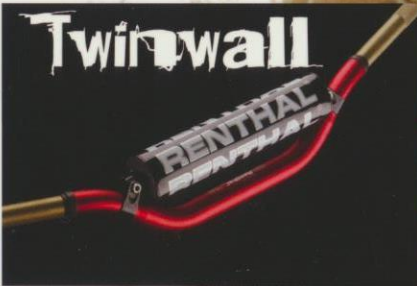




David Knight

In an extreme world
It helps to be the strongest

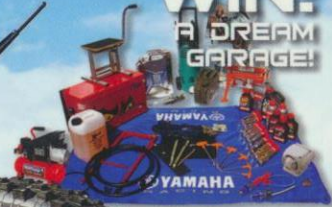


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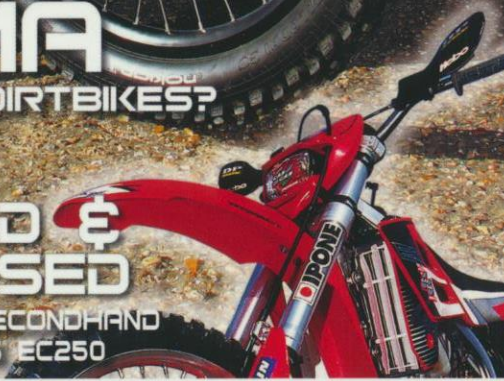
LAP OF THE GODS

LAPLAND TRAILS EXPLORED...



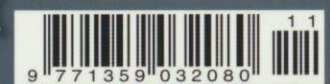
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- NEW INDICATORS



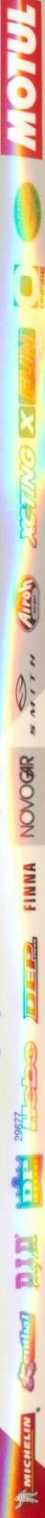
NEW FRP prices; EC125 £4277.54 EC250 £4452.25 FSE450 £5517.41

EC200 £4390.26 EC300 £4452.25

Delivery and D.T.R. charges are extra.

These Genuine UK bikes supplied through these Official GG UK Dealers are sold with a 6 months parts warranty and Full Factory Warranty. All bikes are fully homologated for use on UK roads. All the UK Bikes carry FULL European Homologation and are supplied with the necessary paperwork. You can also be rest assured that the VAT has been paid and you will receive a correct VAT Invoice from the closest dealer.

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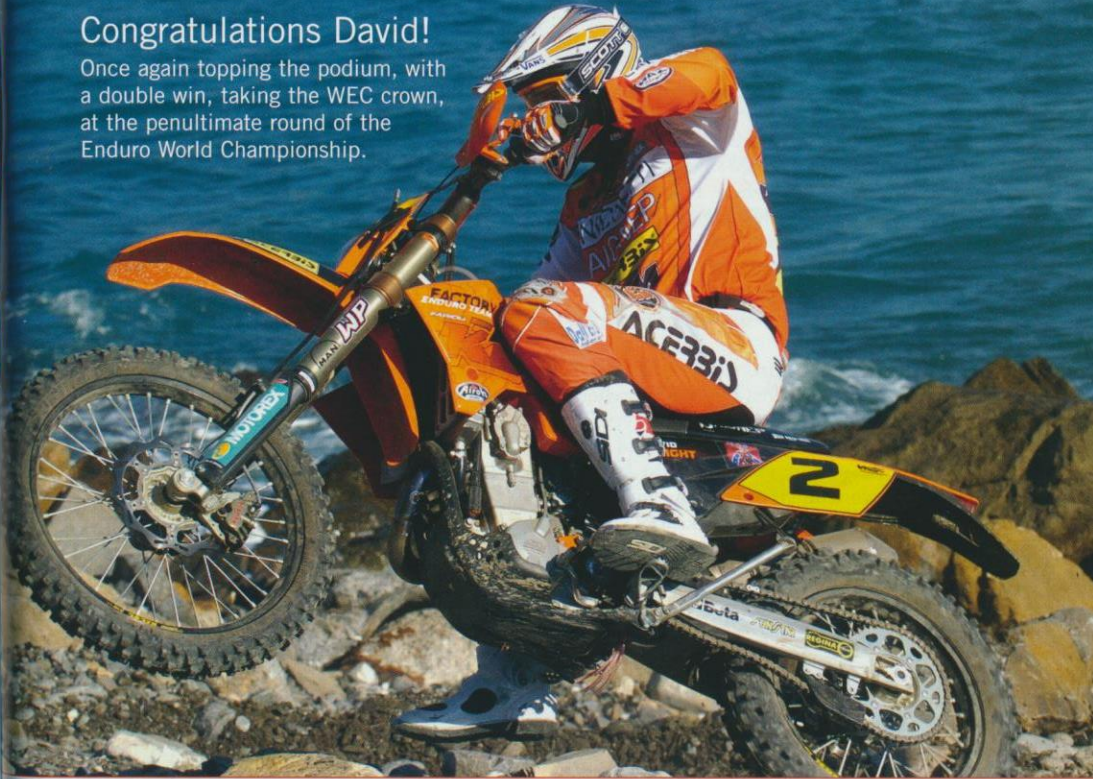
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KNIGHT FEVER... >>

Congratulations David!
Once again topping the podium, with a double win, taking the WEC crown, at the penultimate round of the Enduro World Championship.



Are you "Ready to Race"? www.ktm.co.uk

28964

MOTUL

EDITORIAL

Blade 'n' Races...

You wait ten years for an alternative-fuelled dirt bike to appear within the pages of TBM and then two come along in the same month. How weird is that?

Probably not all that weird given the socio-political climate in which we are living, here in Blair's Britain. A country where a number of privileged individuals called MPs claim to act for the majority, but in fact end up serving their own-, and the selected-interests, of a small number of well-funded, well organised and well-connected people at the expense of the hardworking proletariat.

Of course the removal of freedoms is all part of the price we pay for living in a Blairocracy where it's soon to become illegal to tell a certain type of religious joke for fear of invoking the spread of race hatred. No longer will you be able to say something like: two women in Burhkas were walking along the road wearing rucksacks when one turned to the other and said: *'Does my bomb look big in this?'*

The late, great comedian Dave Allen must be spinning in his whiskey-lubed grave. Of course I'm assuming he was buried not cremated, given that smoking in public is also about to become another criminal offence in Blair's Britain.

So what's all this got to do with alternative-fuel dirt bikes? Well, only that the eco-terrorists appear to have formed an unholy alliance with Westminster's power-hungry legislators on the basis of some (unproveable) theory that global warming means the folk of Norfolk having to don their Speedos as a result of too many fat Americans in SUVs at drive-thru McDonalds.

Of course it suits these *suits* to ignore the well-documented historical, meteorological and geological record which indicates that regular fluctuations in Britain's climate and temperature - from near desert conditions to completely shrouded in ice - are commonplace during interglacial periods (which is what most geologists believe we are in now). But hey, as any journalist will tell you - never let the facts get in the way of a good story.

HYBRID BIKES!!! Yes, yes, I'm just coming onto that. Well the fact remains that like it or not the days of the internal combustion engine are numbered - politically. And not for any sound economic reason other than the fact that some woolly-headed 'mentalist has whispered into the ear of an MP that the burning of petrol vapour will lead to yet more earthquakes in Pakistan, Tsunamis in SE Asia, and probably Krakatoa erupting - sending spumes of molten lava into the offices of the European Parliament, destroying a year's worth of expense claims. And we can't have that happening, can we?

It may seem a long way off to you, and I don't pretend for one minute that it's going to happen tomorrow, but I do think that in the not-too-distant future we'll all be scooting around on electric and hybrid-fuelled dirt bikes and riding in clean 'n' green enduros. If only because they'll let us ride that much more stealthily - perhaps in places we shouldn't! Of course the benefit of these bikes being virtually silent is that it's going to be so much easier to sneak up on some poor unsuspecting MP or enviro-nazi and pummel 'em into the ground. Bring it on!

SI MELBER

Edited & produced by: Si Melber
Deputy Editor: James Barnicoat
Staff Writer: Mel Falconer
Contributors: Mark Williams,
Chris Evans, Jonty Edmunds,
David Knight, Mike Rapley,
Alex Hearn, Steve Plain, Si Pavey
Designed by: Caleb Mason

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TBM

Editorial Address:
TBM PO Box 9845
London W13 9WP

Tel/Fax (10am-6pm Mon-Fri):
020 8840 4760/5066

Subscriptions:
Tel: 020 7903 3993

Advertising Manager:
Natalie Watson
01225 786615

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PERSPECTIVE

Bolt from the Blue: Brit Daryl Bolter fires his Husky out of a Greek special-test turn, en route to yet another podium in the WEC Enduro Juniors...

Pic: Jonty Edmunds



PERSPECTIVE

Bump-in' the Knight: The KTM team helps David Knight celebrate winning his first ever WEC title last month...
Pic: Jonty Edmunds



New V-Twin Aprilia RXV Enduro Bike Arrives...

TWIN SET



The long-awaited Aprilia RXV enduro bike is finally here! Unveiled at the Paris Bike Show in October, the first 450cc and 550-engined customer bikes should be available from the end of November, with the 450 costing £6,050 and the 550 around £200 more.

The stunning electric start, 72-degree, liquid-cooled, V-twin engined machine has taken its styling cues from its supermotard SXV brother, boasting a centrally-

mounted twin-pipe exhaust system, lightweight steel/alloy trellis frame, compact 7.8L tank, streamlined bodywork and neat graphics.

The pared-down looks are backed up with the use of lightweight materials including aluminium silicon alloy crankcases, titanium valves and magnesium engine covers, though we're slightly concerned by the claimed seat height of 996mm.

The fuel injection system, controlled via a programmable

ECU, uses 38mm throttle bodies (40mm on the 550) and the mapping has been set to give smooth and torquey performance at low to medium revs.

After it's WEC debut earlier in the year, the RXV performed well at the recent Slovakian Six Days, with former world champion Stefano Passeri piloting an almost standard machine to the finish.

Expect a test as soon as we can get our hands on one...

PAMP MY RIDE

At the recent Paris show, Scorpa exhibited this all-new trail/trials machine. Looking very much like a French, four-stroke version of Gas Gas' Pampera, the bike uses Yamaha's WR250F motor (which also powers Scorpa's new SY250F trials bike) and details such as the twin-exit exhaust are also borrowed from the company's trials thumper.

Likely to be in production for 2006, the bike fills the gap in the marketplace left by the discontinued Pampera, with only Beta's low-tech Alp 200 as competition. Look out for a TBM test as soon as the first bikes land on these shores...



NUMBER CRUNCH

Last month saw another rise in bike sales, now up one percent from the same time last year.

Once again the Adventure/Sport category has increased its market share, up a full 34 percent on last year's figures. And making a comeback this month is the R1150GS replacing the Yamaha XT660X in fifth place.

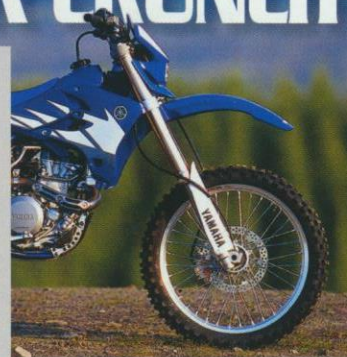
The good news continues in the Trail/Enduro sector, up one percent from Sept '04's figures, with the KTM 450EXC snatching fourth.

ADVENTURE SPORT

1	BMW R1200GS	1667
2	Honda XL125V	565
3	Suzuki 650 V-Strom	515
4	Triumph 955 Tiger	472
5	BMW 1150GS	362

TRAIL/ENDURO

1	Honda XR125L	789
2	Suzuki RV125	452
3	Yamaha DT125	392
4	KTM 450EXC	292
5	Yamaha WR450F	281



Sherco's all-new DOHC fuel-injected 250cc thumper E1 enduro bike (2.5i) has broken cover and will be entering final production in the summer of 2006.

The new model which looks to feature a smaller and lighter frame than the bigger bikes, is expected to cost around £5150 when it arrives. More details soon...

WON KNIGHT!

Hot on the heels of his amazing ISDE win last month, David Knight has now been crowned Enduro 3 World Champion.

TBM columnist Knighter won the world title at the eighth round of the WEC on 9/10 October in Serres, Greece, following two superb class-winning rides. After topping the first day by almost a minute, David needed only to finish in the top three on day two to clinch the E3 title.

In typical Knighter style he dominated proceedings and bagged the top spot on day two as well, 48 seconds clear of the rest of the field.

The full WEC report starts on page 124, and for David Knight's personal insight read his column on page 122...

IN-HOUSE TRAINING

Looking to brush up on your enduro skills? Then why not enrol on one of Geraint Jones's two-day training schools? There's three weekend dates to choose from and the courses are aimed anyone from the competent trail rider or sportsman racer, right through to expert level competitors.

The course costs £130 (if you use your own bike) or £260 if you borrow a Yamaha WR250 or 450F. Instructors will include Geraint himself, along with the 'Jones boys', Wyn Hughes and other guest instructors.

Dates are as follows:
26 - 27 November 2005
10 - 11 December 2005
7 - 8 January 2006

To reserve a place try 01686 413324 or info@yamaha-offroad-experience.co.uk, but be quick as places are limited.

CLIP THE PAGE

& Bag yourself a Bargain!

Come along to the TBM stand at the 2005 Dirt Bike Show and grab yourself a real bargain! TBM have got together with Motul and Oxygen Rush air filters to offer TBM readers a steal of a deal. Clip the token on the corner of this page, bring it along to our stand, and hand over a tenner. In return you'll get one of the superb Aussie-made Oxygen Rush air filters (worth £24.99) and we'll give you a 1L bottle of Motul's finest Air Filter Oil (worth £8.95) absolutely free.

Motul's Air Filter Oil has been specifically designed for use on foam air filters, helping the filter retain dirt whilst allowing the engine to breathe properly. We've got filters for most types of off-road bikes inc (certain EXC, DR-Z, XT, TT-R, XR, CR, WR, EC and KDX models) though supplies are limited and the offer is on a first-come, first-served basis. You'll find the TBM stand in the Linkway between halls one and two, but get there early or you'll miss out!!

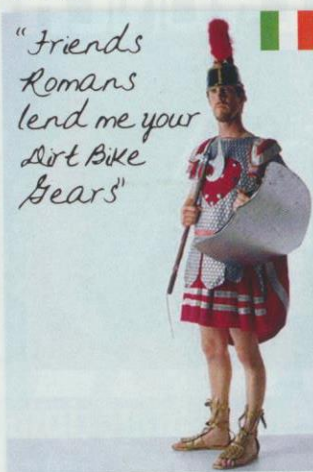


MOTUL

THE WINNING TICKET

After last month's competition to win VIP tickets to The Dirt Bike Show, we can now announce the winners. Of course, no-one correctly answered the question 'What did the Romans ever do for us...?' (the true answer being 'a darn site more than this Government!'), though a couple of entries tickled us enough to be awarded the prize. So step forward Steve Sellick of Eydon, Northants, and Nick Barrett of Purton, Wiltshire. Steve's answer of 'I dunno, I guess the best thing my boss left was his salad dressing' seemed a little obscure, until we realised it was written on a postcard featuring a centurion carrying what appeared to be a bashplate as a shield. Very odd.

Nick, on the other hand, went off on a tangent, desecrating another part of the classic Monty Python script which was far too obtuse for



words. Well done both of you.

For those who didn't win, the show runs from 17-20 November at Stoneleigh Park, near Coventry. Entry costs £13.50 for adults or £7.50 for juniors/senior citizens and you can save ten percent by buying in advance on 0870 240 9019. See you all there...

THE DIRT BIKE SHOW.
2005
17-20 November
Stoneleigh Park

BATTERING RAM



Chrysler has just announced that UK dealers are to sell the incredible Dodge Ram pick-ups.

With its 8.3L V10 engine (borrowed from the 'Viper' sports car), the SRT-10 Pick-up produces an awesome 500bhp and 525lb-ft of torque, giving it a 0-60mph time of just over five seconds and 150+mph capability; while the 5.7L ('Hemi') 4x4 Laramie 1500 Quad Cab won't be too far behind.

Although only available in limited

numbers (all left hand drive), demand for the two American muscle-trucks is expected to be high.

The Laramie comes with a sticker price of £25,995, whilst an SRT-10 costs £37,995 (both excluding VAT), which is around £4000 cheaper than buying a grey import version! Both trucks come with incredibly hi-spec cabs and are SVA-compliant.

Watch this space for a test - once we've stopped drooling, that is...

SNIPPETS

ISLAND LIFE

As in previous years, authorities on the Isle of Man have chosen to temporarily close certain 'upland' trails to avoid damage during the winter months. As the closures have apparently been sensationalised in the local press, the Forestry Division were keen to point out that this only affects a small number of trails and the restrictions will run from 1 Nov - 31 March. The exact grid references of these routes can be found on the TBM website (trailbikemag.com), by visiting the Tourist Information or Highways Division in Douglas ferry terminal, or by contacting the Forestry Division on 01624 801263.

With co-operative green lane user groups, a program of maintenance and clearly marked trails, the Manx authorities have a particularly reasoned approach to trail usage and have requested that visiting riders respect the lanes and don't ride in large groups. Can't say fairer than that...

FOLLOW ME, FOLLOW YOU

Warning all riders in Avon and Somerset - the local police have been alerted to a gang of bike thieves who are attending local events, then following competitors home and stealing their bikes.

As a result, Avon and Somerset Police have requested that all event organisers in the area contact PC453 Jason Mines, with details of their forthcoming events, at Somerton Police stn, Kirkham Street, Somerton TA11 7NN or phone 0845 4567000.

MAKE HISTORY

Long-running Swindon and District MCC are compiling a club history and would love to hear from anyone who is/was a member, especially from the early years.

Any old event programmes, entry lists, results sheets or photos would be useful - all material will be returned afterwards. Call Eric Mulraney on 01793 644724 if you can help.

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See us at the
**STONELEIGH
DIRT BIKE SHOW**
17-20 November

TBM's ULTIMATE GARAGE GIVEAWAY WINNERS!



Win yourself a Dream Garage in our simple to enter competition!

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 news-agent - 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 Top 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 moussets, 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.

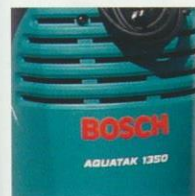
6 And when you're changing tyres (and especially moussets) you'll need a quality set of BIG tyre levers. Don't mess around with other stuff, Italian company Buzzetti (imported by Venhill Engineering) make the best ones we've come across with a specially-designed rim-stop at one end. Here at TBM we use a set of Buzettis 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 moussets 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 bio-degradable, 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.

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

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.

Husqvarna



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

Available from the following Authorised UK Husqvarna dealers:

County	Dealer	Town	Telephone	County	Dealer	Town	Telephone
Avon	Mereditth Motocross Ltd	Bristol	01179 714873	Middlesex	Gifford Motorcycles Ltd	Staines	01784 452489
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
Cornwall	St Blazey Moto-X	St Blazey	01726 816181	Shropshire	SS Racing	Shrewsbury	01743 821222
Derbyshire	SR Off Road	Workswoth	01629 820111	Sussex - East	Freestyle Ltd	Mark Cross	01892 782288
Devon	Albion Motorcycles Ltd	Exeter	01392 260340	Sussex - West	Red Dog Motorcycles	Burgess Hill	01444 248848
Dorset	Just Bikes Motorcycles	Shaftesbury	01747 851005	Tyne & Wear	Kawasaki Newcastle	Newcastle-u-Tyne	0191 2723335
Dorset	Mr Scooter	Bournemouth	01202 466268	West Midlands	QB Motorcycles Ltd	Brierley Hill	01384 637168
Dorset	Three Cross Motorcycles Ltd	Three Legged Cross	01202 810200	West Yorkshire	Cobb & Jagger Ltd	Shipley	01274 591017
Essex	GH Motorcycles	Colchester	01206 791155	Wiltshire	Ardeans Motorcycle & Scooter Centre	Swindon	01793 574800
Essex	Just Bikes	Leigh on Sea	01702 479330	Scotland	ATV Adventure Xtreme Ltd	Glasgow	0141 229 1432
Hampshire	Husky Sport	Cheriton	01962 771122	Scotland	Tom Admson Motorcycles	Elgin	01343 550600
Hampshire	Infinity Motorcycles Ltd	Farnborough	01252 400000	Wales	Wayne Mounter Motorcycles	Pontypridd	01443 400960
Hampshire	Tonymoto	Eastleigh	02380 647222	Isle of Man	Paul Dedman Motorcycles	Ramsey	01624 812390
Hereford	Big Bang Motorcycles	Broad Oak	01981 580077	Isle of Wight	Moto-Hedz	Sandown	01983 403388
Kent	Colwin Motorcycles	Sittingbourne	01795 472512	Channel Islands	Trevis Motorcycles	Guernsey	01481 246463
Kent	Dave Fox Motorcycles	Ramsgate	01843 591113	Channel Islands	Bobs Motorcycle Centre	Jersey	01534 758255
Kent	Red Dog Motorcycles	Edenbridge	01732 863686	Ireland - North	Hugh McEvoy Motorcycles	Newry	02830 849972
Kent	RP Motorcycles	Gravesend	01474 532967	Ireland - South	Hugh McEvoy Motorcycles	Dundalk	00353 042 9351729
Lancashire	Motosupplies	Carnforth	01524 734444				

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

RIGHT TO RIDE

Mark Williams disseminates the effect of the recent NERC Bill...

Well it's finally happened - trailriding as we know it is about to come to an end. After almost two years of threats and uncertainty, the third reading of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Bill was hustled through the Commons on October 11th with virtually no amendments to the highly contentious clauses 61 and 62. Some readers will have followed the

Government's attempts to curtail the claiming of byways and unsurfaced highways for vehicular use - from DEFRA's infamous 'Consultation Paper' in December 2003 to the announcement of the draft NERC bill in June this year. And if so, they will know that Clause 61: 'Restriction on Creation of New Public Rights of Way' prevents claims being made

to upgrade bridleways, RuPPs and the like to Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) after the Bill has received Royal Assent - which will be before the next issue of TBM lands on your doorstep.

Moreover, Clause 62: 'Ending of Certain Existing Unrecorded Public Rights of Way' effectively extinguishes the right to use mechanically propelled vehicles (MPVs) on a hitherto legal RoW that wasn't previously shown as such on a definitive map, or was being used for another purpose, eg as a footpath, that would otherwise confer 'restricted byway' status upon it.

Wasted Efforts

The Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF), Land Access Recreation Association (LARA) and other pro-vehicle use groups had bent over backwards to try and persuade the minister, Jim Knight, that a reasonable window should remain for claims to be made: under the original CROW Act 2000 claims would be accepted up until 2025. Their efforts included a moratorium on claims being made during amendment negotiations with Mr Knight and his DEFRA officials, and a proposal, the Sustainability Assessment Process (SAP) which would prevent time and effort being wasted making claims to upgrade tracks that

could not adequately support vehicular use, or which were of particular environmental and conservation sensitivity.

Following discussion reported in our August issue, the TRF and LARA had received some encouragement from Jim Knight with these initiatives, as well as other proposed measures which would help prevent illegal and inconsiderate use of green lanes - probably the main motives behind these two clauses. But in the event the powerful hiking and conservation lobbies had more influence over the Minister, and they'd also briefed MPs with a welter of *misinformation* and downright lies which ultimately won the vote.

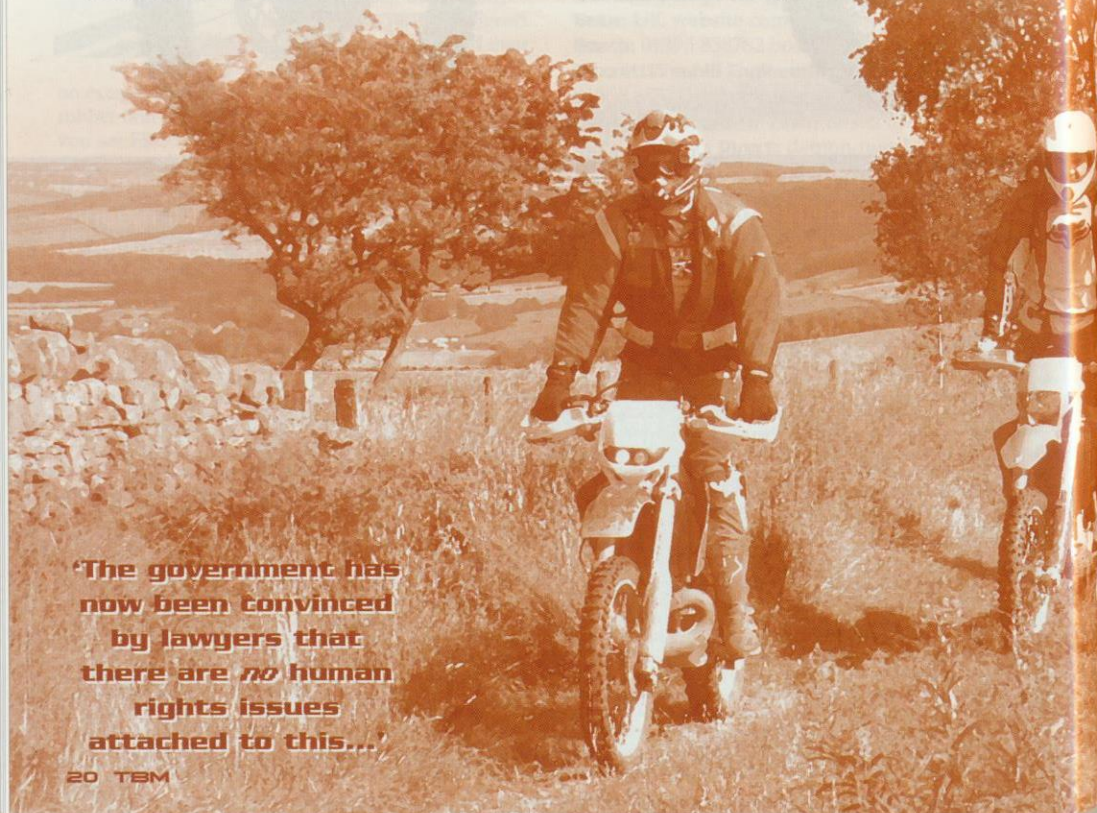
Stories about hundreds of upgrade claims being made as NERC went through the consultative process, and the ruination of leafy lanes by hordes of high-speed motorcyclists were enough to deter most MPs from opposing the bill. And their reluctance to do so was compounded by the fact that NERC is a huge, all-embracing piece of legislation that will actually, in various other respects, do some good for the countryside and its economy. By including Clauses 61 and 62 in virtually un-amended form, we really didn't stand a chance.

Those, like this writer, who feared appeasement in the run-up to NERC's third reading would only back-fire on us have sadly been proven correct. Moreover it shows how little the trailriding fraternity cares about their threatened freedoms inasmuch as very few bothered to lobby their MPs demanding amendments to clauses 61 and 62. Compare our lethargy with that of the hunting lobby when faced with extinction of their sport or, indeed, the relentless lobbying by GLEAM - a tiny organisation - who were behind the anti-MPV measures included in the bill.

And as for the motorcycle trade, which stands to lose millions of pounds as a result of this defeat, why did they not bother putting pressure on the government in the same way they did when motocross and trials were threatened by the agricultural Single Payment Scheme earlier this year?

Warnings Ignored, Apathy Abundant

Within hours of NERC receiving its final reading, the web was buzzing with reaction from the trailriding community, all of it extremely gloomy. Alan Kind, LARA's planning officer noted that 'it was clear that the minister, Jim Knight, had taken our proposals such as SAP seriously and in good faith, but he was simply overwhelmed by opposition - not only from 'the opposition', but also from his own backbenchers. One back-



'The government has now been convinced by lawyers that there are *no* human rights issues attached to this...'



RIGHT TO RIDE

bencher commented that 'the majority of green lane riders and drivers are OK, but the damage and noise of the minority demand that serious action be taken. The power of the New Labour walking lobby is enormous, and this was that power in action - rightly or wrongly. They've got the wind under their tails now... so beware.' He added, somewhat ominously, 'Don't be surprised if it gets worse in the House of Lords.'

TRF Chairman, Geoff Wilson bemoaned that the NERC debate 'made sobering and depressing watching/listening. Not least because it shows the dishonesty, misrepresentation, prejudice, lack of integrity, and lack of care for the truth that drives our so-called democracy. The bottom line is that, despite my predictions to the contrary, trail riding/driving has lost its battle.'

Wilson also noted that the Minister, 'under serious pressure from both sides of the House also said that at the House of Lords stage his government will introduce robust measures to deal with all pending claims. Which seems to indicate that all recently submitted claims and any submitted in the next week or so will also be capped in some way or other - possibly by

backdating the legislation to May. The Government has now been convinced by its lawyers that there are *no* human rights issues attached to this.'

The Gloves Are Off

Needless to say, however, the TRF/LARA voluntary moratorium on DMMO claims was lifted within hours of the Bill being passed and several local TRF groups will be rushing out the claims they've been sitting on for the past few months... possibly, even probably to no avail. But this will, of course risk NERC incurring harsher treatment from their Lordships.

It is hard, therefore, to find any crumbs of comfort from all this. Indeed Geoff Wilson was so dismayed after all the months and months of hard work he and his colleagues have put in, that he later questioned the ongoing relevance of the TRF and announced that he would not stand for re-election as chairman when they meet for their AGM on October 30th. (Ironically, this is also National Green Lane Day, when TRF and LARA members work with councils to repair damaged lanes, and which there is now much talk of boycotting). This issue of TBM will appear too late to report from that meeting, but this writer has already received several e-mails from TRF members who are also now wondering whether the organisation indeed has a purpose anymore.

The short-term answer to that, and indeed the future of trailriding in this country, is that yes it does. For a start, there are still over 6000 miles of legal trails that must be preserved for MPV use at all costs. The problems is that many of these BOATS are few and far between and will soon get overused and doubtless subjected to TROs and downgrades as a consequence.

Make no mistake, the Ramblers, GLEAM and all our other foes will be gloating over their success in preventing amendments to NERC and sharpening their swords in anticipation of mounting further attacks. Reading some of the debate in Hansard, it's clear that several MPs are disposed to banning cyclists and even horse-riders from existing green lanes and if you want to carry on riding your bikes off-road, you'd better believe that there are still fights to be fought.

It may well be, for example, that supplementary blanket legislation will be proposed to retrospectively downgrade BOATs that had been claimed from bridleways and footpaths since the CROW Act came into force in 2000. And in any case a individual downgrade applications can be made at

any time, even though upgrades for MPV use now can't. Which just shows how unfair this is.

Although the TRF has been dealt a body-blow on our behalf, and notwithstanding the sentiments expressed in my Totally Ruttled column this month, it remains the only viable option in representing our right to ride.

And whilst some may be tempted to regard the continuation of trailriding as a lost cause and decide to flog their bikes and take up tiddly-winks instead, there's a strong argument for getting even more involved in rights of way campaigning. The simplest way to do this is to join one of the 44 local TRF groups dotted around the country (log on to www.trf.org.uk for more details).

Get 'em Sectioned

One area of concern, as mentioned in TBM over the last 12 months, is the increasing tendency of county councils to slap TROs on tracks on the pretext that they are too damaged and/or unsafe to be used by MPVs. In my own patch, Mid-Wales, this has closed off several of our longest and best-loved routes and following the dismal experience of the repeated renewal of TROs on The Monks Trod, it was feared that we might lose them indefinitely.

However thanks to the efforts of the Byways & Bridleways Trust and the Greenlane

'Some may be tempted to regard the continuation of trailriding as a lost cause and decide to flog their bikes and take up tiddly-winks instead...'

Associations, under the existing Highways Act, a device known as a 'Section 56' can be served if a Council acknowledges in writing that it is responsible for a BOAT, and that they have closed it for repairs. They are then

obliged to reveal if the repairs have been or are being made. If as a consequence the lane is officially 'Out Of Repair' (OOR), a summons under Section 56 of the Act can be applied for and issued by a magistrates court which obliges the council to effect the repairs and provide an appropriate timetable.

In the case of Powys CC and these particular tracks, this suddenly prompted them to engage in hasty dialogue with the aforementioned organisations, plus the local TRF group, to discuss the repairs and agree a date for lifting two of the TROs - providing that the s56 summons were stalled. Had the summons been issued, the court would almost inevitably have ruled that the OOR tracks must be repaired in the fastest and fullest way possible, which would also have been the most expensive, whereas by engaging with the relevant users groups they had hitherto ignored, much cheaper, easier remedies have been agreed upon using volunteer labour and expertise.



For more on s56 notices, contact the Byways & Bridleways Trust on www.bbtrust.org.uk and borrow or buy a copy of their 'blue book' which contains a host of useful information regarding rights of way. And although we may have lost a major battle with the passage of NERC, perhaps this is the wake-up call that over the past two years has been falling on too many deaf ears.

Finally although the Ramblers et al may think they have eliminated trail bikes and other vehicles from RoW they are wrong. As TRF Press Officer, Ian Packer, commented, 'This new law will eliminate all legal and law abiding citizens and their vehicles but the illegal 'scramblers' and jobs will be unaffected by the new legislation. They will no doubt continue to use their untaxed, uninsured, untested vehicles but without the limits that legal TRF members imposed by the presence of their members in the countryside.

'The TRF foresee an expansion in illegal use as legal outlets are removed. Problems such as binge drinking may be provided with additional resources it seems as licensing laws are extended, yet peaceful trail riding outlawed. How much will it all cost? Loss of business and the enforcement by an already stretched police force battling to deal with serious crime and terrorism. Will the police receive new revenue or will they divert precious resource to chase the naughty boys created by the failure to acknowledge a legitimate recreation?' Only time will tell...

RIGHT TO RIDE

Stop Press: NERC Bill goes to the Lords

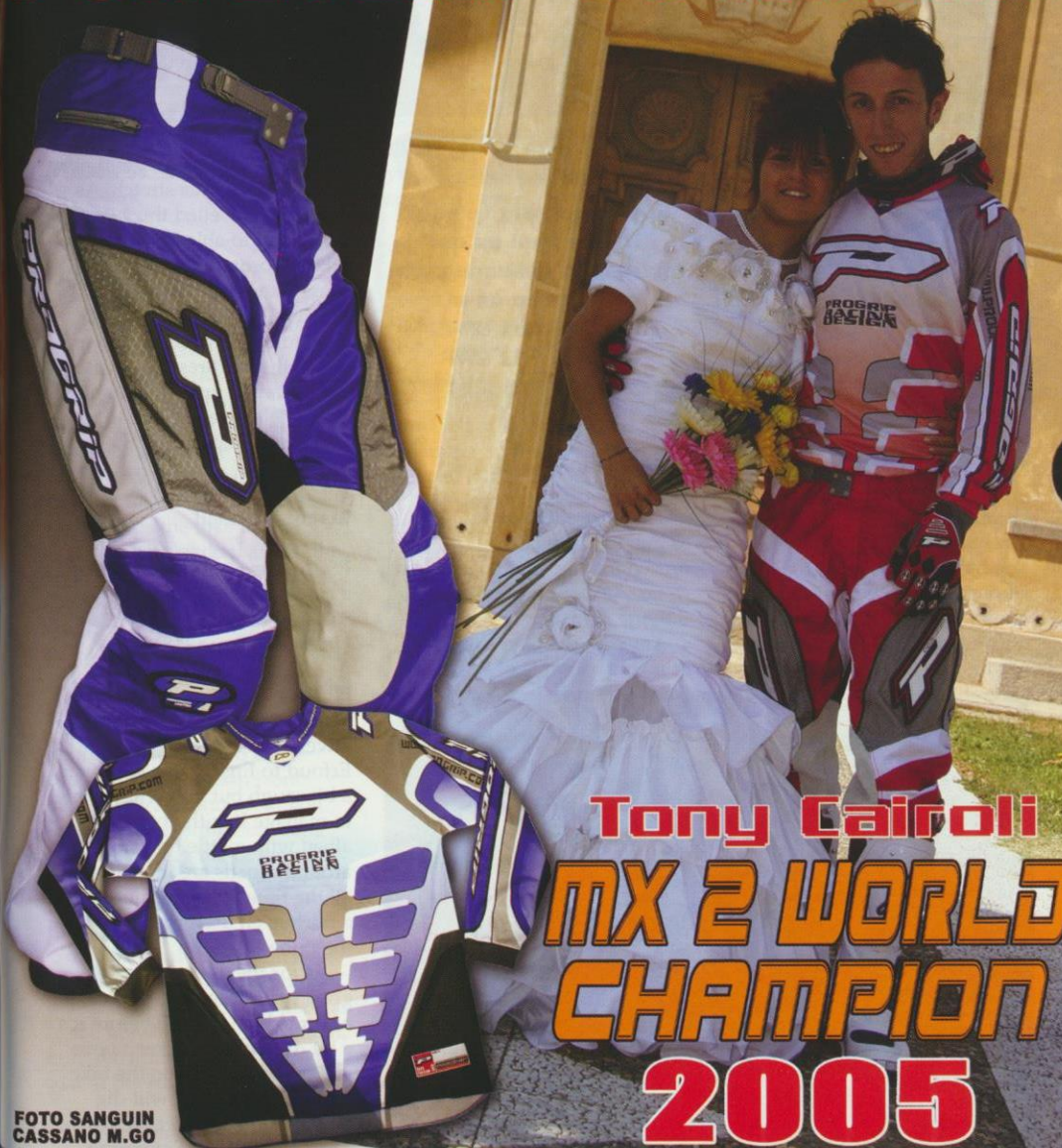
Since the above feature was written we have learnt that NERC goes before the House of Lords on 2 November and to the Lords Committee for ratification on 21 Nov. The former date will be too late for TBM readers to lobby any of their Lordships but it is still worth writing to Lord Bach, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for DEFRA (C/o The House of Lords) who is handling the bill in the upper house.

