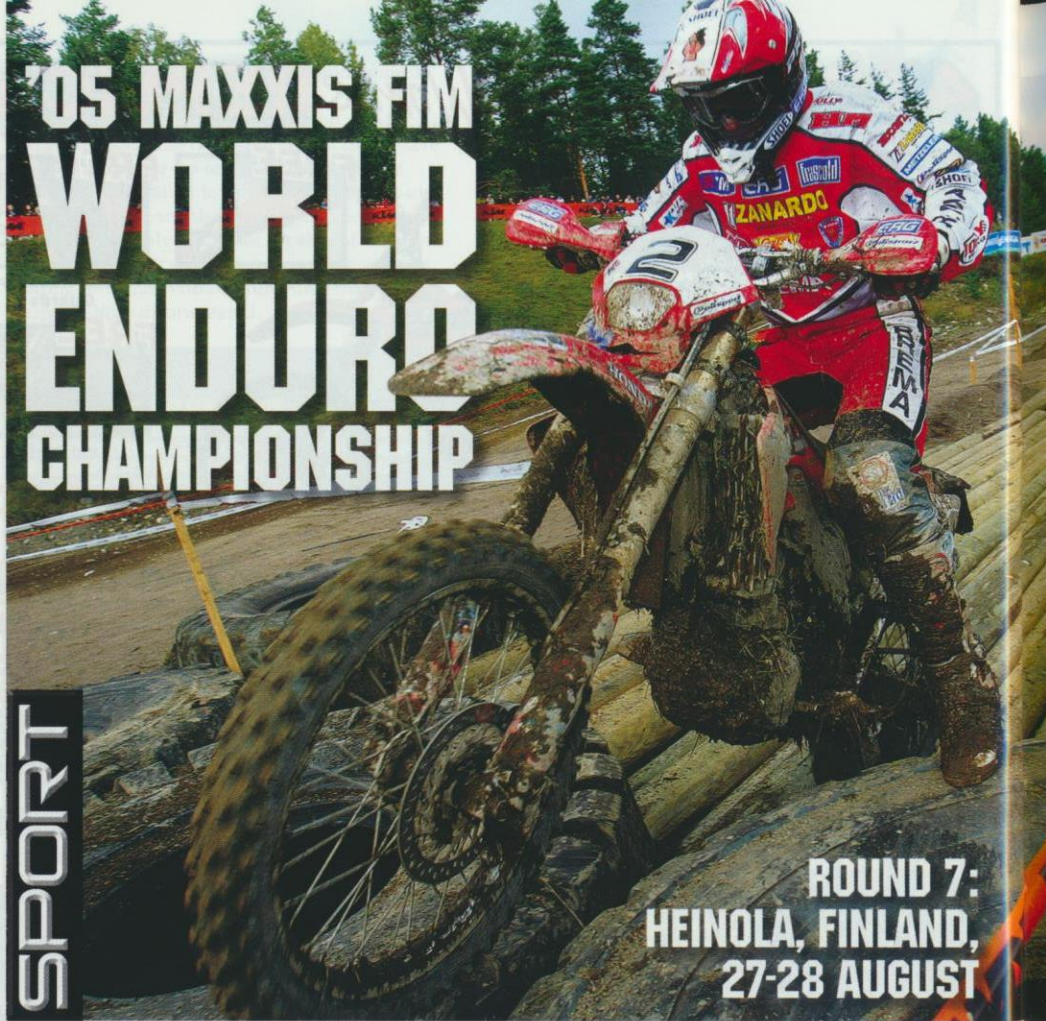
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'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

SPORT



ROUND 7:
HEINOLA, FINLAND,
27-28 AUGUST

Everyone's talking about...

Before the seventh round of the World Enduro Championship had even started drama struck the Heinola staged event when CH Racing Husqvarna team mates Anders Eriksson and Mika Saarenkoski collided head-on at high speed. Making last minutes adjustments to their bikes, the pair mysteriously hit each other while riding around an unofficial training area with both sustaining serious injuries and needing to be rushed to Helsinki hospital. Lying on the ground Anders' left leg soaked in blood and Saarenkoski unconscious, the pair had to undergo lengthy operations in order to re-build their broken bodies. With Saarenkoski needing to have his left wrist plated and bone taken from his hip to rebuild his smashed jaw, Anders suffered multiple fractures of his left leg including a nasty double compound fracture of his femur. Initially told that he would be lucky if he didn't lose his leg,

a 15-hour operation ended with the burly Swede being told that he should (because of his high level of fitness), make a full recovery. With his carbon fibre knee brace having shattered on impact, Eriksson also suffered serious soft tissue damage to his thigh, which would require a skin graft to close the wound. Despite both riders being lucky to be alive, the incident understandably cast a shadow over the event. It also raised the issue of organisers providing a comprehensive, official training area for the riders.

And the winners are...

Ivan Cervantes in the Enduro 1 class, Stefan Merriman in Enduro 2 and David Knight in Enduro 3 class didn't have things all their own way in Finland as home riders Valtteri Salonen and Marko Tarkkala claimed their first ever WEC wins with E2 and E3 class victories on day one.

Topping the E1 class on both days Farioli KTM rider Ivan Cervantes proved, as he has time and



On day one, Paul Eddy got to grips with the Finnish conditions to record a top-five result, but day two saw an uncharacteristic DNF from the normally consistent Midlander...

again this season, that it won't be long before he claims his first world championship title. As confident and relaxed as ever, the flamboyant Spaniard was initially pushed hard by French rider Marc Germain on day one and Italian Simone Albergoni on day two but remained cool, calm and collected to win both days by around half a minute each.

On day one there was little to choose between the handful of riders that placed behind Cervantes. Claiming the runner-up spot was Yamaha France rider Marc Germain who again proved to be the biggest threat to the Spaniard while UFO Corse Yamaha teamster and third

placed finisher in last year's E1 championship Bartosz Oblucki claimed his first podium visit of the season in third. Just missing out on a podium place by four seconds was Paul Edmondson. With not one Finnish rider placing near the head of the E1 class results on day one, the rider most spectators were hoping would produce a strong result - factory KTM rider Petteri Silvan, crashed out early in the day and took no further part in the event.

On day two Cervantes was again too strong for his rivals and despite the best efforts of Honda rider Simone Albergoni he won by a comfortable half minute margin. Finishing in third place was

Paddock POINTERS

✓ Super fast Finn Juha Salminen confirmed in Heinola that he will be returning the WEC in '07 to compete for KTM. Currently competing in the US GNCC series, which he has dominated since the opening round, Juha came to watch the event while enjoying his 'summer break'.

✓ Italian manufacturer Aprilia will officially compete in the WEC in '07 with current Farioli KTM rider Alessandro Botturi signed as the team's number one rider. Botturi will compete on the twin-cylinder 450cc machine in the E2 class.

✓ Honda mounted E2 class rider Valtteri Salonen and KTM's official E3 pilot Marko Tarkkala both claimed their first ever WEC win on day one in Finland. Salonen topped E2 by five seconds while Tarkkala topped E3 by 16.



'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

SPORT

The event...

The Finnish round of the '05 World Enduro Championship wasn't as...well, Finnish as many riders had been expecting with the motocross and extreme tests offering little advantage to the home riders. There was no sand!

Featuring three tests - the MX and extreme as well as a brutally rocky and technical enduro test, the two six-and-a-half-hour, four lap days meant that all riders knew that they'd finished a world championship event come the close of day two. Thankfully, unlike some Finnish WEC events in recent years, the competition only used a few short sections of public highways and provided plenty of challenging going most riders enjoyed.

The motocross test was a generic, flat, grassy, corner-to-corner style stage that got increasingly rutted as the weekend went on. In fact, all of the tests held up well after it chucked it down all

day on the Friday.

In order to make the event more 'spectator friendly' - buzz words at 21st century WEC events, the extreme and enduro tests were situated just a short walk from one another with riders appearing and disappearing from alternate tests during the course of the day. Nowhere near as difficult as extreme tests from previous rounds of the series, the short stage featured a few jumps, some logs, tyres and a few more jumps. While not that exciting or challenging it did still catch out a few riders.

It was the enduro test that was where the event was one and lost for most riders. Featuring rocks, rocks, tree roots and yet more rocks, the test saw a number of riders hit the deck at speed, spoiling their results. Among them were three of the event's fastest riders - David Knight, Samuli Aro and Marko Tarkkala.



