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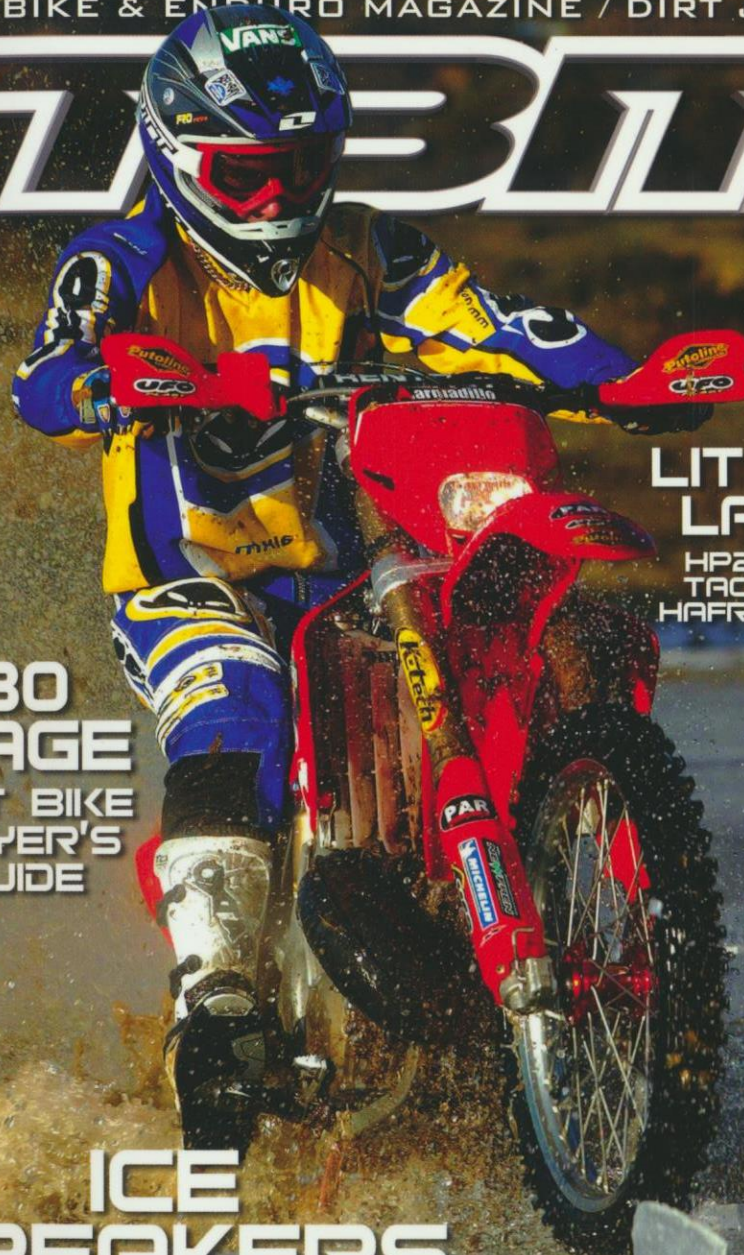
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EDITORIAL

Unreliable Memoirs...

The beginning of the year is the time when traditionally I begin planning out all the events I'm going to be riding in the coming season. I love doing this because it always reminds me of all the myriad events I've enjoyed in the past and makes me think about how much I'm looking forward to going back and riding them again.

For instance there was the time I schlepped over to mid Wales one chilly February for the Snow Run Enduro. Traditionally this early-season timecard enduro takes place in frosty conditions (hence the name), but not this particular year. Oh no. This special year had the distinction of being the wettest spring on record. Oh great. Cold and wet...

I knew things were going to be interesting when on the way over to the enduro we got turned back (in our van) on the main A40 trunk road because it was under four-foot of water. Somehow we managed to find a way through and arrived at the event to find that it was running on the A-schedule (the faster time) because the organisers didn't think it would be as slippery as normal due to the lack of snow on the lower ground!

Columnist Chris and I were both riding and we got ourselves kitted up and had gone no more than about 20m when my bike fluffed a plug. Oh great. It did another plug about an hour later and my last spare one went not long after that.

By the time I came round for the end of the first lap (of two) the special test looked like it had seen an accident between two lorries: one carrying wet cement and the other containing gravy granules!

Chris did the sensible thing and jacked it in after the first 50 mile lap, but I soldiered on for the full six hours of torture only to find that by the time I came around again the special test had more or less been swept away by a Taff tsunami. In fact it was so wet that I was almost thankful that no sooner had I crossed the start line of the final special test than my bike chose that particular moment to fluff its very last spark plug. Ah happy days.

Then there was the immortal Welsh Two Day Enduro sometime back in the late 1990s when on the final test on the final day (run in bright sunshine I might add) I decided to end my event with a final flourish by wheeling across the finishing line of the special test which was located just after the top of a steep and slippery climb.

Well it might've been okay had I been any good at wheelies, but in my haste to impress the sizeable crowd who had gathered round to watch some of the more able riders tear through the test, I gave it a bit too much of a handful. The net result of which was that the bike flipped at the top of the hill sending me all the way back down the climb on my backside. I'm sure I don't have to describe to you the roaring laughter and thunderous applause which greeted my arrival (on foot) at the top of the hill once I'd managed to clamber my way back up... At the third attempt.

Then of course there was the H&H enduro run on the hottest day of the year (I got a puncture and just about keeled over in the heat due to the extra effort of riding a bike with a flat tyre). Then there was the rally I rode where I negotiated one sweeping 40mph left-hander... at about 70mph - straight off the edge. And not long after that, straight into the St John ambulance.

Of course how can I forget the time we'd arranged to go trail riding in the Peak District with an XR400, DR-Z and 400EXC which necessitated a 4am start in order to pick up one of the test bikes from Manchester beforehand. Having driven for seven hours we finally arrived at our destination (two hours late for our guide) only to spend a further two fruitless hours trying to get the XR400 to start - despite the fact that just a few short hours ago it had been happily idling away at the dealers we borrowed it from. Weird.

But the one event I don't particularly want to repeat was an overseas enduro (actually on the Isle of Wight!), when I managed to turn up without my trousers...

Hmmm, on second thoughts, maybe I'll just stay home this year and mow the lawn... **SI MELBER**

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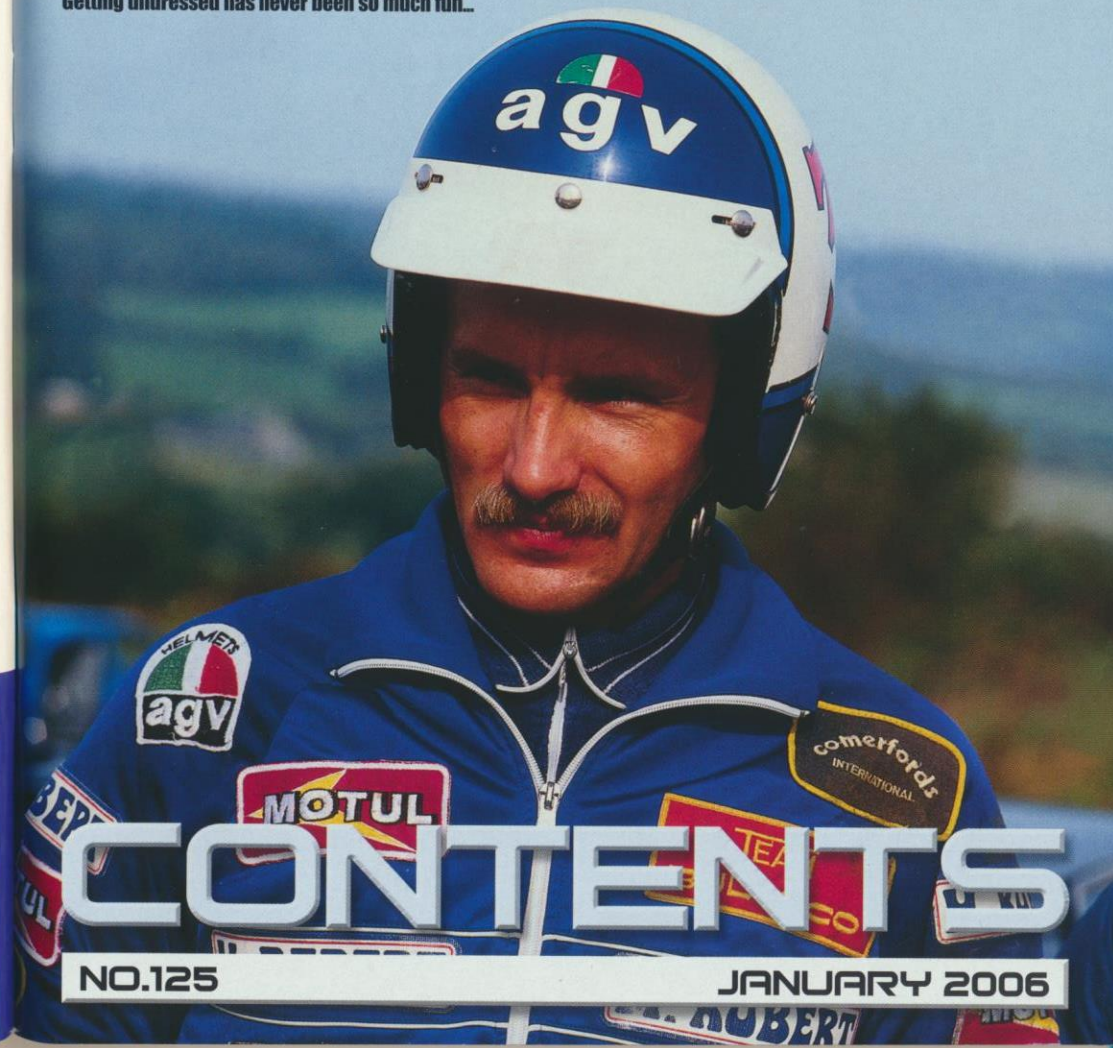
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NO.125

JANUARY 2006

PERSPECTIVE

Into the abyss, Patrick Garrahan tackles one of the 'Extreme Sections' in the dark at the Red Bull Last Man Standing event! Pic: Rich van Every



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06 Catalogue

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When chief Montesa pilot Dougie Lampkin goes out playing on the Cornish coast, the results are nothing short of amazing...
Pic: Ulrichgrill.com

PERSPECTIVE

Brit Daryl Bolter earns full factory HVA ride

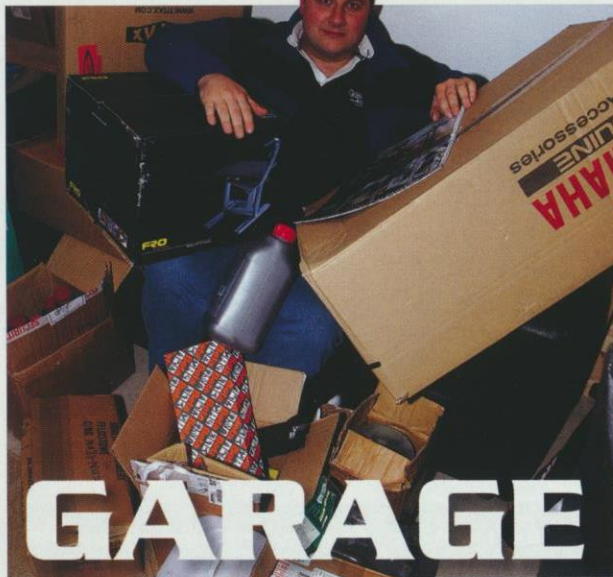
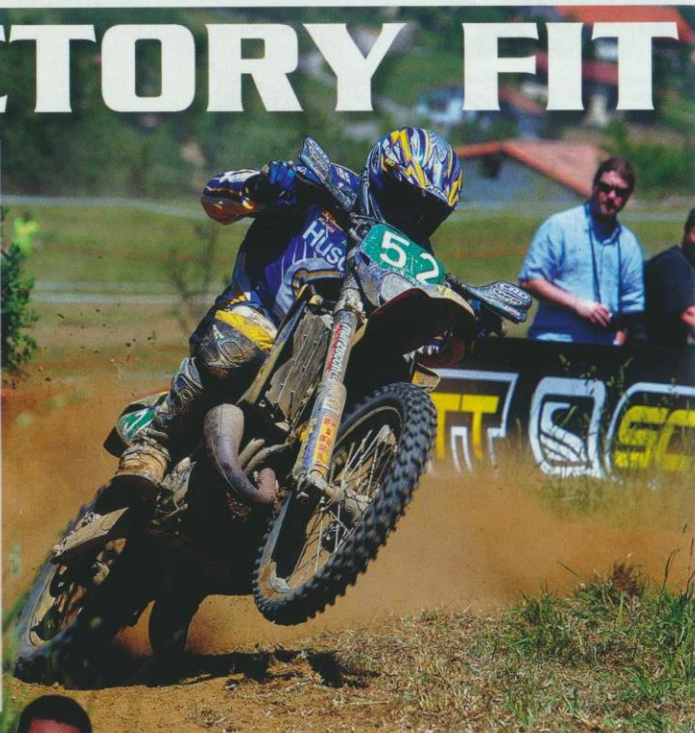
FACTORY FIT

Junior European Enduro E1 class champion Daryl Bolter has secured himself a ride with the factory CH Racing Husqvarna enduro team riding a two-stroke WR250 in the E2 class.

The dream ride came about after contractual wrangling between ex-Yamaha rider Stefan Merriman and CH Husqvarna saw the Aussie looking for a seat elsewhere.

For the last four years 21-year-old Daryl has been racing a WR125 and despite serious back trouble last year managed to clinch his EEC Junior win by a clear 36 points and thoroughly deserves his factory ride.

Rumour has it that Stefan Merriman will be riding for Italian team KL Kawasaki next season...



Well, somebody had to win it... the official recipient of the coveted TBM Ultimate Garage Giveaway is Steve Murrell, from Lyneham in Wiltshire.

Steve, an EX-RAF mechanic, scooped the 17-item dream garage prize that included tools, a hydraulic pump-up bike stand, tyre changer, air compressor, pressure washer, ground anchor, chain garage alarm and lots, lots more.

Steve, pictured here with some of the booty, said: 'I can't believe I've won all this. I'm moving house shortly and can't wait to install it all in my new garage. Cheers guys!'

Nine runners-up also received a Crossbow calendar for their garage walls. For all those of you who didn't win this time, keep your eyes peeled for more bootilicious competitions throughout 2006...

GARAGE ROCK

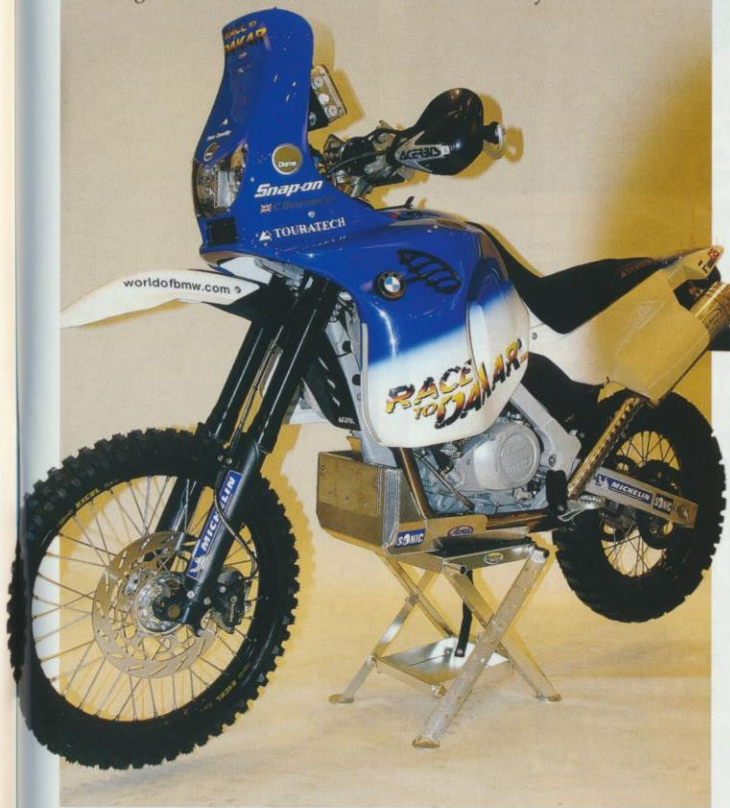
MONEY NO OBJECT

A cool twenty-five grand. That's the price put on the cost of building each of the three Dakar BMW F650s being used in this year's Lisbon-Dakar Rallye by the Race to Dakar team.

The team, which consists of riders Si Pavey, Charley Boorman and Matt Hall, along with a number of other supporting personnel are aiming to produce a television series, DVD and book in the manner of the Long Way Round, which they claim 'will give people an understanding of the privateer angle of competing in this incredible event.' (Although calling a team with three

£25,000 race bikes, a full-time mechanic, a supporting rally-prepped BMW X5 4x4, and the backing of a major manufacturer, 'privateers' might be stretching the point a little).

The bikes are a development of the unique F650GS race bike that BMW Off-Road Skills instructor and occasional TBM contributor Simon Pavey has been campaigning for the past three years on the rally, and which have featured twice in previous TBMs. As you read this the Race to Dakar team will be slogging it out in the dunes of North Africa whilst trying to smile bravely for the cameras. Best of luck boys.



SNIPPETS

IT'S A CLASSIC

Building on its two-wheeled success last year, the 2006 International Historic Motorsport Show will feature classic competition motorcycles, including bikes ridden to victory by the likes of Mike Hailwood, Giacomo Agostini, Barry Sheene, Les Graham, Jeff Smith, Martin Lampkin and Bernie Schreiber.

There will also be the world's first pre-1965 indoor solo and sidecar motorcycle trials display. The course has been designed by Martin Lampkin and will include landscaped logs, rocks and trees, which should prove a challenge for the sidecar entries.

The event runs at Stoneleigh Park, 24-26 February 2006 - advance tickets cost £15 for one day or £28 for two days. Call 08450 706870, or try historicmotorsportshow.com for more info.

SNOW STORM

It's snow time again - yes, it's the annual Snow Run Enduro, taking place on Sunday 5 Feb 2006. It all takes place in the Crychan Forest near Llandovery, Wales and is a timecard enduro event.

Individual entry is £45 and there's a maximum of 180 riders on a first come, first served basis. Entries close on Saturday 28 January 2006 - for regs go to ukoffroad.info.

HELL'S BELLS

David Knight starts as hot favourite for the 2006 Hells Gate enduro, which promises to be even more extreme than in previous years. Taking place on 11 February, there will be a qualifying heat in the morning with the competition proper commencing at three pm. For more info, try hellsgate.it

THIEVING SCUM

Thieves have stolen a total of 48 bikes, equipment and clothing worth approximately £180,000 in two separate raids in Wales in early December.

In the first attack on ET James in Powys on the night of Sunday 4 December, thieves ran down the factory gates and cut through secure fencing to steal ten bikes, including three KTM 250s, a KTM 200EXC and a Yamaha YZ-F250.

The same gang is also thought to be behind the second raid on ER Williams in North Wales. Between the hours of three and five am on Monday 5 December raiders broke through two steel doors and knocked down the back of the workshop wall to steal 38 bikes including Honda CRF 250/450Xs and Yamaha YZ-F and WR250/450F models. As well as the bikes, a large number of helmets, tyres, clothing and handlebars were also taken.