Tell him how unfair and unworkable Clauses 61 and 62 are, tell him that most of the Commons MP who voted against it were given false information by the Ramblers Association and other anti-MPV lobbyists, and that the Minister, Jim Knight, abandoned the proposals to limit their draconian effect which were agreed after exhaustive negotiations with the TRF, LARA etc. You might also point out that responsible trailriders have access to only five percent of Britain's unsurfaced byways, whereas the walkers have access to it all.

Craig Clary-Clinch, spokesman for the Motorcycle Industry Association admitted that 'After we'd managed to fend off the potentially disastrous Single Payment Scheme fiasco, not enough attention was paid (by the trade) to the NERC bill. But we were involved in the negotiations with DEFRA from the very start and feel utterly betrayed by what's happened. It is obvious to me that there are some very nasty people out there who are determined stop a minority of people from enjoying themselves, even when it's without hindrance to others.

'Unfortunately we are living in a climate of political opinion that is opposed to anything involving vehicles that don't run on tarmac, and if we are to maintain any sort of future we have to band together convincingly and make a concerted defence. Lobbying politicians will help, even at this late stage, but everyone who rides off-road should join the TRF now and pledge their support.'

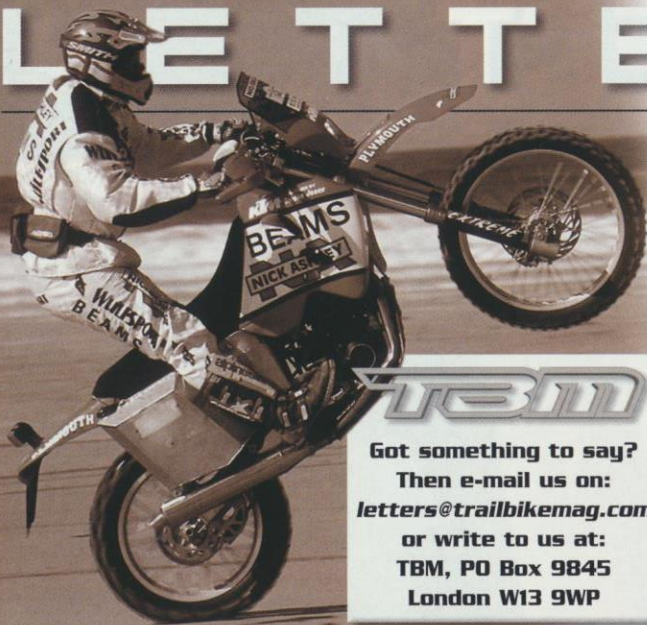
PERFECT.... FOR EVERY OCCASION



Tony Cairoli
MX 2 WORLD
CHAMPION
2005

FOTO SANGUIN
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Then e-mail us on:
letters@trailbikemag.com
or write to us at:
TBM, PO Box 9845
London W13 9WP**

Dune Buddies

Hi Mel

You have certainly put the cat amongst the pigeons in my house. I refer to your excellent article in issue 117 on your time in Morocco. Having read this several times my mind started

to wander to far-off exotic places.

These wanderings turned to pub talk, which, in turn, turned into a plan. No problems so far... except I forgot to mention the plans to my wife!

Anyway, the plan consists of taking a couple of BMW R1100GS's, a baby GS and an

Aprilia crappynerd (thingy) from Scotland over to Amsterdam then head down through France, Spain and into Morocco.

The problem I have and my reason for writing to you is the stretch of road from Erfoud to the Erg Chebbi dunes. My 'instant expert on all things Moroccan' book says I will need a 4x4 to cover this stretch. As you have travelled this bit of road, is it do-able on the big bikes two-up (yes, the wife found out) with luggage etc?

We will have only a few days to enjoy Morocco and as it was the pictures of you playing in these dunes that inspired this whole idea I refuse to go without seeing/trying them for myself.

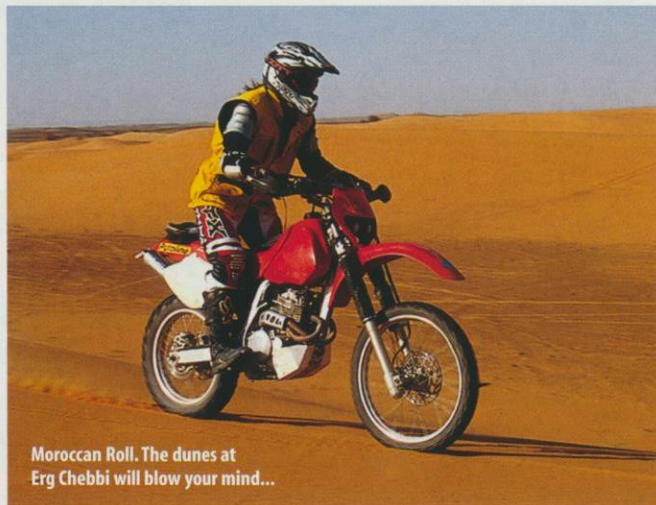
Kenny, via email

PS: Your ex said you look like a clown in your riding kit? STUPID BOY!
(Trick Bits, issue 118)

Hi Kenny, glad to know I kickstarted your Moroccan adventure. That particular Erfoud to Erg Chebbi section is a bit rough but you will be able to manage it with your bikes, albeit with a little bouncing around. Roads are improving all the time out there, and it's a fairly well used route out to the dunes anyway.

As for the dunes, they're good fun although if you've never ridden in sand before it's a bit different - just keep your weight backwards on the bike otherwise the front will dig in and you'll be over the bars. The scenery is also stunning, especially at sunset.

Oh, re: the clown comment - that's *why* he's my ex!



Moroccan Roll. The dunes at Erg Chebbi will blow your mind...



Make A Stand

Dear TBM

I have just purchased a Gas Gas Pampera after reading the various reviews in your mag, seeing as I've struggled to reach the floor on my XR250 for the last couple of years.

The Pam is much lighter and goes anywhere I point it - the only downside, literally, is the original stand. It self retracts and dumps the bike on the ground if not parked at just the right angle. Which it did it on the morning of its first MOT and broke the rear light so I had to get the drill out and sort it out. Apologies if this is obvious but it may help someone.

My solution was to drill a hole at about the 11 o'clock position above and in front of the central stand pivot bolt, then insert an 8mm bolt (long enough to clear the pivot bolt by about 10mm) and secure this with a nut either side of the base plate.

The original spring can then be wrestled out of its original hole and looped around the end of the new bolt. It works a treat, only retracting when I want it to and doesn't get in the way.

John Stratton
Newtown, Powys

Cheers for that John - this trip probably works for all manner

of bikes with self-retracting sidestands...

Dirty Convert

Dear TBM

I have just read your October issue (122) and two thoughts struck me: what a difference a year makes, and what a great sport enduro is.

Two and a half years ago I sold my road bike and bought a DR-Z. I took your advice, as I needed a bike to go to work on and fancied trying trail riding at the weekends. The bike was a bit too heavy for me but it was the right bike for the job and I felt as though I was becoming a more accomplished off-road rider.

I also joined the TRF and wrote the letters to my MP as I seemed to have joined up at a time when trail riding was about to be extinguished by bigoted attitudes. Towards the end of 2004 I spectated at the

Tim Ward enduro in Surrey and was impressed. I had read a couple of excited letters in your mag about guys describing the feeling of riding in their first enduro so I had to have a go.

I sold the DR-Z and bought a Gas Gas EC, again on your recommendation. You were spot on once more and I'm about to end my first year of sportsman competition.

I've learnt more about riding and maintenance in one year than I ever could have learnt before. I've met some top riders and made valuable friends who have encouraged me and given good advice. I've also learnt a lot more about myself, mainly limitations but hey, that's what it's all about. I'm able to enter the over-fifties next year so I'm going to carry on despite the aches and pains.

Paul Chandler, South Croydon
via email

Welcome to the club, Paul... →



Suzuki's DR-Z400. A good bike on which to start trailriding...

LETTERS



Off The Map

Dear TBM

Hi guys - just about to subscribe to your mag as it's top banana. I get your mag every month and in nearly every one the same two issues come up.

Firstly, where can people ride their bikes legally? The same response keeps coming back from you - join the TRF for obvious reasons, like their local knowledge or detailed maps.

The second issue regards people riding illegally on parkland, farmland etc. So here is my solution. After a trip this year to the IOM TT I discovered in a newsagents a map to the public ROW and an outdoor leisure map of the Island. It covers the entire Island, is split into two maps North/South and covers all the green lanes and all the legal off roading places you need.

And guess how much? Just six pounds. Now that to me is just pure common sense. I am not knocking the TRF here as they do a brilliant job, but why not have the map-making posse make up pure green laning maps for the UK?

Chris Harris, via email

Because they'd constantly be out of date (esp post NERC)!

A Tale Of Serow

Dear TBM

Having been reading with interest the recent articles on light-and-low mini thumper trailies (including the CRF230 entered in an enduro), I think that these types of bikes can be very successful in competitions - it just depends on what competitions you choose to enter.

Last year I bought a 1994 Serow to ride on the lanes in Surrey, Hants and Sussex and

XT225 Serow...
Good for certain competitions...



being a sportsman trials rider, I was keen to exploit the Serow's agility and rideability in competition. Down in the SE there are several Long Distance Trials (LDTs) that run throughout the year and these involve riding road legal bikes down green lanes with trials sections.

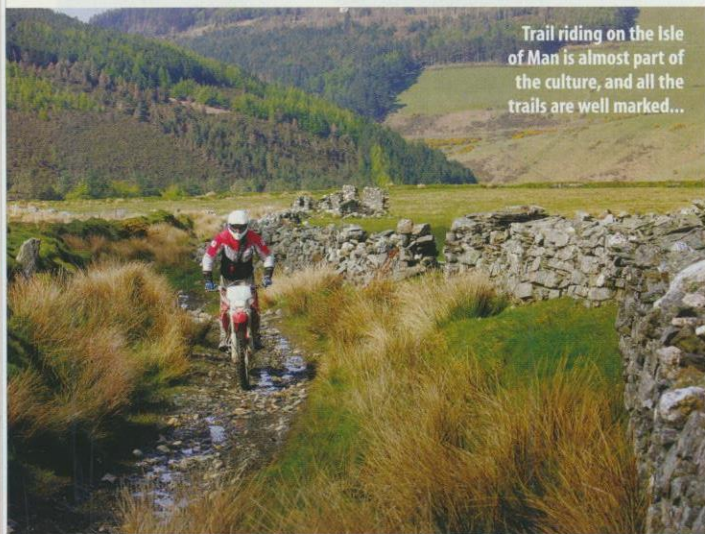
On these, the Serow shines through and the high mpg ensures that a full tank always lasts a long day's green laning.

I recently rode in the Surrey Police Three Stage Trial (3ST) at Bagshot, involving riding trials sections against the clock, and won the Trail Bike Novice class for the first time. It's worth repeating how much fun these bikes are on technical sections at slow/medium pace where bigger and more powerful bikes can get into all sorts of trouble.

So if you happen to own a mini thumper trailie and fancy trying a competition look out for LDTs and 3STs.

Rupert Kemp
via email

Absolutely agree with you Rupert, we've entered numerous LDTs on Serows in the past (many of which have been documented in TBM), and can thoroughly recommend them. Wouldn't choose one for doing enduros on, mind... →

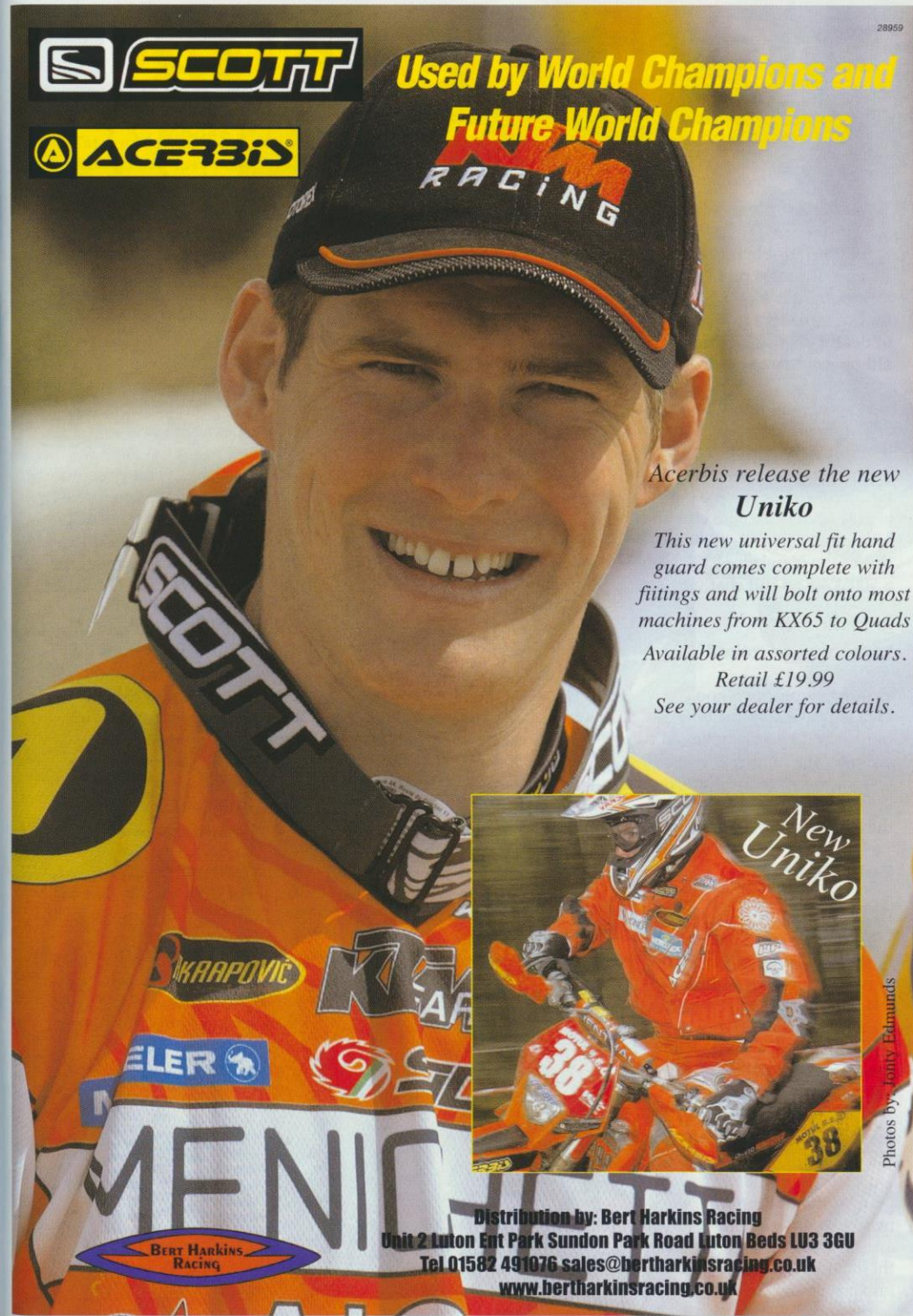


Trail riding on the Isle of Man is almost part of the culture, and all the trails are well marked...

SCOTT

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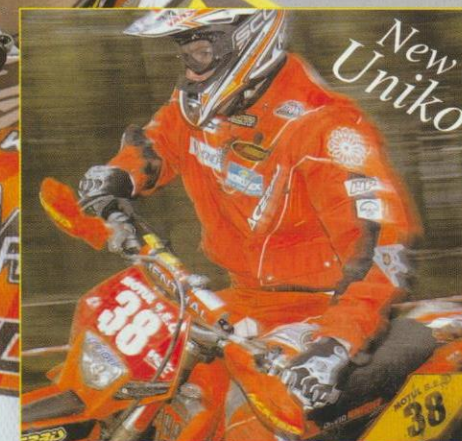


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LETTERS

Stuck On You

After your problems with sticking throttles on trials bikes, just thought it might be useful for other readers to know how to deal with a stuck throttle, although I hope you don't ever need to.

If you grab the front wheel and turn the bike upside down it empties the carb into the engine - a good way to stop a two-stroke. Then as the tank is now lower than the carb the bike cannot go - easy! I learned this at the Hawkstone GP with a 500Mxer on full chat...

G Miller
Lesmahagow, Scotland

Hmmm, probably a good idea to make sure the bike's in neutral first so you haven't got the chain and rear wheel thrashing around. Trouble is - you try finding neutral when the engine's at max revs...

Cold Feet

Dear TBM

Last year I suffered from cold hands and feet all winter. I have the undergrip heaters but could you tell me the best gloves to use with them, and also any good tips on keeping feet dry and warm?

Jake Miller, Darlington
via email

Jake, in wintertime we use neoprene gloves here - Scott and a few other people make them and they actually work fairly well. On the foot front,

30 TBM

try waterproof socks and also taping-up the tops of the boots to stop any water getting in while out on the trail.

And since winter is nearly upon us, we'll be running a feature about cold weather garb in next month's mag...

Start Me Up

Dear TBM

Having read all my back issues and even spoken to (Dep Ed) Barni on the phone I've finally replaced the complicated starting ritual of my old DR350 with a quick 'one prod' affair, so I'm now looking forward to enjoying it as much as everyone says I will!

Now for a moan - where is the Cagiva staff bike? It must be at least a year since the last write up. If you're not going to finish it that LED rear light would look great on my bike...

Jon James
via email

Thought we'd got away with quietly sweeping it away under the carpet Jon. In actual fact we are readying the bike (as and

when time allows) for a rally event next year. Watch out for future Cagiva instalment over Christmas...

Hare Of The Dog

Dear TBM

I'm quite new to this trail biking lark and enjoying it a lot. These are questions you probably get quite a bit, but please bear with me.

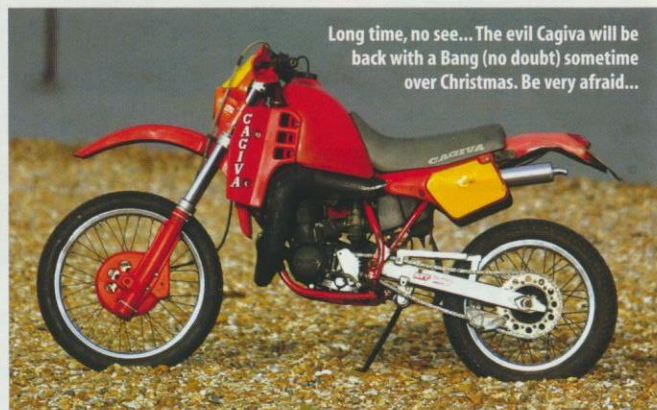
I want to try the Hare & Hound events as they seem a gentler introduction to enduro. Where would be my nearest club to try? And what do I need in order to join and race at the meetings? I live near Lancaster, North Lincs.

I've tried the 'net but info seems to be a bit thin on the ground and unfortunately I don't know anyone who competes either. Any advice would be appreciated.

Excellent mag by the way.

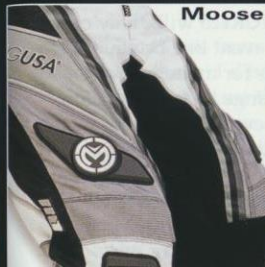
John Spriggs
via email

John, try contacting Dave Jagger at Chorley MX club on 01772 746487. They organise

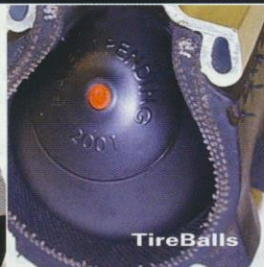


Long time, no see... The evil Cagiva will be back with a Bang (no doubt) sometime over Christmas. Be very afraid...

DirtBikeStore.com



Moose



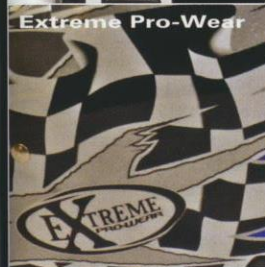
TireBalls



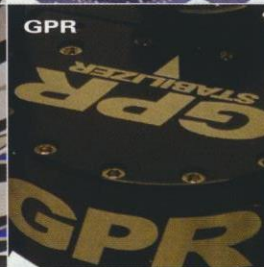
SFB



PowerPegz



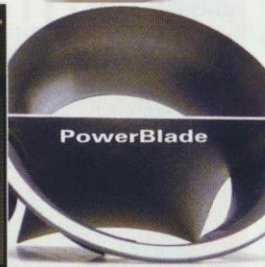
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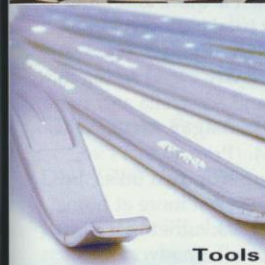
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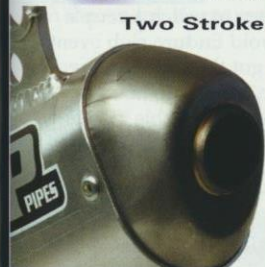
For-Ever-Levers



PowerBlade



Tools

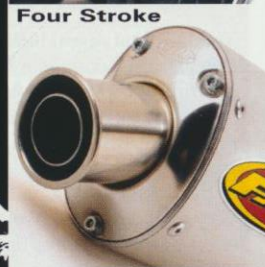


Two Stroke

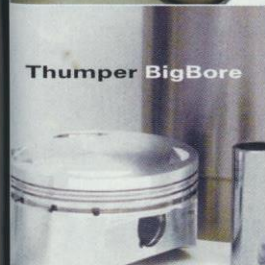
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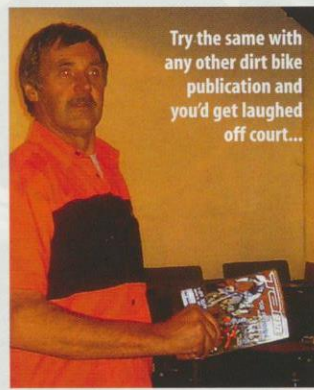


Trade enquiries welcome

LETTERS



Hare & Hounds enduros in your neck of the woods. But in the meantime keep your eyes peeled for a feature we'll be running shortly about getting started in enduros - including covering all of the different disciplines...



Slightly Batty

Dear TBM
Thought you might like to see this picture, taken on a recent trailriding trip to the Isle of Man. As you can see, this fellow is making good use of a certain publication in the games room at the digs. For though it was very well equipped, we were short of a table tennis bat!
Anyway, the trails were well marked out on the Island and we felt very welcome. Life would be a lot easier on the mainland if the powers that be adopted a similar attitude.
Before I go, how about an article on the various enduro / trials riding schools or even enduro / trials riding skills. Believe me, there are some of us out here that need them.

Anyway, no matter what they say about you lot, I think you're all right.

Jon Hall
via email

What do they say, Jon...?

Black and White

Dear TBM

I have two questions: Firstly - I have a 1997 Honda CR125 with a black steel frame. I have seen these in white on CRE/CRM 125s and 250s. I know Honda turned to aluminum in late '97/early '98 but why is mine painted black?

Secondly, I haven't started racing yet so I was wondering how many actual miles would my bike go for before needing a service and what would have to be replaced engine wise?

Would it last in the TBM 12-hour Dawn to Dusk race or would it blow up?

Also, would some engine mods solve this problem and help the bike last longer?

Steven Stevin
Co. Cork, Ireland

PS Great mag... well, better than the motocross ones. And is it possible to get a subscription to the South of Ireland?

Yes. To get a sub to Eire call 020 7903 3993 (or log onto trailbikemag.com). As for the frame colour, we don't know much about MXers, but we're sure that all the late steel-framed CR125s had white frames until the alloy-framed 125 came along in 1998. We can only assume that a previous owner had it powder coated in

black. A CR125 will easily cope with an event like Dawn to Dusk. As for maintenance - we'd change the transmission oil after every other race, and replace the piston ring after about six months use. Oh, and keep the filter good and clean...

Easy Start

Hi,

I read with interest the reply to a letter in TBM122 (Haring Around) where it stated that you're considering publishing advice for people starting enduro racing.

I intend to start racing next year, which is quite ambitious since my total motorcycle experience in the last five years amounts to a day's trail riding in Queensland Australia and two days trail riding in north Wales with IN-4. (Prior to this I've had a couple of road bikes, but to be honest I'm more at home behind a desk rather than on an enduro bike!)

I've been to watch a couple of Cotswold Enduro club events and I've got the bug! I realise that I can't expect to jump on a dirt bike and be able to ride it effectively without plenty of practice/experience so I've booked myself on two enduro schools with Ady Smith and Geraint Jones. I also realise that I've got a lot to learn about the sport in general. For example, types of racing, rules, clubs, where to learn/practice, what type of bike to get, workshop equipment, fitness, etc. As you can see I really am starting from zero! (Well not quite, I bought some boots and a helmet a couple of weeks ago!)

It would be very helpful to me if you'd cover all these

topics! In fact, if you're interested in chronicling my ambitious rise from zero to enduro rider (albeit a beginner) I'd be interested in doing that.

This week I realised that I'll have a lot of challenges ahead of me. For example, as I don't have access to a van to carry my bike (when I get one!) to meetings, I called my local car dealer to enquire about the cost of fitting a tow bar to my car. Wait for it... £1095!!!

Anyway, any help/advice greatly appreciated on my adventure!

Thanks

Michael Eaton, via email

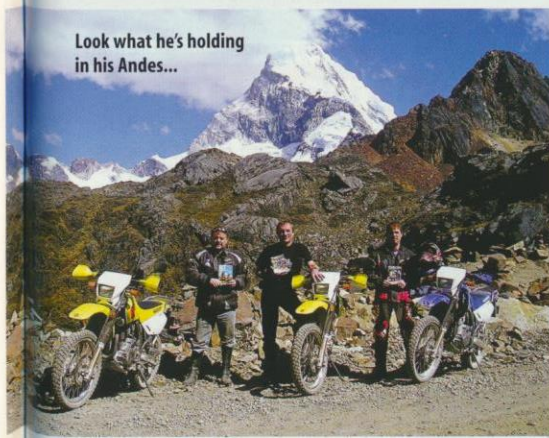
Michael, all we can say is keep reading TBM. We intend to bring new readers up to speed on getting started, where to ride, what kit they'll need etc... beginning next month. Last year we chronicled Mel (our staff writer's) efforts on learning the basics. It's a theme we try and cover (albeit in completely new ways) every other year or so. Watch this space...

The Man From The Peru

Dear TBM

Just thought I'd show you that TBM does get read everywhere! This is in Peru somewhere in the Andes. Keep up the good work.

David Groves
Adventure Peru



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Question Time

Dear TBM

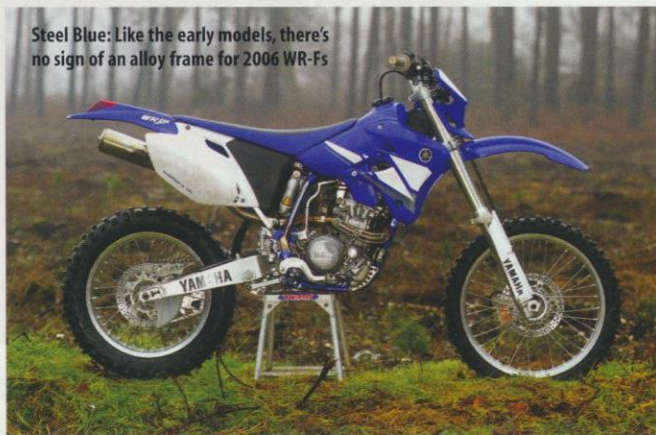
Great mag, keep up the good work. I was just wondering if you could help me out with a couple of things. Firstly do you know if the 2006 WR250F will come equipped with the new ally frame, and if not, when it is due for release?

Secondly are you planning on doing a review of the 2006 WR range and also the Honda CRF250X? I have seen the KTM review but not anything for these two Japanese ranges.

Next up I was wondering if you could help with a bit of riding advice. I have been riding a 2003 WR250F model after changing from road bikes in the last couple of years and love it. However, I find it hard to wheelie a bike (or any bike!) and as it would be very useful at times to lift the front end, some tips would be gratefully appreciated.

Lastly, any further news on green laning as we know it?

Steel Blue: Like the early models, there's no sign of an alloy frame for 2006 WR-Fs



Mark, Dorset

Mark, Yamaha has shown pics of the '06 WR and I'm afraid there's no alloy frame for next year. But for 2007...? Well, who knows. We will be testing all the 250 four-strokes in a giant shootout over the winter, so watch out for that. Wheelies are just a matter of pulling back on the bars and opening the throttle at the same time. Practise makes perfect...

Swap Shop

Dear TBM

Thanks for a great magazine, definitely up there with the best. My 19 year old son competes in the South African National Off-road and Enduro Championships, he would dearly love to compete in a few BEC events in 2006.

I am wondering if there is anybody in the UK that would be interested in some sort of rider exchange? Where he/she could come to South Africa and compete in some of our events such as the Kalahari Desert 1000 or the Roof of Africa, we

would assist each other with a bike, accommodation, transport etc.

We have eight National Off-road Championship events, four National Enduro Championship events and umpteen regional races, so there is plenty to choose from. Any thoughts on this idea?

Iain Gilbert
PO Box 2919
Ermelo 2350
South Africa
mobile 0027824940800
iaingilbert@tiscali.co.za

Iain, we've published your contact details so that anyone who's interested can get in touch with you...

Don't Know Much About Geography

Your Melbership

Re: my letter in issue 121 about the 'Not National Geographic' editorial.

Much humble pie is being eaten here. I guess this is what happens when a chance buy of TBM brings you back into the fold after some 15 years in the wilderness (apart from some crazy downhill mountain biking).

Got myself a Honda TL125 (chrome frame, 150cc big bore kit etc) and am taking lessons on my brothers DR-Z - I'm home at last.

As for information taking a long time to get to Berwick-upon-Tweed, we were still at war with Russia until the Armistice was correctly ratified in the late Eighties.

Paul Birch
via email



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HYDROGEN

BOMB-SHELL

STORY: SI MELBER; PICS: JAMES BARNICOAT



Would you buy a bike which cost £6000 and looked like this if it was the only thing you could ride on the trail...? TBM investigates the weird hydrogen-powered ENV bike...

What's it like to ride?
Very quiet...



than two or three years time. Hydrogen powered machines are not new, the concept has been with us for well over a century. But it's only now in these straightened times - as we can begin to forecast the end of fossil fuels which have powered our nations for more than 300 years - that the concept has been re-evaluated.

And not only re-evaluated but re-invented, re-designed and re-marketed in a format which, while it can't currently compete in terms of price or performance with existing hydrocarbon-burning engines, has the ultimate ace up its sleeve - that of zero emissions. Because that's what the ENV name stands for: Emissions Neutral Vehicle. And when you've got an emissions-neutral vehicle, you've suddenly found yourself a lot of very influential new friends - even if they are (on the whole) a rather badly dressed bunch!

Hydro v Carbons?

Burn petrol vapour in a 12:1 fuel/air mix and the result is carbon dioxide (among others), currently the Al-Qaeda of greenhouse gasses in the war on global-warming. But burn hydrogen in air and

There was a gentle chuff-chuffing sound in the air. It sounded a bit like Thomas the Tank Engine sitting in the station on Sodor, but here we were in the middle of a windswept airfield in Bucks, and there wasn't a toy train in sight. Andy, the ENV project co-ordinator, noticed my puzzled look and said to me: 'Oh don't worry that's just the internal fan to keep the bike's core cool - both bikes are running right now. It'll stop in a moment.' Sure enough a few seconds later the only sound I could hear was the gentle swoosh of a late summer's breeze. Silence reigned.

It's not everyday you get the chance to ride a bike powered by an alternative fuel source. Although if the creators of the ENV bike get their way, that possibility could become reality in less

HYDROGEN BOMB-SHELL

It's a dirt bike Jim, but
not as we know it...



Not a handle... but
actually one of the
ENV's exhausts...



ENV's CORE powerplant
slots in here to provide
the bike's motor-vation.
Note batteries, below...



the result is that the hydrogen molecules combine with oxygen to produce H₂O: water vapour. Yep this bike emits only water and a little bit of heat - though very little of the latter - you can put your hand over the twin exhaust vents (on either side of the 'tank') and it feels just warm and wet. And that's what's made it the talk of the lenth-eating-brigade who, in the past two decades, have gone from badly-dressed-boys to men-at-work with a missionary zeal which won't stop until they purge the world of the nasty, polluting infernal combustion engine.

Of course the ENV bike isn't trying to do that at all. It's not aiming to replace the piston-engine on a global scale (at least not yet), but it is intend

ing to offer a quiet, zero-emission transport solution in the parts of our world which have been chosen as the battleground between environmentalists and the rest of the free-thinking population: our cities and forests.

The folks at Intelligent Energy (the group set up to evaluate, design and ultimately bring to market, the ENV bike) have a vision of cities whirring to the quiet thrum of hydrogen-powered two-wheelers. And don't for one minute think that this is the stuff of Orwellian nightmares. London's Congestion Charge currently exempts alternative-fuelled vehicles (so it's not about congestion after all, merely a political bias against certain types of power-

plants). And as I write this the UK government is drawing up plans to extend the area of the zone and allow at least six other major city centres to implement similar schemes.

And that's just here in Britain.

In other countries it's much worse.

Everyone knows that in Athens in Greece the Government

only allows individual cars into the city centre every other day (depending upon the letter at the end of their numberplate). While in California (the decaff-capital of the world), strict emissions regulations have been in place since the 1970s, and riding a two-stroke is considered slightly worse than 'messing' with kids. The world is changing fast and according to the weirdy-beardy environmentalists you're either part of the solution, or part of the problem.

Dual Fuel, Dual Sport

So where does the average TBM reader fit into all this? The sort of guy or girl who just wants to slip into their Alpinestars and go nail a few forest

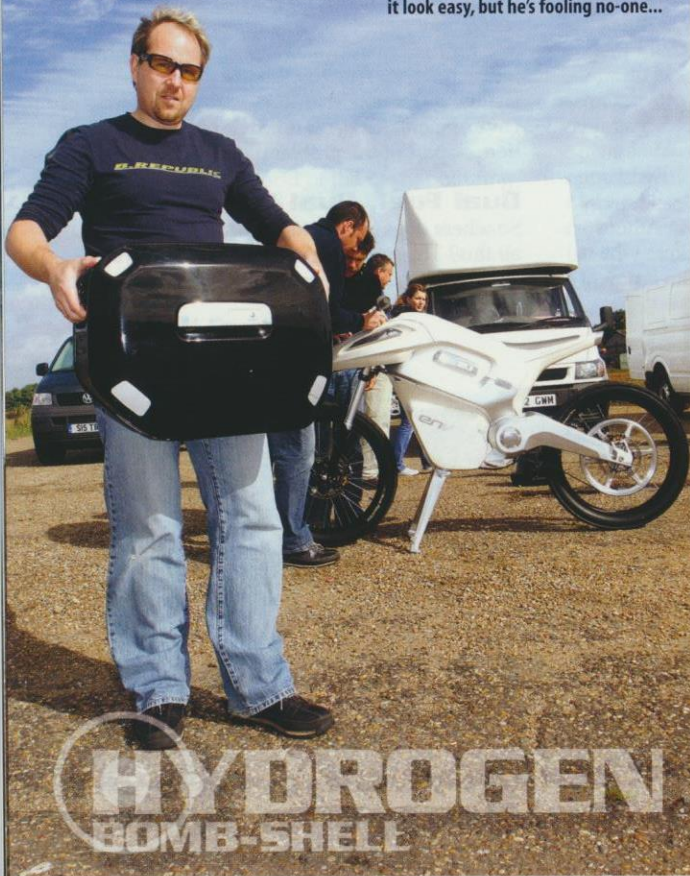
HYDROGEN BOMB-SHELL

How's that work then...?

Inside the aluminium skin of the ENV's removable CORE sits a high pressure carbon composite cylinder containing the hydrogen, along with the fuel cell itself. The CORE uses a Proton Exchange Membrane fuel cell to generate its power. This is the most popular and robust type of hydrogen fuel cell currently available, and is ideally suited to automotive applications. Each fuel cell is a multi-layered sandwich of plates and Membrane Electrode Assemblies (MEAs) in which the MEA acts as a catalyst during an electrochemical reaction producing water and electricity from hydrogen (fuel) and oxygen (taken from the air). The PEM's plates are constructed from metal (rather than the more commonly used graphite), making them cheaper to manufacture, smaller and crucially more robust for this type of application, and IE have developed and patented a 'methodology' to prevent corrosion of the metal plates. The water by-product can be evaporated, drained or even drunk - as it was for example by the astronauts of the Apollo missions!



The ENV's detachable CORE powerplant weighs about 20kg or the equivalent of a full Jerrycan of fuel. The editor pretends to make lifting it look easy, but he's fooling no-one...



or off-road. As it stands the brakes are woefully inadequate, the suspension crashes through its stroke too quickly and the swingarm and forks exhibit more flexibility than Madam Whiplash on a good night's work.