Darryl Bolter claimed two solid second place finishes in the Enduro Junior class...



The only rider to have beaten Knight in the WEC this season, Marko Tarkkala took the day one win in the E3 class...

125cc KTM mounted former motocross rider Alessandro Belometti, one-minute and 20 seconds adrift of the eventual class winner.

While Finland failed to record any notable results in the E1 class, in the Enduro 2 category they claimed the top three spots on day one with Honda rider Valtteri Salonen finishing best following Stefan Merriman's exclusion for refuelling his Yamaha in an illegal area. Salonen's victory was the first of his career and showed that

despite mixed result at all the previous six rounds of the series, given the right backing and support he could well be a rider to reckon with during future world championship seasons.

Behind the youngster former 125cc world champion Petri Pohjamo placed his 450cc TM just five seconds shy of Salonen while E2 championship leader Samuli Aro claimed third after a heavy crash on the enduro test to make it an all Finnish, all 450cc four-stroke top three.

On day two Merriman proved

Paddock Pointers

Being the only Scandinavian round of the series the Finnish event saw a much smaller entry than any other WEC race this season. While the Enduro Junior class fielded a healthy number of competitors, on day one just 12 riders finished in the Enduro 2 class.

Gas Gas decided not to bring several members of their WEC team to Finland with just four riders there officially representing the Spanish marque. Paul Whibley, Helder Rodrigues and Thierry Klutz were all left at home.

David Knight's unbeaten run of Enduro 3 class wins was ended on day one in Finland. Still placing as the second fastest rider in the competition David's defeat came on the 13th day of the series.

to be every bit as fast as he had on day one and with the bit between his teeth after being excluded on Saturday, topped the day two results by 13 secs from Aro. With both Pohjamo and Salonen having less successful days on Sunday it was Italian Alessandro Botturi who clinched the final podium spot having trailed Scot Euan McConnell for much of the day.

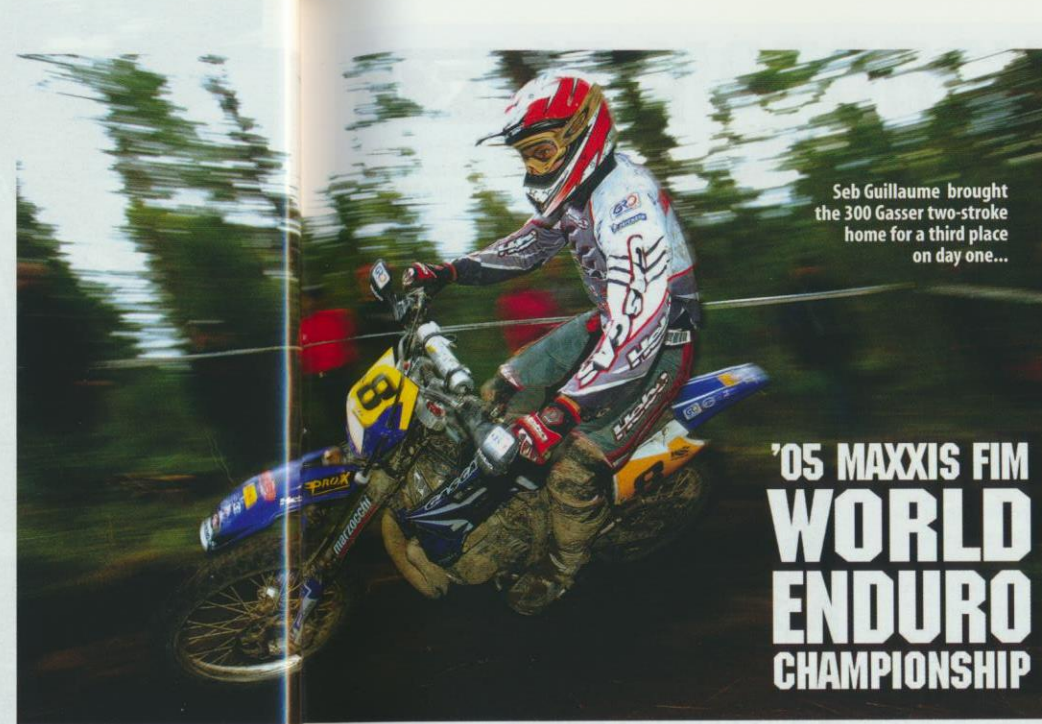
The biggest 'home' result in Finland was that of KTM rider Marko Tarkkala in the Enduro 3 class. Having seen David Knight win each and every one of the 12 championship days leading up to the event, he finally managed to beat the Manxman and in doing so claimed his first ever



It's that man again on his way to yet another WEC victory...

WEC win. Riding exceptionally well, and taking advantage of a costly fall by Knight, Marko topped the class by 16 seconds with he and David also finishing as the fastest two riders in the event on day one. So fast were the pair that third placed E3 rider Seb Guillaume from France placed two minutes and 12 seconds adrift.

Disappointed to have lost for the first time in '05, but all too aware that at this late stage of the



Seb Guillaume brought the 300 Gasser two-stroke home for a third place on day one...

'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

season day wins are little more than a nicety and that winning the championship is what really counts, Knighter had a point to prove on day two. And boy did he prove it. Finishing a massive one-minute and 23 seconds ahead of his Finnish team-mate, Knight showed once again just how dominant he can be and that he, just like any dominant rider, is only human after all and can be beaten. With Knight and Tarkkala separated by so much, Husqvarna rider Mika Ahola claimed third, 30secs adrift of Tarkkala.

In the Enduro Junior class a new name topped the podium on both days - that of Swede Joakim Ljungren. Injured before the start of the season, the Finnish event marked the Husaberg rider's first WEC outing of '05 and Joakim certainly made the most of it to win the class on both days.

But Joakim certainly didn't have things all his own way. Riding as well if not better than he had at any other round of the series Husqvarna rider

Daryl Bolter claimed two well deserved runner-up finishes, placing just 12 and nine seconds adrift of the Swede. Despite not winning, Bolter beat Spaniard Cristobal Guerrero fair and square for the first time this season (despite seeing the Spaniard lift

day's results for 'refuelling his bike at a non-designated refuelling area'.

Merriman's disqualification got tongues wagging on day two as seemingly everyone had something to say about his removal from the

the Enduro Junior world title). A great moral victory.

Better luck next time...

Australian UFO Corse Yamaha rider Stefan Merriman's season of bad luck continued in Finland where the 2004 Enduro 1 world champ ran out of fuel on day one. The fastest rider in the E2 class and heading towards victory on the opening day, the pint sized Aussie saw his WR450 come spluttering to a halt right outside a roadside petrol station. Stranded in the middle of the event, Merriman did exactly what any other rider would do and popped into the service station and filled up his bike. Continuing on his way, Merriman was spotted by several personnel from rival teams and later excluded from the first

The Brits...

Due to the high costs involved in needing to catch a minimum of two ferries to get to Finland far fewer British or British based riders competed in round seven of the WEC series compared to the six previous rounds. Of those that did Knighter was unsurprisingly the best performer with Honda team mates Paul Edmondson and Euan McConnell both scoring good championship points - on the first day at least.

Placing in fourth position in the Enduro 1 class on day one, Paul Edmondson missed placing on the podium by just four seconds. Just over half a minute down on Farioli KTM rider Ivan Cervantes, Edmondson rode smart and fast all day and was frustrated to have finished so close to the top three but not actually on the podium. On day two, after a so-so opening enduro test Eddy decided, for reasons not exactly known to anyone apart from himself, that he didn't want to continue. Presumably having given it his all and still not recorded a time close to Cervantes', Paul decided to stop.

In the Enduro 2 class gangly Scot Euan

McConnell was on course for his best result of the season holding a highly respectable fourth in class on day one. But, as is often the case with the Honda rider, Euan snatched defeat from the jaws of a bloody good result after he was penalised one-minute for having a bike that was too noisy. Warned that he needed to do something about it, and like all riders able to use half an hour post race to fit or re-pack a new silencer, McConnell's 'it'll be alright' attitude well and truly bit him in the ass as he was penalised 60secs which dropped him from fourth down to seventh.