But luckily thieves were foiled in a reported third attack on Burnley based Sandifords Honda

on 14 December. Four men in a white van and a car tried to gain access to the premises via a reinforced fire door but triggered the alarm and escaped empty handed.

The same gang is thought to be behind all three attacks. Anybody with any information please contact DC Dave Pickard, Mold CID, on 0845 6071002 or the anonymous Crimestoppers hotline on 0800 555111.



TOUGH LUCK

It's back. Billed as the UK's hardest extreme sprint off-road race, 'The Tough One' is taking place on 21 January at Nantmawr Quarry, nr Oswestry, Shropshire.

Headlining the event is last year's winner and WEC champion David Knight. And this time to make things a little harder, he will take part in the 'Knigher Unlucky Dip', where he'll have to randomly choose from six different handicap options, including starting either one or two laps down, changing two tyres beforehand or having to run and get his bike as the rest of the Pro class start without him.

The 3.5km course has apparently been made harder -

now running in reverse direction, with a lengthened log and tricky tyre sections, boulder park and several steep new climbs, the last 45 mins will be raced in the dark.

The number of invited pro riders has been increased from 20 to 30 and a one-hour morning clubman race has also been added, with the top 10 clubman finishers allowed to compete in the main event.

£1000 will be awarded to the pro class winner, £500 for the top expert class finisher and the remaining £1000 will be split into three - check out wiralloffroad.co.uk for more info.



SNIPPETS

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Fancy doing something a little different this Easter? The Red Marley Classic Motorcycle Hill Climb takes place on April 17th, Easter Monday at Walsgrove Farm, Worcestershire.

There will be a pre-1950, up to 350cc, unlimited and open classes available. Arthur Browning, who set a time of just under 20 seconds last year, holds the current record. Entries and more information on machine eligibility are available from Peter Dawson on 01527 876364. See you there.

ARDUOUS ENDURO

The RAF are again running their 'Ardua Enduro' on 19 February 2006 at Slab Common, Hants. Hard and easy options are available and fast, flowing special tests are promised. Check out rafenduro.co.uk.

ADRENALIN RUSH

Dainese specialists AdrenalinX are offering an online 15 percent discount on all purchases. Type in <http://www.adrenalinx.com/discount.asp?link=109&discount=dis15000> and get shopping!

KID'S CORNER

If you're looking for a way to keep the nippers entertained at holiday time why not book 'em in for some proper off-road training?

KTM Adventure Tours down in Devon are running their new junior tours starting on 6 January 2006. Dates run from Jan-April and include Easter. Training will take place in a specially built kids indoor training arena. Log onto ktmadventuretours.co.uk and go to the Mini & Kids section for more details.

GO LARGE!

TBM's sister publication Supermoto Magazine is going large! From this month SMM will be produced in an all-new American-A4 format, but will lose none of its high quality glossy look and feel.

It'll be available quarterly and a one-year UK subscription will cost just £15. There'll also be an official SMM website in the near future, with subs, back issue and merchandise ordering facilities - in fact, pretty much like the existing TBM site.

In the meantime to subscribe, call the TBM subs hotline on 020 7903 3993.



ON THE UP



A four percent jump on last year's figures is very welcome news for the Trail/Enduro sector this month, plus overall motorcycle sales are also up another two percent from Nov '04.

The Adventure/Sport category is still a whopping 29 percent ahead of the total industry figures, with BMW's 1200GS selling another 102 units, same as the previous month. But it's not such good news for its smaller brother the 1150GS, as Yamaha's XT660X has stolen its fifth place away with 405 machines sold.

Yamaha have also done it again in the Trail/Enduro table, with the WR450F beating the KTM 450EXC into fourth place this time by a 19 unit margin. Complete figures are as follows:

ADVENTURE SPORT		
1	BMW R1200GS	1871
2	Honda XL125V	668
3	Suzuki 650 V-Strom	550
4	Triumph 955 Tiger	545
5	Yamaha XT660X	405
TRAIL/ENDURO		
1	Honda XR125L	909
2	Suzuki RV125	520
3	Yamaha DT125	437
4	Yamaha WR450F	358
5	KTM 450EXC	339

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5 MINUTES WITH...

DAKAR VETERAN, BMW SKILLS INSTRUCTOR AND D2D ORGANISER SI PAVEY...

WHAT WAS THE FIRST ENDURO BIKE YOU OWNED?

My first ever bike was an XR75. It was a late '70s model that I had when I was 14. My first enduro bike was a Yamaha LT125J, which was a right piece of rubbish. They were all the rage at the time but mine kept blowing up! I bought it from a mate. It was only a few months old and I rode my first enduro on it.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST ENDURO?

I don't remember exactly what event it was, but it was a local race in New South Wales. However, I do remember that I found it really hard. I would have been 16 coming on 17 at the time, but I can't remember what class I was in.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST ENDURO YOU HAVE EVER RACED?

My first Dakar, in 1998, was by far the toughest event I've ever ridden. It was the 20th anniversary of the event and the organisers deliberately made it tough. We had 1000km days and a three-day marathon stage. I went into the event pretty much clueless and stumbled from one disaster to another. I remember that only about 30 percent of the bike entry finished.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ENDURO?

In many ways it's simply the last event I rode in. A few that stand out are the Croc Run, a two-day event run in Northern Queensland. That

was a special event because of where it was held. Also, the Roof of Africa is a very special event. I only rode it once but it was an unforgettable experience. Sometimes though, riding a local cross-country or enduro race with your mates is just as much fun.

WHICH RIDER HAS HAD THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CAREER?

A guy called Geoff Eldridge. He was the founder of Australasian Dirt Bike magazine and was such an inspirational man. He enjoyed racing but also loved the enjoyment of just being at the races. He loved to travel and experience new events, which is where I got my love of trying different races. Also, Geoff Ballard (Australia's Geraint Jones) and John Deacon influenced my career.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE?

I think it would be finishing my first Dakar in 1998. Getting to the start of the rallye is an achievement in itself, and because it was so hard finishing it was just an amazing feeling. I got the exact same time as John Deacon on the final stage of the event and we crossed the finish line together. With John no longer with us it's a very special memory.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR MOST DISAPPOINTING RESULT?

Any event that you don't finish is disappointing. Obviously not finishing an event like the Dakar is a bigger disappointment than not finishing a local race. The more money you have spent on riding in an event the more depressing it is!

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CRASH?

That would probably be in the Finke Desert Race - a sprint desert race from Alice Springs to Finke and back again - in 1988. I was racing a YZ250, which I knew would do 165km/h. I crashed flat-out in top gear and went end-over-end. There were five riders who all crashed in the same place and I was the first one to get taken away in the helicopter ambulance.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED ENDURO MEMORY?

I guess the time I spent with John Deacon was pretty special. I have been lucky to meet and compete against some great rallye riders, many of which are sadly no longer with us. And, of course, there's

obviously entering the Rallye Des Cagous on New Caledonia where I met my wife, Linley.

WHAT BIKE HAVE YOU ENJOYED OWNING/RIDING THE MOST?

It might sound strange but I got a lot of enjoyment out of my old Honda XR600s. They're not the fastest or best enduro bike, but they were a great bike. I got my first one in 1988 and rode my first Dakar on one in 1998.

WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TERRAIN?

Sand... as long as no one else has ridden across it! Carving your own line through the desert is just an amazing feeling. Riding wide open is something all motorcycle riders love to do and in the desert you can do just that, it's amazing.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED MORE OF?

More events for kids would be a good starting point. I guess simplicity in events would help as well. More innovative organisers willing to try something different would be good too, though we need to hang on to traditional enduros, as well as cross-country style races.

WHAT DOES ENDURO SPORT NEED LESS OF?

Politics - less of the people who always seem to be whinging and more doers. The ACU needs to be more flexible because if they were I don't think we'd have three different organisational bodies in the UK.

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

I think there will be more multi-lap events. Even traditional enduros are getting to be multi-lap events now. But I'd like to think that there are enough enthusiasts around to keep the longer enduro events going. I hope that there'll be a good variety of events to cater for all types of riders.

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE IN YOUR CAREER?

I just want to keep on enjoying my riding. I've been fortunate to ride in different events all over the world, so I want to keep riding in different races and basically keep on having a good time.



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.*

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



What do you do when it starts to snow? Drag your CRF out of the garage and head for the hills of course

Photo © AP Trading

PERSPECTIVE

RIGHT TO RIDE

Trailriding may have got a stay of execution from the NERC Bill's axe, but for how long, wonders Mark Williams..?

At the time of writing this piece - mid-December - progress of the dreaded Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Bill through the House of Lords has, once again, been delayed.

Nobody seems entirely sure why this is, but at least it gives us a little more time to bombard the powers that be with protests over the way our freedoms are being trampled under the Ramblers Association's boots. And, of course, time for a little more trailriding under the status quo.

The First Lords Committee Hearing of NERC is now scheduled for 18 January. There will be a Recess from 16-26 February after which a report (on the Committee stage) will be delivered on 27 February. But as TRF Press Officer Ian Packer reminds us, 'these things have a habit of moving as dictated by events.' So theoretically there could be further delays, also in our favour.

Gloom and Doom

We should be in no doubt that letters sent to their relevant Lordships are getting through, although the responses received have been mixed to say the least. I personally have had only two replies from the twelve sitting Lords that I've written to. One was from Lord Jopling (an ex-President of the ACU and thus someone who could be relied on to champion motorcycling interests), who simply bemoaned that he was 'gloomy about the proposals which the Government are intent on railroading through.'

A rather more detailed response emerged from William Propert-Lewis from DEFRA's Rights of Way Policy Unit who seems to be answering on the beleaguered Lord Bach's behalf. (Many of

those who protested at the original 'MPV on RoW' document back in 2004 will be familiar with Propert-Lewis's penchant for weasel words, and rest assured his latest missive is similarly disingenuous).

Whilst he acknowledges that the Government's own Faber-Maunsell report on vehicular use of BOATs concluded that us lot cause 'no detriment to the character of the Way, or the enjoyment of other users', he cites this as merely a reason why DEFRA 'have not gone as far as some groups would like and sought to ban motorised vehicles from rights of way altogether'. How very magnanimous of them. He also makes the breathtaking claim that NERC would not 'reduce the existing network of byways used by motorists' as the existing BOATs 'will not be affected in any way.'

Quite right William, but what about the thousands of miles of RuPPs which at a stroke will become restricted byways?

A point which I trust any others amongst you who've also received his 'form letter' will raise with him by way of a reply.

Claims Going Backwards

Propert-Lewis also failed to comment on the strong rumours concerning a proposal by one of their Lordships to make the cut-off date for DMMO claims, eg for upgrading RuPPs to BOATs, retrospective to May 2005, but on this point there may be a glimmer of hope.

The justification for this, according to the Ramblers' Association and GLEAM (whose memberships contains several MPs naturally anxious to see the Bill go through unamended), is that an avalanche of DMMO claims were made prior to NERC reaching the Commons and that the TRF's self-imposed moratorium on upgrades whilst it went through the House was substantially ignored - untrue in both cases. It will therefore be interesting to read the response to Tewkesbury MP Laurence Robertson's

recently tabled question to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 'how many (a) byways and (b) bridleways have been added to the Definitive Map in England and Wales since the enactment of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000,' as a result of a statement of action in a Rights of Way Improvement Plan?'

And according to TRF Vice-Chairman Tim Stevens, backdating the cut-off point 'may not be possible for various reasons...' not least because 'the Bill included not a single word about existing claims. Therefore the logic of using the date of introduction of the Bill (16 May) as the cut-off date for claims is not sound. That will not stop Parliament, they can ignore logic - but there are rules about legislation being 'proportionate'. There may well also be Human

'The logic of using the date of introduction of the Bill as the cut-off date for claims is not sound. That will not stop Parliament - they can ignore logic - but there are rules about legislation being 'proportionate'. There may well also be Human Rights concerns...'



Rights concerns.'

Stevens adds that, 'the original consultation, and the Government's response to it, both suggested a period of grace before extinguishment, and so did the Bill as published, so what justification is there for an earlier date than extinguishment for a cut-off on accepting claims as valid?'

Keep On Keeping On

Meanwhile both the TRF and LARA (Land Access & Recreation Assoc.) are urging their members and, indeed, anyone else who wants to keep using the existing vehicular RoW network - which is every reader of this magazine - to keep up the pressure on their Lordships, especially as we now have some more time to do so.

To repeat the advice given in December's TBM, you can discover if a Peer sits in the House of Lords or not by calling the Lords Information Office on 020 7219 3107 or check the web at: parliament.uk/directories/house_of_lords_information_office/alphabetical_list_of_members.cfm which provides a full alphabetical list of Peers. The address of the House of Lords is House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW.

Writing, or preferably booking a face-to-face meeting with your MP and asking him to take your concerns to the House of Lords is also crucial. If you are unsure how to phrase your letters, go to the excellent TBM website and check out, but don't slavishly copy, the examples shown in the Forums section: trailbikemag.com/forum - NERC Bill.

Both the TRF and LARA have been actively campaigning to try and persuade their Lordships to see reason and act fairly in their deliberations over NERC, and they have hired a professional lobbying group to assist in this (although despite extensive requests by this writer, no details of their activities were forthcoming as TBM went to press).

Efforts have produced a meeting with Minister Jim Knight, whose poodle-like about-turn when the Bill received its third reading in the Commons have similarly fallen flat, although as Ian Packer questioned 'what would be achieved by this is doubtful considering what happened and would we be able to place any reliance on anything (he) said?'

Bigotry Rules

Other motorcycle bodies have also petitioned the Lords, such as the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA), whose letter to every single sitting Lord drew attention to some potential ramifications if the Bill went through unamended. These included the problems of 'Access to Buildings' which 'many RoW claims relate to' and which will become unclear under the current wording, and the 'Intolerance and Disrespect for Minority Interests in Society' which the Bill will further condone, if not actually promote.

The MCIA also pointed out that by ignoring the strategy agreed with Jim Knight of vehicular use management allied to sustainability assessments regarding future DMMO claims, 'and choosing instead to bend against the tidal-wave of anti-vehicle lobbying, the Commons has presented the Lords with a Bill which can only intensify existing problems and discriminate against a legitimate, but minority section of society.' As Tim Stevens points out and we are only too aware, 'since the Bill left the Commons, there have been no changes to it. There have been promises to do something in the Lords, and we await with great interest what that something turns out to be.'

And as newly elected TRF secretary Polly Cody adds, 'People are giving up on the NERC Bill before it has finished going through the process, and we are trying to encourage them to keep going.' So please all of you, don't give up. Keep on writing letters to the Lords...



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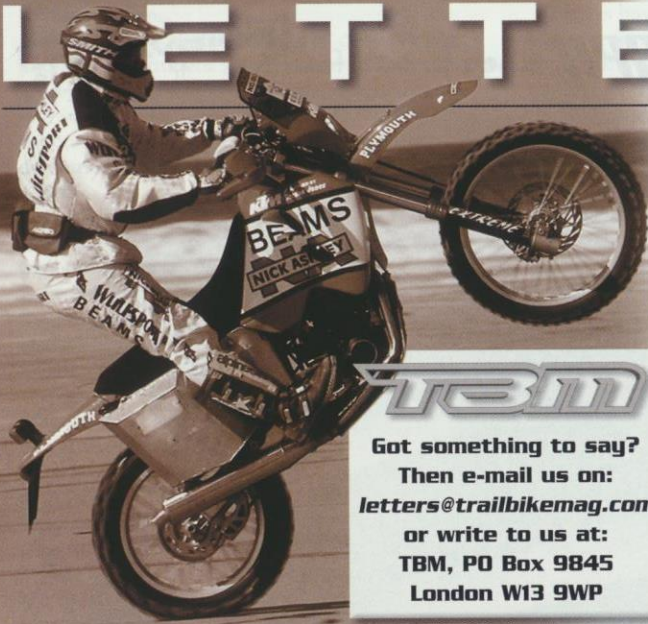


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LETTERS



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Cause Celeb?

Dear TBM

With the NERC Bill looming large and ominous in our rearview mirrors it's time for loud and public action. As much as I hate to say it, we need celebrities, and we need them now!

How about an organised trail riding day, to which all celebs, MPs, and anyone with a publicly known face and a bike license is invited. A sponsor would be needed to provide them with bikes and clothing, some lunch, drinks etc.

Then invite as much press as possible. This gives our cause a public airing, and most of the invitees should attend as it's an opportunity to be seen as listening to our issues, which shows how caring they are (and will get them on telly).

These celebs et al are then taken around some of the more beautiful rides, led by club members (or famous dirt bike

personalities such as David Knight, Geraint Jones etc), at a nice slow pace so as not to frighten them.

This will hopefully make them see what we are talking about and gain their support, but more importantly will give our cause decent exposure to the press as there are famous

people involved. If we can win this support from them then our cause becomes a national cause.

There are plenty of companies offering trail riding days out there - these are an ideal place to start as they will be helping to fight for their own right to do business as normal.

It is not *too* late - Bills can be changed if public opinion is swayed enough. If anyone can organise this, it's you lot (and the TRF). Get on the phone!

Nathan Kedwards
via email

Firm Favourite

Dear Editor

It has been interesting to read the debate in your letters page and various articles on the Honda CRF230. As a company offering guided rides to clients on bikes provided by us on open trails in France, it's been useful to see how the impressions of you and your readers compare with our own experi-

ences in running a small fleet of CRF230s.

The bike, let's face it, is a modern version of the faithful old XR200 which has been the clubman's favourite enduro machine for 20 years. In fact, I believe that it won the Welsh four-stroke championship until a couple of years ago. So, why did we opt for the 230 for our clients?

Well, despite the fact that my partner and I are both experienced enduro riders with 40 years of competition between us, we had to put our sensible heads on and remember that we are offering trail riding and not enduro training. Add this to the fact that our clients will always be a broad spread of abilities from novice off-roaders to MX experts and we have to err on the safe side. However, this bike satisfies everyone!

The CRF is not too tall for shorties nor cramped for the big guys. (We had a 16 stone, six-footer singing its praises recently). It's electric start, discs all round, air-cooled, reliable and economical. It looks great and whilst doing everything you ask performance-wise it does not need constant attention to the chain and brakes.

We recently had a group of really experienced (and I mean experienced!) guys down for a few days and even though their personal bikes back home were, shall we say, somewhat more pokey (as befits a six-times Scottish MX champion and a couple of multiple ISDE medalists), they could not believe just how good the 230s were. The guys asked our lead-guide for non-stop, fast, difficult going and during the day they completed 220km (with only 15km roadwork) and no one

Reader Stephen Durrant realised that one of our pictures from the Trials Heroes series had his late father in the background.... See Who's the Daddy?



was disappointed. Incidentally, the fuel consumption for the day was 9.5L per bike.

Now I'm not saying for a moment that they compare with out-and-out competition machinery but it's horses for courses and these bikes do the job perfectly.

I also feel compelled to respond to the recent problems arising with trail riding in the UK and fully sympathise with those trying to alleviate a difficult situation. It's easy to point at the history of illegal riding, which in itself is not the main problem as I am sure the ramblers don't all know what the trail classifications are, but if those bikes had been well-ridden (ie responsibly) and in relative silence (ie responsibly quiet), then I feel sure they would have gone almost unnoticed.