No matter. That's not what we're here to evaluate. What we wanted to find out was whether the principle of a hydrogen-powered dirtbike could ever be a really serious proposition...

Core Blimey

But before I even clambered aboard the ENV I was invited to remove its 'engine'. You see the ENV is designed to be the first motorcycle with a fully removable/ exchangeable/ replaceable powerplant. At the heart of the ENV is the CORE fuel cell - a self-contained 1kW generator utilising a hydrogen PEM-type fuel cell (see sidebar) providing power on demand directly to the drivetrain. And because it uses an electro-chemical reaction rather than a combustion process to generate its power, there are no moving parts to go wrong.

However should something *manage* to go wrong with the bike's CORE, all an owner would have to do is simply remove it, take it along to the nearest depot and pick up another CORE from the shelf. Your unit would then

be stripped down, reconditioned and put back on the shelf. Simple, really, and like the rest of the machine, designed to be totally recyclable.

Push a button to release a catch, lift up the bodywork where the tank would be on a normal bike (fibreglass on the prototype, but production machines would use recycled plastic) and the powerpack can simply be slid out (It slots into a caravan-type electrical connector on the end of an aluminium cradle). The whole thing weighs about 20kg, or about the same as a full Jerrycan.

And when you think about it, this slot-in powerpack system has a great many advantages. According to the guys at Intelligent Energy: 'People will be able to use a bike like [the] ENV to leave work in an urban environment, drive to the countryside, detach the CORE and attach it to another vehicle such as a motorboat [or indeed a dirtbike], before going on to power a log cabin

tracks in their spare time? Well that's what we wanted to find out by accepting an offer from the guys at IE to become the first (and only bike) journalists to ride the ENV.

Let's start by confirming that the ENV is considered by its designers as a dual-sport vehicle - leisure and work, off-road and on - that's why they've built one with road tyres (in white) and one with semi off-road knobbles (the black bike). Let's also add that although these bikes are simply working-prototypes using a mixture of running gear from the MTB marketplace, the production machines are intended to look very similar indeed - albeit they'll need to add a whole heap of road-legal gubbins before you could take to the road (or trail) on one. And that said there's no doubt that the running gear on these prototypes falls way short of what's needed were they to be ever taken seriously on-

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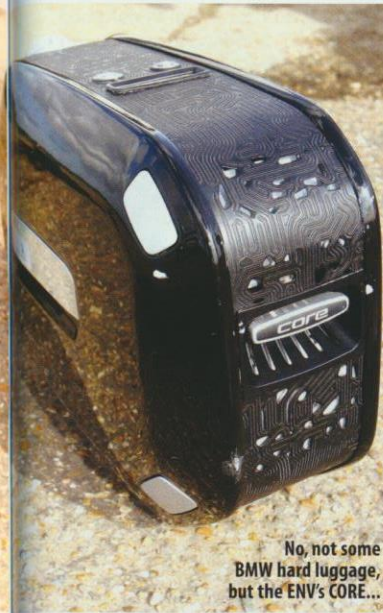
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It's only when you see the bike head on you realise just how small it really is...



HYDROGEN BMW-SHELL



No, not some BMW hard luggage, but the ENV's CORE...



Above: The ENV's development team. Below: Transport for the iPod generation...



with the very same fuel cell, which could then be re-charged from a mini hydrogen creator, the size of a shoebox.'

Practice Makes Perfect

All very good in principle, but in practise there are a few problems to be overcome if the ENV is to reach its target of shifting 12,000 units per year. Not the least of which is the lack of available hydrogen delivery systems on a forecourt basis. In fairness this is likely to be overcome sooner rather than later since the creators of the ENV bike are just one of a number of manufacturers (including Mercedes-Benz, Honda and Toyota) currently developing hybrid models. Their dream is to have a hydrogen fuel-pump at every petrol station in the country within the next 10-15 years.

And talking of fuel - refilling the ENV bike with liquid hydrogen takes about five minutes and is as simple as filling up any other vehicle. Once again you raise the tank cover which reveals a filler-port into which you insert the hydrogen nozzle - and then pull the trigger. The ENV's fuel is stored in a pressurised carbon composite cylinder which is claimed to be safe in the event of a major impact - very important when you're talking dirt bikes and trees.

Underneath the powerpack, slightly below the two ribbed alloy frame spars sit four conventional (15Ah) lead acid batteries to enhance performance during peak power demand. This provides a 6kW peak load during acceleration which enables the single-speed

The future of biking is changing...



electric motor - located between the footpegs and concentric with the swingarm pivot - to deliver a claimed 28-30hp - although the demo bikes were restricted to a 'safe' 9hp for testing purposes.

While it may seem strange to utilise old-fashioned lead-acid batteries in a 'futuristic' bike like the ENV, when much more powerful nickel-cadmium or even lithium batteries are now commercially available. The developers of the ENV are keen to point out, that their bike is show-casing hydrogen power - not battery power. And anyway unlike conventional electric vehicles the ENV's batteries never need re-charging since a secondary role of the fuel cell is to keep the batteries permanently topped-up.

Riding Impressions

I wasn't really sure what to expect when I first swung a leg over the ENV and sat on the firm saddle. The owners had told me to remember that the bike is 'Live' - in other words, despite a complete absence of noise, when you twist the throttle it goes. There's no clutch or gears to worry about on this bike, just a throttle and brakes - its creators say that it would be possible to have a gearbox, though it would probably only need two-speeds since the electric motor offers maximum torque at all revs.

So time to twist the grip then and see what happens. Silently, almost eerily the ENV begins to accelerate. Not fast, but predictably and in a

completely linear fashion with no steps in the power to worry about. The strange thing is, that apart from the lack of noise or any sort of vibration it doesn't feel all that unusual. I'm not sure exactly what I was expecting, but I thought it would feel a bit different - futuristic maybe. It doesn't. It feels normal, easy to live with, simple to operate.

After two or three passes I wind it up to full throttle, lay forward on the tank trying to extract maximum performance and sail noiselessly past where the development team are standing. According to the press blurb, the ENV has been safely tested to 50mph but I reckon I'm not doing much more than about 40mph when I have to sit up and haul on the (barely adequate MTB) disc brakes. The bike responds with a little shimmy as the forks and swingarm both flex and the brakes do their damndest to haul up 102kg of machinery in the shortest possible time. (We took along our digi scales because to be honest we were a little sceptical about the ENV's claimed 80kg weight).

Forget about the inadequacies of the mountain bike cycle-parts for the moment - they'll be replaced with suitably burly components on the

production machines, what I was amazed at was that I was being powered along by a motorcycle running on hydrogen and air, and pumping out nothing other than water. No sound, no pollution, no problem.

My mind began to race ahead, imagining carving my way silently through the trees on a scenic wooded trail. Almost instinctively I stood up on the (non-folding) foot-blades and leaned my weight forward. Up ahead there was a gentle track which lead off into the woods, the design team gives me the go-ahead to ride along it provided I stay within sight. That was all the encouragement I needed. I point the ENV around a large puddle and head for the dirt.

Almost as soon as I'm on-track, the ENV starts to feel slightly uneasy. It's not that it can't cope with the stones and bumps (though the suspension is clearly out of its depth supporting a machine of this mass), so much as the fact that many of the other essentials which go to make up a good dirt bike are missing from the equation.

Between my legs the CORE fuel cell feels slightly too wide to be really comfortable for an off-roader, and the frame needs some tapering to allow you to lean forwards properly. Likewise the



Andy Eggleston, ENV Project Director said:

'All of the hydrogen that is [currently being] produced is a by-product of the refining process. So we take the stuff that is being burnt off and wasted to power these bikes.

'Renewable hydrogen supply will be from crops [in the form of bio-fuels]. Given where we are strategically with fuel supplies in Iraq, Saudi and all the rest of the Middle East why wouldn't you generate a proportion of your own fuel needs from crops if you've got the land to do it?'

'Accident wise it's very difficult to make fire out of hydrogen. You generally have three crash situations on the road - a head on impact, t-bone or a slide. So we've got to make sure in crash testing that the bike won't blow your legs off. The canisters have had incendiary bullets fired at them - they don't explode. If you get a minute hole in it, the hydrogen comes out at such a whack it burns in a jet but the problem with that is that it's colourless. But because of the pressure, it doesn't go back into the tank and blow the tank up. It also disperses very quickly in the air, so for it to reach concentra-

tions where it is flammable outside when there's been an accident is virtually impossible. The only problem is enclosed spaces - you would have to keep the bike in a well-ventilated garage.'

'It's great off-road - it's got good ground clearance, a lot of torque, very controllable and good suspension travel. For these bikes to get onto the market - with no major problems, [it'll be] about 18 months.

'We have no idea about durability of these bikes at this stage - what we are doing is to take these technology demonstrators with their mountain bike components and make them into proper production bikes. The bike as it stands is slightly too heavy for mountain bike equipment - it's simply not man enough! The swingarm and forks twist a little bit - the whole assembly needs stiffening up. It's got to be bounced up and own until it breaks!

'For us, this technology is no mystery - the main thing is how the hell do we get this through regulations [for the road] when no regulations actually exist?'

Changing a bike's engine has never been easier...



bars are a touch too narrow and close to the body, the pegs don't fold-up, and when I lean the bike into the first corner the front end tucks (thanks to road geometry) and I nearly lose it. All these are characteristics of a bike which appear to have been designed for use on the street by a test rider who doesn't truly understand the unique properties of dirt.

I'm not being unfair here, I'm merely pointing out the inadequacies of this test mule as an effective off-roader. If it were ever to take its place in the off-road firmament it would need these (fairly simple) problems addressing.

It's still a blast to ride around on a silent bike however, and the trick with the ENV is to think ahead and keep the throttle open - much as you would on a small capacity dirt bike.

Future Perfect

For all its limitations as an off-roader, I can still see huge potential here. Unlike for instance, battery-powered dirt bikes, the ENV's range is far greater in terms of distance, and much longer in terms of duration. And only really limited by its supplies of hydrogen. Our test bike was refuelled

from a hydrogen cylinder - a bit like carrying a Jerrycan in your van when you go out riding - and there's no need to sit and wait ages for a 'recharge' as you have to do with a battery-powered machine.

For certain there's a future for hydrogen powered bikes - dirt bikes in particular - but will they be ENV shaped? To be honest I've actually got my doubts. Because I think that like a lot of designer-driven products, the ENV currently meets all of the designer's dreams and aspirations, but answers few of the consumers' real needs right now.

As a concept it's brilliant, but as a product it still has some way to go yet. The real revolutionary thing about the ENV is its removable CORE powerplant which seems to offer solutions to dirt biking's perceived problems of noise and pollution in one quiet, compact and interchangeable piece of apparatus.

If there is a future for ENV (as it stands) it's as a trail-styled runabout for urban commuting. I can conceive of a time when legislation ensures that bikes like these are our only real option. For now however, even the most basic of trail bikes (like the Chinese-built Himo GY125 we recently tested) would give the ENV a humbling off-road. And it'll be a while before the ENV will be ready to take on the KTM's and Hondas of this world.

But when it does, the shock waves it'll create with its clean and silent power will be well and truly deafening in off-road sport...

A Hydrogen Future?

- With an efficiency ratio of 45-55 percent, fuel cells have a higher energy conversion efficiency than burning fuel in an internal combustion engine in which typically 60-80 percent of the power is wasted (mostly as heat).
- Fuel cells can be built incrementally (and modularly) to match power demand, and are equally efficient at both small and large scale.
- Hydrogen is the most abundant element on earth and is extractable from many sources including bio-ethanol from plant waste. However hydrogen is not easy to harness and extracting it requires quite a lot of energy in itself.
- There is currently a complete lack of hydrogen-refilling infrastructure for hydrogen powered vehicles.
- Fuel cell technology was originally invented by a Welsh Lawyer called Sir William Grove, back in 1839.



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DIRTY

When I last wrote to you, Dear Reader, I had just popped Mr Melber back on a plane to Stanstead after riding my new Pyrenees route, and was rather hoping for a bit of a break after the stress of getting the route ready for him and the rest of the paying punters. Strangely this completely failed to materialise. Stranger still, I was mostly to blame.

A BIT OF SPANNERING HAS DAMPENED CHRIS'S SPIRITS...

Having loaded my bikes and clobber into my rental van I headed inland and away from the Atlantic Pyrenees coast towards the Lozere, the site of my next trip. The plan was to chill out there for the weekend, do a little work on the bikes and await the arrival of the next batch of punters. Splendid.

All of which saw me up bright and early on Saturday morning ready to do a spot of 'luxury maintenance' - you know the sort of thing, the stuff you do to your bike that you don't actually have to do to stop it falling apart.

To be honest luxury maintenance is the only type of workshop activity that really interests me. Firstly because I don't do it very often, and secondly 'cos I know I can stop pretty much any time should boredom get the better of me. The list wasn't excessively long and consisted of bolting on a reconditioned Ohlins steering damper, changing the handlebar grips, slipping on some new rad graphics and new rubber belts for my roadbook reader.

A morning's work you would have thought - at the outside. Which was

why I was more than a little surprised to be still struggling with the steering damper two days later. And tragically I can't blame Scott / Ohlins, as their stuff, though pricey, is always a perfect fit.

In the end I managed to get everything done, but why it took me so long remains a complete and utter mystery. How can I be so rubbish at tinkering with bikes when I have been doing so for more than three quarters of my increasingly long life? How can other people, you know 'professionals', be so good at it, especially when most of them have trouble stringing a sentence together? Thank God my faithful sweeper Dominique does most of the day-to-day maintenance stuff and that I don't actually wrench for a living. Otherwise I'd probably be homeless and destitute by now.

With the bike finally fettled, and despite 14,000km on the odo, still looking pretty tasty, I couldn't resist heading out on Monday with the Trefle Lozerien course-setter to see if we could rustle up anything in the way of new tracks - and instantly wished I'd stayed back in the warmth and comfort of my hotel.

The diminutive psycho may only ride a modified girlie CRF230 on the trail but boy is he quick. He doesn't have much regard for his or anyone else's safety either, judging by the tracks he was keen to show me.

The first was okay, providing it was bone dry, the second was just insane, boasting as it did a sheer drop (off the side) of at least 70m. When we finally got to the top I politely pointed out that in the wet anybody of a slightly nervous disposition (like me) might be a tad disconcerted by the experience of

'HOW CAN I BE SO RUBBISH AT TINKERING WITH BIKES WHEN I'VE BEEN DOING IT FOR MORE THAN THREE QUARTERS OF MY INCREASINGLY LONG LIFE?'

riding just a few centimetres from a void and almost certain death. He just gave a Gallic shrug of his shoulders and headed off to the next track.

And what a track it was. Effectively, for almost the entire length of its 3km it was a perfect slice of single track: technical, mostly smooth and very pretty third gear riding. It was just the few metres of it that ran barely millimetres from a cliff edge that put me off. My riding companion argued that most of my punters would be past that bit before they had even noticed. I remained stubbornly unconvinced. He called into question my sexuality. Fortunately I had the confidence of recent carnal knowledge with which to refute his allegations. We both sulked. In the end we rode almost all day for only 15 kilometres of useable going - which was added to my roadbook.

So, with just one day left before the start of the trip, I thought I'd just go and have a quick look at 30km of track that I'd added to the end of the third day. And as a couple of punters I'd never met before had turned up early, I suggested they tag along to give them chance to familiarise themselves with the roadbook and the going, before starting out for real the following day.

As the original purpose of the add-on was just to get everybody back to the hotel after an already long day, without doing excessive amounts of road work, I'd completely forgotten that the very first track was probably one of the hardest of the whole trip. Which was probably why the punters were more than a little concerned when we finally huffed and puffed our way to the top of the climb - figuring that if this was a way of *familiarising* themselves with the tracks, what would the following days be like?

Well hopefully better than mine... Partway along one of the tracks my newly-fitted steering damper momentarily locked-solid (due no doubt to my poor fettling), sending me spearing across the trail and worryingly close to the edge. All I can say is it's a damn good job it didn't happen the day before, otherwise this month's column might have been delayed. Permanently!



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- Normandie 22/23/24 Mar
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- Morvan 10/11/12 May
- Lozere 31 May/1/2 Jun
- Pyrenees 20/21/22 Jun
- Morvan 6/7/8 Sept
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COMPLETELY RUTTED



It was all going swimmingly well until I woke up at 4am the day of our monthly TRF group ride-out. I hasten to add this wasn't part of my usual regimen of a five mile jog, followed by a cold shower, a high carb breakfast and then idly gas-flowing my cylinder head before bimbbling off to meet the boys at 9.30. Indeed an alarm clock had nothing to do with it because unless there's money involved, I am not at heart an early riser.

MARK WILLIAMS RECKONS WE'RE ALL GETTING OLDER, BUT ARE WE ANY WISER?

But in this case, it was *actually* my heart that was the problem, a pain in the heart in fact. And in the dread pre-dawn hours a pain in the heart is not the ideal wake-up call. Mind you, this isn't the first time I've experienced worrying chest pains, subsequently spending hours in hospital wired up to hi-tech diagnostics and losing pints, oh alright, millilitres of blood to Nurse Needle. Last time it proved not to be a heart murmur, much less an attack, but a rare muscular-skeletal condition that mimics such maladies. Suffice to say this time it was the same, but backed-up by minor damage to a cardiac valve that thankfully isn't terminable if caught in time (which it obviously was) and is reversible if you keep taking the pills (which I obviously am).

But why mawkishly confront you with my health problems? Well needless to say I didn't head the ride-out that

day, causing problems for my co-leader which he rose to magnificently, but the whole unsettling incident gave me pause to reflect on who's looking after trailriders' interests these days. It demeans no-one to observe that a large majority of members who bother to turn up to the quarterly TRF executive meetings are over 50, and I'd even venture to say that the bulk of active members in any local TRF group are also middle-aged, or at least pushing it.

Having been briefly and exasperatingly involved in the fledgling TRF in the '70s when I was young and bratty, I suspect this is because it requires a certain patience and philosophical approach to life in general, and dirtbikery in particular, to embrace the arcane and potentially frustrating business of running an amateur organisation, even at grassroots level. Plus of course a sense of injustice about the way our servant/masters in Whitehall trample personal freedoms. Younger trailriders may have the latter, but invariably can't be arsed over the former, and so the people who end up doing the donkey work - which we all benefit from - are those older diehards I used to scoff at three decades ago. And now, of course, I'm one of them.

I realise that having bemoaned the onset of ageing in my April scribbles, I'm treading familiar terrain here, but that was about one's sheer inability to ride as well or as vigorously after one hits the Big Five-Oh. And what I'm on about now is rather more serious.

A bunch of grumpy old trailriders may well have the commitment, the debating skills, the accumulated knowledge of RoW law (and indeed

lore), and as retirees some of them also have the spare time that's invaluable for fighting our case at local and national levels. But as I learnt in late September, none of us is immortal and we, that's 'we' as the trailriding constituency, should be concerned about where the next generation of off-road freedom-fighters will come from.

The simple, if naive answer is that they will come up through the ranks as the ranks themselves get older. But despite unprecedented threats to our little game, plus as aggressive an ad campaign as a genteel organisation like the TRF can manage (or indeed, afford), for several years its membership has remained stubbornly immobile at just above 3000. Judging by the numbers of trail and enduro bikes sold over a ten year period, and allowing for bikes sold prior to that may or may have not now expired, I'd say that there are probably seven times that number of active trail and enduro riders in the UK. But I don't see many of them holding up their hands to take on the government, the county council politicians and the NIMBYs when the current TRF (and GLASS, and Byways & Bridleways Trust) stalwarts throw in the towel or fall off their perches.

Because if anyone really wants to fight our right to ride, then the TRF - for all its faults - is the channel through which to do it from. So what's to be done? Well much though I'm loath to capitulate to Blairism, I've come to the conclusion that we need to up our game a few notches and bring in the private sector... or rather pay people to do the job for us. This may be anathema to anyone who believes in the stiff upper lip resolve of Britain's happy amateurism, but amateurs - even those driven by a large helping of righteous indignation - ain't going to sway today's breed of legislators. Money, however, really does talk, albeit money applied in the right areas and with suitable finesse.

If the RAC - a commercially driven organisation - is regarded respectfully by the government in matters of motoring, and the Ramblers Assoc, a charity but with a salaried management, can effec-

'A BUNCH OF GRUMPY OLD TRAILRIDERS MAY WELL HAVE THE COMMITMENT, THE ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE OF ROW LAW (AND INDEED LORE), BUT NONE OF US IS IMMORTAL AND WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT WHERE THE NEXT GENERATION OF OFF-ROAD FREEDOM-FIGHTERS WILL COME FROM...

tively bend the relevant ears at DEFRA, then we need to swallow our shambling pride and do ditto. Even LARA, with which the TRF is affiliated and shares certain crucial executive activities, receives funding from the motor and motorsports industry, thus enabling them to hire lawyers and PR persons that we can do only in *exceptional* cases.

There are enough companies and individuals making money out of dirtbiking who frankly give absolutely sod-all to the TRF's fighting fund and yet without it, their businesses might very well collapse. So what we need is a top-flight team of lobbyists, PR people and so forth funded by the industry and dedicated to our cause. Okay, there is already a MotorCycle Industry Association, but until very recently their support for our interests have been minimal and only really rallied when it looked like DEFRA was going to wipe out motocross and trials riding earlier this year.

I've already suggested to the TRF Executive that importers and dealers who sell bikes, bits and services to us lot should be bullied into donating a levy towards such an enterprise, but there was some discomfort about changing old methods which I fully understand. Yet if someone had had the commitment to organise it, the TRF would probably have provided the necessary backing.

Obviously I had a degree of commitment and commercial expertise, and I'd bet there are a few others with as much if not more but who, like me, just can't afford to ditch their day job to develop such a scheme. And without some kind of extra funding, like the ACU, BME, MCIA and their motoring counterparts, the TRF will always be punching above its weight, with results that under current circumstances are too mixed for comfort.

But given their constitutional and philosophical reservations, would the TRF really be the best vehicle to take on the malign forces massed against us? I think it would rather depend on whether their hearts were in it.

And hearts, as I now know only too well, can be very fickle mistresses...



A

t the time of writing this column - mid-October - I still haven't got my '06 model, non-orange two-stroke off-road motorcycle from a certain European manufacturer, so any discussion about trail riding on my part is purely historical, or academic. So (and I'm sorry this has happened so early in my column's life) I'm going to delve back in time to an argument I once had with a fellow journalist, about writing about trail riding, if you'll excuse the clumsy phraseology.

WAS TRAIL RIDING ONCE ONE OF MOTORCYCLING'S BEST KEPT SECRETS, WONDERS ALEX HEARN...?

He was old school in every sense of the word and there wasn't much he hadn't seen, done, or written about one way or the other. He was, and still is something of a legend to the likes of young(ish) scrotes such as me, but these days has pretty much retired from the cut-and-thrust of day-to-day scribbling, preferring instead to count his dosh, polish his binnacle, comb his teeth and shout abuse at outlanders. He was, and still is a keen trail rider, and a good one at that. About six or seven years ago, when I was still getting into it we did a bit of riding together, and at one point I helped him lift the over-40s award at a Welsh Rally, simply by doing all the donkeywork

while he did the brainwork.

And I think it was after said event that the argument took place. Sat in the bar at the Brynafon House Hotel, Rhayader, full of the thank-bejeezus-it's-over feeling you get after a good, hard day on the back of a dirtbike in Wales, heads nicely fuzzy from beer, and with stomachs creaking full of steak-and-ale pie, we got onto the subject of work. He was a freelancer at the time, a hired gun who sold words and pictures wherever he could. But like most freelancers, he'd been through the magazine mill, over and over and had a view on both the publishing and motorcycle industry. At the time I was a young staffer on Performance Bikes magazine, which then, as now was a title for hardcore sportsbike freaks (though I was starting to drift towards the dark and dirty side).

My colleague got around to the subject of a feature I'd run in the magazine. It basically extolled the virtues of my (new-found) hobby, explained how, where, when and what to ride and, most of all why anybody with a 160mph performance bike would be interested in getting covered in mud at a mere 30mph. I sold trail riding hard, and was very pleased with my efforts. As far as I was concerned, it was a job well done.

He thought the opposite, and didn't mince his words when he told me so either.

His point? By writing about, and

WHICH IS IT, THEN - AN ORGANIC GROWTH IN INTEREST IN OFF-ROAD RIDING, OR HAS THE MAINSTREAM PRESS ZEALOUSLY LED A WHOLE NEW TROOP OF RIDERS INTO THE MUD, WITH UNFORTUNATE RESULTS?

therefore advertising the hobby of trail riding in a mainstream bike mag, a lot of people might want to try trail riding. And this being the case, there'd be trouble - congested trails, legislation aggravation etc - for those that were already doing it, and reading about it. In other words, it was best left as a closed club for those already in the know.

At the time I didn't agree with him - how could I? It was (and still is) my job to write about motorcycles and I wanted to share what I'd learnt about dirtbikes - communicate what a great hobby this was and how much it benefited a road rider, but mainly, simply talk about how much fun off-road riding was for somebody that'd spent a lifetime on tarmac. In the end we agreed to disagree, and that was that. He had his view, I had mine. I was sure he was wrong, and he was likewise.

Now, I'm not so sure. Trail riding as a hobby has grown in the last five years or so and a lot of people taking it up are refugees from the road, just like me. There has been more aggravation in the last few years as well - the trails I was introduced to by my erstwhile colleague in Wales are long-since closed and out of bounds. Which is it, then - an organic growth in interest in off-road riding, lightly fuelled by the likes of me (and others) getting all excited about something fresh and fashionable to write about, or has the mainstream press zealously and genuinely led a whole new troop of riders into the mud for the right reasons, with unfortunate results? Or is it all just a big coincidence?

Really I've no idea. Of course, every journalist's well-kept and supremely

pampered ego purrs at the thought of breaking fresh ground and leading a trend. I just wrote about something I felt passionate about at the time - the thing is, maybe that just as I was feeling hot about this niche of motorcycling so were many others, those that didn't have the opportunity to exercise their hobby (and ego...) in print before 60,000 odd readers.

So where are we now, then? Well, the mainstream bike press seems to be leaving off-roading alone again, after the last few years' flirtations (which I had a hand in yet again in the weekly comic, ahem) leaving this very organ to continue bashing out its consistent and honest message on the subject just as it's done from day one of its existence. I don't know whether his Melbership is smug over this matter or not... but he may have a right to be.

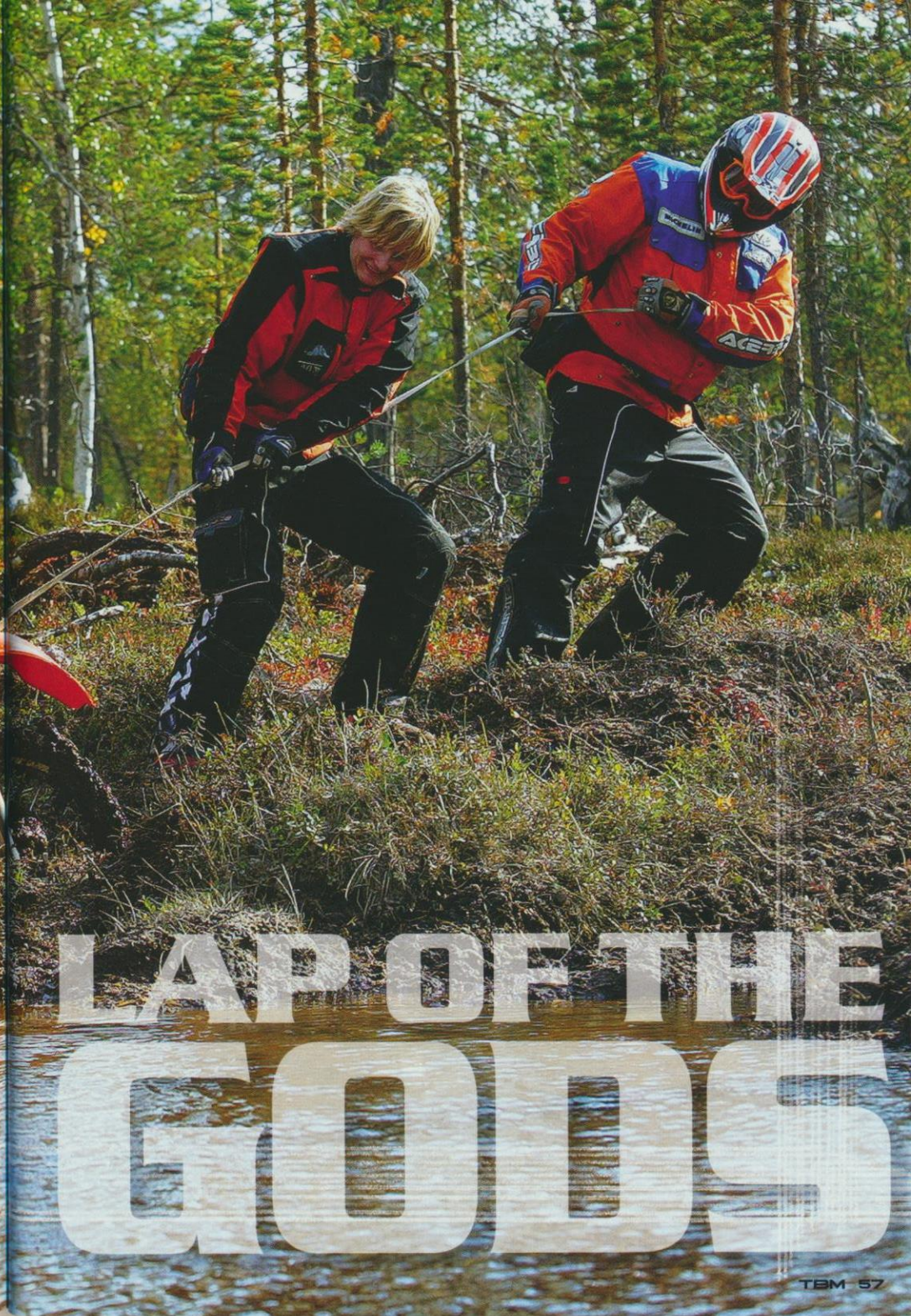
I do seem to know more people now that are into riding dirtbikes than I did a few years ago, and I've been responsible for a few converts not by firing their imaginations with words in print but by dragging them along to an off-road experience and letting them find out for themselves. Just the way I found out, funnily enough.

And as for my cynical, jaded journo mate who jealously guarded his hobby of trail riding, he may well have been right. It can surely be no co-incidence that the government's recent NERC Bill which effectively downgrades about half of all the available trails open to us has arrived not long after off-roading has seen its biggest growth spurt in years. So I'll allow this seasoned hack a certain wry smile and accept that he may just have had a point after all...

I EXTOLLED THE VIRTUES OF TRAIL RIDING, EXPLAINING WHY ANYBODY WITH A 160MPH PERFORMANCE BIKE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN GETTING COVERED IN MUD AT A MERE 30MPH

Lapland is one of those places that few people have actually visited, let alone ridden there. Jonty Edmunds headed north for a very different off-road riding experience...

WORDS & PICS: JONTY EDMUNDS



LAP OF THE GODS

LAP OF THE GODS



C'mon in, the water's....
Bloody Freezing actually!

Famed for being the home of Father Christmas, the Northern Lights and a million and one reindeer, Lapland is a demographic region (rather than a country) which includes the northern parts of Scandinavia and Russia's Kola Peninsula. Most of Lapland lies north of the Arctic Circle and is covered in a rich blanket of forestry through which hundreds of miles of off-road tracks and trails run.

But it's only recently that motorcycles have been allowed to roam over Lapland's sparsely populated countryside. After years of negotiations with the Finnish government and reindeer farmers, only one company is now permitted to run guided rides.

Rain Deer?

Although there are numerous different ways in which to get to Lapland from the UK I headed first to Finland's capital city Helsinki (from Birmingham) before taking a second plane to Ivalo - just a 30min car drive from Saariselka where Motojysky's Lapland Enduro Safaris are based.

The 992km Finnair

flight from Helsinki to Ivalo took around an hour and 20 minutes and, as far as I could work out from Finnair's in-flight magazine BLUE WINGS, is just about as far north as you can fly within Finland.

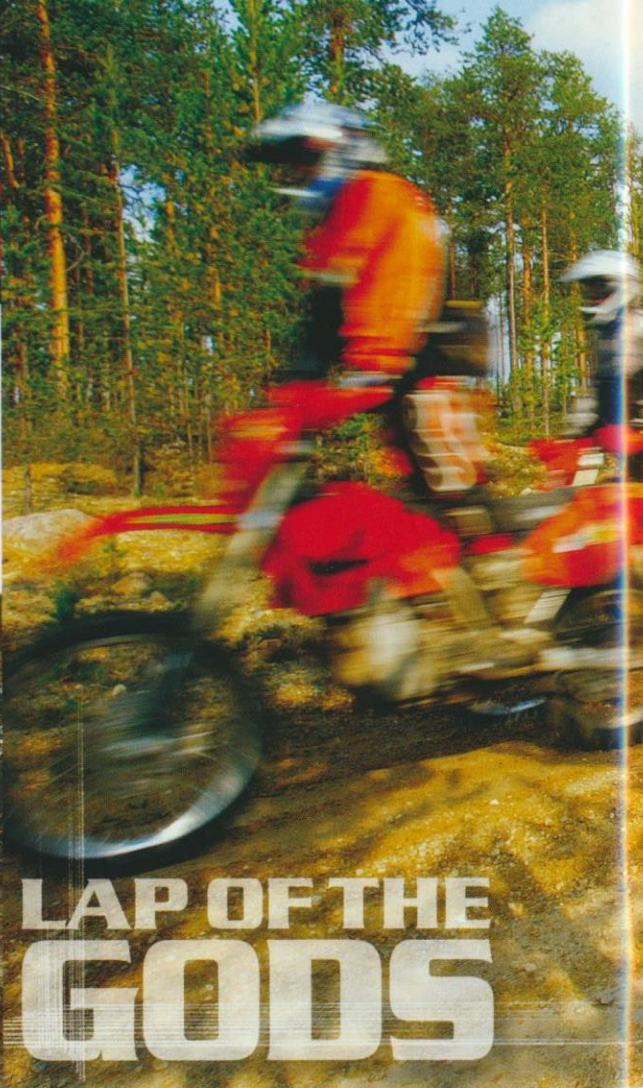
The descent through the clouds revealed miles of dirt tracks, millions of trees and one large river - all very promising for a spot of trail riding

Soon after, Jyri Tengman, a friendly man in his early fifties who runs the Lapland Enduro Safari tours, and Taru Koskinen, one of the tour guides and one of Finland's best female enduro riders, collected me and we headed off to Saariselka, the starting point for all the safaris.

On the journey Jyri explained that numerous car manufacturers use the area for winter testing. With temperatures dropping to minus 40 degrees a local hotel rents out one of its garages to a well known German car manufacturer, and according to Jyri, they simply leave cars in the garage and see if they'll start on their return.

Even though it was summer when I went the weather wasn't particularly great, and through the light rain I peered deep into the surrounding forests in the hope of seeing a reindeer. After around 20 minutes with no sightings Jyri told me that it would be unlikely that I would see any reindeer as they don't actually like rain!

As we approached the small collection of hotels, ski chalets, bars and restaurants that collectively form Saariselka, Jyri explained that



LAP OF THE GODS

Many of the trails are snowmobile tracks in winter...



in the summer only 350 people live there but in winter that number leaps to 15,000. Oh, and I finally saw my first reindeer grazing happily on the side of the road.

Less than an hour later I found myself eating my first reindeer - not a whole one, just a large portion of reindeer stew. Meeting another of the tour guides Jaska Kosonen, who has lived in Saariselka all his life, we talk about bikes, bikes and more bikes before our meal is finished and I'm shown to my apartment - home for the next three nights.

Newly built, modern in its design, spacious and clean, the self-contained unit also has its own sauna, bathroom and kitchen. Clearly built to house some of the many thousands of people

that visit Saariselka during the winter months, it's even got its own heated drying cupboard for ski jackets which later proves extremely efficient at drying wet motorcycle clothing.

Lap Times

Having never been on an enduro safari before I wasn't exactly sure what to expect on the first day. Guessing that I would be joining in with a group of customers, I soon found out that on the morning of day one it would be just myself accompanied by Taru and Jaska.

It seemed that I was going on my own personal trail ride, or so I thought. Aware that I could 'ride a bike' - I'd mentioned the fact that I'd raced the final round of the 1997 WEC in Finland,

which Jyri was actually the clerk of the course for - I was spared the 'hello and welcome... act responsibly and enjoy yourself' briefing and was lead straight out to my bike for the day, a mint condition KTM 400EXC.

With little happening in Saariselka during the summer months, Jyri stores and maintains his fleet of a dozen KTMs in one half of a garage normally used to service and maintain snowploughs and a variety of winter machinery.

Once kitted up and ready to go I realised that it had been a mistake mentioning the fact that 'I used to race'. Expecting to set off at a leisurely pace that would ease me into the Finnish trails, I found myself barely able to keep up with Taru as she set off like a rocket.

Some few kilometres from the start I learned the first lesson of reindeer spotting from a motorcycle - don't look for them, let them come to you. With the tracks that we were riding being fairly rocky, trying to look into the forestry while riding along in fourth gear resulted in more than one scary moment.