On day two McConnell repeated his good form running in a solid third ahead of several factory riders for three of the day's four laps. Disappointingly, a crash and fatigue resulted in him dropping fifth. Still a damn good result.

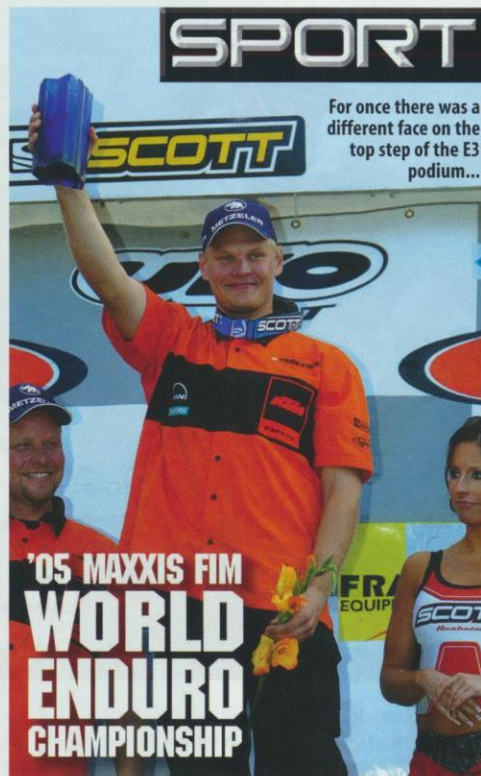
British based Enduro Junior rider Jake Stapleton had a less than successful trip to Finland finishing in fifth on day one and then failing to finish day two. Crashing heavily, like many riders, on the enduro test on day one, Jake called it a day on Sunday afternoon.

results. With some viewing the decision as harsh, others pointed out that rules are rules and even if they are a little 'stupid' they must be followed by everyone. As the only rider to manage to run out of fuel during the event, the UFO Corse Yamaha team took a gamble on running just enough fuel in his bike to keep weight down to a minimum and unfortunately paid the price.

The manufacturers race...

There was a much more mixed spread of colours decorating the podiums in Finland with seven different manufacturers represented during the two days. It was again KTM that finished as the dominant brand but Honda and Husaberg both claimed their first wins of the season and along with TM, Yamaha and Gas Gas managed to break, albeit temporarily, the orange stranglehold on the series.

The Finnish event also saw the crowning of the first world champion of '05 - Gas Gas mounted Spaniard Cristobal Guerrero. The dominant rider in the E3 class all season, Guerrero has been, with the exception of some good results from Seb Guillaume in the E3 class, the light at the end of a rather dark and gloomy championship campaign for Gas Gas in '05. That said, with two rounds of the series still remaining, Gas Gas look like being the only manufacturer other than KTM to win a world championship title this season. And a win, as any manufacturer knows, is a win.



RESULTS - DAY 1

ENDURO 1

- 1 IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 53:31.83
- 2 MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 54:01.28
- 3 BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 54:03.53
- 4 PAUL EDMONDSON (HONDA) 54:06.97
- 5 ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 54:07.42

ENDURO 2

- 1 VALTTERI SALONEN (HONDA) 54:13.45
- 2 PETRI POHJAMO (TM) 54:18.91
- 3 SAMULI ARO (KTM) 54:32.61
- 4 JANI LAAKSONEN (KTM) 55:09.29
- 5 ALLESANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 55:22.92

ENDURO 3

- 1 MARKO TARKKALA (KTM) 52:29.26
- 2 DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 52:45.82
- 3 SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 54:41.72
- 4 MIKA AHOLA (HUSOVARNA) 55:07.39
- 5 ALESSIO PAOLI (TM) 55:36.86

ENDURO JUNIOR

- 1 JOAKIM LJUNGREN (HUSABERG) 55:51.37
- 2 DARYL BOLTER (HUSOVARNA) 56:03.79
- 3 CRISTOBAL GUERRERO (GAS GAS) 56:17.43
- 4 EERO REMES (HONDA) 56:46.02
- 5 JACOB STAPLETON (TM) 56:49.82

RESULTS - DAY 2

ENDURO 1

- 1 IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 57:31.84
- 2 SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 58:01.87
- 3 ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 58:55.69
- 4 MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 58:58.03
- 5 RICHARD LARSSON (TM) 59:31.44

ENDURO 2

- 1 STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 57:38.22
- 2 SAMULI ARO (KTM) 57:52.01
- 3 ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 58:45.34
- 4 VALTTERI SALONEN (HONDA) 59:12.50
- 5 EUAN MCCONNELL (HONDA) 59:31.29

ENDURO 3

- 1 DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 57:01.24
- 2 MARKO TARKKALA (KTM) 58:24.47
- 3 MIKA AHOLA (HUSOVARNA) 58:54.37
- 4 VITA KUKLIK (KTM) 1.01:07.61
- 5 ALESSIO PAOLI (TM) 1.01:07.68

ENDURO JUNIOR

- 1 JOAKIM LJUNGREN (HUSABERG) 1.00:26.53
- 2 DARYL BOLTER (HUSOVARNA) 1.00:36.00
- 3 CRISTOBAL GUERRERO (GAS GAS) 1.00:42.32
- 4 ORIOL MENA (GAS GAS) 1.02:26.25
- 5 EERO REMES (HONDA) 1.03:24.11

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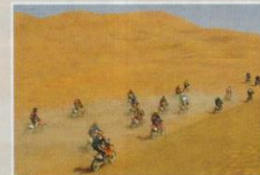


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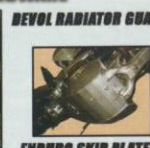
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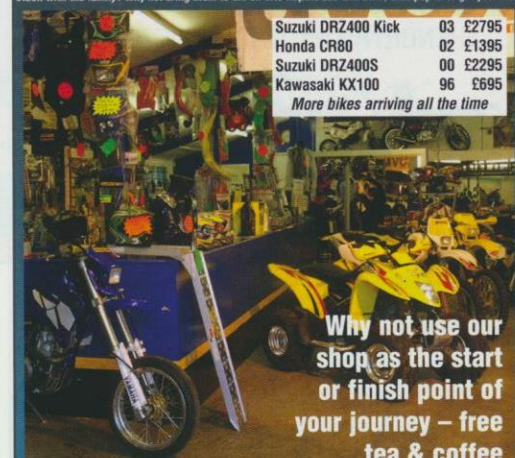
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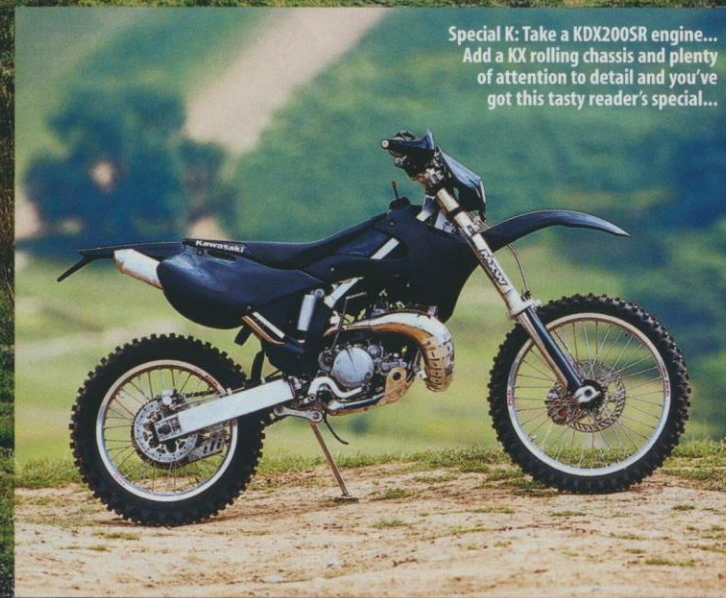
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SPECIAL K

Tasty and light (just like the breakfast cereal), this reader's-special Kawasaki hybrid was built for a female trail rider so who better to test it out than TBM's own girlie-in-residence Mel Falconer...