What is this mentality of needing to change a standard exhaust system to release every last ounce of available power, whether people are skilful enough to use it or not?

Self-policing might have been the answer a few years ago but to try to rescue the situation now is almost impossible. Consequently, we'll be sticking to our Honda CRF230s and promoting quiet, responsible riding on legal trails in France.

Roger Hammond
Green Mountain

Who's The Daddy?

Dear TBM

Firstly, congratulations on the great magazine which I really enjoy reading every month, although work means I don't always catch up with reading some issues until some time later!

Having switched my allegiances from trials to enduro about three years ago I enjoy reading the new trials section in the mag. Having grown up around trials motorcycles (my late father was a keen trials rider in the Fifties through to the Seventies), I really enjoy

Honda CRF230: A trailbike for all ages and abilities...



some of the articles regarding the classic trials and enduro bikes from the Sixties and Seventies which were popular when I was a lad.

My Dad rode everything from Francis Barnetts to Norton 500s, before switching to some of the more modern two-strokes such as Greeves, Cotton and latterly Bultaco. I still have his 1970 250cc Sherpa which I will get round to restoring at some point in the future.

Anyway, this brings me to the main point of my letter. Idly flicking through TBM issue 121 I stumbled across Mike Rapley's 'Trials Heroes' article on Chris Butler. Looking at the picture on page 130 of the SSDT from 1964 I suddenly realised that the man in the background with the red and white check scarf is my late father who died almost ten years ago.

Dad used to go to the SSDT to act as a marshal and observer along with a number of his clubmates from the West Middlesex Amateur Motorcycle Club, and I can only assume from the armband he was wearing that he was acting as the observer on this section when the picture was taken. I'd love to get hold of a copy of this and indeed any other pictures that might exist - hope you can help. Keep up the good work on the mag.

Stephen Durrant
via email

Thanks for sharing such an emotive story with us Stephen, we've put you in touch with the photographer, and I'm sure he'll be happy to help you out...

Route Master

Dear TBM

I've just discovered your magazine by chance, and it's just fantastic! I would like some advice if possible on a trip myself and a friend are planning. We are aiming to go away for around three months in September time but are having real trouble deciding on a route, as we seem to find really conflicting advice on different destinations.

We are both fairly well travelled and have good mechanical know-how, but have never undertaken a long trip aboard bikes before. We were considering travelling up through South America ending up in southern USA.

We'll be on Honda Transalps as these seem to be the budget transport of choice but will consider changing the bikes if this doesn't seem a wise choice.



Honda's well-proven Transalp is ideal for a long distance motorcycle trip through South America...

Any advice would be greatly appreciated.

Dan Lovelock
via email

Sounds like a great idea Dan, get hold of a copy of Chris Scott's Adventure Motorcycling Handbook, and keep reading the mag because we're planning on running a story about someone who made a trip not too dissimilar to this...

Mud Plugging

Dear TBM

I was wondering whether you could mention my dad because he's been biking all his life. At first he rode road bikes then he did dirt biking with his brother Ian. They have been going to Dawn to Dusk since 2000 and met Charlie Boorman this year!

My uncle also does the marquee every year - please

mention them, they're worth it - they are Steve and Ian Reynolds. Oh, and my dad reads your magazine too...

All my biking love, Lily
via email

Ah. Thanks Lily. Your dad has been duly mentioned in TBM. Good time to ask for a raise...

Out Foxed

Dear TBM

We've spent hundreds of pounds on Fox gear for my husband, Ian. He has got a set of 180s and another set of original Yamaha 360s, all of which instruct you to wash them in cold water. But when you do they don't come clean!

It says 'cold water, delicate detergent' - this is ridiculous. We're dealing with a muddy, dirty sport here, not silk lingerie or cashmere cardigans. Why on earth can't this gear be made capable of sustaining a good hot wash, or at least a warm one? One decent day's riding on mud and they never regain their original appearance.

The journalists that give these items rave reviews must only prance about their editorial offices in them, or give them away at the point they need laundering. The designers must never have had to get a set clean either, the amount of white fabric they use.

Ian says the next

Should your riding gear be capable of withstanding a hot wash? Reader Elaine Davis reckons it should, and we agree with her...



time we go to the USA he's going to find the cheapest gear he can, because there's just no point spending more on Fox gear when it can't be kept looking nice.

I sent this message to Fox customer services way back in March and finally in November I got the following back from the MD of Fox Europe.

'I am sorry that your email has not had the reply it deserves. We are continually trying to improve the technical properties of our product. Sometimes there is a trade-off between getting the durability on the track against durability in the washing machine.'

From our extensive tests we have found that using a delicate detergent on a cool wash will bring the product up clean. To keep the rubber logos flexible and not to melt the glue or destroy the leather it is important not to boil wash the product. It is important that we put a care label on that covers the facts, as many mums tend to just boil wash and regret later.'

Just thought I would let you and your readers know as I'm sure other people out there have had the same problems trying to get kit clean.

Elaine Davis
via email

It's a fair point Elaine and one which has cropped up in previous TBMs - we've given this subject at least two airings (pun intended) in the past.

You're absolutely right to say that kit *should* be capable of repeated washings (at at least 40 degrees centigrade if you're to stand any chance of getting the mud out), without losing its shape, colour or texture. It really isn't good enough for kit to look good on the shelves but

then be discoloured from the moment you wear it on a muddy ride. Manufacturers *should* be addressing these issues right now.

However our own experience has shown that certain soils/mud/dust simply do not wash out of kit no matter how many times you wash it (even when you use pre-cleaning or bleaching agents - which certainly aren't recommended by clothing manufacturers). Some very red soils like the ones you find in the south west of the country, or the coal dust you get at the Dawn to Dusk (for instance) will always mark your kit to a greater or lesser extent it seems.

When you consider the harsh environment in which riding kit is expected to perform, it's not unreasonable to find that it wears out or discolours over the course of about a year or so.

Contrary to what you might think, we don't simply 'prance around in our gear then ask for some more when it's dirty', but in fact wash and dry our own kit a hell of a lot during the course of a year. By the end of the season most of our gear is shredded because of the abuse it receives (from us falling off a lot), as well as from trying to get it clean. And the reason we choose white (or light coloured) riding gear is very simple: because it shows up in photos!

However the point you make is valid, and we'll be looking into this a bit more when we review riding kit in future...

Strictly Legal

Dear TBM

I'm looking for an enduro bike but as I'm 18 and have only just passed my test I'm restricted to

LETTERS



33bhp. I was wondering if you could tell me what enduro bikes are under 33bhp - I would prefer a four-stroke. Any help would be appreciated. Great mag. Keep up the good work.

Jason Williams
via email

Jason it's not simply the bhp you need to consider but also the power to weight ratio which the law states must not exceed 0.16kW/kg. To be honest we're unsure which enduro bikes fall into this category because as you might imagine, race bikes are designed to be as light and as quick as possible, otherwise they simply wouldn't be competitive. Can we suggest you either keep your race bike for racing on, or else buy yourself a

restricted trailie which fits this category and spend your time trying to master that machine while you're restricted to a certain power output. And by the way there's no point in trying to pull the wool over anyone's eyes, because you'll simply find that your insurance is invalid.

The only other way to go about it is to buy a bike like a 250 four-stroke and then get someone to restrict it for you, though we're not sure how you measure it as we believe that the law works on manufacturers' claimed figures for power - many of which are grossly exaggerated. Good luck...

Spare Part

Dear TBM

After a break of a few years I thought it was about time I started to get muddy again and

after searching around I found a Suzuki Djebel DR250XC. After a haggle I rode off into the sunset a grand lighter on a tidy 1998 low mileage bike.

I have found the bike a touch tall but then discovered how to lower it. It's an excellent green laner/commuter and I've now started riding a few long distance trials on the thing.

There is one small problem though - I didn't realise when I bought the bike that it was an import, so where the hell do I get parts ie control levers, brake pads and discs, bashplate, exhaust and heaven forbid a front headlight should I be unlucky enough to smash it - have you seen the size of 'em?

I also would like to get a workshop manual as I would like to check the camchain and valve clearances. If this all proves a bit difficult to sort out what would you recommend as a replacement for under £2000?

I quite like the idea of the Honda XR250; they look quite grunty from what I have seen. Have you guys got any other ideas?

Pete Jago
Delabole, Cornwall

Pete, there should be no problem getting hold of parts for the Djebel. Lots of importers bring them in and most will have a parts microfiche for the bike. Check out some of the dealer ads in the back of TBM for various grey importers.



Little jewel: Suzuki's Djebel is very reliable and obtaining spare parts shouldn't be a problem...



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LETTERS

Man 'O War

Dear TBM

I want to let riders who plan to come to the Isle of Man to ride on our fantastic tracks know that some of the longest and best tracks are now shut for the winter until 31 March next year.

The reason given by the Department of Transport Minister Mr Braidwood is 'to prevent further erosion'. No evidence of this erosion exists and technically it is not a valid reason under Manx law, and something I will shortly be questioning him about.

Large groups of riders (15-20) have in the last few years begun coming over here to ride and this, along with a local increase in traffic, has caused a slight increase in the *apparent* wear and tear on our tracks.

These tourist riders have been informally blamed for

worsening existing tracks and riding on illegal areas but as a Manxman I feel a sense of pride that others want to come and ride on the hills I've ridden since I was a boy, I continue to welcome responsible riders who I always try and help when we meet on the tracks.

I am trying to fight these closures and would welcome any suggestions from readers but bear in mind the huge chasm that exists between UK and Manx law. These bans are proposed to be an annual occurrence.

John Fargher
via email

Water World

Dear TBM

I had to just write and let you know about my dirty weekend. Along with my riding mentors Laurence and Rob (both WR450 boys) and Mark (WR250) I experienced my first proper

hardcore ride. On my week-old WR250 we set off on a beautiful sunny Saturday morning though it had apparently been raining in Wales for the last three weeks prior to our ride.

Following a short road ride from our guides' Brian & Glenn's house in Glais we hit our first obstacle, a huge climb-up. With encouragement and advice from the guys both Mark and I made it to the top, with lungs bursting and sweat pouring off us.

The rest of the day was just as hard but rewarding with bogs, rocks, boulders, and water everywhere - we rode though some absolutely fantastic scenery. Even me submerging my bike in one of the river crossings didn't dampen our spirits - 15 minutes of upside down work and she was running again.

A huge thank you to Brian and Glenn (Father and Son) for their advice and help along the way.

We promised that will all return for more action - we'll have to as 61-year-old Brian kicked my ass good and proper!

Clive Bass
via email



The future of trail riding lies with bikes like the ENV according to reader Maurice Courcha...

Future Perfect

Dear TBM

I'm glad you published the article about the hydrogen ENV bike in issue 123 because I missed the opportunity to read about it when it was publicised in the mass media.

Most people assume that the range of electric bikes is so inherently inadequate that they can never make a practical alternative to their gasoline counterparts. However, although the claimed range of 100 miles a day may be an exaggeration it does at least prove that you can have sufficient range to spend a day doing gentle green laning on a bike that is practically silent. I do not see the lack of a hydrogen re-fuelling infrastructure as an impediment to its immediate application.

I envisage the future of green laning involving a trip to the national parks by train or car and once there you could be provided with a hydrogen bike by a licensed tour company who has refuelling facilities. Although a top speed of 50mph is realistic, a top speed of 40mph would have the advantage of preventing riders from going mad and making a nuisance of themselves.

It's a good thing you published the article about the electric Blade bike because it illustrates how designers of battery electric vehicles have striven to overcome the worthy but boring image that electric vehicles have. Indeed, there are experimental battery electric cars that can provide

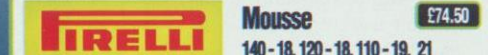


Reader Clive Bass discovers the joys of riding off-road. See Water World...

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LETTERS

sports car performance. I don't see the half-hour running time of the Blade as a problem for certain kinds of riding. It could for instance help solve the problem of teenagers riding motocross bikes on wasteland near council estates. This is something I have experienced myself from a NIMBY's point of view. Having to push the bike back to their house to get it recharged might be a disincentive to using the silent alternative. But if we had urban motocross tracks, they could hire bikes then just hand in the bike when its batteries are discharged and get another fully charged one.

A facility like this for electric karting exists in east London called Revolution Karting and the karts use the same motor and battery technology as the Blade. I have been turned away twice from there because so many kids had bunked off school to have a go, so you can see the potential here.

They say any new technology has to be 20 times better than what preceded it before it gets universally adopted. The problem with these bikes is that they cost more, for less performance so their only inherent advantage is that they allow you to ride at locations where we are unwelcome or prohibited.

Since riders will always buy the best performance they can afford, electric bikes have to meet and surpass the performance of the best gasoline bikes currently available.

I think it can be done. The most powerfully commercially available battery in the world is

the 18650 Lithium-ion battery. This has six times the energy density of lead acid batteries in terms of range and the same power density for torque. You could pack enough of these into a dirtbike frame to make a bike that is within the weight limit of 120kg. The performance would be awesome! Really, it would match or exceed the performance of any 250cc enduro bike currently available.

Maurice Courcha
Edmonton, London

Non-Citrus

Dear TBM

I've just received my December subscription issue and I have to say that after eleven months, it's the most orange-free and subsequently most enjoyable edition yet!

Excellent to see the good old Honda TLR250R gets a mention in the Right to Ride article. I

have one and it's very stealthy. It's also good to see a modern equivalent in the form of the Scorpa TY-S175F, which will be my next new bike.

I'd much rather ten of these crept past my house on a quiet Sunday morning than be woken by the usual gang of ten orange Knighter, NERC-inducing wannabes!

Noel Thom, Cumbria
via email

Evil Minded

Dear TBM

Just read your article 'Axles of Evil' in the last issue - fantastic, very humorous. I know exactly where you're coming from, having just recently flipped me CRF into a hedge - you haven't made me laugh so much in years!

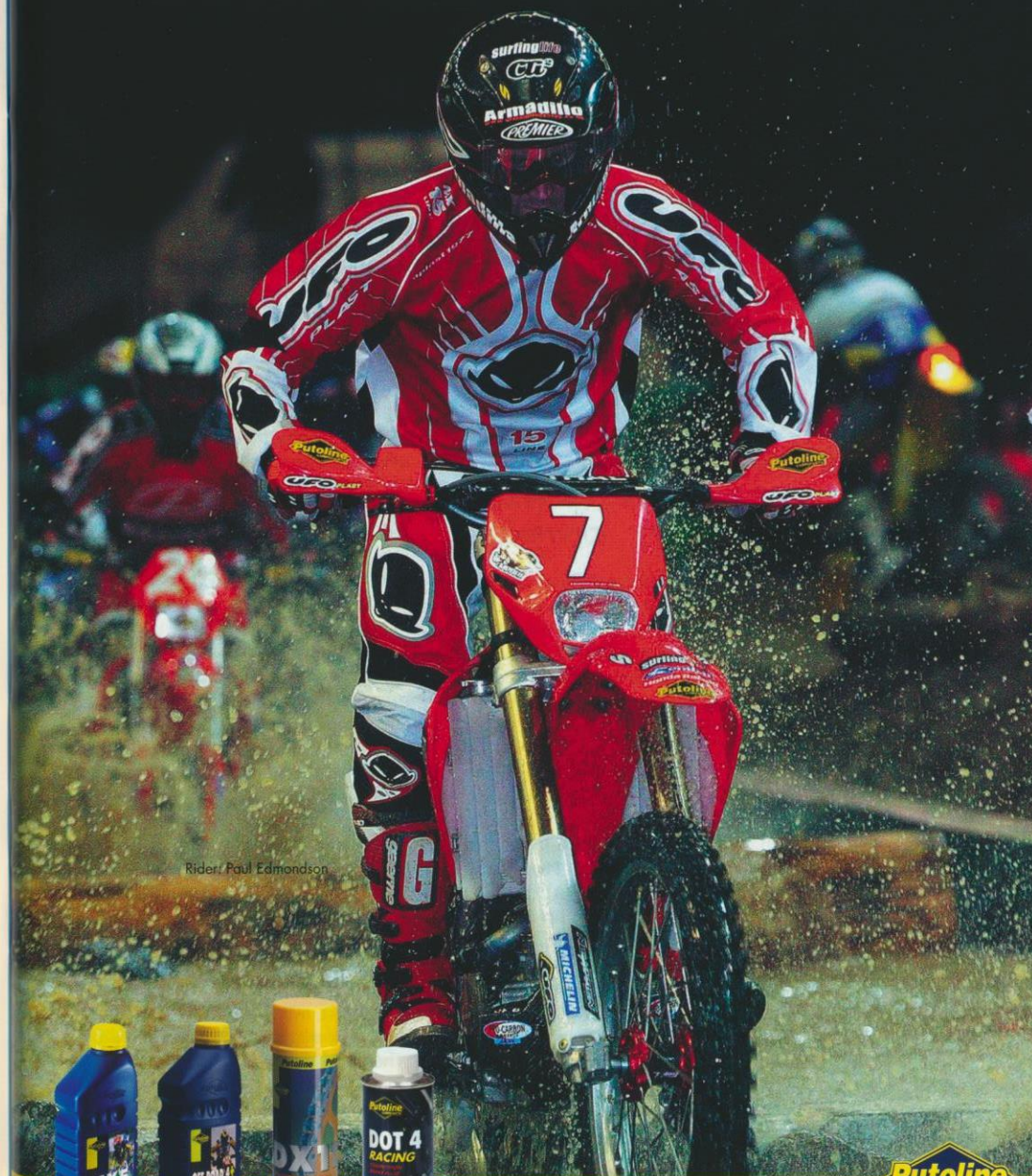
Giles Southcott
via email



Scorpa's TY-S175F: The spiritual successor to Honda's TLR250R...

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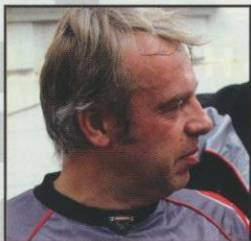
Rider: Paul Edmondson



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DIRTY



CHRIS EVANS FINALLY REALISES THAT THERE ARE BIKES WORTH RIDING WHICH AREN'T ORANGE...

Bikes-I-haven't-ridden-but-would-like-to, are a bit like buses - you wait for ages and then three come along at the same time.

The one I managed to flag down first on a recent trip was the little CRF230 made-in-Brazil Honda - only this was a 'proper' HM version with the rear disc conversion, firmed up

suspension and some other stuff I can't remember - what do you think this is anyway, a proper bike test or something? If my addled brain serves me correctly I seem to remember the owner said they cost about three grand on the road and if that is indeed the case I would have to say they are excellent value for money. They have absolutely no power at all, and even for someone as vertically challenged as my good self, are little on the small side, but nevertheless absolutely brilliant fun. At trail speeds I had absolutely no trouble keeping up with the usual hordes of 450EXC-mounted riders - which sadly isn't always the case - and felt safe as houses doing so. TBM's 'no-blag' policy notwithstanding, if anybody would like to give me one, loan me one or even sell me one at a very reasonable price then please call at the earliest opportunity - preferably before I spend a small fortune prepping my 380 hour 16,000km 2004 KTM for the 2006 season.