One other thing I learned quickly was that my riding companions, although clearly fans of the Finnish countryside and enjoying the riding as much as I was, weren't as enthusiastic about reindeer as I. Making both Taru and Jaska aware of pretty much every reindeer I saw by pointing wildly with both arms and legs was like pointing out herds of sheep to Welsh hill farmers and expecting them to get excited. 'Nuff said.

Although many of Finland's riding areas and most of their motocross tracks are renowned for being sandy, the fast, flowing trails that we were riding along were a mixture of all sorts. Yes, there was some sand, but not deep bottomless beach type sand, more a dry, gritty sort of crushed rock that was mixed in with soil, lots of stones and rocks. Blasting along fourth gear tracks and negotiating slightly trickier first gear single-track trails, we also rode along lots of snowmobile routes. As wide as a single lane carriageway and relatively easy going, only when they crossed a river or stream did they pose any sort of a challenge.

There's a mixture of terrain from deep sand to rocky going...



LAP OF THE GODS

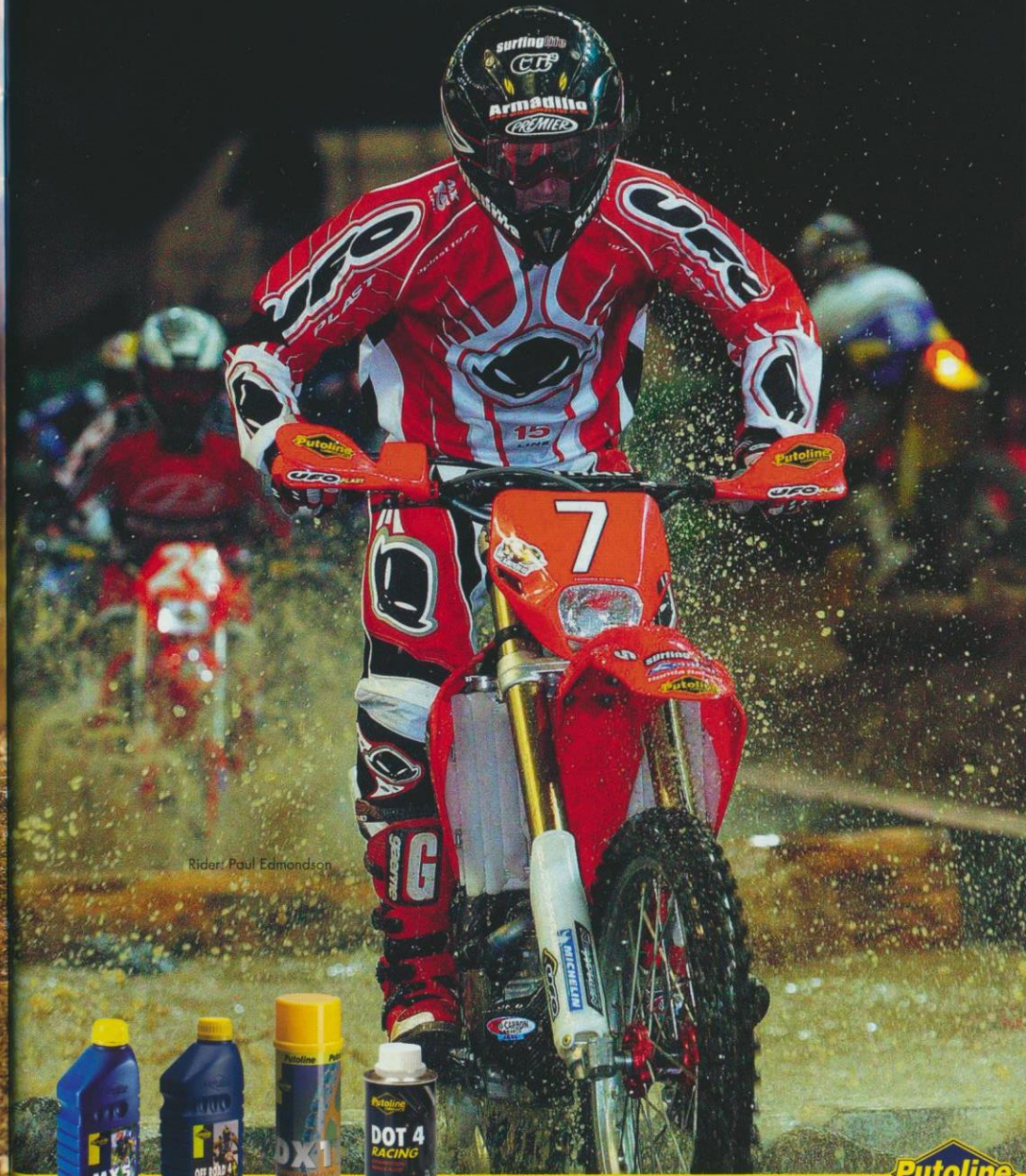
We then returned to base to meet up with what Jyri described as a 'typical group' who were getting ready for a half day of riding. The reason the four were only having half a day's riding was because they were the men who worked from the garage he rents, out on a kind of work outing.

Mud Wrestling

Setting off at one o'clock the afternoon pace was much more relaxed than it had been in the morning and was a typical pace of most enduro safaris. Of the four blokes I had joined for the afternoon adventure two were quite good riders and two not so good, which resulted in lots of stopping and starting, but nobody minded.

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LAP OF THE GODS



Covering the same tracks that had passed me by in a blur in the morning, I now had time to really take in the scenery.

Forests in northern Finland are unlike any other forests I've ridden in - anywhere. Not until I stopped, removed my helmet and took the time to really take a look at my surroundings did I realise just how eerie these places can be. Deadly quiet and looking as if nuclear radiation had sucked the life from it, not until later was I told that it was the cold temperatures that largely shapes the forests. Stunting the growth of the trees, the long, cold winter months ensure the trees grow very slowly and live to be hundreds of years old.

As well as the seemingly endless amounts of tracks, trails and snowmobile routes available to ride, there were numerous bogs - or swamps as the Finns call them - among the acres and acres of trees. With 30 percent of Finland claimed to be swamp it's not surprising that more than a few needed to be crossed before the day had finished.

I soon found out that all of the rules of bog crossing apply to swamp riding - look before you leap, avoid mud in favour of long grass, ride from high spot to high spot and use only as much power as is needed to drive forwards without spinning the rear wheel etc. None of the four

guys with us seemed to care about that though and happily covered each other in smelly Finnish mud! It wasn't long before the three hours of riding had passed and it was time to head back to base. But while the others were done for the day, Jyri had other plans for me as another two hours of riding awaited.

Gold Rush

Despite having titanium screws in his neck and a plastic shoulder joint as the result of a road biking crash, I soon found out that Jyri was no slouch on a bike. Sorting paperwork out more than guiding his tours nowadays, he certainly knew how to blow away the cobwebs as we set off along his favourite trails.

Passing numerous empty makeshift gold panning lodges - apparently some people in Finland like to pan for gold during their summer holidays - we rode along loads of great single track trails and wide snowmobile tracks. As the tracks got flatter, wider and faster it felt as if we were racing towards Dakar not riding in a north European country, as fourth and fifth were the only gears that we used for mile after mile.

Eventually arriving at a small hotel miles from anywhere, a quick drink was followed by our return journey along the same fantastic tracks.

Lap's-Tops: Lapping It Up...

The great thing about Motojyski's Lapland Enduro Safaris is that there is no such thing as an 'off the shelf tour'. Pretty much every aspect of the safaris can be organised and arranged to suit individual and group needs.

With the safaris running from July through to October, no matter whether you are a road rider looking at trying something new or a former international enduro rider looking for a serious challenge, Lapland has terrain to suit everyone. While Jyri's enduro safaris centre around Saariselka he has plans to expand the tours both within Lapland itself and also into the part of Russia that used to belong to Finland before WWII.

Riding distances and routes are set according to the skills of riders, the number of riders in a group as well as the weather (which can make all the difference this far north). All groups are guided by experienced enduro riders.

Thousands of kilometres of tracks and trails, all of differing severity, ensures that although each day's riding starts from Saariselka you won't find yourself riding too many of the same trails twice.

Motojyski are extremely flexible and will

take you riding for one day (if that is all you want) or three days, which is what many customers ask for. Or, if you want to do a day-on-day-off style tour that allows you to ride on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, that can also be arranged.

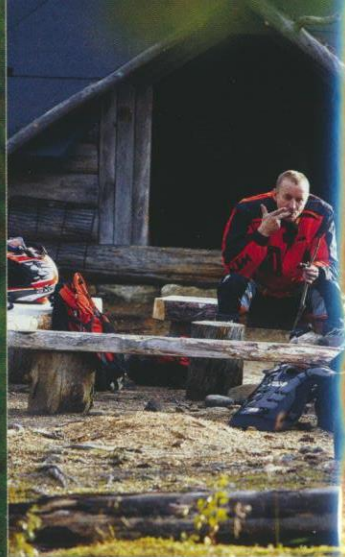
Different accommodation packages are also on offer depending on whether you are in a group or with your family etc. One great thing about the Lapland Enduro Safaris is that if you do decide to travel as a family there is always plenty for them to do - providing they like being outdoors!

When it comes to machinery you again have various options available to you, with Motojyski adopting a 'use your own bike or rent one of ours' policy. With no restriction placed upon what bikes you are allowed to use, if you opt to bring your own, then four-stroke trail and enduro bikes are preferable. Of the bikes that are available to rent, all are KTM EXCs (a mixture of 250cc, 400cc and 450cc four-strokes) and all are fairly new and extremely well maintained.

To find out more about Lapland Enduro Safaris email info@motojysky.fi or check out www.motojysky.fi.



LAP OF THE GODS



Despite having ridden and raced his favourite there-and-back route many times before, Jyri explains that he never tires of it. And I can see why.

Having had a day's riding in Lapland broken up into three very different and equally enjoyable rides, Jyri explained that he doesn't really have a set package that he offers customers as the number of riders, the number of days riding and differing rider ability levels always result in different safaris. On average, two or three days of riding is normal with six riders being accompanied by guides.

In The Bog

On the second day, two other riders - both friends of Jyri - joined us for what turned out to be an unforgettable day. With Jyri staying behind to take care of paperwork in the morning, the two guys Taru, Jaska and myself all set off on a trip that took us from Saariselka to the Russian border.

Initially riding along the

same few kilometres of trails that I'd already ridden on the first day, it wasn't long before we found ourselves on fresh tracks that called for single file riding for about half an hour before widening into easier forest road style going.

Each track that we turned down presented different challenges. Some were first gear all the way requiring us to ride across, up and down winding, rocky trails. Others were faster and drier but required absolute concentration due to hidden rocks. The best were a mixture of the two as short technical sections broke up longer fourth gear rides, all the time surrounded by nothing but trees and the occasional reindeer.

There were more river crossings than on the first day, and with each of the half dozen or so crossings being only spindle deep, the few ruts that lead up the riverbanks away from the water were the only challenge. With single-track trails giving way to un-metalled roads we spent much of the last hour cruising down top-gear tracks, which were simply awesome.

Our last stop before lunch was simply so that Taru and Jaska could inform the rest of the group that all that lay between us and sausages cooked on an open fire were two swamps. With only a few kilometres to go before our well-earned break I, a little too eagerly, opted to go with my instincts and attempted to cross the first of the two swamps. I didn't make it. Sinking to my knees in thick brown sludge, I accelerated aggressively thinking that it was my only hope of getting out alive but my bike simply sank down further.

And in doing so I covered myself in mud that smelled like it had just been dug up from the bottom of the Thames - just what I didn't want

to do before lunch. As the rest of the group rode around me I heaved myself and my KTM out and eventually got to the lunch stop, having taken things very steadily across the second swamp.

With his paperwork finished Jyri had arrived ahead of us to start setting up lunch. Having ridden for about three hours on off-road tracks without seeing another soul, I had no idea how Jyri managed to drive to within 500 feet of where we stopped, but I was glad that he had. Before having time to park my bike, remove my helmet and take a drink from the ice cold, crystal clear river close to where we had stopped, a fire was burning and sticks were being sharpened ready for sausage roasting.

Doing the whole boy-scout thing on day two made it all the more memorable. Granted, we would have found it difficult to pop into a pub or café for food as we were in the middle of nowhere and just a stone's throw away from the Russian border, but nevertheless it made for a great experience.

From Russia With Love

As everyone marked the outside of their own sausage with a knife before resting them on the rocks that surrounded the fire, the realisation that I was about as far from civilisation as I have ever been, anywhere in the world, started to sink in. To the north was the Arctic circle, to the south and west hundreds upon hundreds of miles of tracks and trails like the ones I'd been riding on all morning with little more than reindeer farmers and a few small villages. To the east was Russia - and that was kinda' scary.

But no campfire is complete without a few good stories. Having never been to the Finnish/Russian border before I asked Jyri how the authorities stop people crossing from one country into the other away from the guarded crossing points. Telling me that thousands of kilometres of fences run the length of the border and that a one-kilometre wide no-man's land section runs between the two countries, Jyri went on to explain that some Finnish youngsters did once try to cross into Russia as a bit of fun but had never been heard of since. That was 12 years ago!

Despite Russia only being about three or four kilometres away from where we enjoyed our al fresco dining experience, a large river meant that we had to head back in a similar direction to the one we had come from before turning east and on towards Russia. As I rode beside Taru my mind kept wondering what the border might be like.

Would there be fighter jets flying overhead? Would it be a desolate and deserted place where animals were afraid to live and flowers banned

LAP OF THE GODS



from growing? After more fantastic flowing off-road tracks we hit a brand new and completely empty tarmac road, which would eventually lead us to the Russian border.

We arrived at the boarder crossing to find a much more 21st Century set-up than I had imagined - on the Finnish side at least. Clean, modern buildings with only a few unarmed guards (and no fighter jets) marked the crossing point between the two countries. Parking our bikes to briefly stretch our legs I was relieved to find we were soon on our way and heading for home.

Faced with the option of either heading back to the bridge across which we had just travelled or looking for a place to cross the 30m wide river that stood between us and home, we decided that the bridge was the safer option. With one Juha Salminen having got washed under the flow of the icy water, drowning his bike in the process just a few weeks earlier, I for one am glad we opted not to try and cross it.

The return journey to Saariselka took a little longer than planned as one by one we all ran out of fuel and limped as far as we could on reserve. Thankfully, a call to Jyri resulted in him driving to wherever the hell it was we were, to give us fuel before we headed off for a little swamp racing en-route to base. An hour later we returned to Saariselka and played briefly on a ski slope being prepared for a hill climbing competition before washing off the bikes and heading for a well earned shower after a hard eight hours in the saddle.



Lap Of Luxury

With my flight back to Helsinki leaving at mid-day my final half-day in Lapland turned out to be every bit as enjoyable as the first two. Setting off west along yet

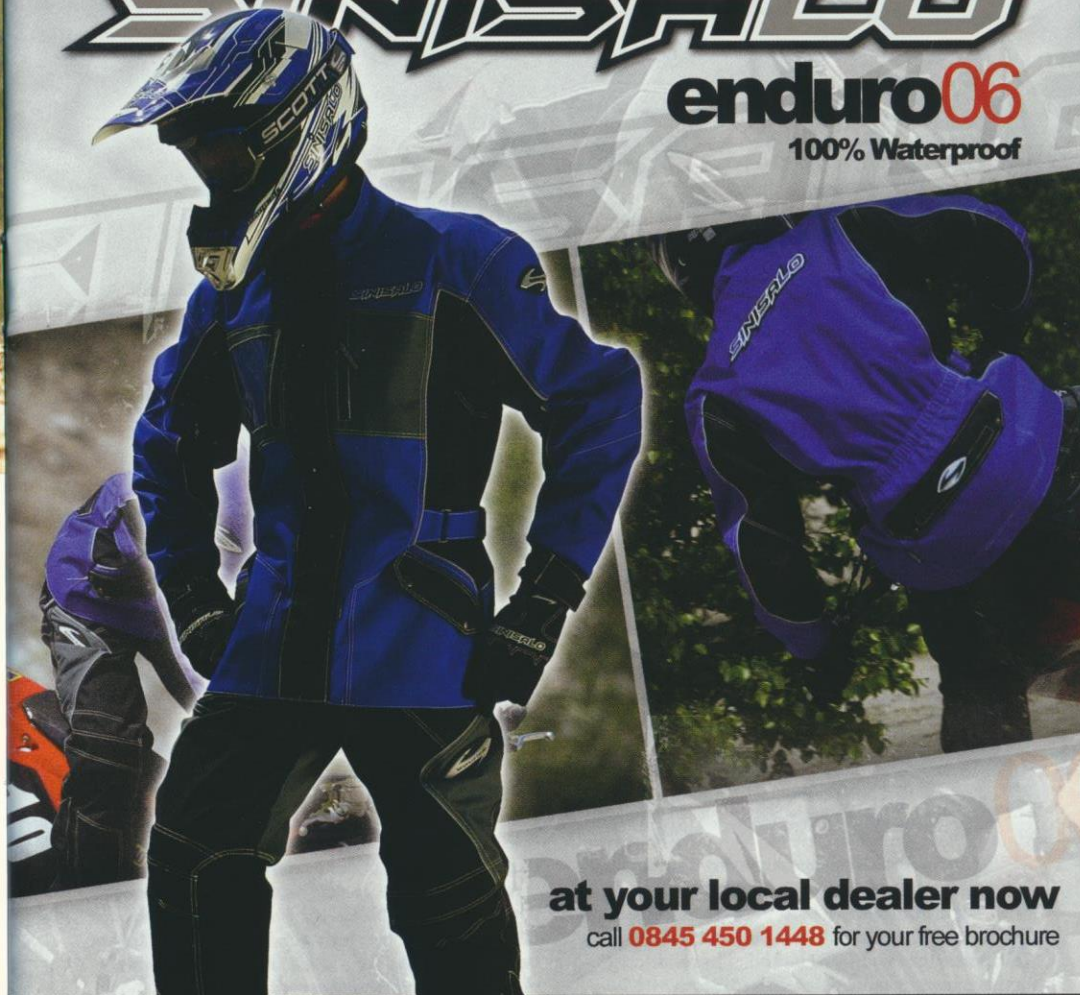
more new trails, the morning's riding covered a multitude of different tracks, most of which were a little faster and more flowing than those ridden on day one.

With the trails becoming slightly more technical as we neared the end of our three-hour ride, the seemingly endless supply of dirt roads, tracks, trails and snowmobile routes showed no sign of abating. Meeting up with Jyri at a small restaurant for a bowl of reindeer stew (as you do in Lapland), all too soon I sadly found myself bidding them all farewell and heading for the airport.

Sad to be going back to Helsinki, I took stock of my three days of riding as my plane hurtled towards the end of the runway. Almost unable to comprehend just how much riding had been crammed into my short visit, and realising that I'd seen and done so much in such a short time, I now knew exactly what the attraction of Lapland was. Told to expect little more than mosquitoes and reindeer, I'd spent close to three days riding in some of the most spectacular and varied terrain in Europe. And it was fantastic...

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USED & ABUSED



Buying Secondhand:

Gas Gas EC250 (2001-2005)

Anyone considering purchasing a budget secondhand race bike on which to ride enduros, Hare & Hounds or for trail riding should be thinking about buying a used Gas Gas EC250. Although the EC250 has been in production for more than a decade (originally utilising a TM engine), for the purpose of this article we're considering the late model years (2001 onwards with the USD forks), as the oldest of these bikes can now be found for as little as £1500, which is more or less bargain basement money for a reliable race bike; and from 2001 the bikes featured a new roller-bearing crank which improved reliability considerably.

All these bikes (right up to the latest 2006 models) utilise the same liquid-cooled 66.4 x 72mm, 249.3cc, six-speed engine, mounted in a perimeter-style chrome-moly frame with either WP, Marzocchi or Ohlins suspension and Nissin brakes.

Why a Gas Gas?

Gassers are built in Spain by a small manufacturer which although comparatively young (it only began manufacturing bikes in 1985) has amassed a rich her-

itage in trials and enduro competition. Consequently their bikes tend to be very easy to ride, thanks to a combination of stable, well-suspended chassis' and fairly modest power outputs. Indeed it's for these very reasons you'd choose a Gas Gas, since this makes them easy to get on with even in the most demanding conditions, and suitable for virtually all capabilities of rider. And while other marques can offer you more power, sharper handling and better build quality, none are quite as user-friendly on the rough as a Gasser.

On the other hand it's worth remembering that Spanish build quality (in terms of design, choice of materials, engineering tolerances, durability and styling) is simply not up to the standards of equivalent Japanese or other European brands (although reliability isn't normally an issue). But that's what makes them so affordable secondhand.

Model years

From 2001 the EC250 dispensed with conventional forks in favour of lighter 43mm USD WPs (or 45mm Marzochis as an option) and this is the easiest way



Gasser's EC250 has got more than enough power for most riders, and is a reliable lump!

of distinguishing the later bikes from earlier models, along with their distinctive (shoulder-less) DID rims, and a new backlit digital speedo. Other changes for the 2001 model year included a revised side-opening airbox design with slightly slimmer side-panels, smaller oval indicators and a Hebo Granada 2000 headlamp. Importantly there were some major engine modifications for that year including the adoption of a new roller-bearing supported crank (rollers on the ignition side), along with a gearbox mod to make gear-changing easier. Like all Gasser 250s the bike came in red panels and 2001 bikes can be distinguished by the rad-shroud graphics which featured a large expanse of white with a big GAS GAS logo running through the middle of them.

For 2002 changes were limited to a new design of exhaust, some minor chassis reinforcements above the rear shock, some carburetion changes and crucially the adoption of needle-roller bearings in the gearbox. Visually little changed except that the front fender was reinforced with a fender-brace and the panel graphics became predominantly black/grey with the Gas Gas logo becoming smaller.

In 2003 Gas Gas decided to sharpen the EC's handling in order to improve its competitiveness against fast-evolving and much racier opposition. It did this by adopting slightly sharper geometry (with less rake and trail) and positioning the motor slightly more forward in the chassis. 45mm Marzochis (with Ti-treated tubes) were adopted as standard, while adjustable bar mounts and taller bars now meant

that you could tailor the riding position more effectively. Meanwhile there was a new design of muffler (with an alloy-coloured end-cap), and minor revisions to the swingarm pivot, rear axle, rear disc and ignition. There was also a new digi speedo, while Hebo handguards now came as standard. Graphics on the '03 models had the leading edge of the rad shroud in black with a large ghosted GG at the bottom and the Gas Gas logo moved to the top.

After the major changes the previous year, in 2004 Gas Gas confined themselves to just minor fettling. Visually, the biggest change was the adoption of a new slightly lower and more compact fuel tank with a trials-style fuel cap (which only lasted for one model year), along with a slightly slimmed down rear mudguard and an all-black seat. Mechanically the 250 got a lighter piston, modified reed-block and the front axle increased in diameter. And once again the rear brake came in for some minor attention. In terms of graphics the ghosted GG moved from the bottom of the rad shroud to the top of the leading front edge and the black part of the graphic was confined to the upper half of the panel.

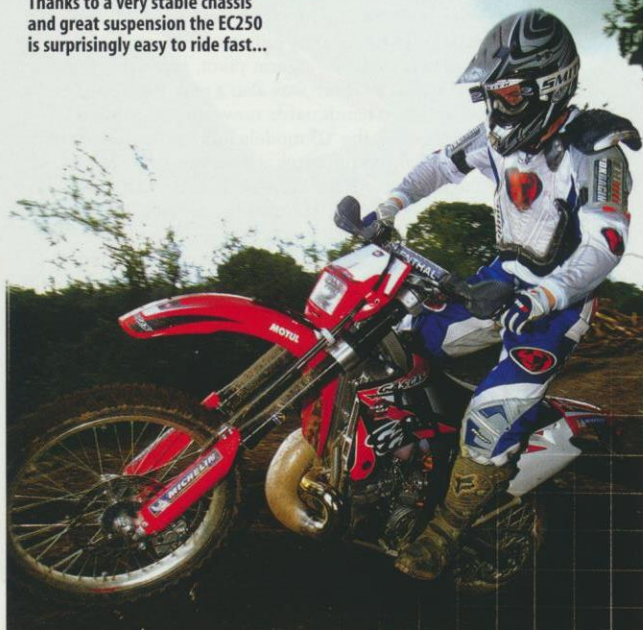
Finally for 2005, Gas Gas once again tweaked the EC's geometry to sharpen-up its handling, while at the same time trimming some weight with the adoption of lighter crankcases and improving power with a new design of cylinder. Meantime the fuel tank re-inherited a conventional screw-on plastic cap, the headlight design was changed (and now sported a halogen bulb), large plastic frame guards became standard fitment and the flip-up steel side-stand was replaced with an alloy one. Gasser also adopted a one-piece rear brake master-cylinder and reservoir, a new design of front fender, lighter DID rims, a new Kokusan ignition, a modified gear-selector drum and a teflon-coated clutch hose. Graphics were much improved - the bikes still had a solid black saddle but the rad shrouds featured a new arrowhead design with the large and now solid GG again moving to the lower part of the panel.

What are they like to ride?

In a word: brilliant. The Gas Gas is the easiest, supplest, and most versatile of all the 250cc two-strokes which makes it a great choice for the clubman or sportsman racer looking to progress. It starts easily, has a light hydraulic clutch (and a light throttle), a six-speed gearbox and plenty of power. But it's the chassis which is the bike's best feature. Because Gas Gas are perhaps unique in building bikes which eschew the current trend for razor-sharp geometry, and instead make a machine which can be ridden easily in a variety of conditions without feeling flighty, nervous or in any way twitchy. This in turn allows the rider to push hard without losing confidence (thanks to excellent stability), yet it still

USED & ABUSED

Thanks to a very stable chassis and great suspension the EC250 is surprisingly easy to ride fast...



Buying Secondhand: Gas Gas EC250 (2001-2005)

feels incredibly quick around a special test. A good riding position helps, as does arguably the best suspension and braking package of any enduro bike (two- or four-stroke) on the market today.

But it's not all good news. Compared with some other 250s the Gasser feels a touch heavy, a little less precise, and it looks a lot more dowdy. The gearchange on the ECs can be a bit notchy at times, and the earlier WP-suspended bikes were not quite as supple (or as well dialled-in) as the later Marzocchi-equipped ones.

And when it comes to working on them, you'll need a well-stocked toolbox and the patience of a saint thanks to some idiosyncratic design and a mixture of every type of fastener available in Spain.

What goes wrong?

Don't confuse a lack of durability with concerns over reliability. Provided you look after it, a Gas Gas EC250 should continue to give good service year after year. There are no known major problems with EC250s other than the occasional quality defect like a

faulty reed block, gearbox bearing or dodgy wiring. By now many of the earlier bikes will be long overdue for a suspension service/rebuild while linkage bearings, wheel bearings and other consumables appear to be as good as with any other dirt bike. Dealers report selling very few piston kits which means that EC250 engine rebuilds must be few and far between (or owners are tight!), and as with all Gas Gases, spares are reasonably priced.

Buying one

As ever, when it comes to buying a secondhand race bike it's far better to find one which has been well-maintained by a fastidious owner (even if it's been raced hard), rather than one which is newer but looks like its been owned by someone who doesn't know what they're doing. That's because if someone is using the bike regularly then they will have stayed on top of the maintenance and most problems will have already come to light.

Although any of these models will offer great value for money, our recommendation would be to spend a little extra and go for a 2003 model (onwards) since that's the year the geometry was sharpened up and the supplier Marzocchi fitted. Indeed

2003 was the last time we ran a 250 two-stroke shootout in TBM and guess what... the Gas Gas EC250 won it! You should be able to secure an '03 Gasser for about £2200-2500 and at that sort of money you'll be getting a bike which is not all that old, yet offers all the competitiveness you'd expect from modern European tackle.

As an affordable alternative to being an orange clone we rate the Gas Gas EC250 very highly. It has all the performance you'll ever need, wrapped up in a package which is amazingly forgiving to ride. And providing you shop around you should be able to find a good example within most people's budgets...

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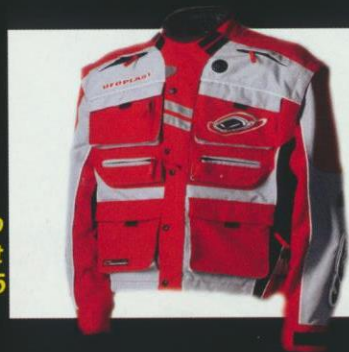


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ELECTRIC

With ever tightening restrictions on where we can and can't ride, a silent dirtbike has huge potential. TBM took a ride on the stealthy electric-powered Blade T-6...

Until recently, my interest in electric vehicles extended to... well, it didn't extend anywhere at all. I had absolutely no interest in them whatsoever. Because as far as I was concerned they came in three tedious forms: 'industrial' machines such as milk-floats and forklifts; weirdy-beardy inventions like the Sinclair C5 and the simply abhorrent Segway; and then, worst of all, ponderous eco-vehicles which are almost as objectionable as the hypocritical film stars and green 'activists' who drive them. Heck, if they could harness their own smugness to generate power, they'd solve an energy crisis in one fell swoop.

But then, back in issue 121, we reported on Electric Moto's Blade T-6, the first battery-powered dirtbike I'd ever come across, and I have to say that it looked pretty interesting.

As a self-confessed 'petrol-head' the technology itself wasn't what grabbed my attention, rather the potential to open up huge areas to ride thanks to its 'silent running'. And like it or not, if dirtbiking is to survive in any way, shape or form, we're gonna have to start pandering more and more to the politically correct muesli-munchers.

Electric Field

Thankfully, the UK's Blade importer, Stuart Rutter, isn't the kind of tree-hugging liberal who would sooner eat his own Birkenstocks than drive a 4x4. He's a regular dirtbiker like you and I, who happens to appreciate that noise is a big issue in modern day dirtbiking - as do the guys in the States who developed the bike.



It may look odd, but it works
and it's absolutely silent.
MTB trails here we come...

ELECTRIC SHOCK!



Electric motor claimed to be good for about 18hp...

Electric Moto's CEO, Ely Schless, may have built electric vehicles (including many for use in the Hollywood film industry) for much of his working life, but way before that, when he was still in short trousers, he was riding around on a street legal 650 Bonneville dirt-tracker, with open megaphone exhausts. So he knows a loud dirtbike when he hears one!

The company evolved from building electric bicycles, as Denali Cycles, into producing the Blade as Electric Moto Corporation, and the bikes are put together using parts from around the globe. It's a relatively small concern, though as you'd expect of such a project, the team are clearly passionate about their work.

Electric Start

For our test, we met Stuart at Washbrook Farm MX track in Cambridgeshire. Washbrook was particularly apt as a test venue for the Blade, as it is beset with noise issues - to the point that the

owner was forced to erect a 25ft high noise barrier out of straw bales, and only run bikes on a Saturday, when the population of the nearby village are all out at Ikea or deafened by their own lawnmowers.

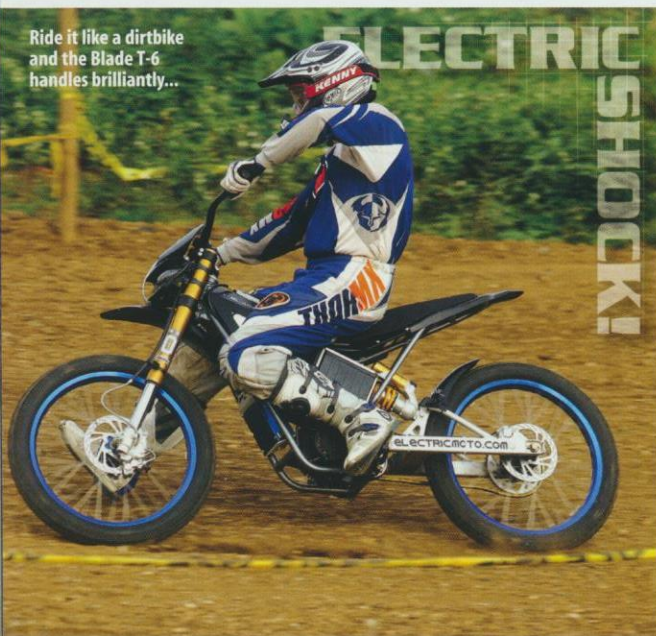
For now, only low-flying fighter jets and the hum of a far away Massey Ferguson broke the rural silence as two Blades sat on paddock stands, their batteries being charged from the power supply in a nearby workshop. And I've got to say they looked pretty purposeful. There's very little 'meat' on the bike - they're pared down to only the basic components with just a small

section of alloy bodywork and an Acerbis headlight. Although this wasn't wired up, a working light is something the company are looking into for the bikes to further reinforce the Blade's 'motorcycle' pretensions.

Despite the lack of a petrol engine and the associated gubbins, and unlike the ENV elsewhere in this issue, the T-6 is immediately recognisable as a dirtbike - albeit much of the componentry is a cross-over between mountain bike, junior MX and regular off-road clobber.

The frame is powdercoated chromo-steel, with a removable sub-frame holding a Yamaha YZ seat. Now, before the rest of the spec, it's worth stopping here to mention just how low the Blade T-6 really is. At around 310mm, ground clearance is a little under what you'd expect of an enduro bike, and the seat sits at just 840mm. That's just 20mm taller than a Serow's perch and 100mm lower than you'd expect on a KTM EXC. So even the most vertically-challenged rider

Ride it like a dirtbike and the Blade T-6 handles brilliantly...



running direct from the motor to the rear wheel.

Nestling between the front frame rails is the control box for the throttle. The regular twistgrip operates a cable, which in turn works a controller within the box, regulating how much power the batteries supply to the motor. Plug your laptop into the box and, using software which comes with the bike, you can program the level of throttle response you require, in a similar manner to a programmable ignition on an internal combustion engine. As well as this adjustability, a toggle switch on the front of the box allows you to drop to 50 percent of the available power, should you wish to go everywhere half as quickly..! Though this does also have the affect of doubling the 'charge-life' of the batteries, to give almost an hour of riding time.

Yep, at present the Blade will only run on normal power for a

little under half-an-hour, though as battery technology progresses (and apparently it's moving pretty rapidly), so the riding time will increase.

Spark Plug

Before we hit the track, Stuart unplugged the charger from the batteries and re-connected it to the control box. A loud 'crack' could be heard as a spark arced between the two plugs, located just behind the headstock at the front of the seat. The bike was then 'live'. No noise, no starting procedure, no fumes, nothing. But tweak the throttle and, Stuart assured us, the bike would take off. And after a brief ride around the car park to get used to the 'workings' of the Blade, I could see why. The control box was set to give good hard throttle response, and the merest tweak of the twistgrip had the bike surging forward like a green protector at a bulldozer. With no engine noise, no bark from an exhaust and nothing in the way of vibes, it was initially quite hard to grasp what the motor was doing.

With a petrol-engined bike, you have to worry about being at the right revs, in the right gear, and then dialling in the requisite amount of throttle. On the Blade you have no such worries. As previously mentioned, there's no gears - it's simply twist and go. And 'go' you most certainly do, because although the bike only puts out a claimed 18bhp at the rear wheel, electric motors are able to deliver maximum torque from zero rpm. What this means in riding terms is that the

shouldn't be daunted by the size of the bike.

Up-front, the fairly thin USD Ohlins appear even skinnier due to the lack of forkguards, whilst the piggyback Ohlins shock looks pretty big 'n' beefy mounted linkless, and upside-down to the swingarm (slotted between the batteries).

The wheels employ bespoke hubs laced to 24in Ringle downhill mountain bike rims, wearing chunky MTB tyres. Slowing these are discs from Italian company Formula, using the Brembo front caliper and master cylinder from KTM's school-boy motocross 85SX and a Formula rear stopper.

Naturally the front brake lever resides on the right-hand side of the braceless bars, though the left side is bereft of anything but the grip. There's no clutch with the single-speed electric motor, and the rear brake is exactly where you'd expect it to be: under your right boot.

Electric Organ

The powerplant is a brush-type neodymium, pancake motor, which could be alien technology for all I know, though Stuart explained that it was essentially an off-the-shelf, 19.2kW, industrial motor. Four sealed lead-acid batteries (two on each side of the frame) provide 16.7amp-hours of oomph, with drive to the rear wheel first being fed through a belt to the front sprocket, and then through a non o-ring chain to the rear sprocket. In time, this system (necessary to ensure the correct gearing and to mount the sprocket at the swingarm pivot) may give way to a chain-drive

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slow-speed response is simply phenomenal and with such a lightweight machine (around 80kg) the initial acceleration is quite surprising. With only 18bhp, this burst of acceleration soon subsides, and the bike will only pull something like 40mph. But on a tight course, through the trees or on the trail this shouldn't be an issue.

Electric Storm

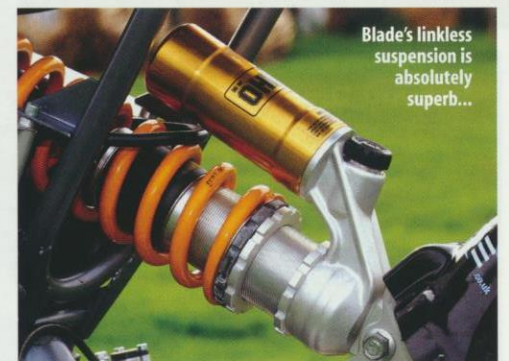
Out on the sand and shale of the Washbrook MX track, the Blade required a bit of a revision in riding styles. With the abrupt transition from 'no throttle' to 'a little throttle' a deft touch was needed through the slow corners and

to prevent the front-end from washing-out. So after a couple of laps of 'thrupenny-bitting' the turns, I decided it would be easier, and to be honest a whole lot more fun, to square them off and then 'gas' it out. The problem is - if it was a problem - that the Blade has no engine braking. We're not talking 'no engine braking' in the same way that a small-bore stroker has 'no engine braking', rather none whatsoever. Not one iota. Zip, zilch, nada. Close the throttle on the Blade and it just keeps rolling - it's the same effect as pulling in the clutch on a regular bike. So where you'd ordinarily bang down through the gearbox and back a bike into the corners, on the Blade you have to do this *entirely* on the rear brake. But it's no trouble, and with the wide braceless bars and low seat it's amazingly easy to chuck around. In fact, in this respect, the Blade is more like a bicycle

ELECTRIC SHOCK!