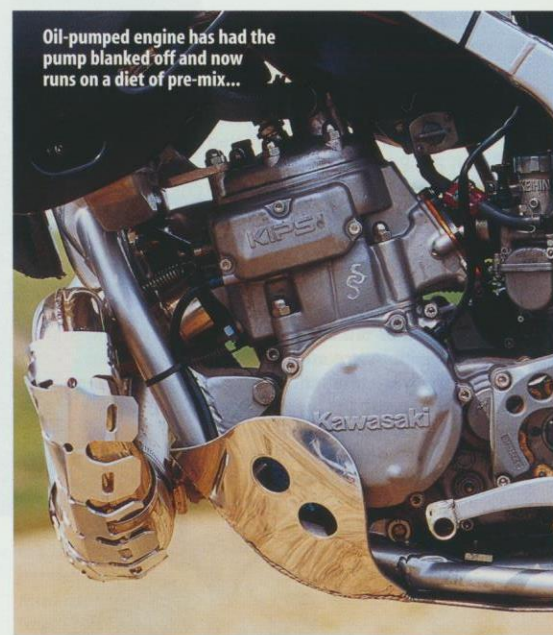
Special K: Take a KDX200SR engine... Add a KX rolling chassis and plenty of attention to detail and you've got this tasty reader's special...



Swingarm had to be shaved down in order to fit the new motor...



Despite braided hoses, the brakes still required a bit of work...



Oil-pumped engine has had the pump blanked off and now runs on a diet of pre-mix...

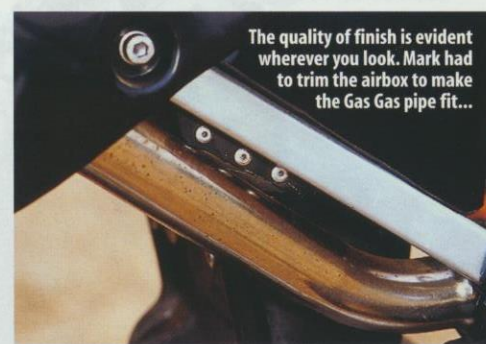
Some of you may remember TBM reader Mark Hollis. Back in March 2004 we tested his semi-automatic-clutched Honda CRF450R. So what has he been up to for the last 18 months?

Well, his latest project has been a bit of a labour of love - 150 man-hours to be precise. And the object of his affections has been a KDX/KX special, built for his close friend An Ross to go out trail riding on.

It all came about because An, a carbon laminator for the Red Bull Racing F1 team, fancied a replacement for her old air-cooled KDX200. After competing in numerous enduros over the years, she turned her hand to trail riding and needed something light, agile and a bit more up-to-date. Never one to pass up a technical challenge, surgical sales-rep Mark saw it as a good opportunity to not only help out a mate, but a chance to build a bespoke bike from the ground up that fulfilled An's wishlist. It had to be done...

KX Appeal

But why not just settle for a small-bore trailie such as a Pampera 250 or Honda CRF230? Well for An's requirements they just fall short of being *the* perfect trailie. The little Honda's basic suspension and short-



The quality of finish is evident wherever you look. Mark had to trim the airbox to make the Gas Gas pipe fit...

gearing are its Achilles heel, plus it really does feel incredibly tiny when you're aboard. Great for shorties but even for an average five foot six-inch girly like me, it's a bit too small. As for the Gasser, despite having a decent trail chassis its trials bike engine is just a bit underpowered, especially if (like An) you want to enter the occasional H&H enduro.

With this in mind Mark decided to have the best of both worlds and combine a trailbike motor with an MX frame. Doing this makes perfect sense - you get the grunt and tractability required for the trail all wrapped up in a lightweight, tune-able chassis.

KX-Planation

First up was deciding what motor to use. After trawling the classifieds section of TBM back in February this year, Mark came across what he was looking for - a 1990 KDX200SR autolube powerplant for a very reasonable £100.

Mark's rationale for this was simple - the liquid-cooled KDX engine oozes reliability and has a good spread of usable power. And the slightly detuned, Japanese street legal SR version is more rider-friendly throughout the rev range thanks in part to a smaller carb and airbox (fitted in order to comply with Far East officialdom).

Once Mark got hold of the SR lump he set about rebuilding it. Unfortunately for him, he had to do it twice. 'I decided to use somebody else to press the engine cases together but in doing so they managed to knacker the crank-seals and then charged me £50 for the privilege,' explains Mark.

As well as replacing the main bearings and seals the next job was some intake mods, including revising the jetting and fitting a 35mm carb spacer to the 28mm carb for increased torque.

On the exhaust front, Mark felt the standard KDX offering wasn't really suitable plus it

didn't fit the KX frame, so he tried one from a Gas Gas 200 which 'nearly lined up' straight away. A few hits with a lump hammer and it fitted around the engine no problem. The airbox was also cut to shape to allow adequate clearance and a FMF Turbo Core II silencer from a 1990 KDX finished the job off nicely.

A new coolant hose was also needed, but a trip to a local Kawasaki dealer saw Mark being quoted £20 for a short piece of hose. Ever resourceful he decided to try a nearby car garage on the off-chance they might have something suitable. 'They whipped off a hose from a broken M3 engine and gave it to me for free!' laughs Mark.



of counterbalancer I wanted to reduce the amount of vibe, so the easiest thing seemed to be to use silicon,' he explains.

A nice touch was the customised folding rear brake lever which matches the gear lever. Mark welded a gear lever tip onto the remains of the back brake lever, which not only looked good, but also helps damage limitation in a crash.

Onto the rest of the bike and the stock KX fuel tank has been kept, along with the seat. A Gasser 125 bashplate was used because it 'fitted perfectly' and a TrailTech Yamaha sidestand had to be cut down and a bracket

made for it to fit onto the MX frame. A set of KTM handguards, a Honda CR125 front fender, a KX rear mudguard and replacement Polisport black plastics finish things off nicely.

So... how much did all this cost? 'Just a shade under four grand,' admits Mark over the phone.

KX-0-skeleton

With the engine pretty much sorted it was time to deal with the rest of the bike, starting with the frame. Mark decided to buy a complete '99 KX125 rolling chassis for £1100, as it was the most cost-effective way to get most of the parts he needed.

The steel frame was stripped bare of its customary green paintwork and the aluminium subframe was also rubbed right down, as was the new swingarm. 'I had to buy a new swingarm as the chain had rubbed through the old one, but luckily I found one on eBay in the States for just 40 quid, which I was really chuffed with' Mark confesses.

Three-quarters of an hour with a Dremel later and Mark had a machined down swingarm that now fitted around the back of the motor perfectly. 'I had to take off 9mm either side so that it would fit' he revealed, 'plus I had to reweld the engine mounts on the frame as they didn't fit the KDX motor either.'

Moving onto the suspension - naturally the standard Kayaba MX set-up had to be softened off to make it suitable for the trail, so Mark got it re-valved and sprung for An's weight by MXW Racing. The forks were also dropped as low as they could go (approximately 10-15mm), and because the linkage had also completely seized the dogbones were replaced as well as the bearings.

KX-Cessories

The next big challenge was sorting out the wheels. Mark decided to make his own wheel jig out of the old swingarm, which he then used to respoke the Excel rims with the hubs which he'd had black powder-coated. He then fitted new KX standard discs and pads plus braided hoses front and rear to provide decent stopping power.

Mark's attention then turned to the handlebars. After fitting a set of braceless 'bars he decided to plug the ends with silicon sealant. 'To negate the lack

Second Opinion: Si Melber

Having previously owned a trailbike engine, MX-framed hybrid - the infamous TBM CRM250CR - I can vouch for the appeal of a bike like this. It's not just the combination of an easy-going and torquey six-speed engine combined with a lightweight well-suspended chassis that appeals, but also the possibility of owning and riding something quite unique out on the trail.

Riding this bike brought back fond memories of the TBM CRM-CR - the way the linear power built progressively towards a lively top-end; the way it handled in a businesslike fashion; and the fact that some of the fine details (like brakes) needed sorting!

You see, enduro bikes are fine on the trail but their aggressive power delivery and short overall gearing is often a compromise and not always to everyone's taste. But by utilising a trailbike engine, this machine's got the flexibility and reliability of a trailie but with the well-suspended chassis of a lightweight dirt bike. And as a benefit, Mark's KDX200SR felt a whole lot more potent than any regular 200SR I'd previously ridden.

It's a shame that manufacturers haven't cottoned onto the appeal of a bike of this nature, because for me this is what a proper trailbike should look and feel like...