Barely had I reluctantly handed back the 230 to its rightful owner than I was swinging my leg over another potential dream machine, a Sherco 450. One of the reasons these bikes have always appealed is their excellent detailed styling. Have a closer a look at the side-stand and you'll see what I mean - just lovely. Not so lovely however was the outrageously high seat height. Admittedly, after the little Honda even a Pampera would seem a tad lofty, but even so, when did the French suddenly get so long in the leg? Frenchies rudely barge into me almost every day in the street and most aren't much taller than I am. Some, mainly the women it is true, are even smaller.

Apart from the gargantuan perch, the Sherco turned out to be a very pleasant ride. Not a revelation like the 230, but nevertheless a nice all round package, that after years of EXC ownership was impressively comfy and stable. Sadly, even with electronic fuel injection, the EXC look-a-like engine isn't quite up to Austrian standards of performance - though I hear the 2006 model has been improved in this department and features a seat your average garlic muncher would feel more at home on.

Last up was a bike nobody likes, but fitted with something I reckon everybody would love - yup you guessed it, a Yamaha WR450 with a semi-automatic clutch. It is incredible, when you think about it, that it was the original YZ/WR400 that kicked off the whole modern four-stroke craze. That bike was an absolute pig to start and not a lot of fun when you finally got it going. I had always imagined that this was simply because having actually got

'NOBODY AT TBM ASKED ME TO LOOK BACK AT MY YEAR, OR INTO THE FUTURE COME TO THAT, BUT FOR ONCE I AGREE WITH HERR MELBER ABOUT SOMETHING...'

it started you were too knackered to ride it, but subsequent squirts on later, electric-start models, have disproved this theory.

Sadly the bloke I blagged the bike off felt so unhappy riding my traditional foot-brake set-up machine he wanted to swap back almost immediately. Still it was a tantalising taste of how truly wonderful it could be not to be able to stall, not to have to use the clutch, ride around in (more or less) any gear you want and be able to hand operate the back brake. His mechanic mate had fitted it and according to the owner it wasn't particularly easy or cheap to install - so if anybody feels moved to send me one make sure it comes with somebody to bolt it on. I don't know why I bother.

Nice though all the above were, none gave me quite as much pleasure as my own latest two-wheel acquisition - a mountain bike. Well I say a mountain bike, what I should really say is little-gem-of-engineering-and-a-marvel-to-behold, which as an added bonus is at least 60 kilos lighter than His Melbership's big old barge of fully-suspended nonsense. And as anybody who knows me will have already divined, a new mountain bike in the Evans garage can only mean one thing - yup I've given up smoking... Again.

Having absolutely no credibility in this particular department I didn't want to break the news to my faithful readers prematurely, but having had not so much as a whiff of nicotine for the past seven months I think it is reasonably safe to declare myself a smoke free zone. Of course the real acid test will be during that mother of all smoking fests - the Dakar Rallye. Nobody at TBM asked me to look back at my year, or into the future come to that, but for once I agree with Melber about something - for me the most perfect way to kick off the new year would be for Patsy Quick to make it all the way to Lac Rose. If I could avoid lighting up in drunken celebration then that really would be the cherry on the gateau...



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COMPLETELY RUTTED



In contrast to my own dour ruminations on the future of our little game in last month's issue, Editor Melber's proposals for post-NERC dirtbikery were positively, well, positive. As indeed they might be. But I was nonetheless surprised that a man of his ingenuity and perspicacity (to say nothing of ambiguity: 'don't let them catch you... eh?' ha-ha-ha), failed to

MARK WILLIAMS BELIEVES THAT OLDER IS BETTER...

mention the one off-road mode that many of us are already seriously considering. Oh alright, a miserable few of us older riders are occasionally thinking about.

And rather appropriately, that's older dirtbikes. This is of course a proposition founded partially on the back of the From The Archives features that I've been scribbling for this mighty organ for a few years now, and which produces a small trickle of mainly complimentary feedback from, well shall we say, readers of a certain age. But I've also had the odd younger rider sidle up to me at off-road events of one sort or another and express admiration for these older mud-pluggers which, in some cases, they didn't even know existed before.

But young or old, overcoming the NERC barrier could be no more complicated (or borderline legal) than simply buying an old banger and taking to what few trails we have left after the bill receives Royal Assent. (See Right to Ride, page 18). And these are the reasons why.

Firstly, older trailbikes are far less competent than the current, state-of-the-art variety, and whilst this may sound like a good reason to steer clear of 'em, it's actually exactly the opposite. A bike with less ground clearance, suspension movement and powerband will, perforce, require greater effort and skill to keep up with the hot-shots on their newer machinery. So riding an old 'un could help you hone your trailriding skills, improve your ability to read terrain, build muscles you never knew you had and introduce you to the joys of chucking it into a ditch every few hundred yards.

However there is another way to ride an older bike, and that's simply to take things more slowly. In fact on some of the machines I've featured in From The Archives, riding slowly is the only option. A BSA Bantam, Honda XL250 or Triumph Mountain Cub, for example, can only realistically be ridden at 15-20mph along the sort of lanes many of us travel before it runs out composure, and possibly steam. But arguably there's nothing wrong with that because you can take in more of the scenery if you're bimbling along at those sorts of speeds.

On yet another hand, you can get an awful lot of satisfaction riding a 40-odd year-old bike along less demanding tracks that might seem bland-ola on a Katosh 450... or even a Serow. And ironically, if all we're left with are a relatively few BOATs, which by definition tend to be better surfaced and less demanding than RuPPs, then riding an oldie could be a more exciting way to go anyway. (At least that's

what I always used to tell my girlfriend).

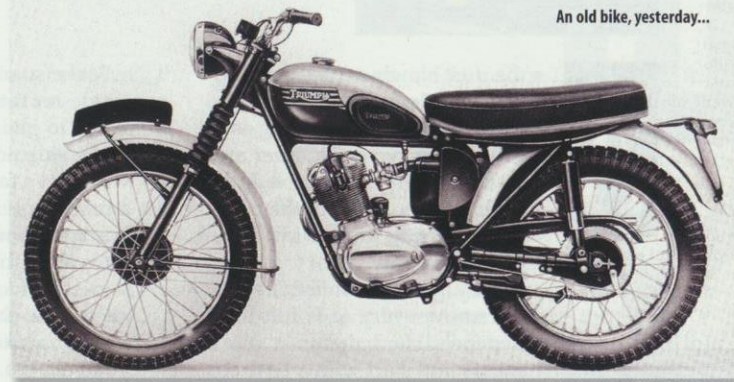
True, some of the machinery I've unearthed in these pages has been more aggressive and, in younger hands at least, quite capable of keeping up with modern trailies ridden on tougher terrain. I'm thinking of the Maico and Montesa enduros of this world, the Bultaco Sherpa and even the ISDT-replica Triumph twins, which what they perhaps lacked in the suspension travel and braking departments, they made up for in power and wieldiness. Occasionally you see such kit tackling a day's ride-out alongside more modern machinery and acquitting themselves well enough, and even more occasionally you see them entered in enduros and doing ditto. So that's another option, although the real advantage of owning one of these, or indeed any older dirtbike, is that maybe you'll learn to spend more time off it than on.

No, I haven't lost the plot - well not this week anyway - but running one of these machines means that you'll almost certainly be spending a lot of time fettling it, and a lot of time chasing across a global network of obscure marque and model specialists for that elusive oil seal or seat cover. This of course will keep you happily occupied in the process of dirtbikery without actually having to ride the blighter through all that yucky mud and huffing 'n' puffing up all those treacherously rocky hills... which is something of a side benefit in my book.

I mean if you spend any time at classic bike shows or autojumbles you'll have witnessed many men in 'Grumpy Auld Byke Bitz' sweat-shirts and worn corduroys earnestly discussing

MARK WILLIAMS

'RIDING AN OLDER OFF-ROADER COULD HELP YOU HONE YOUR TRAILRIDING SKILLS, IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO READ TERRAIN, BUILD MUSCLES YOU NEVER KNEW YOU HAD, AND INTRODUCE YOU TO THE JOYS OF CHUCKING IT INTO A DITCH EVERY FEW HUNDRED YARDS...'



how they both located kickstart return springs for their Suzuki TS185s from a wonderful little man in Dortmund and for only £46.75, and what more rewarding masculine camaraderie can there be than that, eh?

Yes, yes, I know such people can be accused of preferring the theoretical to the practical aspects of dirtbikey, and I myself know one or two people who spend more time maintaining and meticulously cleaning their modern trailies than they do riding them. But if our duplicitous servant/masters in Whitehall are going to force us onto fewer and fewer green lanes anyway, perhaps such behaviour is no bad thing?

More time spent in the shed rather than on the rough means fewer people using the remaining legal byways, which in turn means that it might take longer for them to become damaged and congested and thus attract the TROs that malevolent county councils are just dying to impose in the wake of NERC. That'll allow the lads on full-on, barely silenced MXers to charge willy-nilly along them, scaring the horses and causing seizures amongst the bobble-hatted brigade whilst real trailriders like me and you are squatting at our kitchen tables trying to re-weave a wiring loom for a 1974 Kawasaki KH175 without the benefit of a workshop manual.

Makes perfect sense to me.



A

s the dust slowly settles post the NERC pandemonium, I've been considering how trail riding as a hobby can survive and, after much consideration, genuflection and blowing fart bubbles in the bath while inverting my eyelids, I think I've found a way.

Firstly, go to your dirtbike now, and remove every one of its lurid sidepanels. Hang them via wire coat hangers and start with a base coat of Halfords aerosol matt black and add, in varying densities, shades of brown and olive green. I would take

ALEX PERFECTS HIS POST-NERC SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES...

a good look at the surroundings you tend to ride in the most, and find a suitable match. Try and avoid fashion camouflage, though - what works in Iraq and the high street ain't gonna' do you any favours on the South Downs.

Remove anything shiny on the bike, and make it less so with wire wool. Give it a damn good scrubbing. Camo netting (which can be readily bought in any good army surplus store) will also be useful, especially around the difficult to conceal handlebar/mudguard area.

Noisy pipe? Bin it. Two-dinger or four-dinger, an excess racket is no longer welcome. Actually, it never has been, which is half the reason we're up a certain creek.

Make sure nothing squeaks, jangles or rattles as everything needs to glide in oil, Ninja-like. Make sure none of your lights work (let's face it, that's never really a problem is it?) and mount your postage stamp-sized number plate on velcro strips. But keep it in your pocket just to make sure. Also you'll need to be able to strip and clean the carburettor noiselessly - time yourself, too. It has to become instinctive. Your carburettor is your friend. Only the extra keen will sleep with it, of course.

Bike prepared, it's time to sort you out. Forget the flash Fox or Alpinestars clobber, you'll need a sturdy set of surplus combats, again avoiding the obvious fashion pitfalls. If your boots are anything other than black, don't bother - black is back.

Camo netting on your helmet will disrupt its lines sufficiently and provide a useful web to insert local foliage as and when the need arises. Use whatever's spare for the handlebars. Apply an anti-glare spray on your goggle lenses to stop unwelcome reflections and paint your teeth black if wearing an open-face helmet.

'58 pattern webbing will provide more than enough carrying capacity for all your normal bits and pieces, like the two year-old half-eaten Mars bar, spark plug spanner for your previous bike and muddy cloth to make your goggles muddier, with room to spare for all the extra stuff you'll have to carry. Because now

NOW, THE ONLY EVIDENCE WE SHOULD LEAVE OF OUR PASSING ARE BEWILDERED, MUD-SPLATTERED CRAG-RATS/WALKERS/MPs (ONE AND THE SAME ORGANISM IT WOULD SEEM) AND A FAINT WHIFF OF BURNT HYDROCARBONS

you're going to need rations for at least three days - I suggest a combination of oatmeal blocks, evaporated milk and a substantial block of lard. Not mixed together of course, unless you're really odd.

I'd also reckon on taking vitamin C tablets, at least 500mg a pop to prevent scurvy, just in case you get properly caught out. Also add the following; entrenching tool, sharpened (useful for digging in *and* hand-to-hand combat). Waterproof matches. A Gerber multi-tool with saw attachment.

There's some extra required viewing, too. RAY MEARS' EXTREME SURVIVAL is top of the list, as is anything on the Discovery Channel with the words 'sniper' 'special forces' and 'tactics of the SAS' in the title. Never mind riding ruts or surviving bogs - learn how to skin a rabbit with a biro and make undergarments out of tree bark (Silver Birch is very comfortable next to the skin they tell me...) as these skills may become more important than merely staying upright on your bike.

Because the way I see it the *only* way we can enjoy our harmless little hobby is to not be seen, or heard, while doing it. This is where we may have gone wrong in the past. Now, the only evidence we should leave of our passing are bewildered, mud-splattered crag-rats/walkers/MPs (one and the same organism it would seem) and a faint whiff of burnt hydrocarbons. When riding in a group,

use the diamond formation favoured by the standard issue British light infantryman for so many years - it's better for all-round visibility and makes breaking for cover easier. And the guy in front (or 'on point' as they say, apparently) gets to cover the two flankers in gloop.

I really wish we didn't have to take these extreme measures, but feel we do. I spend a lot of time in southern France and if there's one thing I really admire about the Frenchies

(apart from fine table wines for one euro a pop) is their collective ability to completely ignore a law they feel unjust, unwelcome or downright silly.

All of which applies to this NERC rubbish. And while we still have some places to ride legally, some would argue that now the gloves are off we actually have a lot *more* places to ride, albeit

without official sanction. As the French might well put it: 'PAH!'

So while we're still wide-eyed at the indignity of having the governmental finger inserted firmly into our collective rectum, this whole scenario might actually work in our favour when you take the long view.

If we completely disappear en masse there is no longer a problem, perceived or otherwise. And if, while we appear to have evaporated, we're enjoying riding our bikes where we shouldn't be and haven't yet, all the better. We're happy. They're happy. Everybody's happy...*

***ONCE AGAIN THE VIEWS IN THIS COLUMN IN NO WAY REPRESENT THOSE OF TBM MAGAZINE. IN FACT, TBM MAGAZINE WOULD LIKE TO DISTANCE ITSELF FROM THE RAMBLINGS OF THIS OBVIOUS LUNATIC, ESPECIALLY THE BIT ABOUT EATING TREE BARK AND MAKING UNDERGARMENTS OUT OF LARD. THE CORRECT AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED, THOUGH SINCE FILING THESE WORDS HEARN HAS GONE TO GROUND...**

BRITISH

STORY & PICS: JONTY EDMUNDS



It's the annual TBM line-out of the title-winning British Enduro Championship bikes...

LIONS

BRITISH



LIONS

Edward Jones: '05 Enduro 1 Champion. ET James KTM 125SX

Rather than using either KTM's 125EXC enduro or 125SX motocross bike in his quest to win the '05 Enduro 1 BEC title, Edward Jones opted to ride and modify a 125SXS this season - KTM's off the shelf, semi-factory eighth litre motocross race bike.



Fitted as standard with WP's SXS semi-factory suspension, which is a direct copy of the dampers used by the official factory KTM motocross and enduro teams, the up-rated forks and shock give 'noticeably improved suspension performance over standard'. With the sealed cartridge fork featuring polished springs and a multitude of different coatings to reduce friction and wear, they are held in position by KTM's own hard anodised billet triple clamps, which feature an optional 18/20mm offset. The rear shock features both high and low speed compression damping, a wide range of rebound adjustments and infinitely adjustable preload. The forks and shock retain the standard motocross valving.

Edward's SXS engine also remains standard having already been fitted with a modified cylinder and a six speed gearbox, as opposed to a five speed box on a 125XS. Fitted with a 'competition' CDI unit as standard, which allows the motor to produce stronger power, it also revs higher than standard due in part to a DEP motocross exhaust system being used. In order to run lights Edward fits a US specification MXC motocross style ignition as it allows him to run a motocross flywheel weight, which is much lighter than the enduro version. The bike's crank, gearbox, carburettor, chassis and swing arm all remain standard.

Brakes are improved by fitting standard sized Braking Wave disks in conjunction with Dunlop brake pads while a Regina chain and Renthal sprockets take care of the final drive. Both brake calipers feature quick release pad changing systems. Michelin tyres and mousses ensure the bike's power is converted into forward drive, with Renthal bars, Finna Air Filters, Motul oils and UFO plastics being used. The bike features several carbon fibre guards including a home made sump guard and rear chain guard, as well as a carbon fibre ignition cover and fuel tap protector.

BRITISH

LIONS



Paul Edmondson: '05 Enduro 2 and Overall Champion. Honda Racing Fast Eddy PAR Homes Honda CRE250

Last year Paul Edmondson's CRE250 featured numerous engine modifications designed to smooth out the Honda MXer's brutal power delivery. For '05 a much more standard engine configuration is used, which results in a much harder hitting motor. With the bike's crank remaining standard, the cylinder head is modified and the bike fitted with an earlier model piston, which allows for better gas flow and in conjunction with the head modifications gives a little more torque.

To generate power for the lights an HM lighting coil is used, which features an 8oz flywheel weight that slightly reduces the motor's snap. With the lighting coil adding width to the standard ignition cover, an '02 Honda gear lever is fitted. Jetting adjustments being the only other notable engine changes. Taking care of the burned gasses is either a Doma or a standard Honda exhaust system, depending on the conditions.

While the bike's engine remains close to standard the bike's suspension has been modified to give a plusher ride. The 49mm USD Showa forks have been re-valved by K-tech so that the forks dive further into their stroke, but without bottoming. At the rear an A-kit specification Showa shock is used that features a larger diameter shock shaft than standard, which allows softer settings to be used without the bike's ride height being affected.

The standard wheels are replaced with Talon units, laced to Excel rims and then fitted with Michelin tyres and mousses. Renthal take care of the bike's handlebars (Emig bend Twinwall's), grips, bar mounts and chainwheels, while UFO plastics are fitted throughout. A light Speed carbon fibre chain guard is used as are Putoline lubricants. Newfren brake pads are used and both front and rear wheel spindles fitted with quick release bars. The bike features a standard chassis, linkage and swing-arm and is fitted with an aluminium side stand.



BRITISH

LIONS



David Knight: '05 Enduro 3 Champion. '03 Racing KTM 525EXC

David Knight's Enduro 3 BEC winning bike has an identical motor and chassis specification (and performance characteristics), to his factory world-championship winning WEC bike.



Starting life as a standard 525EXC, Triple-D Motorsport transform the bike by making numerous engine mods and adding factory WP suspension. A close-ratio motocross gearbox, a motocross ignition (which features a lighter flywheel), a shorter con-rod a 'cleaned up' cylinder head, modified cam timing and titanium valves are the most notable changes made to the engine over standard, ensuring that the bike produces more power lower in the rev range, revs a little higher, and gives a much smoother power delivery, which in turn aids traction.

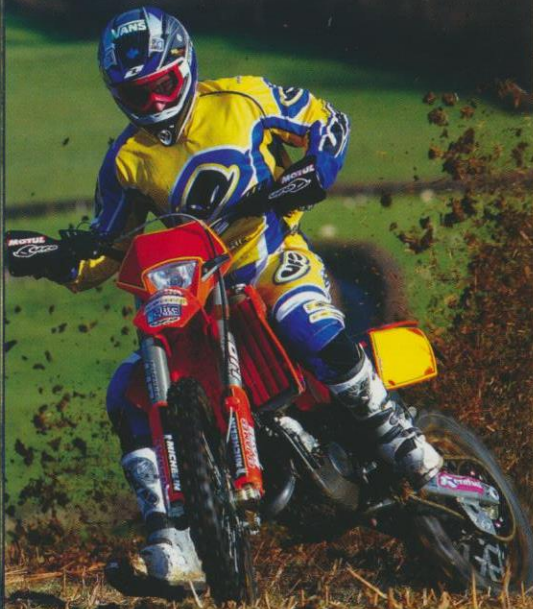
Producing around 56hp, the bike is also fitted with a 41mm carburettor, which replaces the standard 38mm part, an Akrapovic titanium exhaust system and a bigger piston in the clutch master cylinder.