Seen from side-on it's easy to see how the T-6's simplicity means it only weighs 80kg!



than a motorcycle. And although the company want to keep the rear brake near the right peg to emphasise that the Blade is a dirtbike, I'd sooner see the lever fitted up on the bars. No hassle, say Electric Moto, a bar-mounted rear brake lever is on the options list, to keep those from an MTB background happy.

Rather than use the razor sharp geometry of a mountain bike, which would've been far too twitchy on such a machine, the T-6 is set-up very much like an enduro machine. It's stable, yet precise (thanks to a wheelbase marginally longer than a Honda XR250) and despite having employed a 'point and squirt' technique for much of the ride, the Blade can still scythe (groan) through the turns with ease. With very little bulk to haul and no heavy crank revolving beneath

you, flicking the bike from side-to-side is phenomenally easy, far more so than on a 125 even. Throw in that low, flat seat, which allows you to get right forward and over where the tank would normally sit, and you can dominate the Blade like no other 'powered two-wheeler'.

This lack of fuel tank, or protruding radiators, means that the T-6 is particularly slim. Mid-way along the length of the seat, the metal bodywork flares downwards slightly to cover the tops of the batteries and this is the widest point on the bike.

Here it's perhaps *slightly* wider than an enduro bike, though you only really notice it because a crease in the bodywork catches on the tops of your boots - something the factory are planning to change. From this point forward, the bike narrows considerably, making foot-out cornering so



Second Opinion: Si Melber

Occasionally a dirt bike comes along which is so outside your normal testing parameters, that you really don't know what to make of it. The Blade T-6 is one such bike.

Is it a dirt bike at all you may ask? Yes I believe it is, but not the sort of dirt bike we've all been used to thus far.

The truth is it's a whole new breed of dirtbike - one which makes the crossover from mountain bike to motorcycle and blurs the distinction between the two disciplines.

Obviously it's expensive - though there are people out there who don't think twice about spending this sort of money on a high-end MTB, and having ridden it I just cannot get over how well it just eats up the terrain.

For me the biggest drawback is the running time, because riding the T-6 is just so damn addictive you'll want to spend all day just zooming around, jumping, wheeling and powersliding the thing out of corners - all completely silently of course.

And imagine the fun you could have with a bunch of mates at an indoor Karting track remodelled to be like one of the indoor enduros. Las Vegas or Barcelona, anyone?

My verdict? It's quietly brilliant... **SM**

much easier. In fact, without any rads to splay your leg outwards, it actually feels a little odd!

Similarly, the peg-to-seat distance felt a little shorter than I'm used to, but when standing there wasn't the stretch to the bars usually associated with low seat height bikes, and in all other respects the riding position was quite roomy.

Shock Tactics

With great handling came great suspension, and there's no doubt that the Ohlins units had been well set-up. Particularly plush, they handled our modest jumping with ease, and gave great feedback on the loose, unpredictable track. Bigger, heavier forks would've been wasted on the Blade, and with plenty of adjustability available finding settings to suit shouldn't be a problem. In fact, for a small fee, the factory will update the springs and damping should you be heading for the supercross track.

There was certainly no issue with the front brake overwhelming the forks either, as the available braking power is just about on the lower limit of what you'd want. And with the lack of engine braking, the brakes do get quite a work-out, so a bigger, thicker disc would be a welcome addition, and no doubt more reliable than the MTB-esque part currently used. No such worries with the rear though, it's plenty powerful without being snatchy.

There are a few other little niggles which need addressing on the T-6, though they are really just minor detail changes and additions. The lack of a killswitch, for instance, is something which needs to be sorted as we'd hate to see what'd happen in the unlikely event that the throttle stuck open.

You'd have to hope the brakes would stop you (dubious); attempt to separate the power connector behind the headstock (unlikely); or simply jump off (painful, and doubtless expensive as your bike hurtles serenely (and silently) into the distance, before slamming unannounced into something immovable).

Likewise, a switch to disable the bike in the paddock, rather than just splitting the two connectors, would prevent small boys and inquisitive idiots tweaking the throttle and being run over by a rider-less Blade.

Forkguards would be a welcome addition too, whilst at the same time the front brake hose needs to be re-routed. And having passed these comments on to Stuart, subsequent Blades may well be subject to these mods. Because there is no 'model year' with the T-6, if something requires changing then it gets changed. That's not to say that the customer does the development work, far from it, but with small-scale production the factory can effect changes almost at will.

Shock and Awe

It's clear that the Blade is a competent, well-engineered machine and great fun to boot. And whilst the riding experience is clearly a little different to your regular dirtbike, it's not alien. Well, other than the fact that apart from the rumble of the mountain bike tyres (which worked well, incidentally) it's completely silent, allowing you to waft along listening to the chatter of small woodland creatures, or sneak up on annoying ramblers..!

But is it the perfect alternative to a petrol-engined dirtbike? Well, whilst it may develop into a replacement for your 'gas guzzler' there are first some issues which need to be addressed. And the biggest problem, from an enduro standpoint especially, is the running time. Twenty five minutes of play really isn't that long (unless you're a motocross

rider, in which case you'll probably find all your riding kit has gone out of fashion in that time), and even using the optional (at £300) 'quick' charger, the batteries require over 40 minutes to fully 'recuperate'.

To use the Blade in an event, say a hare 'n' hounds, you'd want at least a couple of hours worth of 'high speed' running time, and the ability to quickly swap out drained batteries for a fully charged set would be advantageous.

Hopefully the technology to allow longer running time won't be too far off, but for now you'll need to take a generator out with your bike.

Then comes the cost. At present, a Blade T-6 will stand you in at £4000.

For that you get the bike, the software to fiddle



ELECTRIC SHOCK!



Is the sun setting on conventional dirtbikes? Well no, not yet, but bikes like the Blade could well become more common in the future...

with the control box and an overnight charger to top up the batteries. Or alternatively for the same outlay, you could pick up a year old enduro bike, already road registered (which the Blade isn't, and for the short term at least, won't be) - and a regular dirt bike will run for as long as you put fuel in the tank and has a ready resale value. Mmmm, tough choice. Eventually, Electric Moto will be looking to produce road-legal machines, but for now the bike is definitely 'closed course only'. Shame.

And whilst we were assured that the bike could cope with puddles and jet washing (without giving you a jolt from the batteries), would a stream crossing send it into meltdown? We're assured not.

Whilst we see these as problems (and not insurmountable ones, either), the bigger picture is that the Blade T-6 is a politically correct, eco-friendly(ish) dirtbike. It's not some pie-in-the-sky idea, it's the beginnings of a viable alternative which delivers the same kinda kicks as the dirtbike in your shed. And we can just imagine the fantastic fun you could have with a whole bunch of mates all mounted on T-6s on a 'backyard' enduro track.

The lack of noise and relatively small 'foot-print' from the mountain bike tyres may well open up the use of MTB trails and other land currently closed to dirtbikers (whether legally

or illegally!), whilst the greens will see the lack of emissions as a definite bonus (even if the electricity used to charge the batteries came from a fossil-fired, whale-murdering, newt-squashing, radioactive powerstation).

I couldn't really give a flying treefrog about hybrid cars, Segways or milk-floats(!). But the Blade T-6 certainly came as an (electric) shock to the system...

Thanks to Stuart Rutter and also to Washbrook Farm MX (01354 740442) washbrookfarmmx.co.uk. For more info go to goblade.co.uk.

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Brakes F/R:	200mm discs, Brembo/Formula twin-piston calipers
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YAMAHA TT-R250

Having now owned my Yamaha TT-R250 for 18 months, it's starting to show the signs of wear and tear not normally associated with the shiny baubles most motorcycle journalists normally thrash around on. Mind you, this hasn't been helped by a few monumental 'offs' which have bent and bruised the little treasure. But the good news from my viewpoint is that the TT-R's a pretty robust

all-round package. Indeed the only non-moving parts I've had to replace were the aftermarket handlebar risers, one of which got bent backwards when I got crossed-rutted rather spectacularly during a Doing the Rounds I did with the Cornish mob back in July.

However it was time to pay the ol' girl some attention to spruce her up a bit, so I started with the graphics which have got sorely worn and, in



Blow job: take your time with graphics and the results will be worth it...

the case of the tank decal, large bubbles have appeared under it due to fuel vapour emerging through the plastic tank. Until recently there was no obvious fix for this, but D&D Graphics (e-mail: crm_tart@yahoo.co.uk) are now importing complete graphic kits for the TT-R, in a variety of designs too, which also include perforated tank graphics.

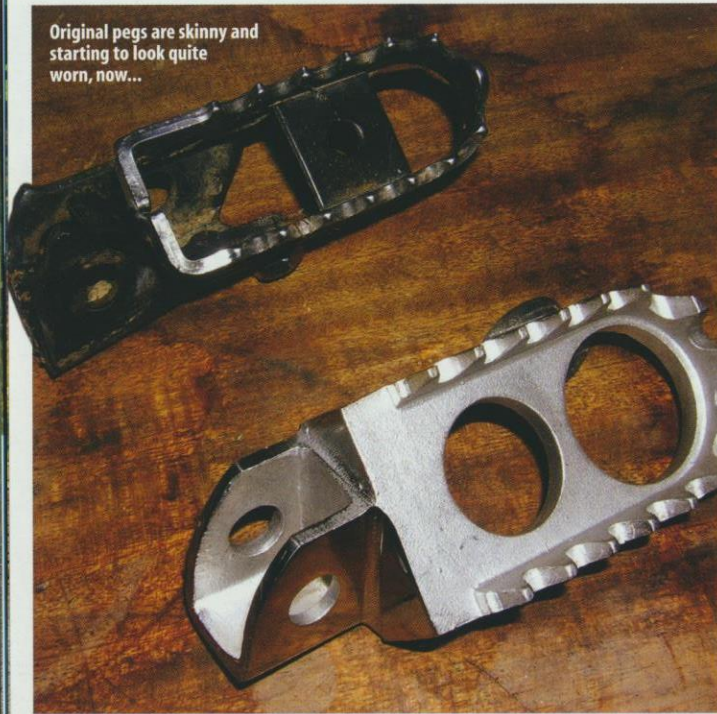
Fitting them is a relatively simple job but in order to safely and effectively do so, you have to drain the tank and let it stand empty for a few days to allow any trace of fuel to evaporate. A good tug on the old decals removes them easily enough but the surface beneath must then be thoroughly scrubbed (preferably with solvent first, and then) using hot, soapy water. Once dry, you carefully apply the decal in exactly the right position, before aiming a hair dryer at it to ensure maximum adhesion. And the result - complete with the TT-R owners' group website address - looks, wears and works well. I also added some

of D&D's other bodywork decals to spiff up my bike and whilst it would be an exaggeration to say it's as good as new, it certainly looks distinctive and the quality is excellent.

Another cost-cutting measure with the original bike was Yamaha's decision to specify narrow, 30mm footpegs, which I have recently replaced with a set of shiny, 45mm wide stainless steel jobbies from a local off-road dealer at a rather steep £49.95 but which certainly improve comfort and control during a long day's riding. I'm told the 'pegs from any recent-ish Yamaha MXer will also fit, but I can't confirm this and they might not necessarily be cheaper. Fitting replacements was quick 'n' easy.

Slightly more serious spannering was involved in checking the valve clearances were adjusted correctly - albeit a little after the recommended 1200 mile point. Fortunately they were well within tolerance, and I could turn my attention to other issues - namely the exhaust.

Original pegs are skinny and starting to look quite worn, now...



already borderline exhaust note had suddenly got louder I removed the can to discover that the gasket - in effect a malleable heatproof strip which wraps round the header where it slips into the can - had somehow dislodged itself and presumably shot up into its bowels. Cheapskate bit of design really and no substitute for a proper ring gasket. Trying to shave a new one from the 1mm thicker Yamaha part - a whopping £7.73, by the way - only succeeded in making a pile of mesh and gunge on my workbench. The ultimate solution, at least to the gasket and thus the noise problem, was to fashion a sleeve from a thin strip of stainless steel which I wrapped around a piece of old fashioned head-gasket sheet 'borrowed' from a friend who re-builds ancient car engines.

Whilst this was a bit of a cobble, it fits more snugly than the Oshiro arrangements and by 'lipping both gasket and sleeve, there's less chance of losing it all up the muffler. However despite the tightness of the join, the backfiring is still evident, only not so pronounced.

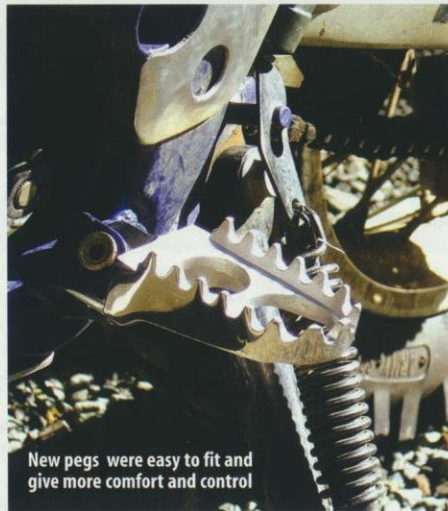
The longer term solution will, I fear, involve either a new aftermarket silencer or, rather more cheaply, retrofitting the original Yamaha item which is several pounds heavier - if several decibels quieter - and re-jetting the whole kit and caboodle.

I'm still eyeing up the rare optional oil-cooler my pal

Pete's got on his grey-imported '95 model but as yet he won't part with it even though he's still struggling to get his bike's starter-motor fettled (see August's Rutted) and could use the vast

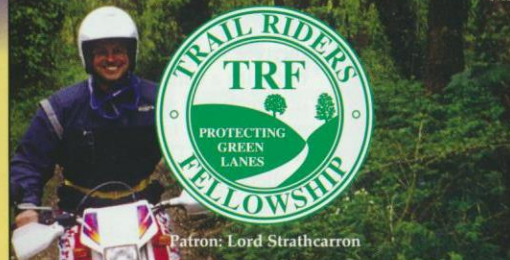
Readers may recall that I'd bought one of the last Oshiro FIM- legal mufflers imported into the UK after I'd undertaken the standard TT-R mod of sawing off the restrictor at the end of the header pipe and cutting back the snorkel in the airbox. These mods, along with re-jetting (up by one size) and raising the needle helped liberate even more power - and right through the range. But the downside of this proved to be a welter of popping and banging on the overrun which I have yet to fully cure.

Initially I richened up the mixture at low revs but this didn't sort the problem and as the



New pegs were easy to fit and give more comfort and control

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The bike's original exhaust gasket had disappeared, so a new one was fashioned out of stainless steel wrapped around a piece of head gasket material from an old car engine...

amounts of moolah I'm prepared to throw at him (well 30 quid is what I've offered). But in the meantime I'm assiduously changing the semi-synthetic oil and cleaning the wire-mesh filter every 20 hours or so because the air-cooled four-stroke only holds a measly 1100ml in its wee sump.

The amount of fine swarf stuck to the magnetic drain plug acquired (for £6.79 from Brian Eland of BogBusters, BrianEland.com) shows just how important this is, although I'm now using wire mesh (rather than paper) filters which are re-usable if carefully washed and dried.

The other major acquisition of late was a brace of tyres. The knobblies on the somewhat soft, but admirably cheap Mitus EF-60 up front were losing their integrity - or to put it another way,



Shiny new boots...

the tyre was almost shagged out with a consequent loss of directional stability, especially on tarmac. So it had to go. The rear, a Trelleborg Army Special T-644 still had a useful amount of tread on it after almost 2000 miles of dual-purpose use, but I couldn't get hold of one in time for a local TRF ride-out I was due to lead. The tread, which looks to be halfway between a trials and enduro pattern, is generally superior to the latter on rocks or roads, and only marginally inferior in gloopy or soft going, and boy does its wear well.

However young James of this parish unearthed a once-used Bridgestone Gritty ED660 in the dank bowels of the TBM shed and that's now replaced the Trelle, along with a Metzeler MCE-2 upfront, the need for road legality being paramount if I am to avoid the mantle of hypocrisy when I bang on about the need for Responsible Riding.

The Gritty certainly accomplishes all you'd expect of it off-road, but is a little skittish on tarmac, whilst the Metzeler is, if anything, better at taking the Yam precisely where you're pointing it than the bargain basement Mitus.

My next task is to check and re-grease the rear suspension arrangements and I am tempted, if slightly over-awed, by the possibility of fitting grease nipples

to the relevant bearings which means that this won't have to be a regular winter chore in future. If anyone else has done this on a TT-R or, indeed, any other similar machine, I'd be grateful to hear from them, c/o TBM Towers... **Mark Williams**

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



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Box of Tricks

Hi Steve

I am the proud owner of a 2003 model KTM 125EXC. I bought the bike brand new in May 2003. It's only done about 2000 miles and it has been well looked after and regularly serviced (albeit by me), with good quality oil. However, it appears to be developing a gearbox problem.

When I'm sat on the bike with the engine running, finding neutral can be pretty tricky at times but whilst riding, if I change down to get that bit of extra drive up a steep bank, it instead finds neutral - first time, every time. As you can imagine I'm getting fed up with falling off! Not only this, but when changing from third to fourth it sometimes takes two attempts to find the gear. Is this merely a case of pilot error or should I be trying extra hard to persuade the missus that forking out on a shiny new '06 model is a good idea?

KTM's 125EXC. One reader has had gearbox problems...



Any light you could shed on this would be greatly appreciated.

Jon Shutt
Via email

This doesn't sound like 'pilot error' to me, Jon, so assuming that the clutch lever is correctly adjusted (just checking!) I think it's time for a spot of spannering. To start with, I'd remove the clutch plates and check that they aren't distorted by placing the steel plates on a dead flat surface. Warped plates could account for the problem of finding neutral whilst stationary.

Alternatively, it could be that the selector ratchet spring has weakened - if you've got a KTM parts manual you'll find it as part number 503.34.007.052. Sometimes dirt in the gearbox oil can find its way under the spring and cause problems. And while you're in the garage, you can also fit the Michelin AC10s you've won for your tech query.

Chain of Thought

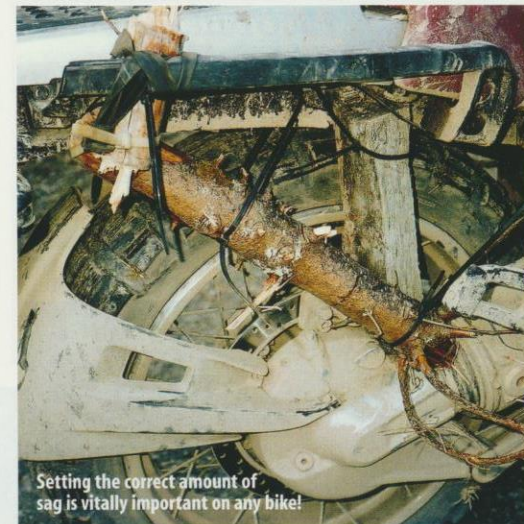
Dear Steve

I've just bought my first bike for a few years, a CRF450X, to use on the road and for byway exploration.

The front chain guide over the pivot of the swingarm initially seemed to be attracting a lot of wear because the chain was never lifting off the guide even when I was sat on the bike. For road use I've already had to up the front sprocket to 14 teeth from the stock 13 and this has helped a bit, but still I'm concerned about the guide wearing right down in no time. I read in your magazine about 'sag' settings but I don't really know what this is and if it has anything to do with my question. Looking in the Honda service manual the only information about chain adjustment entails putting the bike on a stand so the rear wheel hangs, then looking at slack in the middle of the chain above the swingarm and checking top to bottom travel does not exceed 25mm to 35mm. Is this all I need to do? Should I be looking into this sag adjustment thing as well?

Greg Doyle
Wilts

Essentially, static sag is the amount that the rear shock compresses under the bike's weight. Race sag is the amount that the shock compresses under the weight of the bike and rider in full race kit. Sag is adjusted via the pre-load adjuster - the big nut, and locking nut, which run on the thread around the shock body above the spring. To measure the static sag, bounce the bike up and down and allow the shock to settle. Get yourself a tape measure and measure between the rear spindle and a fixed point directly upwards on the sidepanel, endcan etc. Then put the bike on a stand so that the rear wheel is hanging down and the weight of the bike is off the wheels. Measure the same distance again and the difference between the two figures is the static sag. For race sag, repeat the first step of the process, but instead of putting the bike on a stand you climb aboard wearing all your kit and get a mate to measure between the two points, whilst he prevents you from falling over! The difference between these figures is the race sag.



Setting the correct amount of sag is vitally important on any bike!

So Greg, the sag *can* have a bearing on chain adjustment and you'll probably want to set it to the following figures: static sag: 25mm, race sag: 90-100mm. Set the chain as per the manual, but then check that it doesn't go tight when the suspension is compressed. If it does, then slacken it off. You could change the sprockets to help alleviate the problem on the chain guide, but essentially the design means that it will be hard to stop it wearing. So I'd advise that you just keep an eye on it, and don't allow the chain to wear through the nylon.

Shim Shady

Dear Steve

I have a problem with my 2003 KTM 250EXC 2T 'four-stroking' when I gently open the throttle.

Looking at my manual, it recommends that I lift the clip on the needle of the Keihin carb one position to alleviate the problem. After removing the slide and lifting the needle I noticed the up-and-down play on the needle was about 30 thou, which is about the same as the grooves in the needle.

It seems a bit pointless that there is so much play

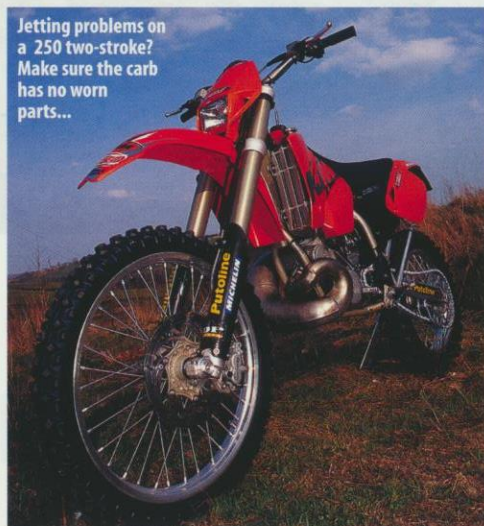
PLAIN & SIMPLE

on something which has such fine adjustment. Apparently when fettling carbs you can shim the needle using small shims. I also work on British bikes, where the spring on the slide holds the needle flat to the surface of the slide, which eliminates any play. So my question is have you come across the problem before? And also, where can I get such shims with an internal diameter (ID) of 3mm and an outer diameter (OD) of 5.5mm?

Duncan Shaw
Cheltenham, Gloucs

Duncan, did altering the needle position solve the problem? Either way 10-15 thou is normal to allow the needle to centre itself, and as this amount of play in the needle is 'engineered in' it's unlikely to have suddenly caused the problem. If you feel that something in the carb has worn, then I'd replace it with a new part.

Jetting problems on a 250 two-stroke? Make sure the carb has no worn parts...



Completely Shafted

Dear Steve

Whilst out riding I started having problems kicking over my 2002 WR250F. As the evening wore on it was taking more and more kicks to get the bike to fire, until finally the kickstart failed to spring back up. I thought I may have dislodged the spring that brings the kickstart back up, or even worse - damaged the engine!

Now I can ride a bike but maintenance and

mechanics aren't too high on my skills list, so I called my mate over. He bump-started the bike and it ran okay so I had a few more laps round the track we were riding.

When I jet washed the bike the next day I pushed the kickstart down with my foot and noticed it coming away from the engine. So I gave it a bit of a 'wobble' and it came away in my hand. As it turns out, the kickstart shaft had snapped about three inches inside the engine.

I rang a dealer and they priced the new shaft at £79. Please could you tell me if you know of any cheaper places to get a new shaft? Is it a big job to replace the part? And what could have caused this?

Sean Stephenson
Via website

Sean, if you're buying new you'll have to source the part through a Yamaha dealer and the price sounds about right to me. However, the shaft does come as a complete assembly, with starter gear and spring. The clutch cover obviously needs to be removed to replace the shaft, but it isn't *all that* big a job and if you're unsure, a decent workshop manual should guide you through the procedure. As for what caused the shaft to snap, I think it's probably just a freak breakage.

Strip Tease

Dear Steve

After 2000km (and probably not enough oil) my 2003 XR400R decided to retire on me. On removing the head, I discovered a very odd shaped piston, with a cracked liner to match. So, with manual in hand, I proceeded to dismantle the engine completely - quite an undertaking considering my lack of mechanical knowledge.

After a total strip-down and rebuild, which included replacing the big-end and all of the bearings, I was pretty anxious when it came to starting it for the first time. It kicked over brilliantly and idled like a dream, which gave me confidence in my mechanical ability. The only problem is that when I open the throttle, the bike then dies. It was



Early WR250Fs were kickstart only...

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suggested to me that it was a carb problem (the only bit I didn't strip down), so a friend of mine stripped and cleaned it for me. As suspected, it was filthy. The only thing is, the problem remains. I am now at the end of my tether after being without my bike for two months and am in need of some advice.

Jason Deane
Via website

Have you checked the valve timing, Jason? If not, then this is the first thing I'd look at. Otherwise it does sound like a carb problem so take it off and strip it down again. You need to clean every drilling in the carb body with a carb cleaner aerosol and then blow them out with compressed air. Hopefully this will sort it out.

Blown Your Cover

Dear Steve

I recently snapped the chain on my 2003 XR650R at about 90mph - there was a loud bang and then the motor went dead. Luckily, the damage appears to be limited to the ignition cover. It doesn't seem too bad. Can I weld it up or perhaps ride without the cover?

Jansen
Via website

Jansen, the cover can probably be welded or repaired with an epoxy filler. Depending on how badly it's damaged, this may be more hassle than it's worth so you may find it easier and possibly cheaper, buying a secondhand part. Whatever route you choose, you *definitely* need a cover on there.

XR650R: Plenty of poke for wheelies... and to break chains!



96 TBM

TT600RE: too low for one reader, but can the bike's suspension be lengthened?



Vertically Challenged

Dear Steve

I bought a 2003 Yamaha TT600RE then found out that it's two inches lower than the earlier 'R' version. So I would like to modify it to 'R' spec.

Do you know if the Sachs shock on my bike is shorter than the Ohlins unit on the 'R' version, or if it's the suspension to swingarm linkage that's longer on my bike?

Also, whilst both models use identical looking Paioli forks (though obviously mine are shorter) is the difference in length in the actual stanchions?

Any help would be greatly appreciated since I had no joy from the Yamaha technical guys. They said they don't know about the 'R' version as they reckoned it was only available as an import.

Stuart Boutell
Via email

Hmm, I believe the shock itself is shorter, Stuart, though you don't have to buy the Ohlins unit to get back those couple of inches - it is possible to alter it internally to lengthen it. Modifying those Paiolis isn't cost effective, so it might be better to find some second-hand ones. This should sort out the suspension travel, though I think the sub-frame on your model may be slightly different too, in order to further lower the seat height. But once you've got the extra suspension travel I shouldn't worry about this.

TBM reserve the right to edit any technical query submitted to the magazine. Submission of a query will not guarantee inclusion within the magazine or a response. TBM do not take any responsibility for (and will NOT be held liable for) the accuracy of technical advice provided, nor will we be held liable for any consequence or expense arising from following such advice. All technical advice is acted upon at the sole risk of the person(s) carrying out such advice. Don't say we didn't warn you..!

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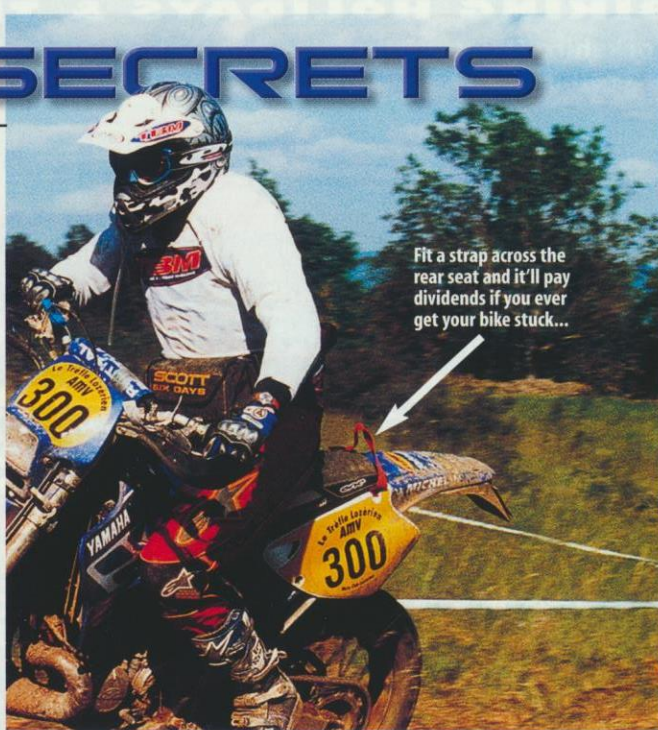
Strap it Up!

One of the best (and cheapest) mods you can carry out to your bike at this time of year is to add a set of webbing-straps to the front and rear of your machine. These cost next to nothing to fabricate, but make a huge difference to being able to pull your bike out of the mire when it gets stuck - and at this time of the year it invariably will.

I've lost count of the number of times I've used these sorts of straps - especially if the bike has dug itself deep into a bog and the underside of the rear fender is clattered in mud, so that your gloves can't get a good purchase to lift the back of the bike clear. They're also useful if you find yourself in a wet and muddy enduro where marshals are pulling bikes out of hazards.

It's pretty simple to fabricate a couple of straps from a length of webbing material purchased from an outdoor activity/ climbing/ sailing shop (choose your colour), or failing that you could use an old tie-down. The webbing material wants to be about 2-3cm wide and obviously strong enough to comfortably support at least double the weight of your bike (say 300kg) - because when the thing's wedged itself in a bog or a particularly deep rut and you're all tugging hard on it, you're going to be exerting a helluva' strain on the strap.

For the rear strap - measure the width of your bike's seat (at its widest part) and then add approximately 10-15cm (it doesn't have to be exact), and tidy up the cut ends of the webbing by holding them over a naked flame. Then ideally, what you need to do is to double over the ends (about



Fit a strap across the rear seat and it'll pay dividends if you ever get your bike stuck...

3-4cm) and make a small hole in the webbing through the doubled up part of the strap - using a small screwdriver or similar. Open-out that hole (taking care not to cut too many of the strap's fibres) so that the rear seat bolts will fit through [if there's no way that you can double it over, then just use a single thickness].

If you've got a bike where the rear seat isn't secured by two exposed bolts (like the late model KTMs etc), then don't worry - you can still make a strap. All you need do is to make the strap long enough to pass both over and under the seat with approximately 25cm to spare. This time you need to either (double) pop-rivet the strap together into one continuous loop - or simply tie the ends together in a reef-knot. Unbolt the saddle, pass the strap under it (so that the fixing/knot is below the seat) and re-attach. Bingo.

When it comes to the front

strap you need to take a little bit more care to avoid it getting all tangled up with your headlight/lockstops/front brake hose etc. Cut a length of strap which is long enough to be able to wrap around both fork legs with an overlap of about 8cm per forkleg - and obviously long enough to form a loop between the fork legs (to be able to get at least two hands in when using the strap). Ideally the strap wants to sit just above the lower triple clamp so that it hangs forward and rests on the front fender. To attach the strap, wrap the free ends around the fork legs so that there's enough overlap to put in a couple of good strong pop-rivets on either side - or once again you can tie the strap together if necessary.

Once you've got the straps in place it's easy enough to remove them once the weather (or your riding) improves, but in the meantime, take it from me... at some point, you'll be really glad you fitted them!



There will always be times when you're glad you fitted your bike with a set of tow-straps!

LIGHTEN UP

If you're converting a motocross bike to enduro trim you'll obviously need to bolt on a set of lights. And with the home mechanic in mind, Fast Eddy Racing have just released this DIY lighting kit. Using UFO head- and tail-lights, the kit comes with all the wiring you need to connect to a generator or battery - apparently it's the same loom that the team uses on their championship race bikes - a brake-light switch and an on/off switch to work the lights. As it's a universal kit, it won't get your bike entirely road legal - there's no rear brake-light switch, for example - but it's not far off.

The kit will set you back £149.95 (plus postage) and is available direct from Fast Eddy Racing. You can buy online at fastedydracing.com, or phone them on 01543 270600.

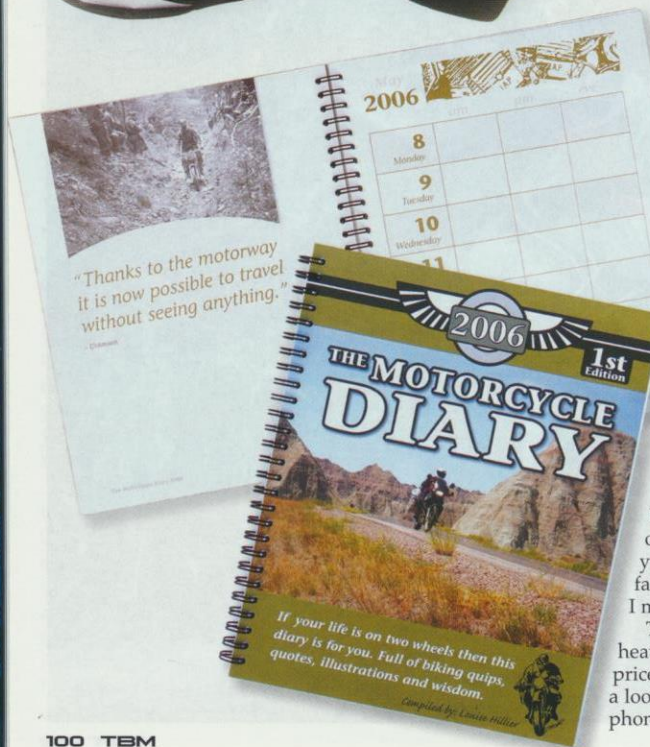
MAKE A DATE

With Christmas fast approaching here's the perfect Xmas present: the 2006 Motorcycle Diary. Now there's no excuse to forget those key dates: when your TBM sub needs renewing, when your bike's tax runs out, and of course the anniversary of that very special day - when you bought your first dirt bike!

Measuring 24 x 19cm, the spiral-bound, soft-backed diary starts with a year-to-view before dedicating two pages to each week - with a quirky biking photo and amusing, or poignant, quote on the left-hand page and the 'calendar' on the right. Each day is split into 'am', 'pm' and 'evening', so there's plenty of space to jot down your activities.

Whilst some of the images are good for a laugh (many are classic dirtbiking shots), it's really the comedic quotes that'll have you sniggering, such as: 'Thank heaven the ground broke me fall', 'A bore is a man who insists on talking about his own machine when you want to talk about yours', and TBM's favourite: 'I couldn't repair your brakes so I made your horn louder'.

The Motorcycle Diary is nicely printed, on heavyweight paper, and is well worth the £9.95 price tag. For more info or to buy online, take a look at motorcyclediary.co.uk. Or alternatively phone the order line on 01872 554490.



STANDING OVATION

Yamaha's recent alloy-framed two-stroke MXers look great, it's just a shame the Japanese don't make an enduro model, instead leaving that type of conversion to the customer!

So whilst you're slipping-in an 18in rear wheel and taking the edge off the power, you'll also want to bolt on a sidestand. And this new alloy 'stand from Welsh enduro company CORE allows you to do just that - there's no welding, no drilling, and no bodging things onto the swingarm, it bolts neatly and easily onto the bike's frame using existing mounts.

Machined from billet aluminium, the stand uses a heavy-duty spring and stainless fixings, whilst a dog-leg shape means that it tucks neatly out of the way, where it's secured with a rubber strap (which is included).

Should you lower the YZ's suspension (for instance with SM wheels), you *might* find that the stand is too tall to support the bike. No problem, CORE have made the stand with a wide, removable foot, so that you can simply chop down the stand and reattach the foot without resorting to welding it back in place. The finishing touch is a small CORE logo etched into the mounting bracket.