SPECIAL
K



Mel found the Special K to her liking...

SPECIAL K

Wow. So how come it cost that much? 'Well, having to pay full whack for all of the individual spare parts didn't exactly help,' Mark explains, but then again he has ended up with a bike which looks more or less brand new...

KX-Rated

I'm glad I didn't know the little Kwacker cost that much as I don't think I would've dared climb aboard knowing my penchant for finding the nearest hedge and tipping into it.

Happily, ignorance is bliss so as this bike had been built purely for a gurlie, and one who was roughly the same height and weight as me I was curious to see how well I would get on with it.

The testing venue was the infamous Tommy's Farm in mid-Wales and it was the first time I'd ridden there in dry conditions, which turned out to be a much more enjoyable experience.

What I noticed straightaway was how comfortable the riding position was and how small the bike felt - in a nicely flickable compact kinda' way - a world away from the Polly Pocket-sized CRF230.

As the 200SR was a trailbike engine I was expecting to have to work it quite hard, but from the outset the KDX lump felt nice and torquey; there were no

sudden surges of power going up the gearbox. It responded smoothly and positively to each twist of the throttle, and although this bike wasn't really built with racing as a top priority, it would easily make a good dual-purpose trail/enduro tool.

Going back to the gearbox a moment, I found the overall gearing a little tall, plus there was a noticeable gap between first and second. While this would be okay for the tarmac, for trail use I would maybe try going up a couple of teeth on the rear sprocket. Mark also agreed: 'If I were to go racing I would probably put in a late Eighties KX gearbox' he added.

Back to the riding and the little KDX behaved like an enthusiastic Labrador puppy, scampering happily along the hard stony trails. Pulling well up the climbs in second and third gear, descents were made a little trickier as the brakes felt quite spongy and didn't haul the bike up as well as they might. But in fairness Mark had been working on the brakes up until 2am of the morning before our test and has since replaced the Honda CRF master cylinder with the standard KX one, which he says has 'drastically improved matters'.

But it was when riding up and then back down a slippery stream bed with some rocksteps thrown in that I was really impressed. The hybrid delivered its soft power in all the right places and was a cinch to manhandle thanks to the light 'crosser frame and dab-friendly height. Interestingly An still finds the KDX a little too tall so Mark is considering either shaving down the seat or overlapping the holes in the subframe to lower it a smidge.

On the looks front the mean 'n' moody KDX/KX was beautifully assembled, and it was clear how much time Mark had spent on it. The only thing it was lacking was a decent set of graphics to break up the blackness of it all.

KX-Pert

Like all good specials, Mark hasn't stopped working on and developing his baby yet. Since our test he's added a 1L reserve, achieved by Aralditing a length of brass tubing to the top of the fuel tap (inside the tank) which is always useful out on the trail, and he's since fitted a smaller KDX 125 kickstart to make starting the thing a little easier.

And to make it a bona-fide road legal trailie, a working horn and lights have also been fitted to get it through its MOT.

So, now this project is more or less over, what's next for Mark? 'I want to build a couple more bikes' he says, 'but this time I want one to race and one to sell,' Mark reveals. 'I fancy boring out a KDX200 to 225cc and teaming it up with a Honda CR125 alloy frame which should be good for racing' reckons Mark, 'then maybe buying a 220R lump and putting it in a new KX125 chassis and selling it afterwards'.

So has he managed to fulfil An's original brief? 'Well, it's usually pretty tough to please a woman' he confesses, 'but in this case I think I've done it...'

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What's the Story?

STORY & PIC: MIKE RAPLEY

The title of this regular piece is Trials Heroes, but in the case of this month's featured rider the terms speedway, road race, hill climb, grass track, scramble and enduro hero can be quite genuinely applied to the 60-year-old ace all-rounder Arthur Browning.

We make no excuses for featuring this very famous Brummie, whose exploits have been well documented in the past, for Big Arthur is still very much an active rider today.

In fact, Arthur rode in the Classic Manx two-day trial this September and finished a steady 41st, which was considerably higher than his finishing position in the Pre-65 Scottish two-day trial back in May when he, along with so many other riders, faced almost insurmountable problems of drowned bikes on the horrendously wet first day.

To some extent, that wet day sorted the entry into two groups, those using modern, up-to-date electronic ignition systems, virtually impervious to water, and those using older electrics. Browning came into the latter category, for his ignition system is magneto. And the machine on which this magneto operates is a Jawa.

A Jawa trials bike you may ask? Exactly. No such machine ever emanated from the Czechoslovakian factory, but Arthur has crafted a beautiful example, and it's on this bike that Arthur is pictured here.

'I've always ridden Jawas since my speedway days,' says Arthur in his typical brusque and forthright manner. 'I had Jawas on the shale, I rode Jawas on the grass, my hill-climb bike (on which he won this year's Red Marley climb) is Jawa-powered, so I've got loads of bits and therefore decided to make a Jawa trialler'.

'It's a big lump, but I'm a big bloke, so I've thrown this together'. Thrown may be the term Arthur uses, but it's a beauty and he deserves credit for producing such a unique machine.

And of course, in recent years Browning has made a name for himself on the classic road race scene. I first caught up with Arthur in leathers three years ago on the Isle of Man where he raced for the first time in the 500 Classic Manx.

'When I first said I wanted to race a Jawa over here, everybody said I was mad, and it would never finish,' explains Arthur. 'But I know these engines and though they were originally designed to race for four laps of a speedway track, I reckoned I could make them go a lot longer.'

'I've had to make loads of changes, including welding big fins onto the barrel to get the extra cooling. I've had to get different pistons made and the total loss oiling system has been altered to re-circulating and after loads of development, I've got her going well'.

At the time of that particular conversation, Arthur had never completed four non-stop laps of the 37-mile Island circuit, so when he took to the start line of the 2003 Manx Classic Grand Prix, he was entering the unknown. But he finished in a respectable 34th place with an average speed of 86mph.

A year later and he was back; the speed had increased by one mph and his finishing position went up to 29th.

Finally in 2005 we met up again, and with his bike still in parc ferme, a pal brought along the final results of the Monday afternoon race. Twenty-first was his placing and the race average had gone up to 90mph, which in anybody's book has to be good for a 'four-lap speedway engine'.

Congratulations from admirers were coming thick and fast, but all that Britain's best all-rounder during the last 40 years would allow himself to say was: 'A 90mph average is not bad when it only does 103mph through the speed trap!'

Hero is a misused term these days, but if it applies to a sportsman, then one person truly deserving of the title is Arthur Browning...

'A Jawa trials bike you may ask? Exactly. No such machine emanated from the Czechoslovakian factory, but Arthur has crafted a beautiful example'

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Kawasaki KDX220, 2000, W-reg, MoT, currently SORN, completely standard, light use only, new tyres, trail rider retiring, exc cond, £1750. Tel 01686 430519 (Powys)

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Honda XR400R, Oct '04, under 800km, green lane use only, FMF graphics otherwise standard, regular oil/filters, exc cond, £2800. Tel (mobile) 07730 312024 or 01420 475261 (Hants)

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Suzuki DR-Z400S, 52-reg, one owner, low miles, £500 worth of extras, ring for details, £2350 ono. Also Yamaha Serow, vgc, £1250. Tel (mobile) 07901 907805 or 01904 781045 (Yorks)

Honda XR400R, 1997, T&T, complete rebuild, maintained regardless of cost, green lane use only, good cond, photos available, £1800 ovno. Tel 01425 476062 (Hants)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, many extras, tank, hand/sumppguards etc, little use, exc cond, reluctant sale, £2495. Tel 0116 230 2965 (Leics)

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Honda XR200, 1998 reg'd/imported, T&T, 5000 miles, recent tyres/battery, £1150. Tel 01650 521831 (Powys)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, 5700 miles, Renthals, handguards, exc cond, £2395. Tel 02392 610776 (Hants)

Gas Gas Pampera mkIII, 2002, little use, vgc, £1450. Tel 01373 463253 (Somerset)

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Honda XR400R, 1999, T-reg, T&T, low miles, Renthals, barkbusters, vgc, £1990 ono. Tel (mobile) 07973 710532 or 01604 401155 (Northants)

KTM 525EXC, 52-reg, one owner, MoT, trail use only, well maintained, new c+s, extras, exc cond, £3400 ono. Tel 01332 741415 (Derbys)