The brakes fitted to the bike are a mixture of factory and standard parts with the rear system being 100 per cent stock while the front caliper and master cylinder are parts that money-can't-buy. Factory WP 52mm forks take care of the damping at the front of the bike and are held in place with billet triple clamps that have an 18mm offset. The factory WP shock features a progressive titanium spring and offers increased stability at high speeds. The frame is powder coated black and a standard EXC swing-arm is fitted.

Talon Carbon Fibre hubs are laced to Excel rims, which are in turn fitted with Metzeler tyres and mousses. A Regina X-ring chain is used. GMX radiators replace the standard rads while the bike's thermostat is removed so it runs cooler.

David runs a seat 20mm higher than standard and for '05 has opted for a lower Renthal Twinwall handlebar bend, which when added to lower bar mounts, allows him to push down more on the front end of the bike. All plastics are by Acerbis and Motorex lubricants are used.

BRITISH



LIONS

Testing, Testing, 1-2-3

With the 2005 British Enduro Championship having reached its close in late November, TBM once again gathered together the UK's top performing enduro bikes in early December for the second annual BEC title-winning shootout. Last year there were five bikes in the shootout (125 2T, 250 4T, 250 2T, 450 4T, and 500 4T), but this year that number was reduced to only three following the ACU's decision to bring the BEC in line with the World Enduro Championship class structure. So it was over to mid Wales for an unseasonably sunny day to put the machines through their paces.

With the 125cc two-stroke and 250cc four-stroke bikes coming together to form the Enduro 1 class, 250cc two-stroke and 450 four-stroke machines grouped together to form the Enduro 2 class, and 500cc four strokes competing against open-class two-strokes (larger than 250cc) in the Enduro 3 class, the reduction in categories has

seen the two-strokes capture two class victories this year compared to the four-strokes single class win in the big capacity.

Interestingly, as well as winning their individual E1, E2 and E3 awards, Edward, Paul and David, or rather Paul, David and Edward, also placed first, second and third in the Overall BEC standings (in that order) though it should be said that Knighter elected not to take part in the final round of the series in order to ride in the USA. So at the end of six days of tough competition in sandy, muddy and at times frozen conditions, three riders from three different counties (not to mention two different countries and one crown-dependency island), all with different riding backgrounds and on three different sized bikes, placed one-two-three at the top of the Overall British Enduro Championship. The BEC it seems, is a championship in which good results can be achieved on any size of bike providing you have the necessary skills, speed and consistency.

One on One

In the Enduro 1 class Edward Jones claimed a comfortable 27-point advantage having won five of the six days that counted towards the '05 E1 Championship class title. The most consistent rider in his class, Edward saw last year's 125cc British champion Daryl Bolter fail to perform at his best through injury before opting to move to the E2 class for the final round, while last year's 250cc four-stroke British champion Wayne Braybrook competed in the E2 championship all season. Despite strong two-stroke competition (Si Wakely and Rob Jones) and tough four-stroke competition (Dylan Jones and Chris Hockey), Edward put his two-stroke ET James KTM at the top of the championship to claim a well deserved win.

Edward's tuned 125'SXC' feels about as far removed from the Austrian manufacturer's enduro model as it's possible to be. And that made it considerably harder to ride than a 125EXC, yet at the same time very rewarding. I'll explain. Thanks to the 'competition' CDI unit, the DEP motocross exhaust system and the cylinder mods the bike built revs noticeably quicker than a standard MXer and much, much quicker than a stock EXC. Put simply the bike lights up instantaneously providing you accelerate in exactly the right gear or give the clutch plenty of abuse. Any failure to do so highlighted the fact that some top-end performance has been achieved at the expense of bottom-end power.

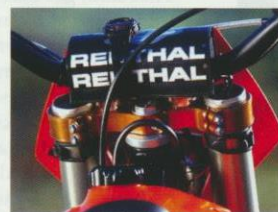
One thing there was no getting away from was the bike's speed. Considerably faster than

a 125EXC, the top-end was seriously impressive but required continuous and highly focused rider input.

While physically easy to ride due to its light weight, the fact that you couldn't relax even for a second meant that at the end of the test session I felt 'mentally' exhausted when I stepped off the 125. Because if you let the revs drop, the bike became temperamental - sluggish even. A slightly 'blubbery' mid range exaggerated the all-or-nothing feeling of the motor's power - as did the fact that revs often dropped as quickly as they were built because of the lightweight crank mass.

But if the motor was kept howling (and thanks to the lack of flywheel effect it was easy to keep on the pipe), the bike was both fun and (within reason), fairly easy to ride. And boy was it fast... Fortunately the SXS WP forks and shock (which are firmer than standard EXC dampers) provided a well controlled ride. While the action of both forks and the shock was plush in the initial part of the stroke, the smooth, almost gentle progression through the remainder of the stroke was where they really excelled. Soaking up small, choppy bumps as easily as they did larger braking bumps, when crossing cambers the bike would cling to the ground like a magnet to steel, which was really impressive. In fact given the bike's performance and its superb suspension, it's easy to see why Ed Jones has been so fast on it this year.

But I simply couldn't get along with Edward's highly personalised handlebar set-up. Not being very long in the leg (Edward, not me) his high-rise bars and soft, low seat resulted in a riding position that was, well, very odd. With the bars feeling like they were mounted on six inch high bar risers, the soft seat exaggerated the distance between seat and bars making the bike much harder to turn in ruts. I guess that's just the way Edward likes it...



Instead of starting with a standard EXC125, Enduro 1 class winner Ed Jones opted for the more powerful but ultimately less torquey 125SXS semi-factory MXer as his starting point. This bike is seriously fast...



Two's Company

It's fair to say that winning the E2 British Enduro Championship was relatively easy for Paul Edmondson this year. Topping each of the six days to finish 52 points ahead of his nearest rival, Edmondson was never headed at the sharp end of the E2 championship. As well as lifting the class title, Paul was also crowned Overall British Enduro Champion, thanks in part to David Knight missing the final round of the series while competing in the US.

As a rule, the less competent or experienced a rider is, the more they need to soften off a motocross bike when using it in enduro competitions. As a four-time world champion... you've probably guessed where I'm going with this already... it wasn't too much of a shock to find that Paul Edmondson's CRE250 has a limited number of modifications aimed at mellowing his bike's power delivery, all of which can be counted on the fingers of one



hand. As a result the 250cc motor in Paul Edmondson's bike has enough punch to make a boxer's eyes water.

A million miles away from the smooth power delivery that purpose-built European enduro bikes give, Eddy's Honda has a serious mid-range hit that can catch you out if you're not ready for it. Retaining its motocross roots, the bike's explosive power delivery made it difficult to finesse the power when you wanted (or needed) to be gentle with the throttle, but conversely, extremely easy to use when blasting out of point-and-squirt turns.

Because of its aggressive delivery - it is after all a motocross bike beneath the lights and hand guards - the Honda wasn't all that easy to accelerate around some of the slippery off-cambered turns on our course, having a tendency to light up a little too easily. And I often had to work at keeping the rear wheel behind the front instead of concentrating on the upcoming corner.

That said, get everything right and this bike would arrive at the next corner much sooner than expected. Extremely fast point-to-point, Eddy's bike is not only a testament to the power and integrity of the standard machine, but also shows how much skill Paul has in keeping the bike on the straight and narrow of a typical rut-and-root-infested BEC course.

Despite a reluctance to exit slippery corners anything other than completely sideways because of the frantic power delivery, once straightened up the Honda actually hooked up in these conditions amazingly well. That's because revs build quickly, and the motors hit would allow it to cut through slippery surfaces

and make the bike drive forwards exceptionally well with no tail end sliding. But the CRE's most impressive attribute was its manoeuvrability.

Despite the suspension giving a very firm, at times, harsh ride due to the initial part of its stroke being very stiff, the way in which Paul's Honda could be made to change direction was very impressive. Most impressive while railing around rutted turns, the 250's relative light weight mixed with its ability to chug along at low rpm in second or third gear meant it corners with ease.

One reason why the bike turned so well however was because of Paul's handlebar position. With a relatively low bend handlebar rolled back in the clamps, when sitting well forward almost on the fuel cap the bars are almost in your lap, which allowed (for me at least) very easy and accurate positioning of the front wheel and resulted in very



Paul Eddy's Enduro 2 winning Honda CRE250 is essentially a nearly-stock Honda MXer with a few modifications to make it suitable for World Enduro competition. TBM's testers reckoned it was the best handling of all three...



Second Opinion: Si Pavey, 82kg Expert

As each of the three bikes have been set-up to win enduros, rather than simply for fun riding, I was expecting to find that each would be considerably harder to ride than the equivalent standard model. Riding David's bike first I soon found that his machine was actually much easier to ride than my standard 450EXC.

Although David is a very committed rider, and at times looks to ride very aggressively, his bike - its motor and suspension - is set-up very soft. The suspension is exceptionally plush, especially the front end, which dives noticeably when braking hard. In fact the thing that surprised me the most was the stopping power of his brakes - especially the front - compared with the stock Brembos. Awesome.

Another thing that surprised me, especially in light of the fact that many riders seem to have their bars well forward and their levers high

these days, was that David's cockpit has an almost old-school feel to it - low bars, which are positioned back in the clamps, with his levers not too high. The bike's seating area had a very small, enclosed feel to it. David can dominate his bike because of his size but the fact that the bike is soft on the front and high on the rear exaggerates that 'domination', as it allows the bike to be pushed down hard into turns. When accelerating the bike seems to level off and is perfectly stable, which bikes that are nose down often aren't. For a big bike it is really manoeuvrable.

Paul's Honda was pretty much what I was expecting in as much as the motor's punch made the bike quite hard to ride at times. Not having enough bottom-end power to allow you to roll the power on smoothly, when the motor hit, it hit hard! On a more gentle 250 you can pull smoothly off the bottom toward the power band but on Paul's bike you couldn't do that as the power hit hard in the mid range and dropped off again equally as soon.

But that was the only thing I found hard to get on

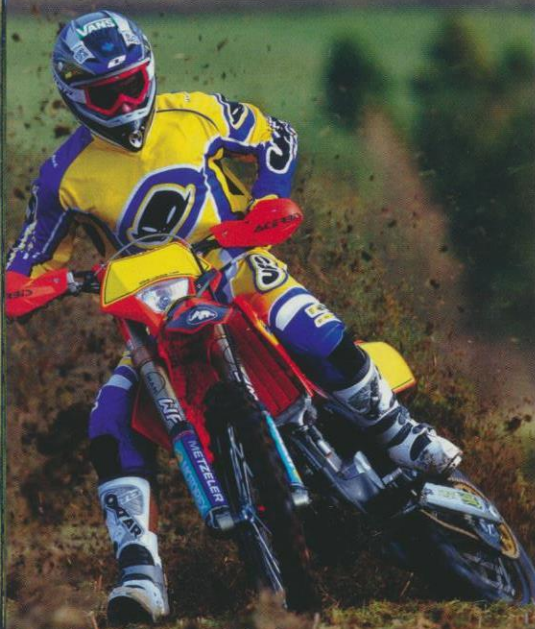
with and for a racer like Paul, in conditions that would allow him to keep the bike in the midrange without having to worry about feeling for traction, I can see it would be a potent machine. The bike's handling was where it came into its own though. Despite its forks and shock being nowhere near as plush as those of the two KTMs, it handled fantastically and was extremely nimble. Though not quite as positive when braking into flat turns as either of the KTMs, in rutted corners the bike was easy to flick from left to right and much easier to change direction on than David's. In ruts Paul's bike was the easiest to ride. Interestingly, both Paul's and David's bikes have a similar handlebar set-up with a similar bend, bars positioned similarly in the clamps and a similar lever position. But the Honda handled fantastically and was the most manoeuvrable.

Edward's KTM didn't have quite as strong a motor as I was expecting although it did everything well and was easy to ride. Although many people think 125s are hard to master, Ed's bike was for me

the exact opposite. It never scared me or did anything I wasn't expecting, it was just easy to boss about at all times. Ed's suspension played a big part in the bike being so easy to ride as it was extremely forgiving in all circumstances. Ed has a totally different handlebar set-up to David and Paul with high bars and a seat that felt low.

While it's hard to say which bike is 'the best', I would be tempted to say David's due to it being so easy to ride. All the bikes felt 100 percent set-up for special tests. Not too long ago a bike that performed well in the forest was the most important thing, but David, Paul and Edward's bikes were very much set-up to work well around short special tests - where modern day enduros are won and lost. If I were to do a season of British Enduro Championship races I'd probably take the 125. If I were doing hare and hounds I'd take the 525 as I'd be able to enjoy the bigger bike more there. That said, I'd happily ride the Honda in either type of competition...

BRITISH



LIONS

positive cornering. Although the handlebar position didn't favour comfortable riding when standing, it did make the bike turn as if it were on rails, and it's worked for Paul this year...

Three is the Magic Number

With just three riders competing in this year's Enduro 3 British championship its little surprise that E3 world champion David Knight topped the class. He is after all the best in the world at present. A full 32 points ahead of his nearest competitor despite missing the final round of the series, David's five day-wins were enough to net him the E3 title. Winning overall four of the five days in which he competed, had he raced in the final round he may well have claimed another Overall British title as well as the E3 class title.

Last year David's BEC winning bike delivered more than a few surprises... this year it delivered even more. With his '05 D3-Racing prepared factory specification 525 KTM being in

many ways very similar to his '04 bike, the most notable changes were his revised suspension, seat and handlebar set-up and the bike's almost unbelievably soft power delivery. A complete contrast to the other two bikes here.

With the bike running last year's crankshaft, ignition, cylinder and gearbox, the additional changes made to the motor have had an incredible effect on the bike's power. Soft and smooth in '04, for 2005 David's bike has a power delivery that is smoother than an electric milk float. Driving from nothing, but seemingly never really pushing the front-end like so many four-strokes do, David's bike drives, drives and drives some more out of any turn, rut or across any camber. But being a half-litre factory thumper you'd expect the bike, once on the cam, to pull your arms off. Well, it didn't last year and it certainly doesn't this year. Incredibly soft all the way through the rev range you hardly notice that the bike is building speed or that the motor is rising through the revs. Much, much easier to ride than a standard EXC due mainly to the fact that the bike has absolutely no hit to its power, the smooth drive it makes is so easy to use that I would put money on the fact that any clubman could ride this bike faster than their own.

One thing that made the bike extremely easy to ride, although not necessarily the fastest, was its ability to effortlessly drift out of corners. With the linear power allowing a drift to be started and stopped at will, the fact that the motor had absolutely no hit to it meant that it was easy to feel confident with it very quickly. So much so that within only a few minutes of getting on the bike it felt like I'd been riding it for hours.

The way in which David has his suspension set on his BEC bike is as unique to him as his motor is soft. With the rear end high offering little static sag, the fact that he runs a very firm seat which is 20mm higher than standard gives the back of the bike quite a tall feel. In contrast low handlebars and soft forks ensure that the front of the bike runs low - so the bike sits very much on its nose. What that does when you're riding it is to make it feel much smaller than you'd expect for a 525 KTM and allows it to turn well and hold almost impossibly tight lines.

Under heavy braking the front end of the bike dives to the extent that the forks almost bottom out, which added to the low bars allows you to really get over the front of the bike and turn with conviction. Despite being sat on its nose the bike has absolutely no headshake whatsoever and still manages to squat and drive out of all manner of different turns. It's a unique set-up but one that, thanks to an extremely smooth motor and progressive suspension, works well.

Conclusion

Of the three championship-winning bikes David's was without doubt the easiest to ride. Nicer to trail ride on, the sweetest to push hard and the bike I felt most at home riding. It's wasn't however the best bike at driving out of slippery turns. While its smooth power made riding and sliding around muddy corners ridiculously easy, the bike didn't cut into the ground and drive away from turns as well as the two-strokes. But that was about the only thing it didn't do better.

The one problem I found with the bike though is directly linked to the fact that it is so good. Because it's so easy to ride it masks the fact that it is a half-litre four-stroke that puts out close to 60bhp. And I found that because of its silky-smooth power delivery, stability at speed and manoeuvrability I felt confident on the bike and therefore pushed it harder and rode it faster, which certainly takes it out of you. Not a problem for someone like David, and it is easy to see how he was so fast on the bike this year. It is also easy to see how the one day of the BEC he didn't win this year was in the mud - and that was secured by Paul Eddy on his 250cc two-stroke Honda.

The two-strokes were in many ways, very similar to ride. Both being extremely manoeuvrable and both feeling extremely light. They both also had very on/off power deliveries with Paul's 250 having a powerful mid-range and Edward's 125 a blistering top-end. While both required concentration while riding - you couldn't get too lazy with them - they were also much more rewarding to ride than David's big thumper, just because you had to work hard to extract their full potential.

But the most interesting comparison between the three bikes was the suspension. With David's and Edward's bikes both having WP suspension - David's full factory, Edward's semi factory,



David's E3 winning bike is all about smooth usable power. GMX oversize rads help keep the 56hp lump nice and cool. Besides the numerous engine mods, the biggest difference over a standard 525 is the use of factory WP suspension...



despite being set-up quite differently they both offered an incredibly smooth and forgiving ride. Paul's Showa suspension by comparison was set-up firmer and wasn't nearly as smooth, making riding the bike that bit harder.

While it was possible to see strengths and advantages in all three motors - Knighter's for ease of use, Edmondson's for strength, and Jones' for the ability to let you ride it hard, my money is on David's thumper simply because it makes being good, so easy...