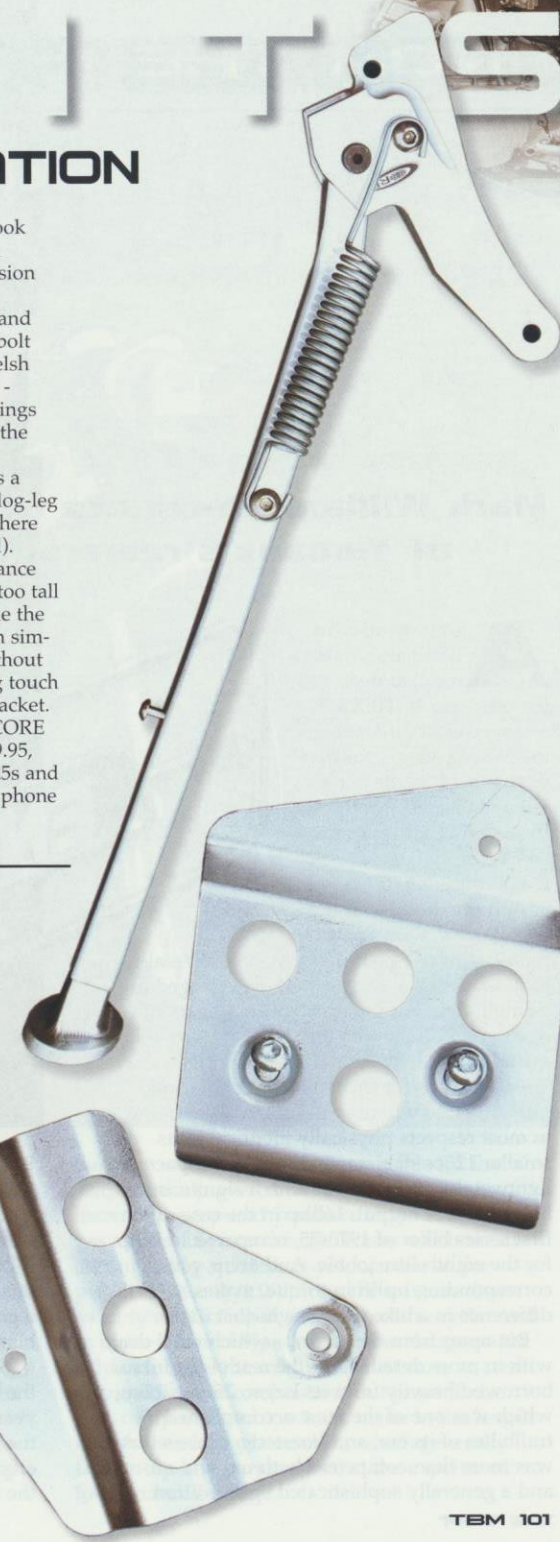
We were particularly impressed with the new CORE stand. It's well thought-out, well made, and at £79.95, well priced too. Available to fit alloy-framed YZ125s and 250s from 2005 onwards, for your nearest stockist phone CORE on 01686 412157 or go to core-uk.com.

RIGHT GUARD

Nothing makes your bike look shabby like worn plastics and missing frame paint. And whilst replacing a set of plastics is as simple as undoing a few nuts 'n' bolts, repainting your bike's frame can require an entire stripdown. So a set of frameguards is a wise investment.

Now, there are plenty of companies out there producing all manner of different 'guards, in everything from plastic to carbon fibre, and for a huge range of machines. But we've not seen anyone catering for CCM's middleweight 404 model - that is until now.

Gloucestershire CCM specialists, Haines & Co, have recently introduced these heelguards to prevent your mud-caked boots from rubbing away at the 404's frame. Cut from 5083-grade aluminium, they're neat, lightweight and unobtrusive, and whilst not particularly cheap at £37.49 (including fittings), they're a hell of a lot cheaper than getting your frame repainted! Order yours at ccmspares.com or by phoning Haines & Co on 01594 822202.



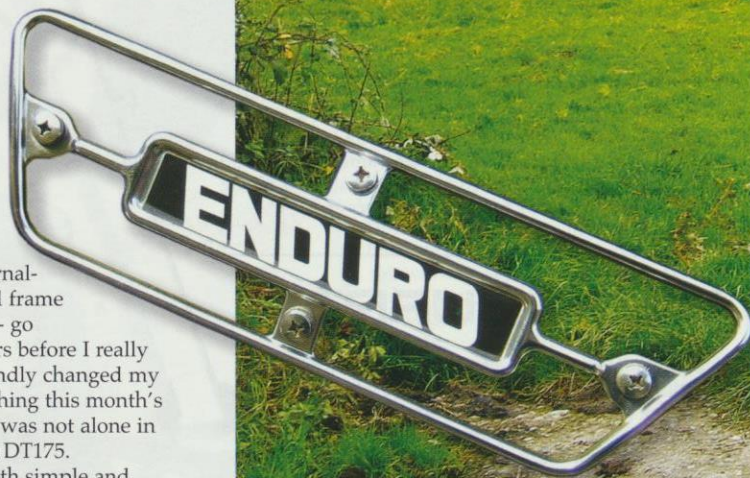
Shock of the New

Mark Williams recounts the history and virtues of Yamaha's remarkable little DT175...

As many off-road luminaries have recalled over the past year in TBM's eponymous mini-feature in the News pages, your *first dirtbike* is often the one you remember most fondly, and the one that sets in train an entire vocation. And whilst that's true even of lowly journalists (my first bike was a rigid frame BSA Bantam with knobblies - go figure), it was a good 15 years before I really found a dirtbike that profoundly changed my riding habits. And in researching this month's Archives, I discovered that I was not alone in my admiration for Yamaha's DT175.

The reasons for this are both simple and numerous, so where shall I start? Well being in most respects physically identical to its smaller 125cc stablemate, it was a compact and lightweight machine, but with a significantly bigger power output, 16bhp in the case of the first series bikes of 1973-75, compared to 12hp for the eighth-litre jobbie. And 4bhp, plus a corresponding uplift in torque, makes a difference in a bike that weighs just 221lb.

But apart from the engine - which we'll deal with in more detail later - the rest of the bike borrowed heavily from its larger, 250cc sibling which was one of the most accomplished trailbikes of its era, and boasted a chassis that was more than competent both on- and off-road, and a generally sophisticated specification.



Battery driven electrics (albeit 6-volt), oil injection ('Autolube' as it was tagged by Yamaha in the early '70s), a biggish, comfy seat and twin dials were all part of the package. And although the DT175 never sold as well as the 125, it always outsold the 250, possibly because it was generally a good 25 percent cheaper and not much less of a blast to ride.

But let's start at the beginning, and admit that the DT125 was around for a good two or three years before it spawned a bigger brother. From the get-go the smaller bike was a winner, its engine born from slicing in half a TD250 motor, the two-stroke twin that dominated road racing



during the late '60s. Oversquare at 56 x 60mm and de-tuned to a 7.1:1 compression ratio, the DT125's engine was also a tough little blighter, which is why its bottom-end stayed intact when Yamaha punched it out to 66 x 50mm and created the 171.1cc top-end we soon learnt to love.

But what impressed most about this engine was its considerable, and almost linear low- and mid-range power delivery - essentially the product of reed-valve technology, which Yamaha trademarked as 'Torque Induction'. Now the problem with two-stroke engines (especially in those pre-powervalve days) is that asymmetrical inlet timing - ie controlled by the piston skirt

passing over the ports - is responsible for the shape of the powerband. And if you want to increase the top-end you have to get as much gas as possible into the crankcase, which means cutting as big a chunk as you can out of the piston skirt so that it'll draw the mixture down as early as possible in the combustion cycle. And in order to avoid blow-back of the charge on the exhaust stroke, the inlet port must close as soon as possible after combustion. But to minimise this, compromises have to be made in the length and shape of the piston skirt, which generally favour top-end performance at the expense of low- and mid-range.



A neat example of one of the earlier twin-shock models...

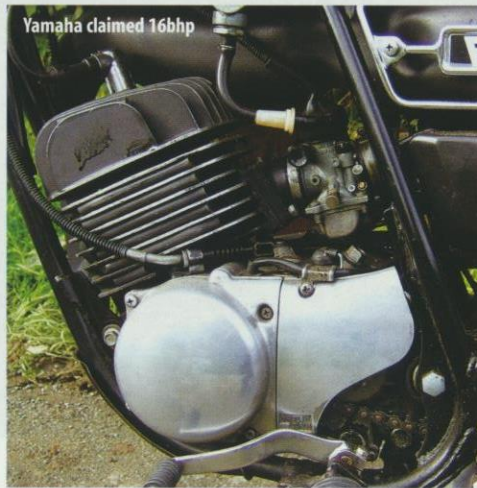
Shock of the New

To reduce such concessions, the concept of a reed-valve is beguilingly simple. Place a uni-directional valve in the inlet tract, and blow-back is eliminated. But the valve must be able to respond instantaneously to the vacuum created beneath the rising piston whilst not stopping the flow of a fresh charge into the crankcase. It must stay open for as long as possible, closing just as the rise in pressure in the crankcase threatens to blow the charge back out through the inlet tract.

To help achieve this, crude reed valves were fitted to some small stationary engines and chainsaws built by the likes of Mercury and McCulloch as early as the 1950s. Indeed the German bike manufacturer, DKW, introduced the first reed-valve aspirated motorcycle in the late '40s, although they abandoned the design because the poor quality materials used meant the petals kept breaking.

But in comparison Yamaha's was quite sophisticated, with a triangular wedge of alloy to which were fixed four (later six) pairs of metal strips. Covering holes in the wedge, the inner strips were made of thin stainless steel which would snap open against a thicker, rigid strip as the charge was pulled down the inlet tract. As the vacuum dropped, the thin strip - sealed by a thin coating of neoprene - would close back over the holes, thus preventing any chance of blow-back.

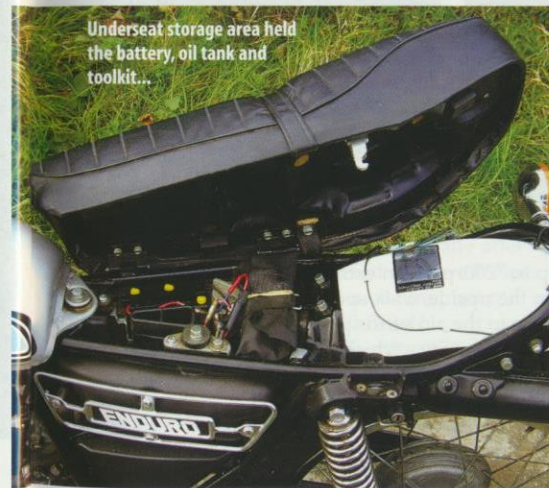
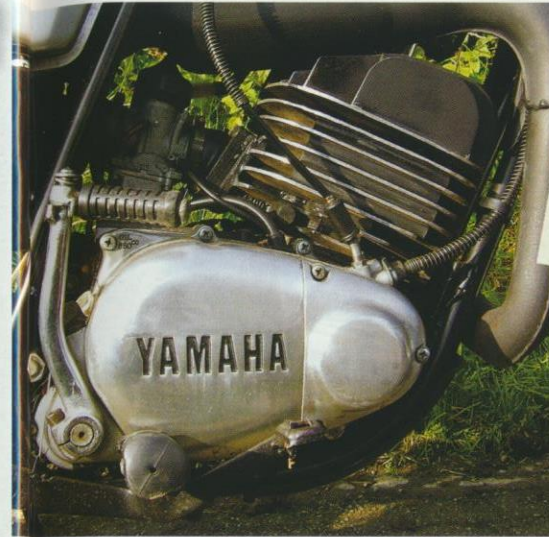
Without wishing to bamboozle you with any further techno-babble, suffice it to say that this system enabled Yamaha's engineers to revise both



Yamaha claimed 16bhp

the porting - actually adding extra inlets and transfers to a total of seven ports - and design the shape of the piston skirt to work as efficiently as it possibly could.

The consequences of all this was to liberate a lot more usable power at the lower end of the spectrum. Hitherto most performance two-strokes produced most of their effective power in the top 20 percent of the rev range. However Yamaha's design enabled the powerband to kick in from the bottom 20-25 percent of the band, which meant 'stokers suddenly ceased to be the



Underseat storage area held the battery, oil tank and toolkit...

screaming, unpredictable monsters that had characterised early Japanese roadbikes and, indeed scramblers.

So when the first DTs appeared over here in the early '70s, they were an immediate hit. The Mikuni 24mm carb was actually the same as that of the DT125, but obviously re-jetted to suit the bigger engine and the gearing was slightly taller to make the best of the 175's extra power. Fifth gear was also strengthened, though I'm not sure why (probably to give journalists something else to write about).

Shocking the competition rigid! Yamaha's DT175



The twin-shock, tubular swingarm and front forks were pretty bog-standard for their day, as was the single downtube frame with its duplex lower cradle, but as a package it worked well.

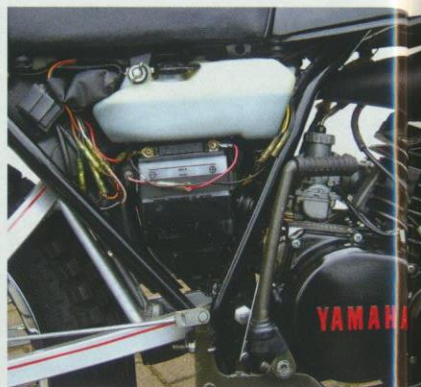
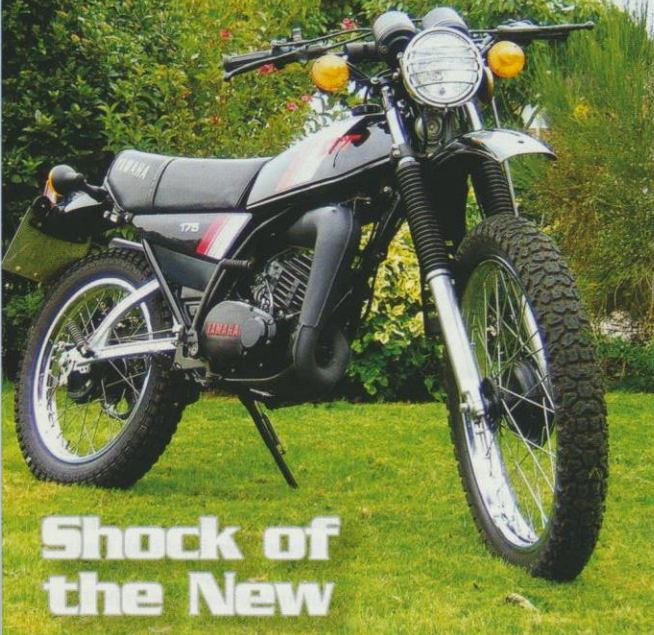
If anything, at 50.5in the wheelbase was a little on the short side, as was the 30in seat height, and one couldn't help but think that the early DTs were designed for oriental rather than occidental riders.

John Chappell's silver machine featured here is pretty typical of the first era of DT175s which lasted until the 1978 model year, and wore a steel tank, side panels, wheel rims and fenders (although it was still a relatively light bike for its day). John's bike - bought through the classified ads - has had only one previous owner in its 27 year existence and clocked up a mere 2200 miles in that time, a quite extraordinary figure but which its virtually showroom condition testifies as being kosher.

The small SLS drum brakes were amongst the more effective offerings then available and both they and the engine cases sported the usual polished alloy finish - that is before matt black became the order of the day. And unlike today's trailbikes, the early DTs were very user-friendly with deeply padded seats which hinged open to reveal a battery, air-box vent and toolkit - although along with their massive indicator lamps, twin dials and rubber covered footrests - clearly designed for a life of mainly road use.

That all changed with the 1978 model year when a cantilever rear end - already a feature of the company's YZ125 motocrosser - appeared on the fittingly re-christened DT175MX, along with some other revisions that suddenly made the bike a serious proposition to the clubman enduroist, never mind the recreational trailrider. The new suspension provided eight, as opposed to seven, inches of travel and this was damped by a single

Later bikes utilised Yamaha's lovely cantilever rear end...



Shock of the New

gas/oil De-Carbon shock which was nice and progressive and didn't cook its innards too easily. The spring load of which was easily adjustable by removing the seat and applying a C-spanner to the shock.

New, thicker front forks also offered an extra inch of travel, although not quite as well controlled as that at the back-end, this could be remedied by pre-compressing the fork springs and upping the weight of the oil. Needless to say a lot of us did exactly that - and by 'us' I mean those that actually bought the little darlings, of which I was one. It was also possible to add an extra two inches of travel at the rear end with a kit supplied by Essex dealer, Dave Rayner, and engine tuners were soon offering mods to bump up the power to 17, 19 and as much as 24bhp from the meagre 15bhp that was now the standard output. I say 'meagre' because despite knocking the compression ratio up to 8:1, that was actually a whole pony less than the previous twin-shock model and you had to pull the revs

up to 7000rpm - an extra 500rpm - to get at it. On the upside, a six-speed gearbox had now come to the aid of the party - a first on a bike of this capacity - which certainly made the most of the slightly reduced power output, giving it an indicated top speed of 70mph. A CDI ignition system was now standard, and although still abetted by a puny 6-volt system, the engine would usually crack into life first kick.

This state of affairs was partly a consequence of US emissions regulations which strangled the combustion process, although the DTs nevertheless managed to offer a little more bottom-end than their competitors which was useful in the nadgery stuff or when clawing your way up a particularly annoying hill. But simply replacing the Yamaha reed valve with one from Messrs Boyeson instantly improved torque throughout the range and if you were really serious about your off-roading, some judicious porting, after-market exhaust systems and re-jetting would improve matters even further.

The new cantilever chassis made the wheelbase longer by a couple of inches, obliging a revision of the steering geometry which provided an excellent compromise between stability and manoeuvrability both on- and off-road. But for those people weaned on twin-shock machinery, the front-end dive associated with these early mono-shockers took a little getting used to. (And it was actually a lot worse on the pukka IT175 and 250 enduro models which Yamaha never officially imported to the UK, but whose motors shared many components). Although still with a steel tank and wheelrims, the side panels and fenders were now plastic - the front one ventilated to allow maximum air (and gunge of course) to get to the now radially finned cylinder head - while one less shock absorber and a few other mods brought the weight down to 217lbs.

And of course junking the battery, mirrors and indicators, fitting alloy rims and abandoning a few other niceties would bring the dry weight down to nearly 200lbs. And if you were really serious about racing your DT, you could ditch the entire Autolobe system - which included a neat little oil tank that swung out from behind a side-panel for easy filling - and run the thing on a petrol mix.

The only thing that really let the DT down as a clubman racer were its brakes. Still weeny and no longer full-width drums, they didn't really imbue confidence when tearing along forestry tracks on your hopped-up 175, especially after you'd got 'em wet. EBC offered improved shoes though, and ones that shed moisture pretty quickly, so that's what we all fitted.

When I tested the first MX-er for Which Bike? magazine I concluded that 'this bike is the best 175cc Japanese trailbike I've yet ridden. By far.' And it was an opinion I never had to revise... though possibly because the 175cc class petered out a few years afterwards! After a succession of heavy, unreliable British four-strokes and heavy, unreliable British two-strokes plus the odd flightily Italian number, this was a bike that could be ridden hard on the pipe if you so wanted, but was very forgiving when it needed to be and would bumble along and enjoy the view if that's all you asked of it. Being Japanese and designed for mechanical nincompoops, it was of course utterly reliable and being bigger in every physical dimension than its predecessor, it was also easy and comfortable to pilot for a lanky lad like me. In short, it changed the way I judged trailbikes for ever and ever, amen.

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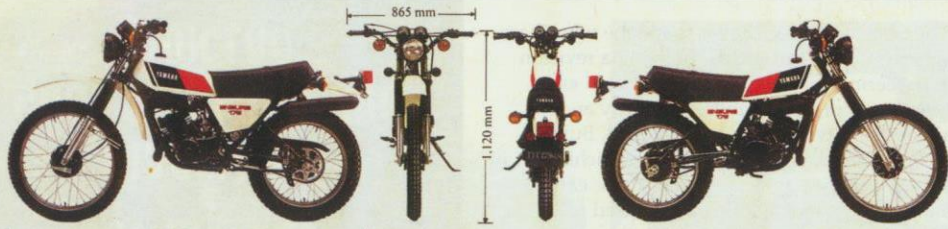
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FROM THE ARCHIVES



Despite its age the venerable DT175MX still makes a passable trailie today...

The cantilever MX version continued on unchanged save for different livery and a few changes to cycle parts - a plastic headlamp was a nice touch - for a further three years, but in 1981 Yamaha took things a stage further, probably to stay a jump ahead of an opposition who were also starting to toy with single shock rear ends.

Although the front half of the chassis was unchanged, the cantilever arrangement was now fashioned in box-section tubing, painted silver to not-very-convincingly give the impression of aluminium. In fact there were no advantages in terms of travel or damping performance proffered by the new rear end, but it did look nice, didn't it? (Well actually not as far as I was concerned, by which time I was on my second 'old' style 175MX).

The black bike owned by Paul Truckle and featured here - white was the other option for 1981 - is in immaculate condition and looked pretty damn tempting when I went to photograph it last month. Like John Chappell's twin-shocker, this is a remarkably low-mileage machine - its 9700 miles justified by pristine paintwork and unblemished decals, the only non-standard feature being a Gianelli muffler. Paul bought the bike because he 'couldn't resist it', although he already owned a grey import DT200 which he uses (instead of his Porsche 911) for commuting. At the time of writing, he's decided to sell the smaller bike as his garage is just getting too cluttered, but is reluctant to let it go for less than £1200 - top money for a late model DT, but then it is in top nick.

And it's also even rarer than the earlier MX version with just 24 months of model life before Mitsui Machinery Sales - the UK importer - introduced the liquid-cooled DT125 which spelt the end of the road for the air-cooled 175... at least as far as this country was concerned.

In fact the model soldiered on for two more decades, built in increasingly smaller numbers and primarily for the Australian market where it was fitted with sturdy racks at either end and is

beloved of the sheep farming fraternity. When I visited Oz a couple of years ago dealers were selling them at the equivalent of under two grand sterling, and I must admit I was mighty tempted. However the realities of shipping one home and going through the registration process rather dampened my ardour. Then again, my brief encounters with both John and Paul's bikes have somewhat fired it up again. You never know...

Special thanks to John Chappell whose rare and immaculate 1977/8 model is for sale at £1650 (vno: johnchappell20@ntlworld.com); and Paul Truckle who is also selling his 1981 machine, and is looking for less (tel: 07746 032259). Finally a big box of chocs to RH, who helped with invaluable research at the 11th hour.

YAMAHA DT175MX (1981)

Price:
Value now:

Engine:

Bore & stroke:
Displacement:
Comp ratio:
Max power:
Transmission:
Chassis:

Front susp:
Rear susp:

Brakes:
Wheels:

Wheelbase:
Seat height:
Ground clear:
Fuel capacity:
Dry weight:

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171cc
8:1
15bhp@7000rpm (claimed)
6-speed
Single down tube, duplex subframe
Hydraulic forks, 8in travel
Cantilever gas/oil monoshock
8in travel
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10in
1.5gals
219lbs (claimed)

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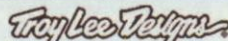


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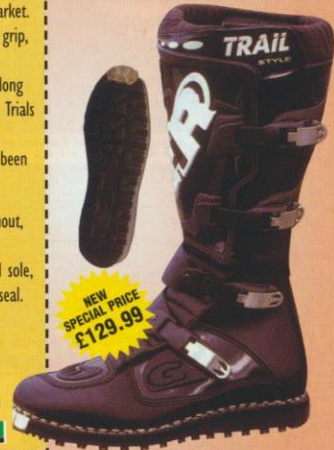
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'I WAS THE FASTEST RIDER ON BOTH DAYS IN ITALY, WHICH IS A NICE WAY TO END THE SEASON AND MEANT THAT I WON A SCOOTER...!'

W

inning a motorcycle world championship is something that I've wanted to do ever since I was a kid. Back then I wanted to be trials world champion but from the day I started competing in the WEC five years ago, it's an enduro title that I've wanted to get my hands on. Finishing as runner-up on three separate occasions I'll be honest and say that there were times I thought I might never get to win it. But this season I finally did it.

HE DID IT! KNIGHTER SCOOPS HIS FIRST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP...

2005 has been an incredible year for me and winning both the ISDE and now the Enduro 3 world championship title means that I certainly won't forget it in a hurry. Although I plan on winning more titles, even if I never manage to repeat my championship success again I'll always know that I've been world champion - and that is something no one can take away from me.

It's weird but having lead the E3 championship from the first round of the series, and having remained as leader of the E3 class throughout, I didn't feel under any extra pressure going into the penultimate round in Greece. It might sound big headed but I've been winning races this year because I've been the fastest and most consistent rider in my class, so I knew that as long as I rode smart and didn't make any mistakes I'd be fine. And I was.

The atmosphere in and around the Farioli KTM team in Greece was different to any other event this season - it was even more relaxed than usual. Although there were no guarantees that Ivan Cervantes would win the E1 title, Samuli Aro the E2 title or myself the E3 title, the

fact that we all had such big leads in our respective classes meant that we were *expected* to win. Although Samuli and Ivan were a little nervous, knowing that there was one more round of the championship remaining meant that if anything did go wrong we would only have to wait one more week to do it.

As it turned out all three of us won our championships at the same event - Ivan first on day one followed by Samuli and myself on day two.

The way in which the course was laid out in Greece the final test of the event was right next to the paddock, which meant that everyone was watching.

Arriving at the start of that final test was a bit strange knowing that all that lay between me and winning my first world title was a few piles of rocks, some logs and a couple of jumps. Thankfully I didn't really have time to think about my situation and the only problem I had during that last test was when I tried to stop on top of the final log pile to do a burnout and wave to the crowd.

Almost going over the bars as my front wheel dropped off the logs, as I rounded the final corner I could see the whole KTM team waiting for me at the finish. Crossing the line to clinch the title was a surreal moment as I got sprayed with champagne from all directions and was handed the '05 Enduro 3 number one plate - the thing I'd been working hard to win all year.

Thinking that things couldn't get much better for KTM having won E1, E2 and E3 world championship titles at the same event in the same season we then got the news early next morning that Juha Salminen had won the US GNCC title aboard his 250cc KTM - not that I remember much about being told 'cause the whole team was busy celebrating at the time.

Winning the title before the final round



of the series meant that the only thing resting on the Italian round of the championship was day bonuses really. But I wanted to put on a good show for the Farioli KTM team and their sponsors as well as for all the Manx supporters that came over to watch me ride. With the organisers also giving away a scooter as a prize to the fastest overall rider in the competition, I wanted to win that and give it to the team's mechanics as a thank you for all their hard work this season.

The event proved to be good and bad for me. Good because I was the fastest rider on both days, which was a nice way to end the season and meant that I was able to win the scooter. But it was bad because I officially finished 16th in the E3 class on day one. Because of a poorly marked pre-finish check I arrived at the end of the first day too early and was penalised for it, despite the club all but admitting that it was their fault.

Day two was a long day. With the event being one of the toughest of the season with loads of tests and some great sections to the course I managed to win each test in the E3 class to end the series in the best



possible way. With KTM putting on a private dinner prior to the end of year prize-giving ceremony, just as in Greece the celebrations went on long into the night.

With '05 having been such a great season I'd like to thank everyone who has supported me especially my friends and family, KTM, the Farioli KTM team and all their sponsors. I also want to thank Julian Stevens from D3-Racing. As well as being my mechanic at all WEC events this season, Julian is one of the people who really believed that I had what it took to win a world title at the end of

what was a difficult '03 season for me. Setting up the D3-Racing KTM team in '04 with limited backing while also trying to establish his new shop, it was only with Julian's help and KTM machinery that I was able to prove myself last year as a rider that could win a world title. The end result was that I finished the 2004 E3 championship as runner-up, which ultimately led to my signing a deal with the KTM factory. The rest, as they say, is history.

Things have turned out better than I could have ever imagined this season. I just hope that next year will be as good as this one has been...

ROUND 8:
SERRES, GREECE
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'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

And the winners are...

With three world championships up for grabs, an air of expectancy surrounded the eighth round of the 2005 World Enduro Championship series staged in Serres, Greece. Despite the final round of the series still remaining, Ivan Cervantes, Samuli Aro and David Knight all stood a chance of clinching their respective world titles and the three factory KTM riders didn't disappoint.

In the Enduro 1 class, Ivan Cervantes became the first ever Spaniard to win a world enduro title following an impressive E1 class win on day one, helped by the fact that Yamaha France's Marc Germain, his nearest championship rival, placed in fifth position.

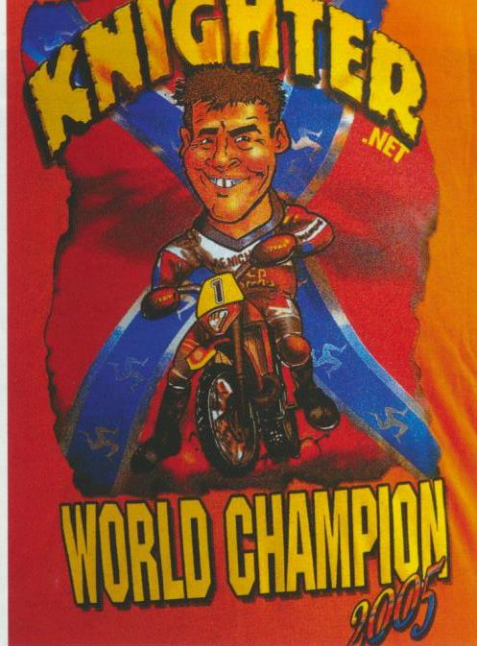
Remaining cool and calm during the day, it wasn't until after the final extreme test that Cervantes let his emotions show. With his Farioli

KTM team, his father and the president of the Spanish motorcycle federation all on hand to congratulate him, Ivan cried tears of joy.

Although Cervantes topped day one by some 34 seconds, he didn't have things all his own way. Bartosz Oblucki, the Polish UFO Corse Yamaha rider who'd topped the E1 class at the Slovakian Six Days, pushed him hard during the opening two laps of the event. Continuing his return to form after a disastrous first half of the season, Bartosz, aboard a virtually standard WR250F, maintained his pace to finish as runner-up - his highest finish of the season.

Making things even sweeter for the Farioli team, and KTM, on day one was the fact that Alessandro Belometti finished third on his debut ride aboard the new DOHC 250cc four-stroke. Having campaigned a 125EXC up until the ISDE, Belometti's podium finish spoke volumes about the bike, and the Italian's abilities.

SPORT



DAVID KNIGHT: 'WINNING THE TITLE IS SOMETHING I'VE BEEN WORKING HARD TO DO ALL SEASON SO TO FINALLY BE WORLD CHAMPION IS FANTASTIC.'

'NEAR THE END OF THE SECOND LAP (ON DAY ONE) I NAILED IT OUT OF A CORNER NEAR THE END OF THE ENDURO TEST IN FRONT OF MY MUM AND ENDED UP ON MY ARSE!'

'LOSING MY FATHER MADE ME WORK HARDER THAN EVER, ESPECIALLY DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THIS YEAR. I PROMISED THE OL' MAN THAT I WOULD WIN THE TITLE, SO THIS ONE'S FOR HIM.'

With both Cervantes and Belometti mounted on the quarter-litre thumpers next season, KTM will have two of the fastest riders on what is clearly the best bike in the class.

Free from the pressure of day one, on day two Cervantes upped his pace to not only finish over one minute ahead of the rest of the field, but also as fastest rider in the event.

Second and third places again went to Oblucki and Belometti, but this time Alessandro snatched the runner-up position with Bartosz claiming third. With 14 seconds having separated the two riders on day one, just six

seconds split the pair on day two.

Of the three KTM riders poised to take world titles (Cervantes, Aro and Knight) Finn Samuli Aro was visibly the most nervous before the start of the Greek event, despite having previously claimed two world championships in two different classes.

As it turned out Australian Stefan Merriman proved to be comfortably the fastest E2 class rider, winning day one by 48secs. With Aro not pushing any harder than he felt comfortable with, winning the world championship and not the race was clearly his priority. Placing second on day one meant that a top five finish

Paddock Pointers

☑ Finn Juha Salminen made KTM's post event celebrations in Greece all the sweeter when news reached Serres that the former five-time world champion had won the 2005 US GNCC championship in his first year of competing in the States.

☑ French rider Fabien Planet returned to WEC competition in Greece after missing the French and Finnish rounds of the series through injury. Suffering from a lack of bike fitness Fabien placed in sixth and eighth in the Enduro 2 class.

☑ The dry, warm weather in Greece, coupled with a great motocross and enduro test made the penultimate round of the series arguably the best event of the year. With all riders enjoying the long, technical, fast and flowing tests, the 2008 ISDE, being held in the same area, looks set to be a great event.

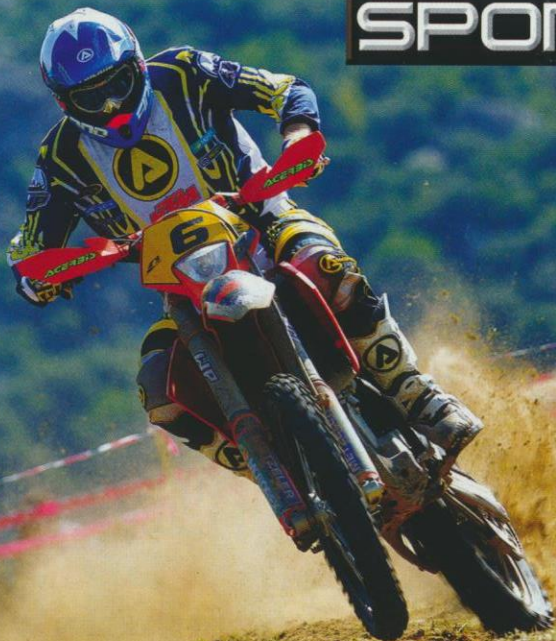
the next day would ensure that the world title would be his.

Behind Merriman and Aro it was another Finn, Honda mounted Valteri Salonen, who claimed the final podium spot finishing close to one and a half minutes behind Merriman.

Returning to WEC competition after breaking his elbow during a training crash prior to his home round of the series in France, Fabien Planet placed in sixth, clearly lacking the fitness and speed he had had earlier in the season.

Also competing in the E 2 class having been crowned Enduro Junior World champion

'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP



at round seven of the series in Finland was Spaniard Cristobal Guerrero.

Placing seventh on day one the young Gas Gas rider showed good speed but in the competitive E2 class needed to be a few seconds quicker on each test for a chance of a place on the podium.

On day two Merriman wasn't quite as domi-

nant as he was on day one. Although topping the E2 class with relative ease his winning margin was smaller and he found himself being beaten in the Scratch class by E1 class rider Ivan Cervantes.

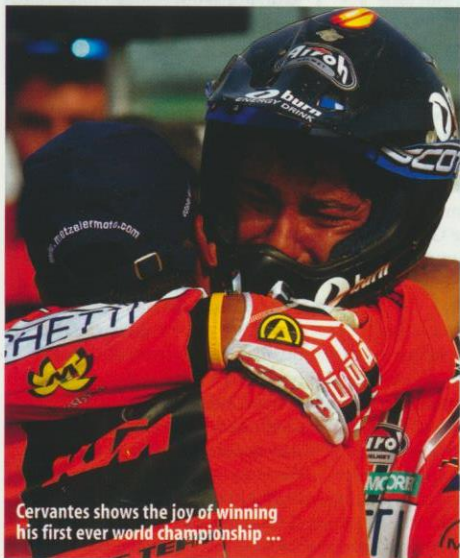
But despite his E2 class double win, Merriman's performance was overshadowed by that of Samuli Aro. Finishing in second position, as he had on day

The Brits...

David Knight and Daryl Bolter apart, there was only one other British rider competing in Greece - Scot Euan McConnell. Having opted not to head back to Britain after the Slovakian ISDE, Euan instead travelled to Italy to ready himself for the penultimate round of the 2005 WEC series.

But instead of competing aboard a 250cc Honda in Serres, as he had during each of the first seven rounds of the series, McConnell raced aboard a 250cc Valenti Suzuki having been released from his Honda deal after the Six Days.

Hoping to compete for the Italian based Suzuki team on a full-time basis in 2006, Euan was a little disappointed with his ninth place performance on day one. Finding his yellow machine very different to his Honda, McConnell upped his pace on day two and placed in seventh.



Cervantes shows the joy of winning his first ever world championship ...



With the E1 championship in the bag, Cervantes had time to play to the crowd...

PADDOCK POINTERS

Just 77 riders took to the start of the first day's competition in Greece - the lowest total number of riders to compete in a WEC event this season. The Enduro 1 class saw the lowest number of competitors with just 12 riders.

Finnish riders Petteri Silvan (KTM) and Petri Pohjamo (TM) both crashed out of the Greek event on day one and failed to re-start on day two. With KTM not renewing Silvan's contract for 2006 the former world champion is likely to work for the Austrian manufacturer as a test rider next season.

day two, and stopping on the final log section of the last test of the event to do a celebratory burn-out, Knighter topped the day by 48 seconds to claim 15 wins from 16 days in the E3 class this year. With his mum waiting for him as he crossed the finish line of the final test David was swallowed up by his team as they soaked him with champagne.

Behind David, Finn Marko Tarkkala claimed the runner-up spot on both days but was unable to pose any real threat to his KTM mounted team-mate. Only just managing to finish ahead of Gas Gas rider Seb Guillaume on day one, Tarkkala was joined on the podium by Xevi Galindo on day two as the Spaniard made it an all KTM top three in the E3 class.

As Cristobal Guerrero opted to compete in the E2 class in Greece he left Australian Jake Stapleton and Brit Daryl Bolter to battle it out for the Enduro

IVAN CERVANTES: 'IT FEELS GREAT TO HAVE WON MY FIRST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE, ESPECIALLY AS I HAVE HAD SUCH A GOOD WEEKEND. IT HAS BEEN MY DREAM TO WIN A WORLD TITLE AND TO MAKE IT COME TRUE IS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL.'

one, the big S claimed his third world championship title.