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KTM 450EXC, 2004, sump/handguards, clutch saver, new tyres/c+s, green lane use only, almost mint cond, £3800 ono. Tel 07720 700432 (Denbighshire)

Suzuki DR250S, 1995, T&T, low miles, elec start, barkbusters, sumppguard, new rear ED663, trail ready at £1400 ono. Tel 01905 27419 (Worcs)

Honda CRM250 mkII, 1993, T&T, 9000km, RSV front pipe, Mugen tailpipe, lots of new seals/bearings, green lane use only, good cond. £1250 Tel 01235 523193 (Oxon)

Yamaha WR200R, 1994, not DT or import, T&T, full DEP pipe, new AC10s/bashplate/rings, 10oz flywheel weight/c+s/seat, Renthals, ready to trail/race, can email pics, £1500 no offers. Tel 01670 522904 (Northumberland)

Yamaha WR400E, 2000 model, W-reg, one owner, always well maintained, some spares. Tel £1595 ono. Tel (mobile) 07973 627289 or 01920 487695 (Herts)

Honda XR650R, 54-reg, 5000km, road legal, new c+s, c/w wpare wheels, green lane use only, good cond, £3300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07976 629788 or 01455 890502 (Leics)

Husqvarna TC610 enduro, road reg'd, factory spec, no T&T, MX tyres, £1850 or swap for 125 or 250 Japanese MXer. Tel 07921 786626 (Northumberland)

Honda XR650R, 2002, T&T, one owner, 6700km, new c+s, gold/black supremoto wheels, wave disc, very clean bike, £3700 ono. Tel 01980 590429 (Wilts)

Honda CRM250 mkII, MoT, USD forks, DEP exhaust, Renthals, Barkbusters, green lane use only, good cond, £1200 ono. Tel 01843 584011 (Kent)

Yamaha TT250R, 04-reg, taxed, warranty remaining, only 1200 miles, alloy sumppguard, Renthals, frameguards, £2700 ono. Tel 01274 494446 (W Yorks)

Kawasaki KDX220, late 2003, one owner, full spares kit, many new parts, £400 spent in last month, very well maintained. Tel 01558 823324 (Carmarthen)

Kawasaki KX80, 1997, DID rims, Renthals, braided rear hose, good c+s, well maintained, good runner, vgc, £725. Tel 01254 824387 (Lancs)

Gas Gas EC250, 1997, P-reg, same owner last three years, very clean, rides superbly, £1450. Tel 01280 709977 (Oxon)

Yamaha WR400E, 1999, T&T, very reliable, spares included, £1650 ono. Tel 01209 843074 (Cornwall)

Honda CRF250X, 2005, bashplate, handguards, very little use, vgc, £4200 ono or p/x 2004/05 KTM 200/250 2T. Tel 01387 375408 (Scottish Borders)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1990 model, first reg'd 1997, T&T, 14000km, dual start, £1100 ono. Tel 01276 683041 (Surrey)

Gas Gas TXT Pro 300, 2004, hardly used, modded for easy starting/traction, as new, £2300. Tel 02392 632418 (Hants)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 2004 model, 53-reg, stored almost from new, all usual extras, spares, never raced, absolutely immaculate, £3250. Tel 02392 632418 (Hants)

KTM 450EXC, 2003, one owner, 2600 miles, new c+s/tyres, regularly serviced, looked after, no time to ride, £3000. Tel 01773 776466 (Notts)

Yamaha WR250E, new in Feb '05, 260 miles, only used four times, fully road legal, hand/sump/frameguards, FMF and standard exhausts, new new Michelins, includes riding gear, £3250 for quick sale. Tel 07798 894204 (Staffs)

Enduro left-hand sidecar, 1987 Wasp chassis, Honda CR500 engine, road reg'd, completely rebuilt engine, new clutch/brakes, spare front wheel/engine/carb/electrics, £995. Tel 01227 770449 (Kent)

Sherco 290 trials bike, 2000 model, blue/grey, little use, £1200 ono. Tel 01252 678852 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, reg'd April '05, little used standard bike, bargain at only £2295. Tel 01296 630396 (Bucks)

Gas Gas EC400, 03-reg, elec start, similar to DR-ZE

though lighter, exc off-roader, first to see will buy, £2400. Tel 0121 605 7531 (W Mids)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2002, blue/white, taxed, 28000 miles, CRD exhaust, disc/handguards, bashplate, good cond, £1995. Tel (mobile) 07831 888774 or 0121 745 9148 (W Mids)

Yamaha WR250 two-stroke, 2002, MoT, green lane use only, recent service, exc cond, plus helmet/boots/jacket/trousers, worn five times, bargain at £2200. Tel (mobile) 07980 570445 or 02476 262296 (W Mids)

Kawasaki KXL300, 1999, V-reg, Supertrapp exhaust, regularly serviced, spare c+s, £1800. Tel 07776 293417 (N Yorks)

CCM 604E, 2001, T&T, 5500 miles, standard, both sets of wheels, Supertrapp silencer with road and race cores, lots of factory extras, vgc, £2650 ono. Tel 01947 602303 (N Yorks)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, CRD sump/frameguards, YZ-F Exhaust, regular oil changes, good condition, selling for house deposit, £2900 ono. Tel 07765 390946 (Gloucs)

KTM 200EXC, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, only 30 hours' use, 500 miles, well looked after, vgc, £2900. Tel (mobile) 07905 878403 or 01992 426229 (Herts)

Honda XR250R, 1997, T&T, handguards, new rear pipe, regular oil/filter changes, good cond, £1450. Tel 07919 374839 (Cheshire)

Suzuki DR200 Djebel, MoT, 18000 miles, elec start, superb cond, £900. Tel 02380 638996 (Hants)

Honda XR400R, 2003, red, taxed, 1500 miles, recent service, new c+s, lots of extras, vgc, ring for details, £2800ono. Tel 07950 399245 (N Yorks)

Honda CRM250 mkII, recent c+s/tyres/wheel bearings, very reliable, £1450 ono. Tel 07785 928637 (N Yorks)

Husaberg FE501, 03-reg, hardly used, suspension mods, spare wheels, exc cond, £2600 ono or p/x 250 2T/4T MX/enduro. Tel (mobile) 07815 818246 or 01584 890402 (Shrops)

Husqvarna WR125 enduro, 2003 model, 1700 miles, light off-road use only, vgc, £2550 ono. Tel 02380 402315 (Hants)

Yamaha TT600RE, 2003, 4000 miles, never raced, write up in TBM96, immaculate bike, as new, £2790. Also Yamaha TY50 trials, £490. Tel 07789 201602 (Dorset)

Suzuki DR350SEX, 1999, T&T, one owner, under 17000 miles, Renthals, barkbusters, frame/sumppguard, Ceet graphics, good cond, £1500. Tel 0161 740 6654 (Manchester)

KTM 250EXC, 2002, 2000 miles, recently MoT'd, regularly maintained, good cond, £2150. Tel 07901 524674 (Bucks)

Husaberg FE501, 2003, one owner, T&T, sump/handguards, well maintained, recent c+s, green laned all its life, £2695 ono. Tel 01904 709275 (N Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 2004, 45 hours' use, done two events, unused for six months, Akrapovic system, lots of spares inc wheels, immac cond, £4000. Tel 07793 749347 (Staffs)

Yamaha WR250E, 2003, road reg'd, new graphics/plastics, Fatbars, frameguards, vgc, £2850. Tel Joe on 07771 996060 (London)

KTM 450EXC, 53-reg, taxed, FSH, 2000 miles, digi clock, extras, exc cond, £3650 ono. Tel 07888 854195 (Essex)

Gas Gas EC300, 05-reg, taxed, CRD bashplate, carbon fibre exhaust guard, Fatbars, barkbusters, tip-top enduro bike, £3500 ono. Tel 07885 466886 (Bucks)

Yamaha WR250Z 2T, 1999, good cond, £1800. Also KTM 250EXC 2T, 2004, exc cond, £3200. Tel 07624 453727 (IoM)

Yamaha WR450E, 2003, road reg'd, very well maintained, 'guards, mousses, new tyres/c+s/pads, green laned only, good cond, £3400 ovno. Tel 07768 315894 (Surrey)