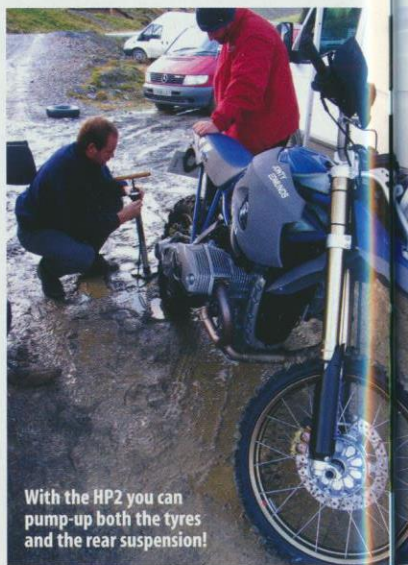
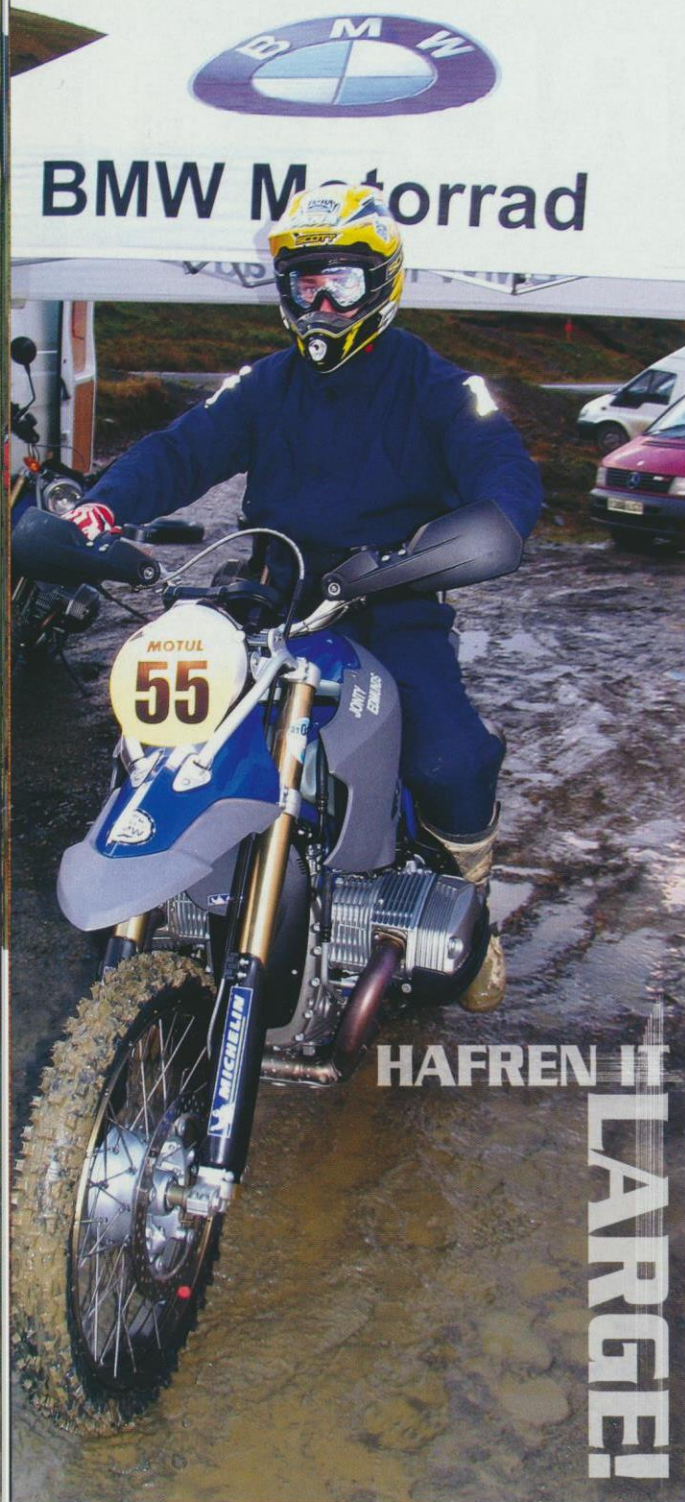
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Thanks go out to Edward, Paul and David for allowing TBM to test their BEC bikes as well as to Michelin for supplying the tyres fitted to both Edward and Paul's bikes. Thanks also to Lee, Gizz, Si and Julian for helping out on the day.

Riding a rally designed for big trailies is always good fun, and this year's Hafren Rally seemed the ideal place to test the BMW HP2. But even the best laid plans sometimes go badly awry as TBM test pilot Jonty Edmunds found out. And so it was left to Husky TE250-mounted Mel Falconer to uphold the honour of TBM. Uh-oh...

HAFREN RALLY

LAFFER!



With the HP2 you can pump-up both the tyres and the rear suspension!

Jonty Edmunds: BMW HP2

Finishing in 254th place at the 2005 Husqvarna sponsored Hafren Trail Bike Rally, or second to last of the 255 listed finishers as my friends take great joy in reminding me, wasn't exactly the result I'd been hoping for in my first ever 'rally' event. As every rider knows, 'sh*t happens'. And a day that started out full of promise and excitement ended disappointingly early with me wondering 'what if?'

As a Hafren Dirt Bike Club member I've spent a fair bit of time in the Hafren Forest over the years. Having competed in enduro events, tested bikes and photographed BEC and EEC competitions from inside what I consider to be one of Wales' best motorsport forests, I've also marked out a few courses there. Which is exactly what I found myself doing, (along with several other hard working Hafren club members) less than 24 hours before this year's event.

It's partly because of my involvement with the HDDB that I've never ridden in the Hafren Rally, despite the event being on my doorstep and run at a rela-

tively 'quiet' time of year. This year however, having only managed one competitive outing in a WOR hare scramble, I figured I'd give it a go. And I'm glad I did. Making my decision to compete all the easier was the kind offer from BMW of a brand spanking new 1200cc HP2 to compete on. Yes please.

Despite having helped out before at the Hafren, I didn't really have a clue what to expect come the start of the event. Knowing that it, (like all rallies I'm told) would be a fairly laid back affair, I decided that carbo' loading and an early night seemed a little over the top. Having won the first running of the Dawn to Dusk enduro after a supper of turkey dinosaurs and baked beans washed down with a few pints and a crap night's sleep, I figured serious preparation wasn't the way to go.

So after a hearty meal with the guys and gals from BMW and a quick visit to the event's social it was onto Llanidloes' premier nightspot Bar Code. Chatting to several of the event's competi-

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tors while being entertained by the nightlife, three hours before I needed to get up and make my way to the start I cut short my conversation with fellow first timer Ian Davies from Lancaster and headed to bed.

Having Husqvarna importer Mike Carter starting on the same minute as me meant that I had a riding companion for all of the first three miles of the event. With 950cc more displacement than his quarter-litre Husky it soon became clear that either Mike would have to up his pace or I'd have to slow mine. I was soon riding alone and weaving my way around the Welsh forest roads.

Expecting the course to be easy due to the nature of some of the bikes entered and the fact that the words 'Trail Bike' were used in the event title, I have to say I was surprised just how tricky a few sections of the circuit were. And

HP2: Hype or Hyper?

Labelled as an 'uncompromising, sporting off-road motorcycle' the HP2 is the first in a new independent category of High Performance motorcycles developed by BMW Motorrad.

BMW claim that as the most powerful off-road boxer twin yet, the bike's low centre of gravity, relatively low weight (175kg), and chassis based on their last official Dakar bike the R900R result in supreme on- and off-road riding capability. And as far as the off-road bit goes (I haven't tested it properly on the road), I would have to agree with them.

In the wet and slick Hafren forest it proved to be every bit as enjoyable to ride as it was on the launch in Spain, and dealt better with the various off-road challenges than I thought it would.

Riding the bike on the fast, flowing forest tracks was a joy. Not since getting to ride the late John Deacon's BMW Dakar race bike have I actually laughed out loud whilst riding due to enjoying myself so much when drifting into and out of corners.

But it was off-road, and I mean *properly* off-road, that the bike impressed me the most. With a Michelin enduro tyre on the front the bike became much, much more positive in its front-end handling than it was at the launch in Spain.

Able to attack climbs on the HP2 as if it were an enduro bike the bike's weight was never an issue. Honestly, it was only the fact that two rather large (no, on second thoughts make that *huge*) cylinders stuck out from the engine that reminded me that I wasn't riding an enduro bike. In the final analysis the HP2 may be big, but then it provides BIG fun...

possibly it was a little more challenging for me due to the fact that I was on a bike with an engine bigger in size than three of those fitted into your average KTM, or maybe because my lack of sleep and the cold had numbed my senses slightly!

The most notable tricky climb was the slippery, muddy uphill just prior to what was the start of the first special stage. With my bike fitted with desert tyres, weaving around the randomly placed fallen riders ahead of me was made all the harder in that I didn't want to clip any stranded riders with one of the big Beemer's cylinders. I came close on more than one occasion but thankfully managed to make it to the top unscathed.

As for the rest of the course I didn't have too many problems, on the first lap at least. Enjoying having so much power that I could lazily roll the power on and off while making only minimal gear changes, the second special test took me by surprise and was, for me, the best section of the course by far. Rough, rutted, littered with water holes and rocks, the fact that it tested a rider's technical ability as opposed to simply his bravery or bike's speed was what made it so enjoyable. Shame then I only got to ride it once.

Wanting to ride the HP2 in as close to stock trim as possible, and because the standard rear wheel size is 17in (mousses only come in 18in or 19in) I opted to run tubes in the event along with proper off-road Michelin tyres. I also wanted to try and win the event outright and not simply finish, which meant giving each stage my all.

This plan worked perfectly during the opening lap with one exception - my rear tyre slipped slightly on the rim. Releasing the air from the tyre to straighten the valve prior to the start of the second lap, the one thing I feared might happen did. Halfway through the second special stage the HP2's tyre slipped again, wrenching the valve out of the tube in the process.



Mel aviates the Husky TE250...

I somehow managed to get the tyre back onto the rim with the use of a little brute force and a long stick (thankfully the HP2 has a single-sided swing-arm), using zip-ties to hold the tyre on lasted for about another mile or so before I had to push the bike out of the test. Knowing that part of the forest pretty well (as it was home to the cross-country test for the Hafren Enduro a few years ago) I managed to bypass the final two miles and arrive at the end of the stage knackered and requiring assistance.

After getting the security bolt to clamp down on the tyre enough for me to ride directly back to the start, my hopes of at least being able to see how I would have fared by getting timed on the third lap were dashed when I found out it had been scrubbed. With one lap and one timed

special stage completed - for me event was over.

But before my disappointing exit I did manage to record the fastest test of the day and was the only rider to set a time under five minutes - this despite passing six people and falling off! Mind you, I did almost overshoot the first right hander off the start and thought I was toast when I came close to out-braking myself on the long, fast uphill forest road section, but apart from that it went well.

Arriving at the second special stage having got chatting to a couple of the riders ahead of me, I was astonished to hear one rider compliment me on the 'skilful' way I had passed him. Never before have I had a rider compliment me for shouting at them before blasting past and accelerating away aggressively.

I realised then and there that rally riders are a completely different animal to enduro riders - what a refreshing change..

Asked on numerous occasions what the HP2 was like to ride, I can honestly say that it was absolutely great fun and more competent as an off-road bike than I thought it would be. Having been lucky enough to ride the bike in Spain, in British conditions I was sure it wouldn't be quite as much fun. But it was. With a decent set of knobby hoops fitted the bike was transformed into a serious off-road piece of kit. Not in any way difficult to ride, the fact that I'd put only 32 miles on the bike's clock before the event was, I thought, pretty impressive as it ran sweet as a nut all day.

Having rolled the bars a bit further forward, positioned the levers a little higher, set the shock's ride height and increased the compression on the forks, the only other thing that was really changed from standard was the fitting of the Michelin tyres.

All in all I had a great day, albeit one with a little more adventure than I'd anticipated. Despite my name featuring further down the results sheet than most will ever bother to look, I'd definitely do it again, and aboard the HP2 if BMW are kind enough to let me. But hey, it isn't the winning that matters, it's the taking part that counts, or so I'm told... **Jonty Edmunds**

Mel Falconer: Husqvarna TE250

This year's Hafren Rally had a lot riding on it for me. Firstly, having been invited by UK Husqvarna importer Mike Carter to ride alongside him on one of their TE250s, I knew I was under the spotlight. And then there was the small matter of trying to defend my Best Lady title. It was all getting serious.

With no less than seven gurlies entered, I had my work cut out and a quick scan down the names meant that short of a miracle, I wasn't going to be winning anything this year. You see I was up against Dawn to Dusk veteran Donna Gray plus Tamsin Jones, who completed six laps at this year's D2D. And with the best will in the world, I'm not up to their standard quite yet, but I WAS more than capable of scoring a third place.

Getting an early number due to another rider pulling out meant that I also stood a fighting chance of getting a third lap in before dark. Starting a minute ahead of Husky Mike, Dep Ed James and Jonty Edmunds meant that it was only a matter of time (okay, three minutes) before they caught me up. With both Mike and me aboard '05 TE250s (the '06 bikes weren't

available), it wasn't long before the wet conditions threw up their first real challenge - a very muddy, slippery climb.

Having turned off the fire road and straight onto this, I didn't anticipate (like many others) just how soggy and slimy it was and didn't give it quite enough at the bottom. After a few attempts at getting going again it wasn't happening so I slid back down for another attempt, which saw me get halfway up before grinding to another ignominious halt. Cue Mike to the rescue.

IT WASN'T UNTIL THE SECOND LAP'S FINAL TIMED STAGE THAT I STARTED TO REALLY CLICK WITH THE HUSKY. SO IT WAS TYPICAL THAT WHILE ON FOR A REASONABLE TEST TIME, A ROCK HIT ME SQUARELY IN THE FACE...

Once at the top, blatting along the greasy flint fire roads the TE's rev-happy twin-cam engine was a blast, although I did give myself a few scary moments when I didn't brake anywhere near hard enough for some of the sharper corners. What I had forgotten was just how much mid-range power the Husky has, and very manageable it is too for what is a fairly focused race bike. Nowhere was this more noticeable than on the rocky ascents as the punchy motor pulled strongly up the climbs in third gear.

There was nothing else too tricky in the lap after that first snotty scramble, so I settled back and enjoyed the course, much of which was similar to last year but this time in reverse. And it's testament to how much I must have improved since last year as I kept up a fairly good pace and only had a couple of small tumbles. The best one was predictably in front of a group of riders waiting at a timed stage. I was at a standstill and trying to dismount when my trouser leg (baggies) got caught on the sidestand and both the bike and me toppled over. In front of Mike again of course.

The only time the sharp turning, responsive chassis didn't work so well was on the second special stage where there were some single-track ruts. The TE wanted to clamber out of them and it took a bit of concentration to keep it tracking straight. Other TBM testers have noted this in

the past, but it was the first time I'd really experienced it.

But it wasn't until the the second lap's final timed stage that I started to really click with the Husky, so it was typical that while on for a reasonable test time, a rock hit me in the face while exiting the 'supercross track' and I was stopped dead in my tracks. Normally it wouldn't have bothered me but as I wasn't wearing goggles at the time due to the extre-mely muddy conditions, I almost permanently lost the ability to see where I was going. So I'll be keeping the goggles on next time thanks.

Despite this I was raring to go for a third lap and was sorely disappointed (as were many other riders) to find the rally finished as a two-lap event to avoid running out of light. Out of the seven ladies, five made it to the finish and I got my hoped for third place.

Riding both the Hafren and the Husky again was very rewarding, but nobody was more ecstatic than the Ed at the end of this year's Hafren Rally. Because of my third place finish you ask? No because myself and Dep Ed James managed to finish an event with both bikes in one piece... **Mel Falconer**



• sam connor - steve saunders - martin sandiford •

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cutting edge
helmet
paintwork

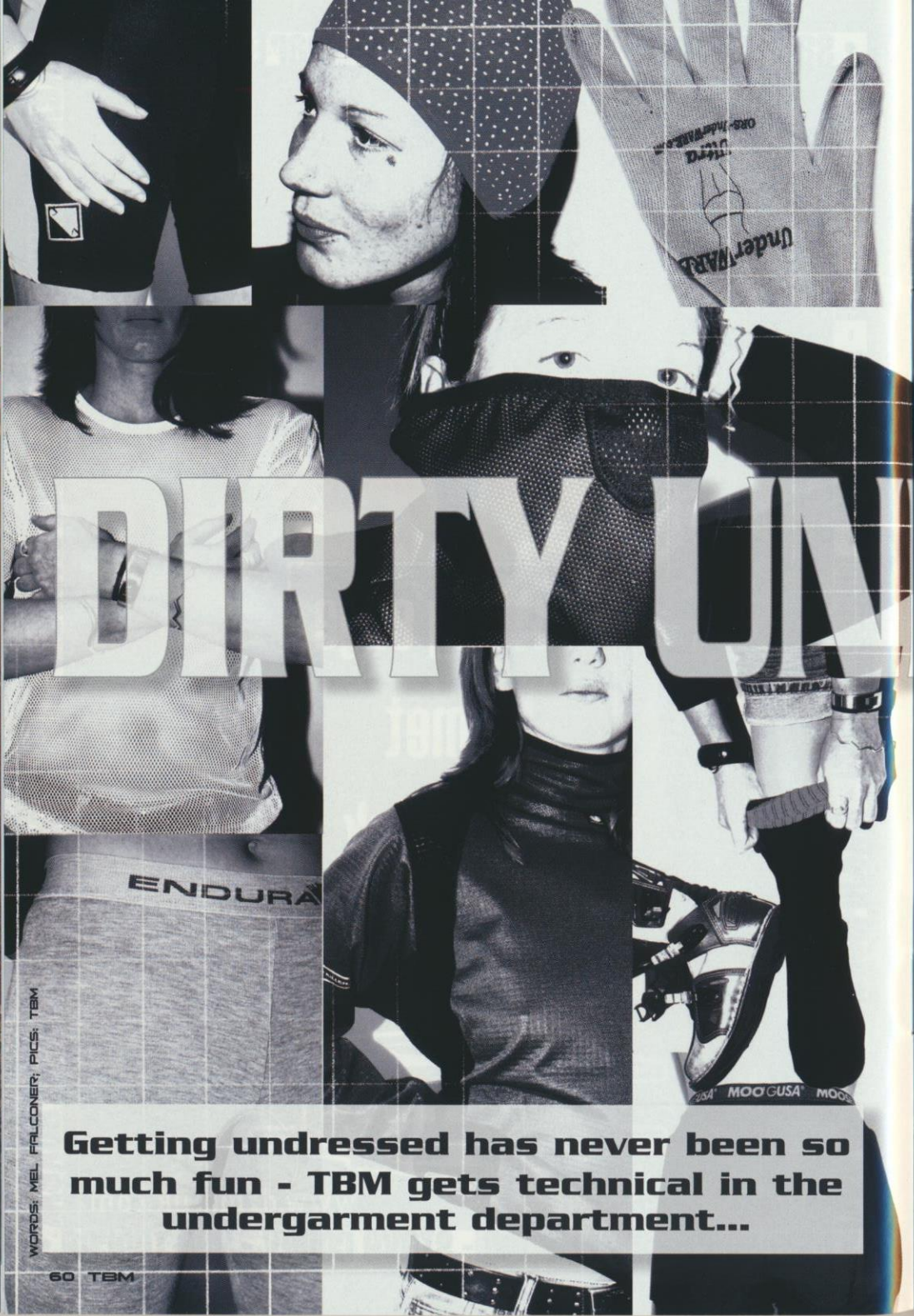
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DIRTY UNDERWEAR

Getting undressed has never been so much fun - TBM gets technical in the undergarment department...

WORDS: MEL FALCONER; PICS: TBM

With the Met office currently predicting a second Ice Age right about now, it's a good time to take a look at what to wear to keep warm and comfy out on the trails.

But it's not simply a matter of slinging on a big 'n' bulky jacket, as you're more than likely to cook like a lightly basted turkey when you start to overheat. And when you start to cool off it feels even worse.

Nope, layers are definitely the answer. Not only do they keep you warm more effectively by trapping air in between (therefore providing insulation), but also in warm weather it's a lot easier to take off unnecessary items and remain comfortable.

And not just any old rag will do - now there's a profusion of 'technical performance' apparel available catering for most parts of the body, designed to provide all-season usability by

keeping the wearer warm or cool (depending on the weather) and of course dry.

The difference between this clothing and say, a normal cotton t-shirt, is the use of specifically developed fabrics that have fast drying/moisture reduction/wind resistant/heat retaining properties. To really maximise their effectiveness they are generally meant to be worn as either a base, mid or outer layer in conjunction with other conventional layers (such as a jacket and race jersey).