Admitting after the race that winning his third world title didn't feel as good as winning the first two because he 'was the best but not the fastest rider in 2005', Aro, like Cervantes, was mobbed by his team as he exited the final test of the day.

Now it was David Knight's turn. Instead of letting nerves get the better of him David prepared himself for the event in his own unique way - a Mars bar for

breakfast and lots of fooling around with his team prior to the start. So relaxed and confident was Knighter that he would win, he even had his own world championship winning t-shirts printed beforehand.

Topping the E3 class on day one by close to one-minute, David hardly put a foot wrong all day and not caring how he performed in the Scratch, he knew that on day two he would be champion. And he was.

Taking things a little easier on

SPORT

With this unique riding style it could only be one man: Stefan Merriman...



05 MAXXIS FIM
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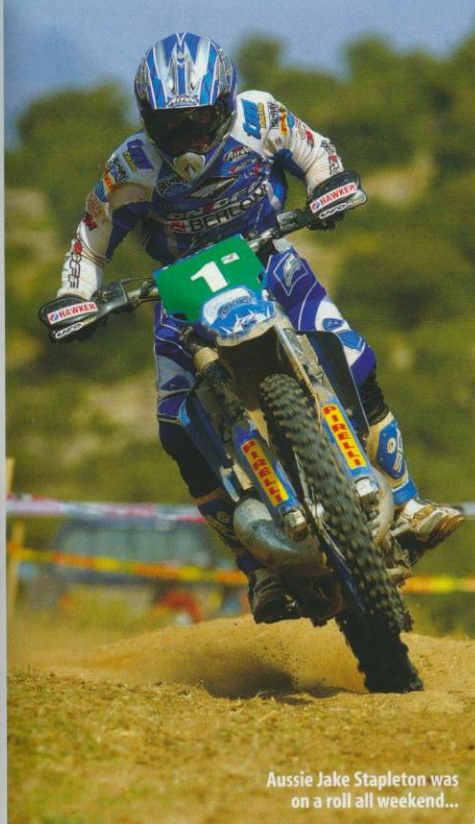
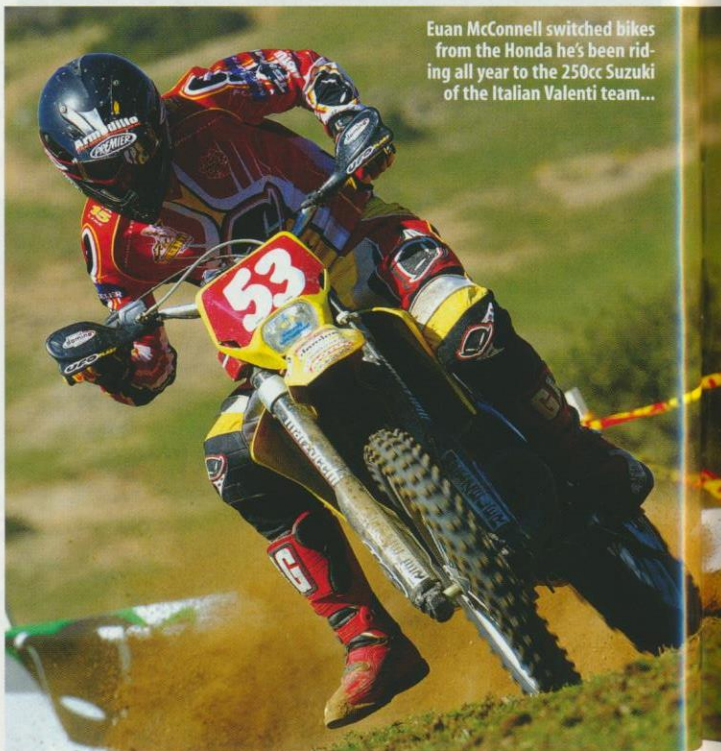
Junior class victory. With Jake riding better than he has done all year following a strong performance at the ISDE, he trailed Bolter by the narrowest of margins going into the final test of day one. This meant that it was a simple case of whichever rider rode the fastest during the final test of the day would win, and it was Jake who performed best to claim victory by just one second from Bolter.

On day two Jake claimed victory by a sizeable one and a half minutes. Despite Daryl squeezing every ounce of power out of his 125cc Husqvarna he couldn't match the speed of Stapleton on his 250cc two-stroke and pushing just a little too hard crashed heavily on the enduro test on the last lap, which saw his chances of victory well and truly ended.

Better luck next time...

With Cervantes, Aro and Knight all claiming their world titles it was the end of the road for Marc

Euan McConnell switched bikes from the Honda he's been riding all year to the 250cc Suzuki of the Italian Valenti team...



Aussie Jake Stapleton was on a roll all weekend...

SAMULI ARO: 'I WAS SO, SO NERVOUS. I JUST TRIED TO BE AS FAST AS I COULD WHILE BEING REALLY CAREFUL.'

'WINNING THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP THIS SEASON IS GREAT BUT IT DOESN'T FEEL AS GOOD AS IT DID THE LAST TWO TIMES.'

'WHEN I WON MY FIRST TWO TITLES I WAS THE FASTEST IN CLASS AND THE BEST RIDER. THIS YEAR I'VE BEEN THE BEST BUT NOT THE FASTEST.'

Germain, Stefan Merriman and Marko Tarkkala's championship hopes in Greece.

With both Cervantes and Knight having been the riders to beat in the Enduro 1 and Enduro 3 classes all season, the best that Germain and Tarkkala could hope for was that either rider would run into mechanical problems, which simply didn't happen.

But while Germain and Tarkkala were both outpaced all season, Stefan Merriman proved, on more occasions than not, that he was the fastest rider in the Enduro 2 class during 2005. With Samuli Aro admitting that the Australian was faster than him, had it not been for the unfortunate fact that Merriman injured his finger at the opening round of the season, his knee at the second and then crashed out of the Italian round rupturing his spleen, he would have claimed another world title.

The event...

The Greek round of the WEC series was one that many riders and teams had been looking forward to for some time. Not only was there an air of expectation surrounding the race due to the fact that world titles could be won, but knowing that the 2004 event had been one of the best of last season meant that everyone involved was again expecting a good competition as well as guaranteed good weather.

Run over an almost identical course to last year's event, and with both the motocross and enduro special tests marked out over the exact same areas as in 2004, only the extreme test, (which was a second motocross test last year), differed from last year's event.

Once again based at the Serres motorsport complex on the outskirts of town, a simple out and back, two-check lap was used and ridden three times each day.

Leaving the start, the riders headed straight into the extreme test before making their way into the Greek countryside en route to the 'out' service area and the motocross test. From there they rode to the enduro test and back to the pad-

dock. The only real complaint riders had was that the two checks, which were 55 minutes and over one hour, were a little too long. In total each rider rode for seven hours.

With the going relatively easy with lots of time to spare at the two service points, the motocross and enduro stages were where the event was won and lost as the short extreme test saw most riders separated by just a few seconds. Laid out on the infield of the motor racing circuit that circled around the paddock, the extreme test was little more than a series of flat grassy corners that were linked by man-made rock, log and telegraph pole sections with a few jumps thrown in for good measure.

The motocross test was the most spectacular of the event. High in the hills above Serres, the many flowing turns, climbs, descents and technical sections proved popular with all riders.

Extremely dry and in places dusty, the length of the test meant that most riders were more than a little tired when they reached its finish. The enduro test also proved challenging as it crossed numerous small rivers - many of which were deep enough to cause bikes to cut out.



The manufacturers' race...

KTM, KTM. Having lead the E1 and E3 championship races since the opening round of the series, and the Enduro 2 class for more rounds than not, KTM clinching the three titles came as a surprise to nobody. As well as clinching three world championship title wins, KTM finished the event as the manufacturer with most class wins.

But Yamaha's Stefan Merriman proved once again to be the fastest rider in the E2 class and gave his UFO Corse Yamaha team a double win. With Bartosz Oblucki placing second and third in the E1 class Yamaha outperformed all the other manufacturers to make it a solid weekend's work for the Italian Yamaha squad.

Honda's Valterri Salonen claimed a third placed podium finish on day one in the E2 class while Gas Gas rider Seb Guillaume finished third in the E3 also

on day one. In doing so the two riders were the only non-KTM riders to make it onto the rostrum.

In the Enduro Junior class things were a little more spread-out among the manufacturers thanks to TM-mounted Jake Stapleton claiming top spot on both days. Husqvarna claimed two runner-up spots thanks to Daryl Bolter, and Gas Gas two third place finishes due to Oriol Mena.

RESULTS - DAY 1

ENDURO 1 CLASS

1. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 45:41.853;
2. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 46:16.436;
3. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 46:29.938;
4. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 46:40.504;
5. MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 47:22.693

ENDURO 2 CLASS

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 45:28.196;
2. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 46:16.325;
3. VALTERRI SALONEN (HONDA) 46:53.716;
4. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 46:58.470;
5. BJORNE CARLSSON (HUSABERG) 47:20.602

ENDURO 3 CLASS

1. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 45:50.220;
2. MARKO TARKKALA (KTM) 46:49.998;
3. SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 46:50.897;
4. XAVIER GALINDO (KTM) 46:59.156;
5. MIKA AHOLA (HUSQVARNA) 47:01.144

ENDURO JUNIOR CLASS

1. JAKE STAPLETON (TM) 47:50.875;
2. DARYL BOLTER (HUSQVARNA) 47:52.031;
3. ORIOL MENA (GAS GAS) 47:59.552;
4. JOAKIM LJUNGREN (HUSABERG) 48:14.786;
5. MARC BOURGEOIS (HUSQVARNA) 49:15.441

RESULTS - DAY 2

ENDURO 1 CLASS

1. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 52:46.686;
2. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 53:50.750;
3. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 53:57.176;
4. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 53:58.623;
5. MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 54:58.086

ENDURO 2 CLASS

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 53:15.142;
2. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 53:49.969;
3. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 54:16.808;
4. BJORNE CARLSSON (HUSABERG) 54:23.235;
5. VALTERRI SALONEN (HONDA) 54:35.749

ENDURO 3 CLASS

1. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 53:20.665;
2. MARKO TARKKALA (KTM) 54:09.540;
3. XAVIER GALINDO (KTM) 54:17.992;
4. MIKA AHOLA (HUSQVARNA) 54:21.178;
5. SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 54:54.184

ENDURO JUNIOR CLASS

1. JAKE STAPLETON (TM) 54:47.284;
2. DARYL BOLTER (HUSQVARNA) 56:22.128;
3. ORIOL MENA (GAS GAS) 56:22.307;
4. JOAKIM LJUNGREN (HUSABERG) 56:25.458;
5. JULIEN DUBAC (HUSQVARNA) 58:24.543

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'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP



SPORT

Everyone's talking about...

With all three of the 2005 World Enduro Championship titles having been settled prior to the ninth and final round, much of the talk in the paddock before the event centred around what machinery champions Ivan Cervantes, Samuli Aro and David Knight would compete on. Having claimed their respective titles aboard four-stroke machinery, many expected the three riders to race two-stroke machinery - Cervantes on a 125, Aro a 250 and Knight aboard a 300 - just because they could. However, with little time to organise replacement machinery, Cervantes was the only rider to make the switch.

There was also much speculation in the paddock as to which riders were riding for what teams next season, with much of the talk based around Stefan Merriman. Known to be leaving

Yamaha after two years aboard the Japanese bikes, Merriman's signature on a Husqvarna contract is all but certain, despite rumours linking him with Aprilia, Honda and a possible move to the US. Many of the other top riders still haven't finalised next year's rides, with the factory KTM squad the only team to have confirmed their line-up.

And the winners are...

Proving that his strong result in Greece was no fluke, and that he was adjusting well to KTM's 250cc thumper, former world championship motocrosser, Italian Alessandro Belometti, claimed his first ever E1 WEC victory on day one. Winning three of the opening day's special tests, Belometti finished just over 22 seconds ahead of French rider Marc Germain. With Germain fast on the flat, grassy motocross tests it was Belometti's speed on the

enduro test that ultimately gave him the win. Finishing third was E1 world champion, Ivan Cervantes. Not as fast as he would have been aboard his 250cc four-stroke, Ivan still managed to win two tests and end the day just nine seconds behind Germain.

But the real excitement in the E1 class took place on day two, when Italians Belometti and Simone Albergoni battled it out for the class win. With both riders winning tests and performing consistently all day, the 12th and final test proved to be the decider, as both riders

arrived at its start separated by just one second. Despite neither of them winning the test, that honour went to Ivan Cervantes, Albergoni posted a time fast enough to beat Belometti and in doing so claimed his first win of the season. Alessandro came home in second, less than four seconds adrift, whilst Cervantes claimed third after Bartosz Oblucki stalled his engine on the third-to-last test of the day.

Despite finishing fifth on day two, Yamaha France rider Marc Germain placed as runner-up in the E1 championship behind Cervantes. Belometti's strong

Paddock Pointers

✓ The picturesque town of Schilpario and the breathtakingly beautiful mountains of northern Italy provided a spectacular backdrop to the final WEC race of '05. Clear, sunny skies also made for a memorable event.

✓ Close to 40 of David Knight's friends, family members and supporters travelled from the Isle of Man to Schilpario to watch their world champion in action, with Manx supporters seemingly out-numbering the Italians on several of the event's special tests.

✓ Australian TM rider Jake Stapleton claimed the top spot on the Enduro Junior podium on day two, to bring his first full international season to a close on a high note. Making things even better for Jake was the fact that his parents were there to see him win and that TM offered him a three-year deal to remain in WEC.



end-of-season form helped him edge ahead of Albergoni, resulting in the two Italian riders placing third and fourth in the championship, respectively.

UFO Corse Yamaha rider Stefan Merriman dominated the Enduro 2 class on day one in Italy, to finish 43 seconds ahead of world champion Samuli Aro.

With the E2 title already his, Aro obviously didn't need to push any harder than strictly necessary though Merriman seemingly wanted to prove that he's still the fastest rider in the class after an injury ruined his season.

'05 MAXXIS FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

Behind Aro was Italian Alessandro Botturi on his KTM, whilst French KTM rider Fabien Planet continued his comeback from injury to claim fourth. Finn Petri Pohjamo took his TM to a fifth place result and Enduro Junior world champion Cristobal Guerrero claimed a creditable sixth place in only his second event in the senior class.

The final day of the series saw Stefan Merriman finish as runner-up in E2. With little separating Merriman and Aro during much of the first half of the day, a mistake by the Australian saw Aro open up a small lead, which Merriman tried to close on

The Brits...

Other than David Knight and Daryl Bolter, Scott Euan McConnell was the only British rider competing in Italy. After his Valenti Suzuki debut ride in Greece produced mixed results, McConnell had a disastrous final WEC event. On day one, Euan failed to finish after his front wheel spindle broke. The wheel then parted company from the rest of the bike and the tall Scott crashed heavily. Having dusted himself down, McConnell could do little more than get himself and his bike back to the paddock in readiness for day two.

Disappointingly, things weren't much better for Euan on day two. Posting some good test times (which would've placed him around tenth in class), mid-way through the day he found himself without a front brake, which

the enduro test. Pushing a little too hard, the Yamaha rider crashed, losing further time to the Finn. Aro maintained the advantage, to finish over one-and-a-half minutes ahead of Merriman, with Husaberg's Bjorne Carlsson claiming his only podium of the season in third. Finn Valtteri Salonen and Fabien Planet rounded out the top five.

In terms of the final championship standings, Aro comfortably topped the E2 class, helped in no small way by the fact that second placed Merriman failed to score any points on four separate days. Italian Alessandro Botturi finished third, as one of

resulted in him dropping 11 minutes as his team tried to fix the problem.

In the final championship standings, Euan McConnell was one of five British riders inside the top ten of their respective class. Finishing tenth in E2, Euan placed ahead of British-based New Zealander Paul Whibley who came 12th aboard his Gas Gas, and Irishman Gordon Clark who finished 39th on his TM. In E1, Paul Edmondson came sixth, despite not competing in the final two rounds, while Ed Jones was 43rd on his KTM. Tim Lewis placed 51st on his TM, and in Enduro Junior, Honda rider Si Wakely finished eighth.

Aside from Knight's dominance in E3, Daryl Bolter put in the strongest performance of all the Brits, taking an impressive third place in Enduro Junior in his first full WEC season.

SPORT



Merriman gets a soaking...



Euan McConnell quickly got to grips with his new Suzuki... Until it broke!

just a few E2 riders to complete the series uninjured.

According to the official results at the end of day one, E3 world champion, David Knight, finished in 16th position! His KTM team-mate, Marko Tarkkala, placed one position behind him in 17th. After winning all but one test on the opening day, David arrived at the end of the third lap closely followed by Tarkkala. The pair needed only to fit new tyres to their machines before impounding them in the parc ferme to claim another one-two result for KTM. Instead, due to the fact that organising Moto Club Bergamo decided to place the pre-finish check on a busy, highly-congested road outside the paddock without any sort of a filter lane to direct riders

towards the check, Knight and Tarkkala rode through the check without realising it was even there. As the two riders competing at the front of the entry (it was the E3 class' turn to start first), several witnesses claimed that the check staff simply weren't ready for the arrival of the riders and hadn't finished marking out the check. As a result, David arrived 12 minutes early, Marko fourteen, and both were penalised.

As the road was blocked by traffic and the check poorly marked, David, Marko and KTM hoped that the International Jury would see sense and scrap the penalties. They didn't. The clerk of the course refused to admit that the check was badly marked (those in the paddock couldn't believe that the check had been

Paddock Pointers

Despite being one of Italy's longest standing and wealthiest moto clubs, Moto Club Bergamo decided not to adhere to FIM regulations and initially planned on running seven-and-a-half hour days. After much discussion they revised their plans and shortened the days to seven hours and nine minutes - still longer than the FIM specify.

The Schilpario event was Italian Alessandro Botturi's last international competition for the Farioli KTM team. Although not yet officially announced, Botturi will compete for Aprilia in next year's WEC series.

Despite it being 'shorts and t-shirt weather' during the day, when the sun dropped below the mountains it was bitterly cold. Due to fears of frost on the enduro test, the long, technical stage wasn't timed on the first lap of day two.

placed on a public highway in the first place) and the Jury decided that the penalties would stand. This decision gave French Gas Gas rider Seb Guillaume the win, with Ahola and Paoli in second and third respectively.

On day two, Moto Club Bergamo admitted (verbally, at least) that there might have been some issues regarding the way in which day one's pre-finish check was marked out, though it had no bearing on the previous day's results. And so Knighter went out and dominated the class, winning every test to top the class by one minute and 20secs,

2005 MAXXIS-FIM WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

The event...

Long before those competing arrived in Schilpario, the organisers made it clear that the final WEC round of 2005 would be a challenging one. Situated high in the mountains of northern Italy, much of the course was around 2000 metres above sea level, and as a result many riders commented that they found themselves feeling tired and unable to concentrate properly. With two motocross tests, one extreme test and one enduro test, the event was the first of the season to feature four timed specials.

The competitors rode three laps each day, each lap being split into three time checks. The first check, which included the first motocross test and the extreme test, totalled 33km, while the second was 17km in length with no tests. The third check brought riders back to the *parc ferme*, was 20km long and featured the second motocross and enduro tests. With each lap taking around two hours and 20 minutes, the additional 15 minute pre-finish check at the end of day one meant riders spent over seven hours in the saddle - more than enough for even the fittest WEC competitor.

The course itself was as challenging as the scenery was beautiful. Featuring numerous technical climbs, steep descents and a mixture

of tracks and trails, it also came with a brisk time schedule and one fairly tight check each lap.

Of the special tests, the two motocross stages were very similar as both weaved and looped their way around relatively small areas of grassland. Initially flat and slippery, they soon became rutted, with both offering just one line from start to finish.

The extreme test, while featuring a few token log and rock sections, was largely laid out over natural climbs and descents. Several riders struggled to complete the test without mistakes, and Italian Simone Albergoni stalled his Honda on the second lap of day two after he braked heavily to avoid a *chicken* that was crossing the track. Quite why the chicken was crossing the track, though, we're still unsure..!

Taking riders anywhere between five-and-a-half and six-and-a-half minutes to complete, the event's enduro test decided the finishing order of most classes. Winding its way alongside a river before crossing over to wind its way back again, the test was the most technically challenging of the season and featured plenty of tree roots and rocks from start to finish. Timed just twice on each day, the clock showed a massive difference between those who had a good run through and those who did not, and only a few riders completed all four passes without incident.

and prove that he's the best rider in WEC. Behind David, Mika Ahola claimed the runner-up spot with Seb Guillaume taking third. Two crashes saw Tarkkala finish an unlucky sixth.

Knighter's almost perfect season saw him top the E3 championship almost 60 points clear of his nearest rival, failing to win on just one day out of 18 (controversial jury decisions aside). His KTM teammate Marko Tarkkala claimed the runner-up spot, and Gas Gas rider Seb Guillaume placed third as the highest finishing two-stroke rider in the class.

The manufacturers' race...

With KTM riders having already claimed the three senior world titles, and numerous Italian riders and teams wanting to end the season with good results at their home round, the Austrian concern didn't have things entirely their own way in Schilpario.

In the E1 class they did, however, get two riders onto the podium at the end of both days - one on a four-stroke and one on a two-stroke. In the E2 class they claimed a second and a first on the two days,

while in E3 they *essentially* dominated proceedings again thanks to David Knight.

Honda claimed just one podium finish in the senior classes with Simone Albergoni, and for Yamaha, the only other Japanese manufacturer in the running, Merriman's E2 class win on day one and runner-up finish on day two was joined by Marc Germain's E1 runner-up finish on day one. Husqvarna, Gas Gas, TM and Husaberg also claimed podium finishes.

Overall, in E1 KTM finished the series comfortably ahead of Yamaha, with Honda third. In E2 things were much closer between KTM and Yamaha, with Honda again third. But in E3 well over 100 points separated KTM from second placed Gas Gas, with Husqvarna claiming third. Making things just that little bit sweeter for KTM, was the fact that their two official factory teams placed first and second in the end-of-season team standings: KTM Racing Team Farioli finished in the top spot while KTM Enduro Factory Team placed second, with Gas Gas Moto netting third.

RESULTS - DAY ONE

ENDURO 1

1. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 56:56.82;
2. MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 57:19.23;
3. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 57:28.42;
4. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 57:32.04;
5. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 57:39.80

ENDURO 2

1. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 56:04.94;
2. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 56:48.35;
3. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI (KTM) 57:47.04;
4. FABIEN PLANET (KTM) 57:55.49;
5. PETRI POHJAMO (TM) 58:13.59

ENDURO 3

1. SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 57:03.96;
2. MIKA AHOLA (HUSQVARNA) 57:14.37;
3. ALESSIO PAOLI (TM) 57:23.00;
4. ALEX ZANNI (HONDA) 58:06.94;
5. THIERRY KLUTZ (GAS GAS) 58:58.31

ENDURO JUNIOR

1. PAOLO BERNARDI (HONDA) 58:43.54;
2. JAKE STAPLETON (TM) 58:55.73;
3. DARYL BOLTER (HUSQVARNA) 1.00:23.86;
4. ORIOL MENA (GAS GAS) 1.00:34.63;
5. JULIEN DUBAC (HUSQVARNA) 1.00:36.08

RESULTS - DAY TWO

ENDURO 1

1. SIMONE ALBERGONI (HONDA) 58:41.57;
2. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI (KTM) 58:45.17;
3. IVAN CERVANTES (KTM) 58:58.56;
4. BARTOSZ OBLUCKI (YAMAHA) 58:59.39;
5. MARC GERMAIN (YAMAHA) 59:28.60

ENDURO 2

1. SAMULI ARO (KTM) 58:06.35;
2. STEFAN MERRIMAN (YAMAHA) 59:44.65;
3. BJORNE CARLSSON (HUSABERG) 1.00:16.99;
4. VALTTERI SALONEN (HONDA) 1.00:50.68;
5. FABIEN PLANET (KTM) 1.01:21.60

ENDURO 3

1. DAVID KNIGHT (KTM) 57:24.94;
2. MIKA AHOLA (HUSQVARNA) 58:45.72;
3. SEB GUILLAUME (GAS GAS) 59:46.49;
4. ALEX ZANNI (HONDA) 1.00:23.69;
5. XAVIER GALINDO (KTM) 1.00:39.25

ENDURO JUNIOR

1. JACOB STAPLETON (TM) 59:44.70;
2. PAOLO BERNARDI (HONDA) 1.00:59.51;
3. DARYL BOLTER (HUSQVARNA) 1.01:17.62;
4. MARC BOURGEOIS (HUSQVARNA) 1.02:23.76;
5. JEAN-CHARLES GILBERT (KAWASAKI) 1.02:51.20

FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

ENDURO 1

1. IVAN CERVANTES
2. MARC GERMAIN
3. ALESSANDRO BELOMETTI

ENDURO 2

1. SAMULI ARO
2. STEFAN MERRIMAN
3. ALESSANDRO BOTTURI

ENDURO 3

1. DAVID KNIGHT
2. MARKO TARKKALA
3. SEB GUILLAUME

ENDURO JUNIOR

1. CRISTOBAL GUERRERO
2. JACOB STAPLETON
3. DARYL BOLTER



**David Knight:
‘...I need a quicker bike!’**

SCOTT TO BE DONE!

Not content with winning at Enduro, David Knight set out to conquer the world's hardest one-day trial. This is what happened...

The appearance of new World Enduro Champion and ISDE winner David Knight at the Scott Trial last month resulted in a massive turn out of enthusiasts eager to see the ultra-competitive Manxman take on a new challenge. That challenge being to ride the infamous Scott time and observation trial, an event which first ran in 1914, and which with the exception of the War years and Foot & Mouth crises, has run every year since.

To win the Scott, a rider needs to mix speed with good clean rides through the sections, and with a proven record at being fast cross country, combined with having been a British Expert Trials Champion, Knighter was seen as being in with a good chance.

And he certainly didn't disappoint the fans, though his final result was way below his capabilities.

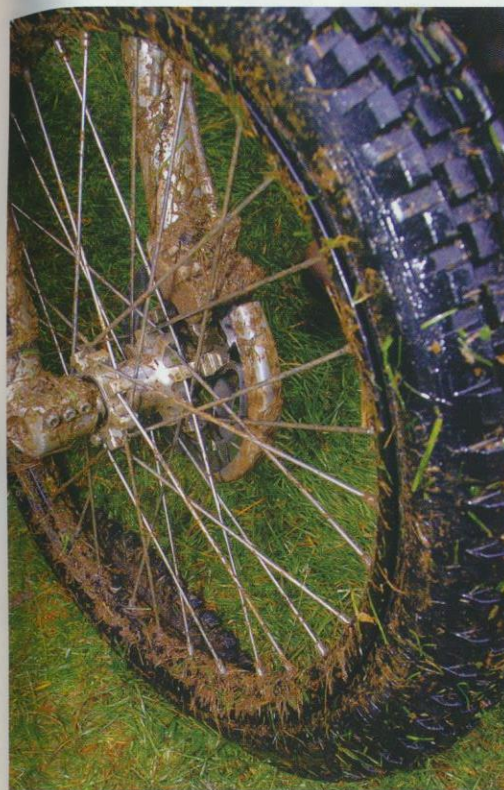
Whilst any suggestions that he might set fastest time or even win the trial at his first

attempt were way off the mark, he kept his fans' hopes alive by hanging with eventual winner Graham Jarvis (Sherco) for half the trial, before collecting a rear wheel puncture about two thirds of the way round the 75 mile, 76 section all off-road course. And then he compounded the problem by puncturing the front tyre about half an hour before the finish. Not one to mess around with

'just make it payable to CASH, David...'



SCOTT TO BE DONE!



repairing punctures, Knight rode on first one flat, then two flats for nearly two hours.

But prior to the start it was all looking good, with a new Nigel Birkett prepared Scorpa ready and waiting for the 9am departure which saw the unleashing of 200 riders at 20sec intervals for their collective punishment.

'I've had enough pressure events this year, this is just a new challenge, something different. I've never seen the Scott Trial before, and have no idea of the course. I'll just give it a go and see what happens. I'll be happy with a finish' said David just half an hour before setting off.

Just five minutes from the start, the trial came to a temporary halt for the final 25 riders who had to be held back for ten minutes as an injured competitor was air-lifted off the course. But then they were off again, and Knighter was amongst those final 25 who were the crème-de-la-creme of the entry.

Through evocative sounding sections like: Cold Knuckles, Underbanks, Rawcroft, Faggergill and Bridge End, Jarvis and Knight were never far apart. 'If I stick with Graham, (six times the Scott winner) I'll know where I should be', said David before the off, and stick with him he did.



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SCOTT TO BE DOWN

At Punchard Steps (about half way round) they were both looking good, but through Whaw Bridge, Black Hills, Tottergill and then the Grouse Moor after the third fuel halt, Jarvis had pulled away when Knight got his rear wheel puncture. I had the kit with me to fix it, but I was almost as quick on it flat as I was when it was inflated, so I pressed on'. Amazingly the Dunlop stayed on the rim and through Goats, just seven sections and six miles from the finish, the Manx ace had a cracking clean on a real tough hazard. And by this time he'd picked up a front flat as well. Rotten Wood is the hardest of the last few sec-

tions and by then, Knighter knew he had been in a classic Scott. Two flat tyres didn't help but he buzzed the Scorpa up the steep and slippery rock gully then headed over the final few fields to Clapgate and then the finish. With the front tyre off the rim and the gently steaming Scorpa dead on its side, Knighter reflected on his day. 'Did you enjoy that?' he was asked, 'Yeah, it was all right' he replied in his classically understated way, 'but you need to know where you are, where you're going and I need a quicker bike. I'll give it another go and see if I can be a bit quicker next time. But that Jarvis,

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SCOTT TO
BE DONE!

he takes some beating round here.'

Jarvis certainly does take some beating in his specialist discipline, but then Knighter's the same.

In the end Graham Jarvis won for a record seventh time with 13 marks on time and 16 on the sections. David Knight was 25th overall with 53 penalties on time and 114 in the sections whilst the fastest rider of all was fourth placed Ian Auster Muhle on zero time penalties and 76 in the sections, taking just 5hrs, 10min, 23secs to finally complete the punishing course.

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What's the Story?

STORY & PIC: MIKE RAPLEY



air-cooled, Villiers' engines with doubtful points ignition. Yet strangely, even though the bikes were probably the best of the day, now, nearly five decades later, the Greeves is not by any means the 'must have' pre-65 trials iron. Of course there are still some cracking examples around, but they are not the first choice of most riders.

Don Smith was a great rider who won many national and club events. He was rarely spotted without his trademark cigarette, though occasionally, as shown in this pic, he tackled a section without a fag in his mouth. He was very much the showman, a bit like Steve Colley is today, and is perhaps best remembered for arriving at the 1964 Scottish Six Days Trial with his Greeves, almost totally chrome plated, strapped to the back of his Ford Zodiac.

And all those years ago, it was the Barbour (or Belstaff) suit that was de-rigueur trials wear - no helmets were required in those days, and the best footwear available was secondhand leather fireman's boots to which studs were added for extra grip.

Trials were all pre-entry back then and most organisers produced programmes for the spectators, who liked to follow the events along the public roads. There were few multi-lap, short course trials in the Sixties, and the sections (which mostly consisted of mud, roots, climbs, streams and flat rocks) were far easier than they are today because the bikes simply weren't capable of tackling giant rock steps and the like. Neither were the riders of the era, who had not (back then) managed to reach the level of skills possessed by today's professional riders.

And finally the spectators. There were always enthusiasts out on Sundays because back then, Sunday opening, huge DIY stores, car boot sales, and multiple sports channels simply did not exist. They travelled to watch the sport in cars and on bikes and some of them remain devoted enthusiasts to this day.

For if you look closely at the photograph, the lad in the bobble cap, aged just 15 or 16 when this picture was taken, is the author of this article, standing with my dad (in the flat cap) who was the inspiration behind my life-long love of trials...

It's fair to say that Spain has dominated the trials market for much of the past three and a half decades. Back in the Seventies it was the Bultaco, Montesa and Ossa brands which ruled the roost, and latterly it's been Gas Gas who've had the upper hand. But before the Spanish invasion took hold (going back about 40-odd years), the best selling trials bike in the UK was British - the eponymous Greeves Scottish.

And of all the different models that came out of the Thundersley factory in Essex, probably the most

successful of them all were the bikes manufactured around 1962/63/64 that sported Greeves' own alloy square-finned barrel, before the tapered finning of the Challenger barrel was introduced.

Club and Centre riders up and down the land rode the blue framed, square barrelled Scottish designated bikes. But undoubtedly one of the most charismatic riders of all was the late Don Smith.

A Londoner by birth, Don was for a good many years, a Greeves factory rider who won the European Trials Championship long before the

World Trials Championship came into existence.

Our picture this month is from the camera of Gordon Francis who has been a trials photographer all his life, and it illustrates better than any other picture you'll see, the Greeves Scottish, the style of section and the garb that the riders and spectators wore all those years ago.

The Greeves is a classic machine, but so different from today's offerings. In those early days riders accepted flat, steel handlebars, leading link, rubber bushed suspension, four-ply tyres and four speed,

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Yamaha DT125, 1987, MoT, rebuilt engine still running-in, new piston/rings/bearings, derestricted, used on-road only, £550 ono. Tel 020 8723 6480 (Middx)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003 model, taxed, 6500 miles, Gadget bashplate, workshop manual, spare c+s, £2800. Tel 01302 768636 (S Yorks)

CCM 404DS, Nov 2003, 53-reg, 1800 miles, large sumpguard, vgc, £2850. Tel 07976 271207 (Cheshire)

KTM 300EXC, 2005, seven months old, 50 hours' use, two new tyres, new c+s, alloy sumpguard, Datatagged, mint cond, £3580. Tel 01535 658933 (W Yorks)

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Gas Gas Pampera, 2002, gentle trail use only, good cond, sell or exchange for mint white XR400 with cash your way. Tel 07816 482696 (Somerset)

Yamaha YZ250, 2003, road reg'd, taxed, lights, hand/frameguards, suspension revalved for trail/enduro, spares included, £2195. Tel 01803 812940 (Devon)

Honda CRF250, 2004, autoclutch plus original, lights, huge amount of extras, 18in wheel available, can email pics, £2800 ono. Tel 07973 254579 (Hants)

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KTM 450EXC, 2004, hardly used, 18 hours' lane use only, complete with unused road kit, all guards, mint cond, £3500 no time-wasters. Tel (mobile) 07870 553840 or 0151 521 0800 (Cheshire)

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Kawasaki Super Sherpa, 1998, MoT, 23500km, small ding in tank, mechanically good, great LDT and trail bike, £1720 ono. Tel 020 7274 4091 (London)

KTM 525EXC, 2003 model, usual extras, sale due to lack of use, vgc, £2995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07766 304482 or 01685 872869 (S Wales)

Honda XR400, 2001, road reg'd, SORN at present, 2000km, indicators, horn, standard bike, little off-road use, like new, £2200 ono. Tel 01923 244651 (Herts)

KTM 450EXC, 2004 bike, FMF tailpipe, clutchsaver, handguards, bashplate, lack of use forces sale, £3200 ono. Tel 01308 426468 (Dorset)

Yamaha TTR250, 2002, 52-reg, blue, under 500 miles, dry road use only, Datatagged, fenderbag, some spares, as new cond, £2795. Tel 01934 834163 (Bristol)

KTM 250EXC, 2004, road reg'd, 41 hours' use, hand/sumpguards, clutchsaver, green lane/rally use, must be seen, £3200 ono. Tel 01423 871991 (N Yorks)

Husqvarna TE410, 1997, T&T, under 6000km, mainly green lane use, £1500 ono. Tel 01702 618567 (Essex)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, green/white, low miles, elec start, full road lights, not used on rough, £995. Tel 01275 332413 (N Somerset)

Yamaha TTR250, 2004, 1600 miles, elec start, knobblies, original used tyres and Renthals bars/grips available, vgc, £2450 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07776 146906 or 01603 259373 (Norfolk)

Husqvarna TE250, 54-reg, 800 miles, elec start, two Husky services, one year's warranty, mirrors/indicators still boxed, good cond, £2850. Tel 07841 827620 (Northants)

Suzuki DR-Z400SY, 2000, T&T, 5500 miles, FSH, Yoshimura graphics, CRD endcan plus original, exc cond, £2195 ono. Tel 07989 965611 (Oxon)

Honda CRF230, August '04, road legal, spare tyres, little use due to back injury, £2150. Tel 01271 812022 (Devon)

Kawasaki KLR250, W-reg, T&T, 3600 miles, FSH, Alphaslot security, original spec, exc cond, £2100. Tel 01752 263920 (Devon)

CCM 404e, 2004, T&T, 1200 miles, maintained regardless of cost, exc cond. Tel (mobile) 07974 798346 or 0191 523 8892 (Co Durham)

Honda XLV750, low miles, SORN'd so no MoT, shaft drive, good cond, big chunky trail bike, bargain at £1100.