Yamaha YZ250E, 2005, road reg'd, taxed, bashplate, new sprockets, exc cond, £3195 ono. Tel (mobile) 07771 833962 or 01929 472859 (Dorset)

KTM 450EXC, 2005, radguards, green lane use only, exc cond, £3595 ono. Tel 07771 833962 (Dorset)

KTM 450EXC, 2003 model, T&T, well serviced, new graphics, vgc, £3300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07855 954241

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

or 01430 441960 (E Yorks)
KTM 250EXC 2T, 2005, handguards, new c+s, vgc, £3695. Tel (mobile) 07710 090836 or 01795 472017 (Kent)
CCM 604, 2001, genuine 400 miles, Rotax motor, supermoto wheels, as new, £2800. Tel 01928 788342 (Cheshire)
Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1997, well maintained, DEP system, Renthals, carbon frameguards, sumpguard, new Michelin T61s, mainly road use, exc cond, £1750 ono. Tel 01283 763890 (Derbys)
Yamaha WR450F, 2004, road reg'd, gold Talon hubs, black rims, WP forks/shock, AP Racing caliper/disc, Brembo master cylinder still boxed, £4500. Tel 07879 836228 (Lincs)
KTM 450EXC, 03-reg, handguards, bashplate, new graphics, well looked after, regularly serviced, light green lane use, good cond, £3300 ono. Tel 01430 441960 (E Yorks)
KTM 450EXC, 2005 model, taxed, only 700 miles/32 hours' use, ready to go, vgc, new bike forces sale, £3950. Tel 07860 728332 (Kent)
Beta Alp 200, 53-reg, yellow, taxed, 3600km, very little use, mint cond, £1900 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07733 135410 or 01622 710305 (Kent)
Montesa Cota 315R, 2001, one of the nicest around, very little use, exc condition, comes with new '02 rear mudguard worth £80, XC-Ting trials jeans/gloves, Hebo shirt and workshop manual, £1600. Tel (mobile) 07764 476934 or 02380 611110 (Hants)
KTM 450EXC, 2003, only 30 hours' use, suspension lowered by 1in, not been ridden for 18 months, serviced, good cond, £2,995. Tel 07930416903 (Huntingdon)
KTM 250EXC 2T, 2004, lots of spares, a few hare 'n' hounds and green lane use only, exc cond, £3000 ono. Tel 07886 088970 (Mid Glam)
Kawasaki KDX220R, 2002, FMF system and original, new tyres/plastics, lots of extras, £2000 ono. Tel 07729 181099 (Gloucs)
Honda XR400R, 2002, only 700 miles, not to be ignored, £2500. Tel (mobile) 07733 477224 or 01962 850001 (Hants)
Husky WR360 enduro, loads of new parts fitted during total rebuild, 95 percent complete, call for full details, £1000. Tel (mobile) 07740 160953 or 01942 879585 (Manchester)
Husaberg FE501e, 02-reg, T&T, new seat cover/decals/c+s, Talons/Excels, Brembos etc, exc cond, £2650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07740 160953 or 01942 879585 (Manchester)
Husaberg FE501e, 03-reg, road legal, one owner, well maintained, new c+s/front tyre, vgc, £2500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07790 003019 or 01623 871744 (Notts)
KTM 400EXC, 2002, 2650 miles, trail ridden from new, hand/sumpguards, exc cond, £2750 ono. Tel (mobile) 07814 038982 or 0121 604 2996 (W Mids)
Honda XR250R, 2002, green lane use only, lowering link, barkbusters, new tyres, good cond, £2150 ono. Tel 01909 723205 (Derbys)
Honda XR650R supermoto, X-reg, T&T, 5000 miles, Talons/Excels, Datatag, Renthals, extras, plus original, any inspection welcome, £2595 ono. Tel 0115 973 0379 (Notts)
Husqvarna TE250, 2004, road legal, brand new, Renthals, handguards, trick bashplate, Datatag, £3000 no offers. Tel 01306 740742 (Surrey)
Husaberg FE400e, May '02, MoT, 1400 miles, new plastics/seat with originals included, new tyres, light use only vgc, £2000 ono. Tel 01626 776624 (Devon)
Yamaha DT125R, white/pink, H-reg, T&T, 7345 miles, alarmed, immaculate cond. Tel 07717 672407 (W Mids)
KTM 450EXC, 2003, little use, hand/sump/frame/clutchguards, great enduro or supermoto bike, exc cond, £3200. Tel 07850 046574 (W Mids)
Suzuki DR-Z400E, V-reg, two owners, CRD exhaust,

recent service, £2000 ono. Tel 07876 574855 (Middx)
KTM 400EXC, 2005 model, road reg'd, only 16.5 hours/350 miles use, KTM hand/sumpguards, huge saving on list price at £3650. Tel Si at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)
Kawasaki KMX125, G-reg, green/blue, only 15000 miles, new tyres/c+s before being stored for eight years, completely standard except derestricted, starts fine though needs slight fettling due to storage, good cond, make great winter commuter/green laner, can email pics, £650 no tyre-kickers. Tel 07740 520538 (Beds)
Yamaha WR400F, 1998, T&T, good starter, very reliable, regularly serviced, lots of extras, good cond, £1695. Tel 0118 989 1893 (Berks)
Honda XR400R, S-reg, T&T, new MT21 rear tyre, religiously maintained, trail/road use only, exc cond, £1600 ono. Tel 01787 282032 (Surrey)
Husqvarna TE610E, 2001, V-reg, MoT, no tax, complete engine rebuild, spare engine, lots of new parts, good cond, £2500. Tel 07944 697996 (Lincs)
Gas Gas EC250, 2002, T&T, FMF front pipe, new c+s/wheel bearings, reliable bike, very clean, £1995. Tel 01522 794969 (Lincs)
Suzuki DR200 Djebel, import trailie, first UK reg'd 2002, K-reg, white, T&T, £750. Tel 01428 604693 (Surrey)
Gas Gas EC300, 2002, T&T, 1600km, WP forks, Ohlins shock, well maintained, reliable bike, vgc, can email pics, £2150. Tel 01330 825197 (Scotland)
Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, yellow, 2200 miles, green lane use only, new tyres, Acerbis handguards, plus all original road kit, vgc, £2650. Tel 01284 760195 (Suffolk)
Yamaha WR250F, 2003, road reg'd, elec start, green laned, new Rental c+s, exc condition, £3200. Tel 07711 328045 (S Yorks)

WANTED

Wanted spare parts for 250cc Hiro engine, as fitted to 1980s Armstrong trials bike. Or any parts for bike. Tel (after 5pm) 02830 878704 (N Ireland)
Wanted Yamaha XT350, must be in reasonable condition with lights but anything considered, will travel for the right machine. Tel (mobile) 07764 233581 or 01977 682168 (N Yorks)
Wanted enduro converted Yamaha YZ125, 2004/05, must be in good cond and sensibly priced. Tel (mobile) 07854 901104 or 01590 679565 (Hants)
Wanted rear hugger for BMW GS1100, Tel 01494 474807 (Bucks)
Wanted KTM 200EXC/EGS, with autolube, later model preferred but anything considered. Tel 01386 446969 (Worcs)
Wanted supermoto wheels to fit Yamaha WR426F, would like gold rims and hubs, must be in good cond. Tel 07769 874149 (Co Durham)
Wanted large tank to fit Honda XR650L, will XR600 fit? Any other spares considered for trip to Timbuktu, cash waiting. Tel 0121 458 1758 (W Mids)
Wanted parts for 1990 KX250, gearbox, seat, plastics, would consider full bike. Tel 07724 323830 (Merseyside)
Wanted supermoto wheels to fit CRM AR, any condition considered. Tel 07973 779901 (Notts)
Wanted trail/enduro bike up to 300cc, must be road legal, runner with current MoT, low seat, disc brakes and low mileage, up to £1800. Tel 01254 825798 (Lancs)
Wanted parts for Suzuki DR-Z400 enduro, carb, cams and exhaust. Tel 01943 879299 (Yorks)