A considerable amount of this high-tech clothing has been developed for the cycling and snowboarding community but it's just as useful to off-road riders. As there are literally hundreds of these products, we've selected a few of the best top-to-toe options from both the pedal power and off-road worlds for you to choose from...

HEAD

EDZ Helmet Liner £10.00

What You Get: All season 'Sports-125 Light' material skullcap with insulating and breathability properties. The centrally-seamed thin base-layer fabric transports sweat away from your head and not only keeps your head warm but also helps keep your helmet liner clean. And the whole thing's invisible when wearing your helmet.

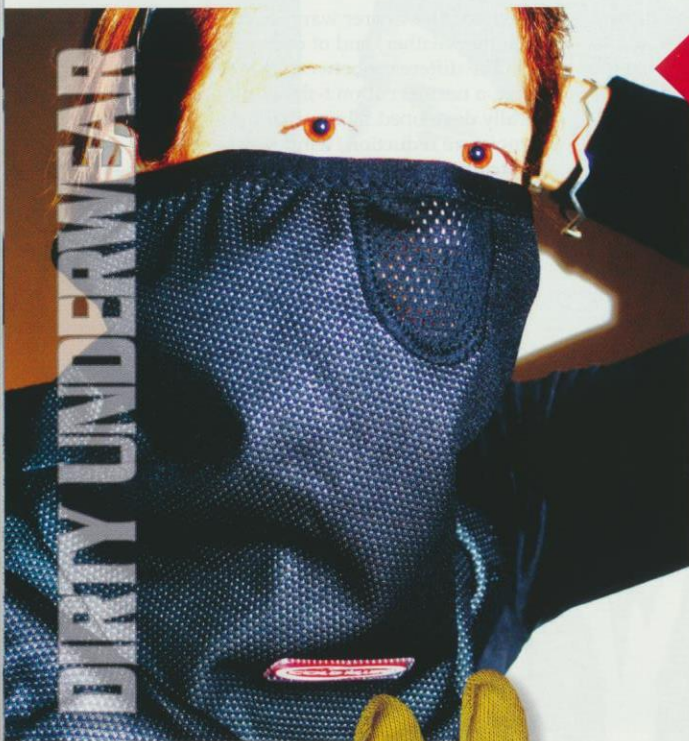
What We Think: Inexpensive (and easy to clean) way of keeping your lid fresher for longer.

Colours: Red polka dot/blue polka dot/dogtooth/black

Sizes: One size fits all

Contact: 0870 410 6112 or edz.biz





NECK

Cold Killers Maxi Tube £14.99

What You Get: 100 percent windproof Singtex membrane that claims to stop heat loss by eliminating all wind chill around the neck and shoulders. Made from thin, flexible fabric designed to be worn under outer layers. Breathable and treated with a water repellent coating, it's also washable. Back of neck section is made from soft fleece and there's a v-shaped perforated mouth/nose vent for easy breathing.

What We Think: Effective thermal base layer that offers comfortable neck, lower face and upper chest protection. But better on-road than off.

Colours: Black
Sizes: Universal size
Contact: Knox on 01900 825825

HANDS

Kevlar 'Original' Gloves £13.95

What You Get: 100 percent Kevlar fibre-knit gloves, lightweight and hardwearing. Designed to fit under normal riding gloves and act as an additional layer to improve warmth and prevent blisters. There's also a waterproof version available for an extra four pounds.

What We Think: Offers more protection than conventional glove 'liners' and should help keep fingers a little more toasty and blister-free. Waterproof ones sound like a good idea in extremis.

Colours: Yellow
Sizes: S-XL
Contact: Bert Harkins Racing on 01582 491076



UNDERSHIRT

UFO Undershirt £19.95

What You Get: Lightweight 'string vest' look short-sleeved perforated racewear undershirt. Made from dry-fast CoolMax material and is designed to be worn next to the skin.

What We Think: More suited for summer use due to its temperature reduction fabric, useful to wear underneath race jersey although the long sleeves option (£26.75) would be better to go under body armour.

Colours: White
Sizes: M-XXL
Contact: MD Racing on 01935 429646

Cold Killer Sport Top 2 Shirt £44.99

What You Get: Three-layer wind resistant Singtex undershirt with a check-fleece material inside, claimed to improve air circulation and breathability. Contoured shirt with a high neck and left-side full-length zip, plus elasticated thumb loops to prevent sleeves bunching up.

What We Think: High quality, lightweight base layer shirt suitable for winter trailriding, although only in cold conditions as it's pretty warm. Left-side zip makes for easy dressing. Is a little pricey but is top of the range gear.

Colours: Black/grey
Sizes: S-XXL
Contact: Knox on 01900 825825



LEGS

Endura Lites Boxer Shorts £14.99

What You Get: Fitted 'armour' boxer shorts made from a cotton-feel CoolMax fabric, whose fibres are claimed to be 'hydrophobic' - in other words they absorb moisture quickly to prevent clamminess. Comes with elasticated waistband and leg hems so they won't ride up underneath riding kit. Padded gusset panel features flatlock seamless stitching that claim to get rid of painful pressure points. Available in both male/female fit.

What We Think: Fabric has a nice soft feel to it and padding is generous. Cut is a little on the ample side, so try ordering a size down from your normal choice. Nearly £15 is quite a lot for what is essentially a bog standard boxer with some extra padding, but nevertheless these should help prevent you getting 'monkey-butt'.

Colours: Grey marl only

Sizes: S-XL

Contact: 01506 497749 or endura.co.uk



Endura Ladies Meryl Short £34.99

What You Get: 80/20 percent nylon/elastane mix made from an open weave Meryl/Lycra microfibre material. Also has claimed fast wick-away perspiration properties. 360g in weight, eight-panel construction made specifically for the female shape. Seamless inside leg segment, with three-piece antibacterial cushioned lined with CoolMax fabric. Suitable for both cold and warm weather conditions.

What We Think: 'Shortie' cut leg style is flattering, and the padding is thick without being obtrusive. Much more substantial than the 'Lite' range, which is reflected in the higher cost. Only testing will tell how comfortable they'll be, but we reckon they'd be well worth a look, especially if you did a lot of racing.

Colours: Black/Gold, Black/Blue, Black

Sizes: S-XL

Contact: 01506 497749 or endura.co.uk



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LEGS

Moose Long Skins £34.50

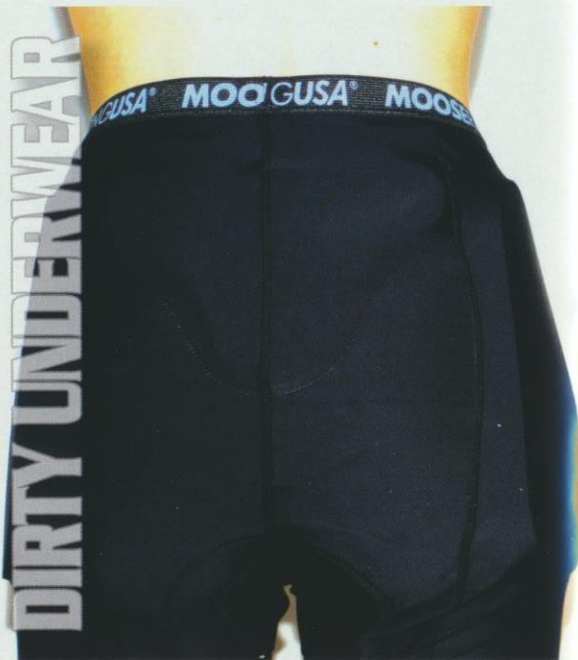
What You Get: Close fitting lycra long johns constructed from a 80/20 nylon/spandex blend with elasticated narrow waistband. Six-panel design featuring removable back and side foam protector pads, plus a synthetic chamois gusset pad that claims to 'virtually eliminate monkey butt'. Moose logo detailing on lower left leg.

What We Think: Being full length should be good for winter use and could help to protect against knee pad/brace chafing and crash injuries. Look to be well made with decent reinforced stitching. Inbuilt crotch padding is quite light. Not a bad price for a complete leg coverage option though.

Colours: Black

Sizes: M-XL

Contact: DirtBike Store on 01278 424979 or dirtbikestore.com



DIRTY UNDERWEAR

FEET

SealSkinz Long Light Merino Socks £30.00

What You Get: One-piece seamlessly constructed sock, with a fully waterproof and breathable Porelle membrane. Outer sock is a quick-dry lycra/elasticated nylon mix, inner lining is merino wool and acrylic.

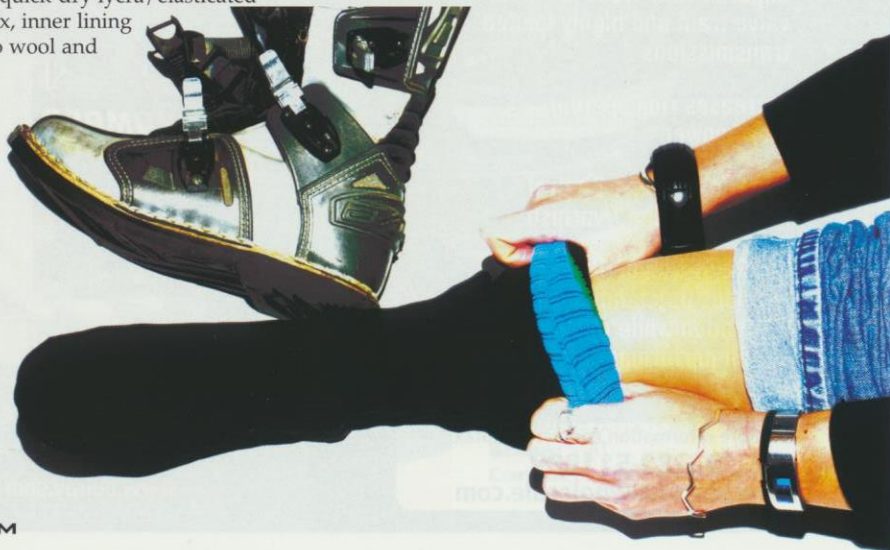
These are designed to be worn either on their own or with a liner sock (or normal socks underneath).

What We Think: Very comfortable, durable and well-made waterproof socks. Wool lining keeps feet nice and toasty, and we can vouch for their effectiveness - especially at this time of year.

Colours: Black with coloured piping

Sizes: S: 3-5 M: 6-8 L: 9-11 XL: 12-14

Contact: PIL Membranes on 01553 622030



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SMELLS LIKE TEAM



Fabio & Arnaldo Farioli...

Behind every great champion is the backing of a hardworking and highly organised team. And this year in the World Enduro Championship, David Knight wasn't just the *best* rider, he had the backing of the very best team. Jonty Edmunds takes a closer look at the Fabulous Farioli boys...

Meet the Fariolis

At 60 years of age Arnaldo Farioli still gets as excited by enduro as 'a little kid who's just seen his first motorbike'. President of the Farioli KTM team and the man from whom the team takes its name 'Ol' man Farioli' no longer deals with the day-to-day running of the team (son Fabio now does that), but his enthusiasm and obsession for a sport which has dominated his life for nearly 40 years is obvious for all to see.

A former works Gilera and Moto Guzzi rider, he has two Italian enduro titles to his name and started his association with KTM back in 1968 by helping to develop KTM's first two-stroke off-roader, the Penton 125. One of which makes up part of his huge collection of over 200 KTM motorcycles. In the late 1960s

SPRINT

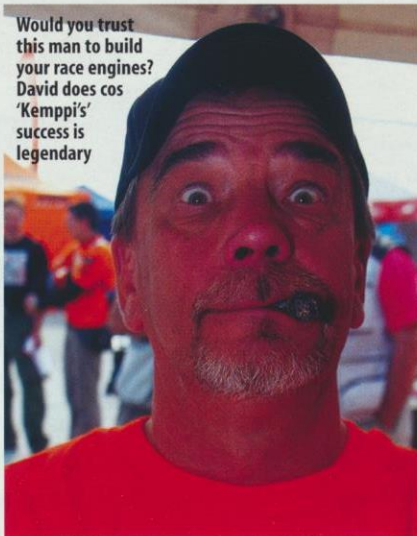


Here: The Workshop Boys, and Giuliano (also below right) who takes care of all the team's logistics... Right: Julian Stevens of D3-Racing, is David's chief mechanic...

Arnaldo became the Italian KTM importer bringing modest numbers of bikes from Austria to Italy for local riders to compete on. But by 1977 Farioli KTM sold more than 6000 bikes a year, which at the time was 50 per cent of KTM's annual production. When KTM ran into financial difficulties in '92, Arnaldo was a key player in bringing numerous KTM importers together to buy the Austrian company and save it from bankruptcy.

These days his son Fabio calls the shots. Now 35, Fabio has been around motorcycles since the age of four when he got his first dirt bike - though it wasn't until he was 23 that he claimed his first, and only world title - the 1993 500cc four-stroke World Enduro Championship. With a total of 16 Italian enduro championships to his name, including 14 consecutive 500cc four-stroke titles, it's fair to say that Fabio is no slouch on a dirt bike. In 2002 he raced his final WEC season and at the start of 2003 took over from his father as team manager.

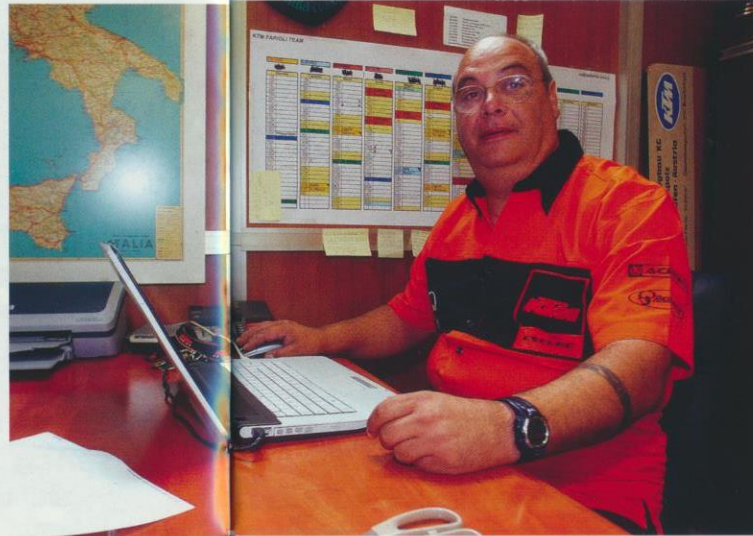
Fabio has played an important role in David's successes this season. Not least because he's been on hand to offer advice where needed, but also because he's treated David like a professional sportsman - something that Knighter complained



Would you trust this man to build your race engines? David does cos 'Kemppl's' success is legendary

he didn't get when he was part of the UFO Corse Yamaha team. Sensibly Fabio has allowed Knighter to remain at home on the Isle of Man between races this year, rather than insisting he fly to Italy all the time. And clearly the free reign Knighter has been given has allowed him to remain within his close circle of friends and relatives on 'the Island'. The results speak for themselves.

As Fabio puts it: 'David has been incredible



has got more and more confident after each race. It is normal for a rider to get faster during the season if everything is working well for him, which is what has happened with David. He has worked well with the team and made this season an enjoyable one for everyone.

'I know that on the inside he is always completely calm but David is one of the most relaxed riders I have worked with. I think that it is partly because he knows when to work hard, but he never seems to worry too much and is always playing around with the mechanics, which helps them to relax as well. If you are relaxed then you enjoy what you do and David has fun, which a lot of riders forget to do.'

Team Mates

Below Fabio, the Farioli KTM team is split into two main groups: the logistics team headed up by Giuliano Ceconi or 'Big Mamma' (as he was affectionately nick-named by Aussie Shane Watts back in the late 90s), and the team's mechanics. With 59yr old Big Mamma taking care of everything to do with money - hotels, ferries, food, flights and sponsors etc - his relaxed presence

'If you are relaxed then you enjoy what you do... and David has fun, which a lot of riders forget to do': Fabio Farioli

and easy-going humorous nature ensures that days in the KTM camp are seldom ever boring.

Within the group of nine mechanics responsible for all the team bikes, there are three (as far as David is concerned) who are more important than all the others: one British, one Finnish and one Dutch. The first is Julian Stevens - the same guy that set-up the D3-Racing KTM team at the start of '04 and brought David and KTM together for the first time. Julian is contracted by the KTM factory to officially 'look after' David's bikes at WEC, BEC and selected other events. Slotting in as an additional member of the Farioli KTM team at WEC events, and speaking the same lingo as David (well, almost!), Julian jets into events puts the finishing touches to Knighter's bike, and is on hand during the weekend just in case.

As he puts it: 'Everything has gone to plan this season and David has ridden better than I imagined he could. He has really stepped things up a gear, it is incredible just how fast and consistent he has been. I think that having a full factory bike, being in the Farioli team and having another year with KTM has made all the difference.

Isle of Mam? Newly crowned champ DK and one very proud mum...



SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT



Alex Doring is the KTM factory's enduro and freestyle co-ordinator. It's his job to ensure that the team performs to KTM's expectations...



Coming from [a background in] trials means that he's not worried about any technical sections of the tests. And I also believe that he's worked a lot harder than most other riders. He has done his homework and he's got the results he and the team wanted. And there's no reason why David can't be even quicker next season...'

In the past having an Italian mechanic hasn't always suited David. Language barrier aside (DK speaks about as much Italian as your average Ukrainian) the 'relaxed' work ethic of some

Italians doesn't gel with David's more British 'get up, get it done, get to bed early' approach. With Julian he has someone who works the same way he does.

Another important member of Knighter's team is Juha Kemppainen, or Kemppi as he is known. A sixteen-time ISDE competitor and five-time gold medal winner, 61yr old Kemppi is the guy who builds KTM's four-stroke racing engines. He's as nice a bloke as you could want to meet, loves talking about his motors and knows his



Teamwork in the pits...

stuff - having prepped Kari Tiainen's and Shane Watts' WEC bikes in '97, the year they both won world titles. Known affectionately as Mr Diesel, Kemppi has been living in Austria since '97 and began working directly for KTM in '98. In the past he's built engines for Joel Smets and in this year's MX3 motocross world championship his engines finished first, second and third.

At the beginning of the season Kemppi builds three engines for each rider - to the specification they request after an official end-of-season engine test in Spain. One engine is used in the race bike, the second in the training bike while the third remains in the truck. Just in case.

This year Cervantes, Aro and Knight - KTM's three world enduro champions, finished every day of the championship to prove that not only does the Finnish engine wizard build fast, powerful motors, he also builds reliable ones.

Each engine will do two races before being sent back to Austria to be serviced. The Farioli mechanics don't get to look inside the engines as Kemppi takes care of stripping them down, checking them over and then rebuilding them. When they are ready to go again they are sent back to Farioli and fitted back into the bikes. Always keen to produce better motors and give

the riders exactly what they want, Kemppi usually has something new for them to test at the end of each season. And it's probably fair to say that without Kemppi, KTM's trophy cabinet would require far less dusting each month.

The third and final member of DK's three-man mechanic squad, is Arnold Litjens - KTM's suspension guru. Flying into the races to take care of all 'KTM group' official teams' suspension needs (and that includes Husaberg), Arnold is in charge of the testing, setting-up and servicing of the official WP suspension the Farioli team uses.