Tel Mike (09:00 - 17:00) on 0115 909 8007 (Lincs)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 54-reg, 1500 miles, road use only, Cat 1 alarm fitted, as new cond, £3000 no offers. Tel 01373 463253 (Somerset)

Honda XR250, 1989, red, Renthals, handguards, fair cond, £950 ono. Tel David on 01462 442013 (Herts)

Suzuki DR-Z400SY, 2001, black/silver, T&T, 6000 miles, mainly road use, good cond, £2250 ono. Tel 07989 606889 (Staffs)

KTM 525EXC, 2004, owned from new, 29 hours' use, not raced, all manuals/receipts, sump/handguards, One Ind graphics, fantastic cond, £3750 ono. Tel 01778 426272 (Lincs)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, Y-reg, T&T, legal lights, CRD pipe plus standard, spare plastics, regularly serviced, green lane use, £2800 ono. Tel 07725 633118 (Worcs)

Suzuki RMX250, 1998, MoT, spare front disc/two tyres, reliable, very clean and tidy, £1900. Tel 07752 806972 (Devon)

Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, taxed, regularly serviced, plenty of extras, very reliable bike, exc cond, £3400 ono. Tel 07764 347901 (Cornwall)

Kawasaki KL250, 1979, two classic twin-shock trailies, one complete and in vgc, new forks/shock/stainless exhaust, the other's in boxes, £850. Tel 01803 866490 (Devon)

Honda CRM250, 1994, 10000km, DEP pipe, new c+s/Michelins/rimlocks, barkbusters, lack of use forces sale, £1250 ono. Tel 07840 906692 (Scotland)

Husaberg FE400, 2002, 2000 miles, c/w SM wheels, full set of plastics for off-roading, other extras, mint cond, £2850. Tel 01332 239853 (Derbys)

Honda XR400R, 1999, white, T&T, 4000km, recently serviced, new graphics, hand/sumpguards, good reliable starter, good original cond, £1950 ovno. Tel 07989 852802 (Lancs)

Kawasaki 250 Super Sherpa, 2000, only 6000 miles, new tyres/battery, very smart, could deliver, £1200. Tel 01997 421911 (Scotland)

Honda XR250, reg'd '85, one owner, green lanned only, original cond, £950. Tel 01491 680566 (Berks)

Husqvarna SM450R, 2004, black/blue, 800 miles, good as new, £3500 no offers. Tel 01293 887132 (W Sussex)

Yamaha WR400E, 300 miles on clock, no time to ride, mint cond, call for more info, £2600. Tel 07799 863385 (Beds)

Suzuki DR350SEW, 1998, R-reg, T&T, DEP pipe, plastic tank

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fitted, new battery/clutch, rear suspension serviced, little use lately, £1550 ono. Tel 01380 827130 (Wilts)

Honda XR400, 51-reg, T&T, 3800km, new tyres/c+s, bashplate, brushguards, spurs spares, green laned only, £2100 ono. Tel 01642 724852 (N Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2000, blue, T&T, 3000 miles, Dynojet, Renthals, casesaver, Alphadot, lowered, good cond, delivery possible, £2250. Tel 01366 328589 (Norfolk)

Vertemati S570, 2002, road reg'd, 900km, all Vert' top spec, maintained to highest standard, used as toy, immaculate cond, £3300 ono. Tel 01724 733798 (N Lincs)

Suzuki DR-Z400E K4, reg'd Dec '03, 3000 miles, new c+s, only used for light green laning, job forces sale. Tel (mobile) 07956 864304 or 0114 245 2950 (S Yorks)

Yamaha WR400F, 2002 model, road reg'd, T&T, One Ind graphics, White Bros exhaust, Renthals, sump/handguards, exc cond, £2495. Tel 01443 799026 (Mid Glam)

Honda CRM250 AR, 1998, purple, new MoT, DEP pipe, exc cond, £2000. Tel 07974 573973 (Somerset)

KTM 450EXC, road reg'd, lower than average use, maintained regardless of cost, manuals, good clean and tidy bike, first to see will buy, £2900. Tel 07747 864294 (N Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, light green lane and local clubman use, meticulously maintained, all usual extras, in exc used cond, ring for details, £3250 ono. Tel 01442 397605 (Herts)

Honda CR250RY, 2000 model, never raced, very low usage, brushguards, new tyres, original spares kit/manual, serviced for sale, as new, £2100. Tel 020 7773 1216 or 01438 869026 (Herts)

Kawasaki KDX220R, 2003, road reg'd, road kit fitted, green lane use only, vgc, £2350 ono. Tel (mobile) 07979 700706 or 01905 757950 (Worcs)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, one owner, FMF system, all original parts included, great cond, £2500. Tel (mobile) 07984 169547 or 01977 798411 (W Yorks)

BMW R1150GS, 2001, MoT, garaged, lovely cond, exceptional value, can email pics, priced to sell at £6199. Tel (mobile) 07736 041477 or 0118 947 9523 (Berks)

KTM 200EXC, 2002, T&T, new tyres, vgc, selling due to lack of use. Tel (mobile) 07985 468826 or 01902 665471 (W Mids)

KTM 950 Adventure, 53-reg, silver, 7000 miles, engine bars and pannier frames, a genuine clean bike, £5000. Tel (mobile) 07947 784945 or 01258 861266 (Dorset)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, T&T, spare set of Talons, new sprockets, spare battery, paddock stand, levers, 'plugs, toolset, plastics, indicator kit, and loads of wee bits and pieces, £2800. Tel 01241 872500 or 01241 870751 (Scotland)

KTM 525EXC, 2003, 03-reg, one owner, very well maintained, new plastics/sticker kit/seatcover, lots of extra bits, vgc, £3300 ono Tel 07909 535475 (Kent)

Honda CRM250 mkII, H-reg, T&T, Mugen pipe, stainless guards, the ultimate trailie, good cond, £900. Tel 07989 711884 (Devon)

Sukuki PE175, 1984, not road reg'd, good cond, £550 ono. Tel (mobile) 07767 760367 or 01242 672667 (Gloucs)

Honda XR250R, 2003, Honda UK dealer-supplied bike, road reg'd, road legal, only 1800 miles, Polisport brushguards, £2695 ono. Tel (mobile) 07799 011296 or 01477 535719 (Cheshire)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, road reg'd, taxed, elec start, optional D3 lowering kit - ideal for shorter rider, other than that totally original, £3095. Tel (mobile) 07990 897867 or 01539 729907 (Cumbria)

Kawasaki KXL300R, 1999, V-reg, MoT, only 2100 miles, Datatag, excellent tyres/c+s, oil/filter/plug 25 miles ago, good clean cond, lack of use forces sale, £1995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07786 112877 or 01706 210883 (Lancs)

KTM 200EXC, 2002, T&T, well maintained, FMF pipe, sump/handguards, gripper seatcover, very tidy, genuine sale, £2250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07990 518404 or 01527 502382 (Worcs)

Yamaha Serow, 1989, elec start, new c+s/clutch/front disc/rear tyre, £750. Tel 020 8398 5904 (Surrey)

KTM 525EXC, 03-reg, trail use by mature owner, usual extras, HD tubes, recent c+s, all manuals, spares, exc well maintained cond, first to see will buy, £3495 ono. Tel 01925 290079 (Cheshire)

CCM 404e, 04-reg, 450 miles, one owner, spare exhaust, sump-guard, handguards, exc green lane bike, exc cond, £2950 ono. Tel 07786 916526 (W Yorks)

Yamaha YZ250, 2005, alloy frame, road reg'd, less than 25 hours' use, recent rings, superb bike, £2950 ovo or may p/x cheap green laner under £750. Tel (mobile) 07876 790369 or 01789 751643 (Warks)

KTM 640 Adventure, one year old, 4000 miles, never been off-road, many extras inc GPS, panniers etc, immaculate cond, £5259 no offers. Tel (mobile) 07815 856513 or 01299 266504 (Worcs)

Gilera RC600, red, cracking bike in good condition, too many toys forces sale, £1000. Tel Will on 07801 029848 (Northants)

Gas Gas EC200, 2003, T&T, CRD bashplate/frameguards, handguards, Trailtech, FMF Gnarly, powervalve box, spares, very clean and very well maintained, £2400 ono. Tel 01344 776057 (Berks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2002, T&T, 2700 miles, one owner, alloy bars, brushguards, CRD exhaust/sump/frameguards, spares, immaculate, £2150. Tel (mobile) 07971 193249 or 02920 887705 (Caerphilly)

KTM 450EXC Factory Replica, 2005, five months old, ten hours' use, bought for my 50th, mint cond, £4350 ono. Tel 01623 861345 (Notts)

Suzuki DR125, 2001, T&T, 3000 miles, little use, as new cond, £1350. Tel 01491 680566 (Berks)

Honda CRM250 mkII, 1993, K-reg, MoT, 16000km, DEP system, very reliable, exc original cond, photos available, £1200. Tel 01423 545895 (N Yorks)

CCM 644DS, 03-reg, T&T, 5600 miles, off-road wheels included, Acerbis handguards, £3300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07815 042497 or 020 8508 9077 (London)

Honda TLM220R, 1991, road reg'd, 3500km, vgc, £1100 ono. Tel 07814 092064 (Notts)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, yellow, 3200 miles, been off-road six times, Acerbis handguards etc, plus original kit, road tyres etc, vgc, £2200. Tel 07971 182339 (Kent)

Honda SL230, 2003, silver, low seat height, elec start, Honda dealer maintained/serviced, discs front and rear, good cond, £1895. Tel 01600 772400 (Monmouth)

Honda XR250R, 2003, 4500 miles, taxed, new plastics/Rentals, Comp3s, bulletproof green laner, £2300. Tel 07970 270985 (Kent)

Kawasaki KXL300R, 2003, 1300 miles, one owner, Renthals, frame/handguards, bashplate, KX rear fender, LED rear light, some spares, vgc, £2500. Tel 07810 601647 (Lancs)

Yamaha WR250F, 2004 model, 05-reg, UK bike, taxed, elec start, green lane use as new, £3795 ono. Tel (mobile) 07968 766392 or 01527 544125 (Worcs)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, new piston/clutch/bearings/tyres/c+s, full guards, DEP pipe, green lanes only, mint cond, £2000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07941 903691 or 01925 724709 (Cheshire)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, 1994, L-reg, purple/white, 8000km, import with big headlight, brushguards, top-end rebuilt 150km ago, new battery, vgc, any view, £1450 obo. Tel 07966 443425 (Gwent)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1992, J-reg, well maintained, recent tyres/cables/filters etc, £995 ono. Tel 0161 224 2597 (S Yorks)

KTM 450EXC, 03-reg, hand/sump/clutchguards, spares, well maintained, good cond, £2950. Tel 01761 490050 (Bristol)

KTM 525EXC, 2003, low miles, many extras, very well maintained, exc cond, looking for new bike, £3300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07870 303862 or 01538 755492 (Staffs)

Husqvarna TE250, 2004 model, light green lane use only, hand/frame/forkguards, spare plastics, immaculate cond, £3250 ono. Tel 07747 015778 (Hants)

KTM 625SX, 2004, only 130 dry road miles, absolutely mint, quick sale, £3500. Tel (mobile) 07717 297836 or 01305 821745 (Dorset)

Honda CRM250 mkII, one owner since imported in 1996, full history, fastidiously maintained, Renthals, bashplate, wide pegs,

Goodridge hoses, FMF pipes plus originals, £1395.

Tel 01903 246164 (Sussex)

Suzuki DR-Z400SM, 2005, DEP exhaust with spare, Acerbis long-range tank not fitted, as new bike, £3800 ono.

Tel (mobile) 07985 110842 or 01708 402214 (Essex)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, Dec '04, 1000 miles, road legal, £500 worth of extras, exc cond, £3100 or poss p/x. Tel (mobile) 07989 913655 or 01977 620990 (Yorks)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, MoT, FMF system, handguards, vgc, £2000 ono. Tel (mobile) 07835 946600 or 01946 861135 (Cumbria)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, DEP pipe, green lane use only standard bike, plastics scruffy hence £1795 ono. Tel 01732 874436 (Kent)

Gas Gas EC400FSE, 2002, MoT, little use last two years, easy to ride, very tidy, £1800 ono. Tel 01454 228932 (Gloucs)

Yamaha XT600 Tenere, 3AJ model, import, T&T, little use, vgc, £995 ono. Tel 01246 209099 (Derbys)

Honda CRF450R, 2003, no competition use, light use only, new c+s, Fatbars, hand/sumpguards, spares kit, lovely cond, £2700. Tel 07929 841531 (Essex)

Honda CR250, 1990, red, new barrel/piston/c+s, tyres like new, exc cond, £795 ono. Tel 01942 700508 (Lancs)

Gas Gas TXT249, 1999, new plastics/c+s/bars/brakes/levers etc, some spares, good cond, £1200 ono. Tel 07774 205602 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KXL650, 1994, MoT, low miles, twin headlight, new tyres, many new parts, Remus silencer, well maintained, all original parts kept, tidy bike, £1500 ono. Tel 0116 2301036 (Leicestershire)

KTM 400EXC, 2003, Six Days model, new wheel bearings/tyres/brake pads etc, good cond, please ring for more info, £2900. Tel (mobile) 07786 934363 or 01935 881088 (Somerset)

Honda XR400R Baja, 1999, T&T, twin headlight, complete with all original parts, great cond, reluctant sale, £1900. Tel 07801 029848 (Northants)

Yamaha TTR250R, 1993, T&T, low miles, dual start, new battery, Trailtech speedo, good cond, £1100 ono. Tel (mobile) 07754 453883 or 01757 288388 (E Yorks)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 2002 model, T&T, regularly serviced, loads of extras, some spares, green lane use only, exc cond. Tel 07986 066088 (Herts)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2002, MoT, FMF Q-pipe, Renthals, bashplate, gold Talon/black Morad SM wheels with 320mm wave disc, plus off-road wheels, tired scuffed plastics, £2300. Tel 01278 686335 (Somerset)

Gas Gas Pampera, 2004, well maintained, green lane use only, vgc, £2250 ono. Tel 07736 314645 (Yorks)

Honda XLR250 Baja, 1993, K-reg, blue/white, MoT, 11500km, twin headlight, good tyres, commuter use only, vgc, road bike forces sale, £1250. Tel Brian on 07957 613523 (London)

Suzuki DR-Z400SY, 2000, W-reg, T&T, FSH, Yoshimura graphics, CRD can plus original, usual extras, £1995 ono. Tel 07989 965611 (Oxon)

KTM 200EXC, 2003, road reg'd, little use, sumpguard, FMF silencer, good reliable bike, good cond, £2300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07977 210879 or 01246 231723 (Derbys)

Honda XR400R, 2003, taxed, 2000km, hardly used, many extras, 'guards, stand etc, exc cond, must be seen, £2350 ono. Tel 01543 416692 (Staffs)

Honda XR250S, 1995, T&T, elec start, good mechanical order with good tyres/chain, £1500 ono. Tel 01628 474777 (Bucks)

Honda XR650R, 2001, Y-reg, T&T, 5100km, new c+s/tyres, regular oil changes, good cond, £2395 ono. Tel 07815 500261 (Kent)

Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2003, blue, only 1200km, one owner, o-ring chain, Renthals, hand/sumpguards, immaculate, £1950. Tel 01732 847047 (Kent)

KTM 400EXC, 2005, new in August '05, road reg'd, ridden once, race kit, showroom cond, £4100. Tel 07770 801711 (Lincs)

KTM 125EXC, 2000, X-reg, MoT, 1000 miles, one previous owner, new parts fitted exc cond, £1850 ono. Tel 01765 640662 (N Yorks)

KTM 125EXC, 2004, road reg'd, only 400 miles, immaculate cond, £3250. Tel Steve on (mobile) 07775 775041 or 01438 869432 (Herts)

Gas Gas TXT Rookie 70cc trials, under two years old, only three tankfuls of petrol used, six-speed, discs, hydraulic clutch, immaculate, £2100. Tel (mobile) 07971 193249 or 02920 887705 (Caerphilly)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, CRD sump/frameguards, original road

kit, YZ-F exhaust, £2800 ono. Tel 07791 105333 (Gloucs)

Kawasaki KDX220R, 2003, the ultimate KDX, taxed, USD forks, re-jetted, YZ silencer, handguards, two events only, the best available, £2500. Tel 01934 627648 (Somerset)

KTM 400EXC, 2002, one owner, green lane use, steering damper, sumpguard, £2500. Tel 01953 883735 (Norfolk)

Gas Gas EC200, 2002, very little use, handguards plus other extras, original cond, best available, £2200. Tel 01555 895555 (Scotland)

Yamaha WR250F, 2001 model, Works Connection frameguards, very little use, some spares, exc cond, ring for details, £2100 ono. Tel 07790 257055 (Notts)

KTM 250EXC 4T, 2004 model, 53-reg, 600 miles, stored for one year, road/little green lane use, usual extras/spares, as new cond, £3150. Tel 02392 632418 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2001, T&T, road legal, new c+s/pads/battery, reliable, good cond, £1900 ono. Tel 01226 716999 (S Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400S, 2003, yellow, 2200 miles, green lane use only, new tyres, Acerbis handguards, plus original road kit, vgc, £2350. Tel 07810 770762 (Suffolk)

Honda XR650R, 2003 model, 3000km, green lane use, twin headlights, new tyres, brushguards, original parts, requires registration, imported, £3150 ono. Tel 01933 275691 (Northants)

KTM 525EXC, 2003 model, UK bike, MoT, one owner, well maintained, trail use only, new c+s, plus extras, exc cond, £3250. Tel (mobile) 07791 080763 or 01332 741415 (Derbys)

Yamaha WR250F, 2003, road reg'd, Rental Twinwalls, CRD frame/sumpguards, light use only, vgc, £3300 ono. Tel (mobile) 07976 316612 or 01394 673330 (Suffolk)

Yamaha XT600E, H-reg, T&T, stainless wheels/exhaust, road use only, well maintained, vgc, £1250. Tel 07845 154775 (Essex)

Husqvarna WR250, 2004, taxed, recent piston/engine service, new seat cover, handguards, injury forces sale, £3000 ono. Tel 07966 466156 (W Mids)

KTM 540SX, 1999, T-reg, T&T, well maintained, little used, trail/road use, vgc, can send pics, £1875. Tel 07947 867124 (Staffs)

Yamaha DT250, 1977, P-reg, bright yellow, 17000km, recent rebuild, fantastic cond for year, no time to play forces sale, £1200 ono. Tel 01993 882013 (Oxon)

Yamaha YZ450F, 03-reg, Fatbars, hi-rise clamps, Hot Wheels graphics, hardly used and never on-road, mint, £2300. Tel 01708 526410 (Essex)

BSU sidacar, exc MX engine, two sets of Talons, full spares kit, manual etc, exc mechanical cond, ready to go, trailer available, £2500 re-advertised due to dreamers. Tel (mobile) 07862 247887 or 01242 519500 (Gloucs)

Honda XR400R, 52-reg, only 2325km, never raced, just light green lane use by beginner, fantastic cond, emigrating so need to sell, £2995 ono. Tel (mobile) 07990 665120 or 01494 636621 (Bucks)

Garage clearance, Honda XR600, 1995, £1000. Honda XLR125, 1997, £650. Gas Gas Pampera, 2002, £1650. Tel (mobile) 07771 511506 or 01733 380490 (Camps)

Kawasaki KDX220R, 2003, used twice in past 18 months, off-road use only, FMF exhaust, full spares kit, £2200 ono. Tel 07866 573842 (Northants)

KTM 450EXC, 03-reg, T&T, hand/sumpguards, new graphics, regularly serviced, fun use only, £3200 ono. Tel (after 6pm) 01430 441960 (E Yorks)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2004, full CRD exhaust, frame/sumpguards, WRP bars/handguards, this bike is still like new, £3000 ono. Tel 01189 404921 (Berks)

KTM 450EXC, 2004 model, 900 miles, sump/hand/clutchguards, some spares, vgc, £3850 ono. Tel 01268 691648 (Essex)

Yamaha YZ125, 2004 model, 05-reg, vgc, £2300 ono. Tel 01962 777526 (Hants)

Suzuki DR-Z400E, Nov 2004, elec start, Alphadot, regularly serviced, new tyre/plastics, sump/brushguards, Renthals, risers, green lane use only, £2800 ono. Tel 01730 810707 (W Sussex)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1998, R-reg, standard bike in exc cond, £1250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07849 065718 or 01923 237290 (Herts)

Gas Gas EC250, T&T, new c+s/wheelbearings, FMF front pipe, reliable clean bike. Tel 01522 794969 (Lincs)

Honda XR400R, 2002, 52-reg, only 1400km on the clock, stock

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trim, Acerbis' guards, as clean as they come, bargain at £2400. Tel 01626 336821 (Devon)

BMW F650GS Dakar, 54-reg, 5200 miles, 12 months warranty, FBMW5H, top-box, heated grips, mint cond, £4350 ono. Tel 07803 275265 (S Wales)

KTM 200EXC, 2002, T&T, full FME, carbon protector, Fatbars, lots of goodies, £2000. Tel (mobile) 07962 107774 or 01580 200782 (E Sussex)

Honda XR400, 2002, elec start, T&T, only 3000km, very reliable and easy to maintain, sound machine. Tel (mobile) 07970 162087 or 01633 275177 (Gwent)

KTM 300EXC, 2005, reg'd, taxed, FME, mousses, case saver, handguards, revalved suspension, recent tyres/+s, immaculate, first to see will buy, £3500 ono. Tel (mobile) 07944 203962 or 01449 720992 (Suffolk)

Yamaha Serow, 1989, F-reg, T&T, 13500km, girl owner, good condition, reliable trailie, good bike, £1300 ono. Tel 07976 353913 (S Yorks)

Honda XR250, 1990, T&T, Renthals, barkbusters, sumpguard, x-ring chain, tankcover, exc bike, £850. Tel 01663 741191 (Derbys)

Yamaha WR250F, 2004, road reg'd, hardly used, FMF Q-pipe, bashplate, Fatbars, handguards, Michelins, Ohlins shock, baby forces sale, £3495 ono. Tel 07973 628270 (Northants)

Suzuki DR350S, 1992, blue/white, T&T, enduro trim, recent engine rebuild, 17L tank, lots of extras, tidy bike, £1000 ono. Tel 07887 703979 (Bucks)

Honda CRF450R, 2003, road reg'd, lighting kit, barkbusters, sumpguard, FMF Q-pipe, new plastics/tyres/c+s, £2800 ono. Tel (mobile) 07967 585223 or 01543 274358 (Staffs)

Husqvarna WR250, 2004, reg'd, mid-fifties rider, recent piston, new tyres, had an easy life, never abused, £2600. Tel 01988 840666 (SW Scotland)

Honda XL500R, MoT, complete rebuild, receipts, manuals, Micron exhaust, exc cond, £925. Tel 01993 823326 (Oxon)

Husaberg FE380 Force, ltd edition model, two months old, billet triple clamps, black DID rims, as new, two-stroke forces sale, £4350. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1995, T&T, very reliable, green lane use only, DEP front pipe, Excel rims, forks refurbished, £1750 ono. Tel 07891 154590 (Surrey)

Honda CRF250R, 2004, only ridden twice this year, less than 20 hours' total use, Endurotech suspension, Acerbis lights/handguards, full spares kit, immaculate cond, £2600 or swap for Gas Gas 300 Pro. Tel (mobile) 07775 906362 or 01449 677406 (Suffolk)

Suzuki 125S2 trail bike, 1983, MoT, fully restored, good learner-legal bike, lots of new parts, vgc, £495. Tel (mobile) 07887 943889 or 01625 431310 (Cheshire)

Two overland enduro bikes, Suzuki Desert DR800, alloy panniers, dry-stored past six years, £1500. Yamaha XT600Z Tenere, 1989, dry-stored over 2 years, £1250 or take both for £2000. Both elec start/only two owners, ring for info. Tel 01491 578692 (Oxon)

KTM 200EXC (GS), 2002, autolube, road reg'd, plenty of extras, JD jetting kit, religiously maintained, loads spent, superb cond, delivery possible. Tel Matt on 07788 144445 (London)

Beta 250 Techno trials bike, with two-bike trailer, £1200 or will split. Tel 01455 616630 (Leics)

Honda CRM250 mkIII, M-reg, red/white/purple, T&T, 9300km, good cond, selling due to lack of use, £1700 ono. Tel 01473 414159 (Suffolk)

Husqvarna WR125, 2003 model, 1500 miles, light off-road use only, perfect cond, £2500 ono. Tel 02380 402315 (Hants)

Husqvarna SM610S, W-reg, MoT, maintained regardless of cost, just serviced, new fork oil/front tyre, exc cond, £2500 ono. Tel 01484 350274 (W Yorks)

Honda XR250RK, 1992, occasional green lane use over last eight years, good standard cond with sensible mods, Renthals, brushguards, £1250 ono. Tel 01252 710143 (Surrey)

Yamaha Serow, 1990, white/green, T&T, dual start, very reliable, not off-roaded. Tel (after 6pm) 01252 322733 (Hants)

BMW GS900, looks like 1970s ISDE enduro bike, swap for 125cc trail bike, phone for full details. Tel 0161 456 5701 (Cheshire)

Kawasaki KLX300R, 2002, reg'd 2003, 1200 miles, standard bike, regularly maintained, new tyres, plus road tyres, good cond, £2500 ono. Tel 01635 253338 (Hants)

Honda XR400R, July 2002, T&T, 2400km, road use only, mint cond, £2850 ono. Tel 01394 460803 (Suffolk)

KTM 525EXC, road reg'd, fully sorted, gold Talons, company director owned from new, every conceivable extra plus original parts, £4500. Tel 01945 465534 (Cams)

Husqvarna TE250, 2004, taxed, one owner, dealer serviced, standard cond, £3000 ono. Tel 07739 633919 (E Sussex)

Yamaha TTR600, 2004, only 850 miles on the clock, still under warranty, never been off-road, this bike is absolutely immaculate, £3000 ono. Tel 01559 384241 (Carmarthen)

Gas Gas TXT270, 1998, new tyres, clean bike, some new parts, good runner, £895 ono. Tel 0161 456 5701 (Cheshire)

Yamaha TT600, 1987, MoT, good cond, £1000 ono. Tel Dean on (mobile) 07767 703083 or 01754 820832 (Lincs)

Husaberg FE400, 2002, 4500km, mainly used for green laning, well maintained, good cond, £2000 negotiable. Tel (mobile) 07810 212193 or 020 7840 3924 (London)

WANTED

Wanted swap your KTM/Suzuki/CCM 400 for my 1997 Triumph 595, plus extras, whole package worth about £3000. Tel 01284 749349 (Suffolk)

Wanted rear shock for Yamaha TT600, 1985-89 model. Tel 01229 587853 (Cumbria)

Wanted all parts for Yamaha WR450F, disc cover, handguards, pipe, radguards, anything considered. Tel 01652 658719 (N Lincs)

Wanted two-stroke enduro bike in p/x for my Kawasaki ZX6R, 1998, value £1800, anything considered. Tel 01603 754679 (Northfolk)

Wanted supermoto wheels to fit Honda XR250/400, prefer with discs/spacers etc. Also standard XR250 silencer for 1995 model. Tel 01455 822187 (Leics)

Wanted XR wheels, CRM USD forks and yokes. Tel 01455 822187 (Leics)

Wanted Standard or aftermarket tailpipe for Gas Gas EC250, in good cond please. Tel 01235 523193 (Oxon)

Wanted end can for 2004 Yamaha WR450F, aftermarket or from 2005 bike. Tel 01524 831168 (Lancs)

Wanted tool chest, with or without tools, would prefer it with ball bearing drawers, anything considered. Tel 07784 033970 (Cumbria)

Wanted KTM twin-shock parts, 1982 495/250, 125 mono and LC500, anything considered. Also Maico, SWM, Gori, Cagiva, MX or enduro. Tel 01243 513243 (W Sussex)

Wanted parts for 1990-91 Husqvarna 250, exhaust, r/h rad scoop, sidepanels, outer clutch cover and clutch. Parts from other years or Cagiva may fit. Tel 01243 513243 (W Sussex)

Wanted 12/13L tank for 1998 YZ250, complete if possible. Tel (mobile) 07771 858793 or 01833 690171 (Co Durham)

Wanted KTM 400EXC or 450EXC, must be in great cond, will pay up to £2600. Tel (mobile) 07974 656535 or 0117 940 9510 (Bristol)

Wanted parts for Suzuki DR350S, big-bore kit, carb, camshaft, aftermarket rear shock. Also wanted carb for Yamaha WR450F. Tel 07944 775682 (Tyne & Wear)

Wanted exhaust system for Yamaha WR200, FME, DEP etc, WHY. Tel 01929 553175 (Dorset)

Wanted original handguards and r/h sidepanel for '86 XT600 Tenere, in blue. Tel Jon on 077020 11608 (Cheshire)

Wanted first off-road bike, looking for an XR400R or a CRM, must be in good nick and not too far away from Manchester so I can come and view, up to £1500 for the right bike. Tel 07973 627273 (Lancs)

Wanted for DR-Z400E, exhaust header pipe, consider aftermarket

part. Also wanted Keihin carb. Tel 01943 879299 (W Yorks)

SPARES

Michelin mousses, 21in front and 19in rear, not used, £90 ovno. Tel 07970 485504 (Devon)

Clarke 12L tank to fit 2002-05 YZ250, £145. FMF Gnarly pipe, £95. FMF Q-silencer, £85. Both to fit YZ250 2T, exc cond. Tel 01803 812940 (Devon)

15in rear wheel to suit 2004 Honda CRF, Talon hub, Excel rim, three months old, £175 ono. Tel 07973 254579 (Hants)

Quill stainless can and Y-pipe to fit BMW 1150GS, perfect cond, £250. Tel 01873 880549 (Gwent)

Remus exhaust system to fit BMW 1200GS. Also Touratech beak and bar brace, as new, all less than 2000 miles, £480 the lot. Tel 07802 925609 (Tyne & Wear)

Supermoto wheels to fit DR-Z400, gold Morads, discs, sprocket, chain, tyres, as new cond, genuine reason for sale, cost £850, sell for £450 ono. Tel 07799 532737 (Gwent)

FP race exhaust system to fit Husaberg FE650, as new cond. Tel 01430 449313 (E Yorks)

Single-bike trailer, lights, spare wheel, new tyres/bearings, very light, good cond, £125 ono. Tel 01455 822187 (Leics)

Breaking DR650/350, ring for details. KMX, DR350, DR650 manuals. Baglux harness for Africa Twin, £25. Tel 01446 721578 (Glamorgan)

KTM adjustable triple clamps, brand new, only used once, have new bike hence sale, £185 ono. Tel 07909 535475 (Kent)

Riding gear and tools for sale, due to retirement, two helmets, boots, three pairs of gloves, body armour, waterproof jacket/trousers, huge gearbag, call for details & sensible prices, can email pics. Tel (mobile) 07780 665690 or 01256 861759 (Hants)

KTM 2003 enduro wheels, front also fits earlier models, black rims, spacers, good discs/tyres/sprocket, exc cond, £350. Tel (mobile) 07990 518404 or 01527 502382 (Worcs)

Hebo hydraulic clutch, brand new in box, never fitted, model no HR8900121L, cost £119.50, accept £90 ovno. Tel 01246 209273 (Derbys)

Acerbis universal front discguard, white, with selection of fixings, brand new, unused, £12. Tel 00 42 366 306 3200 (Kent)

V-Force reed block for KTM 125/200, £50. Legal rear light and carrier, £20. Indicator set, £10. Bar pad, £5. All new, to fit 2000-04 models. Also KLX front fender, black, £10. Tel 0191 262 7918 (Tyne & Wear)

Front pipe for Gas Gas Pampa, new, £60. Levers, new, £15. Front pads, new, £10. Wheel rims, used, no dints, £40. Tel 01207 542767 (Tyne & Wear)

Motorcycle magazines, job lot, 52 copies off TBM, full set of On Two Wheels, VMX maintenance and repair magazines, assorted mags, XR400 book, new goggles, £20. Tel 07980 434210 (Gwent)

Motorcycle carrier, connects to tow bar, easy telescopic loading, takes any motorcycle up to 500kg, brilliant, £120 ovno. Tel 01329 662478 (Hants)

Yamaha DT250MX spares, many new and used parts. Tel 0161 224 2597 (S Yorks)

KTM twin-shock owners I'm thinking of getting MX sidepanels and enduro rear mudguards made, any interest please ring Robin on (mobile) 07751 772203 or 01243 513243 (W Sussex)

Bike rack, fits onto car tow bar, adjustable, suitable for trials bikes, complete with light board, £35 buyer collects. Tel 0161 755 3256 (Manchester)

KBC helmet, vgc, £30. Axo boots, black, size 9, £50. Scott jacket, vgc, £30. Sinisalo MX pants, 34in waist, vgc, £30. Tel 01246 209099 (Derbys)

Rekluse semi-auto clutch to fit 2003 Gas EC300, will fit other models, ten hours' use, vgc, call for more details, £225 ono. Tel 01603 712470 (Norfolk)

Enduro kit to fit 1998 Suzuki RM125, Talon 18in wheel with disc etc, used once, complete unused lighting kit, factory exhaust system, offers. Tel 01252 312841 (Surrey)

Husaberg parts, sumpguard, clutchcase saver, air filter, front spindle puller, Pro Carbon exhaust guard, as new, please ring for prices. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)

Acerbis 20L fuel tank, white, with taps, caps and brackets, £70. Tel 01603 741970 (Norfolk)

Supermoto wheels to fit KTM, gold Talon hubs, black rims, wave discs, sprocket, tyres, used twice, mint condition. Tel (mobile) 07787 306984 or 01492 583378 (Conwy)

Rad panels for 2004 Gas EC300, brand new in wrapper, £30. Tel (mobile) 07771 858793 or 01833 690171 (Co Durham)

Brake and clutch lever set for Gas EC300, says 2000-02 on packet but apparently fits up to '04 models, £10 inc postage. Tel (mobile) 07771 858793 or 01833 690171 (Co Durham)

Honda XL500 rolling chassis, 1990, V5, re-covered seat etc, good order, £250. Ceriani 35mm forks, £80. Suzuki SP370/400 engine spares, please enquire. Tel 01245 353297 (Essex)

KTM tailpipe to fit 2001-02 Yamaha WR250F, vgc, £50. Tel (mobile) 07779 372919 or 01793 876339 (Wilts)

BMW GS Rallye gloves, size medium, new and unworn, £20. Also BMW Motorradd club jacket, black/blue, size small/38in, new, £80. Tel 07981 791263 (W Yorks)

BMW Rallye II enduro suit, grey/black, size 40in chest/32in waist, brand new and unworn, £350. Also GS1 boots, size43, £90. Tel 07981 791263 (W Yorks)

Riding kit, Alpinestars Tech boots, size 11. Knox armour suit, XXL. KBC TK-X helmet, yellow, size XL. Thor gloves, XL. Fly Moto knee protectors. Oakley goggles. All unmarked, £200 or make me an offer. Tel (mobile) 07990 665120 or 01494 636621 (Bucks)

Honda CRM mkII parts, swingarm, brakes, loom, pipes, clutch parts, two gearboxes, plus lots of other bits and bobs, sell as whole, offers. Tel 07712 778558 (Bristol)

Supermoto wheels to fit KTM 450, silver Talon hubs, black rims, 5in rear, wave discs, Goldspeed tyres, crash bobbins, small fender, good cond, £675 ono. Tel 01268 691648 (Essex)

Prexpport boots, black, size six, only used twice, ideal for trail or road use, £30. Tel 01452 520595 (Gloucs)

Yamaha Serow engine unit, 1997, little used, £400. Honda SL125 complete bottom-end, good cond, £45. Tel 01245 353297 (Essex)

Parts for Suzuki DR350, CRD stainless pipe, £90. Acerbis plastic tank, £30. Pair of trail wheels with cush-drive rear, discs etc, £200. Tel 07796 853969 (Lancs)

Laser Prodro exhaust for Suzuki DR650, stainless steel, silencer and intermediate pipe, part no SP42, good cond, can email pics, £120 plus £8.50 p&p. Tel 01462 456120 (Herts)

Leo Vince silencer and link pipe for Yamaha WR450F, baffles, FIM legal, good cond, with Dynojet kit, £175. Tel 07973 834155 (W Yorks)

Sumpguard for Suzuki DR350, 3mm aircraft-grade alloy, £25 inc p&p. Tel 01935 863684 (Somerset)

Supermoto Magazine issues 1-23, in mint cond, £120 will not split. Tel 01832 734146 (Northants)

G-Force stainless twin exhaust system to fit KTM Duke II not for road use, £130. Tel 01832 734146 (Northants)

FMF Q-pipe Powerbomb header for Yamaha WR250F, £180. Also XR400 parts. Tel (mobile) 07837 550939 or 01538 371656 (Staffs)

Acerbis 14L tank to fit KLX250/300, as new, cost £199, accept £75 plus postage. Tel 01229 889109 (Cumbria)

Yamaha XT600 engine spares, mainly for kickstart model, most parts available, a few other bits. Tel Dean on (mobile) 07767 703083 or 01754 820832 (Lincs)

Budget brake upgrade or SM conversion, Nissin CBR600 twin-pot caliper with recent pistons/seals/EBC HH pads, a few scuffs, braided hose, Brembo master cylinder, 320mm floating disc, 6-bolt Honda CR fitment, £110 plus courier. Tel James at TBM on 020 8840 4760 (London)

STOLEN

Stolen Yamaha WR400E, 2002 model, reg PN03 OOH, frame no H309E0016238, chassis no CH04W0013873, 'Behind Bars' stickers on fork legs, rad shrouds and swingarm, stolen from Northamptonshire area. Tel 07962 319802 (Northants)

STOLEN

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