Wanted KTM 125EXC, or similar enduro bike for 15 year old, need to p/x immaculate KTM 855X, 2004, with lots of bits. Tel (mobile) 07768 137771 or 01291 680067 (Monmouthshire)
Wanted FMF Q-pipe and Powerbomb header to fit Yamaha WR250F. Also XR400R parts. Tel (mobile) 07837 550939 or 01538 371656 (Staffs)
Wanted supermoto wheels and large tank to fit Honda XR400R. Tel 01787 282032 (Suffolk)

SPARES

Budget brake upgrade or SM conversion, Nissin CBR twin-pot caliper with recent pistons/seals/EBC HH pads, a few scuffs, braided hose, Brembo master cylinder, 320mm floating disc, 6-bolt Honda CR fitment, £125 plus courier. Tel James at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)
FMF exhaust system for 2000-03 KTM 250/300, Gnarly pipe/Turbine Core 2 silencer, 2 days' practice use only, £200. Tel 07870 204215 (Powys)
KTM parts, 125/200 V-Force reed block, £50. KTM road legal rear light support assembly, new, £15. Polisport rally handguards, new in box, £15. Tel 0191 262 7918 (Tyne & Wear)
TBM back issues, 78-120, 38 in total with one or two missing vgc, £50 plus P&P. Tel 01250 882264 (Tayside)
Akrapovic race system for Husqvarna TE250, hardly used, original price nearly 600 quid, yours for £300 ono. Tel 01458 210413 (Somerset)
12L tank to fit KTM 250EXC, £65. Also DEP enduro end-can, £50. FMF header, 20 hours' use, as new, £100. Tel 07811 201626 (Hereford)
13L tank to fit KTM 400EXC, little use, £85. Tel 01789 294460 (Warks)
Parts for TS185 and TS100, approx 1978. Tel 01453 768528 (Gloucs)
Kawasaki KMX125 parts, front wheel, forks, monoshock, headstock, £100 the lot. Tel 01453 768528 (Gloucs)
12L clear tank to fit 2002 KTM two-strokes, with fitting kit, £55. Tel 0116 236 5986 (Leics)
Lowering link to fit Gas Gas EC200, only used a few times, cost £60 new, will sell for £40. Tel 01494 474807 (Bucks)
Wulfsport MX boots, black, size 42, as new, £50. Tel 01438 216056 (Herts)
Richa Giant jacket, Millennium trousers, Cordura material, armour, used once, as new, cost £400, accept £95, buyer collects. Tel 01202 540685 (Dorset)
Off-road wheels to fit CCM 404, brand new, unused, with discs, sprockets, tyres, chain, sidestand, end can, £300 ono. Tel 020 8270 8929 (Essex)
Two-bike trailer, three rung, very well made, £250 ono. Tel (eves) 0118 962 5984 (Berks)
FMF Q-pipe to fit Honda XR400R, very little use, no marks or scratches, £150. Tel (mobile) 07730 312024 or 01420 475261 (Hants)
Mikuni flat-slide carb to fit XR400R, if you've got an XR400 this is the carb to have, exc cond, £175. Tel (mobile) 07730 312024 or 01420 475261 (Hants)
Gold Talon/Excel wheels to fit XR400R, with discs, spacers and sprocket, all excellent except rims slightly scatched, £350. Tel (mobile) 07730 312024 or 01420 475261 (Hants)
CRD bashplate to fit XR400R, £50. K&N air filter, £20. Standard XR rear fender, no light, £15. Tel (mobile) 07730 312024 or 01420 475261 (Hants)
KTM rally bracket, £10. Touratech LED control lamps, £10. KTM LC4 stainless chainguard, £10. Aerostich gloves, size 9.5, £10. All plus p&p. Tel 07717 093228 (Worcs)
Acerbis 23L fuel tank for Honda NX650 Dominator, black, fits 1992-1994 part number 1589, tap and all fittings, £70. Tel (mobile) 07788 790966 or 01244 533855 (Chester)

Yamaha XT350 spares, engine, exhaust, forks, plus other parts, £100 the lot. Tel (mobile) 07817 692513 or 01264 850613 (Wilts)
DR-Z400S parts, forks, £100. Complete carb, £100. Shock, £40. Plastics, £10. Plus other bits, please ring. Tel 02392 632418 (Hants)
Parts for KTM 200EXC, FMF Gnarly front pipe, Powercore 2 silencer, new, £175. 11L tank to fit 2003-05, £100. Flywheel head, unused, £55. Tel 01529 415853 (Lincs)
Yamaha XT600 head/barrel/piston, £40. Swingarm and linkage, mint, £30. 1981 Maico tank, £10. XT500 top and bottom yokes, £25. CDI for 1983 KL250, £20. Tel 01246 435297 (Derbys)
Off-road wheels to fit Husaberg FE650, blue Talon hubs/rims, c/w discs, sprocket, good tyres, £200. Also complete front brake system for same, £60. Tel 07815 613859 (Cams)
Yamaha XT350 complete bike less frame, 1986, loads of bits, also workshop manual, £795. Tel 01978 840124 (Clwyd)
DR-Z400 rads (panels?), white, brand new, plus air filter, unused, still wrapped up, £20. Tel (mobile) 07855 954241 or 01430 441960 (E Yorks)
Supermoto wheels to fit Gas Gas, gold Talon hubs, black rims, as new, £350. Tel 01928 788342 (Cheshire)
TDM parts, exhaust, fairing, mirror, bars, £75. DR-Z parts, sprockets, seat cover, brake pads, headlight, new, £40. Tel 01928 788342 (Cheshire)
Acerbis rally fuel tanks to fit XR650R, 24L front, 14L rear, rally seat, locking caps, as new, £350. Tel 01384 894128 (W Mids)
Garage clearout, 1993 CR250 forks. CRM250 mkII forks. 1993-94 TM125 engine, 90 percent complete. CRM250 mkI barrel. Ohlins shock for 1990 KX250, offers. Tel 01283 763890 (Derbys)
Clarke 12.9L tank for Suzuki RM125, gives two-and-a-half to three hours riding time, tank is clear to see fuel level, £130 ono. Tel Nick on 07802 906946 (Oxon)
Pair of wheels for Yamaha WR-F, rear fits 2003 250F, front will need spacers, originally for WR400F, discs, sprocket, tyres, etc, £220 ono. Tel 07791 105333 or 07765 390946 (Gloucs)
Cams for 2003 YZ250F, brand new, genuine Yamaha, £150 pair. Tel 07791 105333 or 07765 390946 (Gloucs)
Supermoto wheels to fit CCM 604e, gold Morads, silver hubs, good tyres, all spacers/bearings/discs etc, £400. Tel (mobile) 07740 160953 or 01942 879585 (Manchester)
Talon HD wheels to fit Honda XR400R, black, stainless spokes, as new tyres, £350 ono. Tel 01787 282032 (Suffolk)
MXA grippy seat cover to fit KLX250, with timecard holder, £25. Genuine Honda workshop manual for 1979 CR250RZ, £25. Tel 01285 720921 (Gloucs)
K-tech rear spring to fit Yamaha WR450F, upgrade for heavier rider approx 16 stone, brand new, never fitted, in box, £50 inc postage. Tel 07971 834656 (Derbys)

STOLEN

Stolen Gas Gas TXT321 trials bike, 2001 model, blue, frame no VTRGG370110000065, not road reg'd, wiring/lights removed, small dent in top r/h side of tank, Jam Sport stickers, rear fender repaired leaving 1in roughened strip across it, bought 24 Aug, stolen Fri 26 Aug from Reading area. Tel 01189 470748 (Berks)
Stolen KTM 400EXC Six Days, 2003, reg CK02 AOU, frame no VBKRC4083N351023, engine no 0359542087, with Black Behr Supermoto wheels, new rad shrouds and KTM graphics not 6 Days graphics, stolen at 16:30 on 12 Sept from Leicester, police contact no 01162 222222, crime no W1 04630054. Tel 01530 457472 (Leics)

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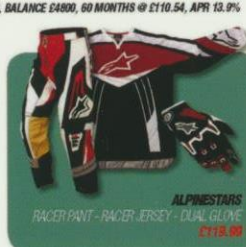
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HONDA	CRF 450	05	£4399	YAMAHA	YZ 250F	05	£3999						
KTM	MXC250	DISCOVERY	05	£4899	YAMAHA	YZ 250F LC	05	£3999					
SUZUKI	RMZ 450	05	£4199	YAMAHA	YZ 450F	05	£4199						

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