Tempus Fugit

One thing the Farioli team prides themselves on is the fact that for many years they would often be able to tell the organisers who had won an event before the official results were released. How? Because they were the first team to use timekeepers. With a minimum of two timekeepers flying to every WEC event - though more often than not four or sometimes five of them attend a race - the team riders always know exactly how they are getting on. With a timekeeper placed at the end of each special test recording rider times and one back at the start/finish, they keep in contact by mobile phone and produce an

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Everyone loves a winner...

SMELLS LIKE
**TEAM
SPIRIT**

up to the minute account of how the team's riders are performing. This information is then sent to all KTM staff as a text message following each test. It's a system that the Farioli KTM team were first to develop and one which has been adopted by several other teams.

One other person who travels to all WEC races to help the Farioli team is Italian Walter Fortichiari. Employed by Acerbis as the company's Racing Support Manager, Walter now 48, is not only passionate about Acerbis and enduro, but is always on hand to ensure David and all Acerbis-sponsored riders are happy with their clothing and equipment - and regularly replenishes their kit bags. An enthusiastic MX competitor, Walter gets on well with David, and keeps him looking good.

Overseeing the two official KTM teams this season has been Alex Doring - KTM's enduro and freestyle team co-ordinator. Based in Austria, Alex is the first point of contact for team managers and riders alike. Organising everything from posters to clothing, accommodation and spare parts, Alex is the glue that binds together the many disparate parts of KTM's WEC race programme.

Organised, relaxed and hard working, he's well aware that his work is done away from the races

and sensibly lets his team managers get on with the job while keeping a close eye on everything that goes on.

A former professional football player, Alex (like Fabio) is full of praise for their British signing: 'David is the king' he says, 'he has been incredible this season, he's won just about every race he has entered this year, no matter what it is. He has really grown within the team and has become such a strong figure within enduro now.'

The winning combination

Yet despite all the praise and support from his teammates for his individual performances, the truth is that it's really been the combination of both Knighter's awesome and aggressive riding, matched with the team's absolute determination to succeed that has produced a winning partnership. Surrounded by the right people in the right team with the right technical back-up, David was free to focus on the business of winning races. And that's exactly what he did.

In fact as David's mechanic Julian Stevens rather succinctly put it: 'There's no real secret behind David's success this season, he just needed the right team around him and the right bike to take him to the top. The rest has been bloody hard work...

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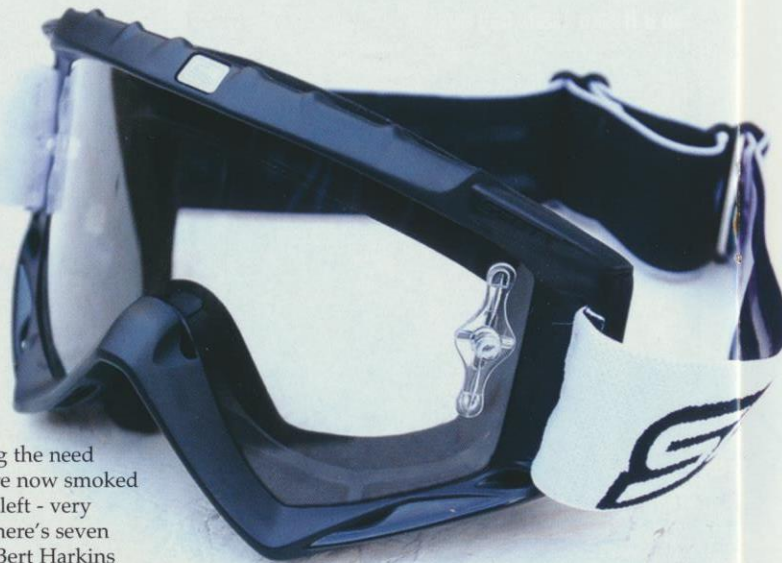
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TORICK X BUSTS

GREAT SCOTT

The legendary Scott 89 goggles have had a face-lift. The updated 89Xi still takes the same shaped lens as the existing 80 series range, but now comes with plastic tear-off pegs fixed to an anti-fog lens as standard. The tear-off tension can also be adjusted via one of the pegs, plus the same lens can be used for both tear/roll offs, eliminating the need for pre-drilled items. Canisters are now smoked so you can see how much film is left - very handy. Goggles cost £25.95 and there's seven different frame colours - contact Bert Harkins Racing on 01582 491076.



NEWS ANCHOR

Made in the UK, this three-kilo TORC ground anchor is a *really* excellent and secure piece of kit. The rotating top plate facilitates chain threading through the shackle and there's just the right amount of clearance for heavy-duty chains. It should be an easy DIY fit with four load-spreading fixing points which use 12mm high tensile bolts.

It'll fit onto your garage floor, wall or even in the back of a van or pickup with a special vehicle mounting option. The standard anchor costs £69.95 - contact Pragmasis on 01827 286267 or torcanchors.com.



STRONG BOW

Brilliant attention to detail is what makes this new high quality trailrider's backpack from Oxbow unique. Features include a built-in tool roll, towrope, waterproof mobile phone holder, handlebar hook, three-point back padding for comfort (and air ventilation) and insulated main compartment with separate hydration pack area. There's also plenty of storage and the bladder valve can be taken apart for easy cleaning. We think it's pretty much perfect for trail use and we'll be testing one out this year. Available in black/orange it costs £49.95. call MotoGear on 01536 526460.



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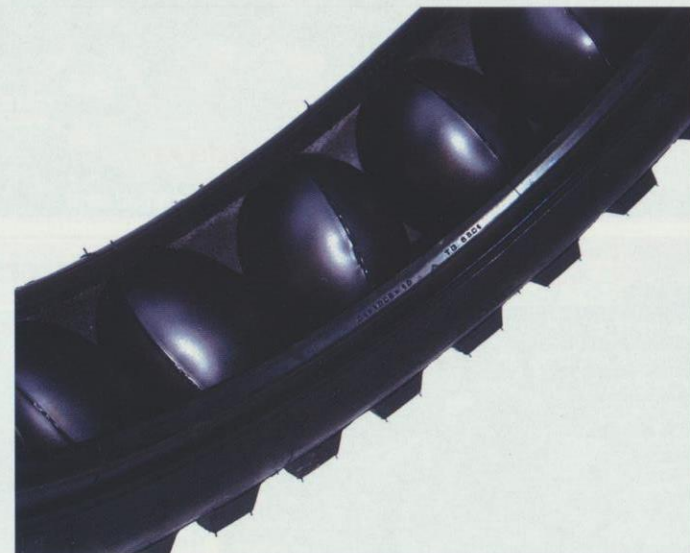
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An alternative to mousses, TireBalls is a multi-ball tyre inflation system that claims to be flat proof. The ball shaped air-cells are made from a material that's apparently ten times more puncture-resistant than conventional inner tubes. Each ball's air pressure can be adjusted and individual cells can be replaced if punctured - several spares come with each kit. There's an MX Pro 2 or Off-Road Pro 2 kit depending on your riding level. Prices start at £129.50 per wheel - we'll be testing them to see if they really do live up to the hype and hefty price tag. Call Dirtbike Store on 01278 424979.



TRADE SECRETS

Bearing Up...

You know how it is, you turn up at an event like a rally or enduro and your bike fails scrutineering because of worn bearings. Worn bearings are potentially dangerous because they can collapse or seize at any time, and as they deteriorate they also adversely affect the handling of your bike.

So how exactly do you check that your bike's bearings (that's wheel bearings, head bearings, swingarm bearings and linkage bearings [if it has any]) are all in good condition?

Well if you're at all serious about your bike maintenance you won't wait until the bearings feel 'clonky' but instead will strip them down from time-to-time and re-pack 'em with waterproof grease. This is definitely worth doing at least once a year, but realistically, who's got the time

to be bothered doing it more frequently than that? What you really need to know is: are the bearings on your bike safe - or do they need replacing? This is especially true if you've just bought (or are about to buy) a secondhand bike.

Okay the following check will only take you about five minutes on a Saturday morning, but will require a bike-stand which lifts both wheels off the ground, and preferably a helping pair of hands.

Righto start with the bike on the ground and ensure that both axle nuts are done up tightly. Now, get someone to hold the bike upright for you (holding the bars) and crouch down by one of the wheels.

Grab the wheel firmly at the ten-to-two position and push it vigorously back and forth (away from you and back towards you), ensuring that you push evenly with both hands at the same time

(ie *not* alternately with each hand).

Any movement here signifies wear in the wheel bearings. A very slight amount of movement can be addressed by whipping the wheel out, removing the bearing seals (very carefully with a fine-tipped screwdriver) and re-packing the bearings with grease - making sure you force plenty of grease right into them, before replacing the seals and reassembling.

If you can hear a clicking sound or you can feel large amounts of movement when you 'joggle' the wheel, that means the bearings are shot and should be replaced immediately. So check both wheels for play and then decide on what course of action to take.

Okay, time to check the linkage (if your bike has one), so lift the bike up onto the stand ensuring that the rear wheel is clear of the deck. Ask your helper to lean across the saddle of the bike to

Unlike with a linkage design, (where a little play in the bearings is acceptable), a KTM lower shock mount should have no play in it whatsoever, and mustn't be lubed...



if there is any free-play in these bearings, the rear wheel (and swingarm) will be able to move up and down in a vertical plane by anything up to about a centimetre before you begin to feel the resistance of the shock. Okay, a little movement here (say 3-4mm) is not uncommon - and unless the bike is new, most linkages will exhibit a certain amount of play and it won't do any harm.

However it is a sign that the bearings have begun to wear and will need replacing at some point in the future, so keep an eye on them. If there's excessive movement here (7-10mm) then they'll need replacing straight away.

From this position it's also possible to check the swingarm bearings. Again the bike needs to be off the ground and again it's best if your helping hand can stabilise the bike while you do the checking.

stabilise the machine for you because you're going to be lifting the rear wheel. So straddle the rear wheel and reach in with your hands and take hold of the rear rim at the top of the wheel. Now

gently lift the rim a few mm at a time until you begin to feel the resistance of the shock spring. This time what you're feeling for is free-play in the linkage bearings - and it should be obvious because

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TRADE SECRETS

This time you need to crouch or sit behind the rear wheel and take hold of either end of the swingarm in your hands (don't try doing it by holding the wheel). What you're trying to do is to twist the swingarm (relative to the back of the frame), in the direction it's not meant to go. So lift up one side of the swinger and push down on the other and vice-versa, trying to feel for any movement in the swing-arm bearings where they go through the frame or the back of the engine.

If you can feel some movement here then really the next course of action is to disconnect the lower shock mount and try the same trick again to work out how worn the bearings are. If there's no discernable movement here then all is well.

Okay, moving on to the headstock bearings, keep the bike on

the stand and ensure that both wheels are clear of the ground. Right, go to the front of the bike and (facing the headlight), crouch down (with your back straight) so that your knees straddle the front wheel and place one hand underneath the bottom of each of the fork legs. Once again ask your helper to hold onto the bike - very tightly.

Because what you're going to do is lift the bottom of the forks up and towards you only a couple of cm. You need to be in the correct position for this manoeuvre because you're taking the whole of the weight of the front end and don't want to strain your back.

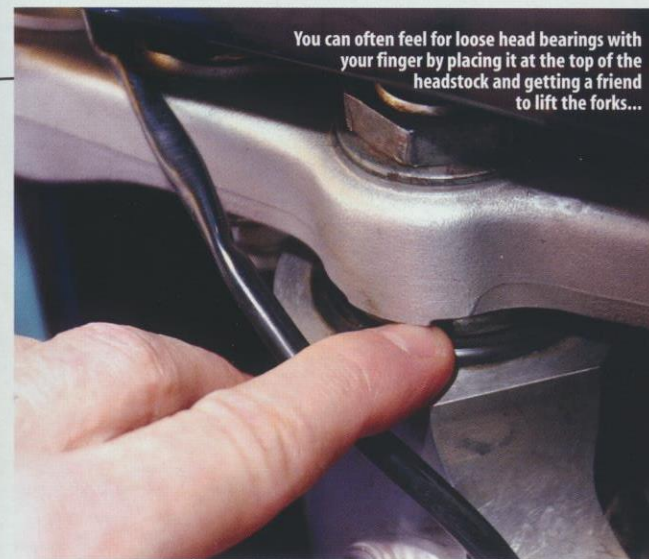
As you lift the forks (and the front of the bike up) it'll begin to rock back on the stand, but don't confuse rocking on the stand with any knocking through the headstock. What you're trying to feel

for is any play in the steering stem. Ask your helper to place their index finger against the cup of the upper head-race, so that as you begin to lift the forks they can feel for any movement there.

Once again if there is any play here it'll be apparent. Again a very slight rocking movement at the headstock can usually be corrected by gently tightening up the headstock castle-nut (preferably with the correct C-spanner).

However if as you lift the forks you can feel lots of movement, it may need further investigation. It could be that the fork-slider bushes are worn, so try and establish exactly *where* any movement is taking place before you decide on a course of action.

There is also something else you can check for - notched head bearings. Ensure that the bike is firmly located on the stand and



that the stand can safely support the weight of both bike and rider. Get your helper to hold the back of the seat or the rear fender (just for safety), and then climb up on

the bike standing up on the foot-pegs. Right make sure that the front wheel is well clear of the ground, centre the bars and then holding gently onto the grips,

swinging the bars from lock to lock - all the way until they touch the lock-stops.

What you're trying to feel for is any slight notchiness in their smooth passage from one lock to the other. This is usually to be found around the straight-ahead position. If you can feel any notchiness at all (make sure that the cables aren't snagging) then the head bearings are probably knackered and will need replacing. If all flows smoothly then everything is fine.

And lastly, some bikes have grease nipples attached to the various bearings and it's worth pumping grease into these from time to time to keep everything moving sweetly.

Otherwise, think about disassembling and manually greasing these crucial parts of your bike at least once a season!

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BMW F650GS DAKAR

When the final instructions for this year's Hafren Rally arrived on my email a week before the event they were accompanied by a picture of the Hafren Forest, which appeared to have suffered a bit of a white-out. 'I've emailed the instructions out to everyone because I'm snowed in', explained organiser Marianne Walford. Uh-oh. It seemed that we'd procrastinated about getting the GS Dakar muddy for so long that winter had arrived and I'd have to search through the BMW catalogue for the official Motorrad snowplough attachment just to make it round the course.

As it transpired, the snow melted away after a

couple of days, or rather it was washed away in the deluge which preceded the event, though I wasn't entirely sure this was much of an improvement. Anyway, whatever the Welsh weather could throw at us, I was looking forward to getting the GS caked in gloop...

It's all in the Preparation...

Whilst the 650's been here at TBM Towers I've harboured some not-so-secret desires to turn it into a desert rally rep. Of course, this never happened, and nor did the myriad of detail changes I'd envisaged performing before entering the Hafren. Swapping out the steel

bars for alloy items and losing the horrendously narrow standard pegs for something with a bit more bite were both right at the top of my 'to do' list and, of course, I got around to neither. What I did manage to do however, was lever onto the rims a pair of Michelin Deserts to replace the block pattern Siracs. Unfortunately, what I didn't factor into the operation was that none of the rimlocks we had in the TBM parts department would fit the 3in wide rear rim and so I was left to run high pressures for the event or risk the tyre creeping round the rim and ripping out the valve. Good-oh. And other than a quick check-over to ensure everything was tight, that concluded the bike prep for the Hafren..!

The journey over to mid-Wales was far from pleasant. The usual trudge up the M40 and through the West Midlands was made even more tedious than usual by pouring rain and the new knobbles sending the bike into a terminal weave at anything over 70mph. A brief stop to drop the tyre pressures and up the rear preload with the handy quick-adjuster alleviated some of the speed wobble (now more of a wiggle!) and at least the soaking gave me a chance to test whether the Metal Mule topbox is waterproof - which it is.

An early start time dictated an early rise, and despite our Welsh hosts at the B&B declaring that 'it's gonna be a lovely morning', a mile down the road my face was stinging from the rain as I sped over to the start at Sweet Lamb - arriving with just enough time to remove the mirrors, tape up the lights and strip off the numberplate, before checking that the ABS was *definitely* switched off and heading out onto the fireroads.

After a few miles I arrived at the first real challenge: a mud-slicked hill which I recognised from last year's event. Only back then we'd descended the slope, and now we were running up it. With nothing in the way of run-up, I gassed the GS and it seemed to be clawing its way up pretty well, right until the point that the



Metal Mule's been watertight all year...

rear tyre spun-up on some tree roots, bringing me to a halt. Mercifully, with my weight right over the back-end the Beemer found some traction and pulled its way to the top, though it did lead me to wonder what the climb would be like next lap after 300 bikes had been up it...

A short distance later I came across the first of the 'special stages' (untimed on this lap), and watched as Jonty Edmunds took off down a hill aboard the HP2 at warp factor ten. Mistakenly figuring that if Jonty could go quite that hard I could perhaps up my pace a touch, I took off down the hill, only to find a row of braking bumps at the bottom which sent the bike into a violent tankslapper. It was kinda strange, because although the forks clearly couldn't cope with the bumps and the bars were going lock-to-lock, the rest of the bike seemed totally unaffected and it pulled out the other side without any further drama. Weird, huh?

Mud Slingin'

At the two other specials' fellow 650GS rider Ian Musgrove showed me exactly how a Beemer should be ridden, as he came past sideways, throwing his white Dakar around like it was a lightweight enduro bike (and going on to win the Open Trail Bike class in the process). Ian also offered a key bit of advice (cheers, mate), that I should check the rads at the end of the lap as without any type of guard they clog with mud.

I hadn't noticed that the rads were bare and, yep, they were stuffed full of dirt. But even having to prise the baked-on mud out of the fins with my bare hands couldn't dampen my enthusiasm, for I was having a blast aboard the BMW. Sure, the suspension clanged and crashed as it bottomed out on the forest whoops and the front wheel chucked mud 'n' water straight into my face on the fire-roads, but the GS always tracked straight, and was far easier to ride on the dirt than I'd ever imagined. Plus, just to top things off, with the heated grips blazing away even my hands stayed warm... Yep, it really was a hoot.

Out for the second lap, I tried to hustle along a little quicker. Despite running relatively high pressures, the Michelins did a fine job and gave plenty of grip, even out of the wet, rocky fire-road turns. The hardest thing of all was simply trying to control the momentum of the Beemer on a couple of steep downhill, where a high first gear allowed the bike to run away, and it proved tricky to balance the speed on the brakes. Don't think for a minute though, that this (slight) increase in speed translated into decent test times, as I didn't really fancy extracting the GS from the undergrowth and thus near misses were more-or-less confined to almost T-boning the UK Husky importer. But hey, that's another story...

Descending back into the paddock at the end of lap two, a marshal was standing on the course stopping the riders and relaying the bad news that the third lap had been cut out. Shame, I was looking forward to those last 40 miles. So all that was left to do was to pull some more mud out of the rad, untape the lights, stick the mirrors and numberplate back on and head back to the warmth of London. And I'm pleased to report that the GS took it all in its stride...

And sadly, this is the final instalment of the 2005 staff Dakar as BMW have asked for it back.

Initially, when we picked up the GS, I was a little overwhelmed. Parts such as the rear brake lever, bars and pegs are very basic, the brakes aren't blinding and at a claimed 194kg it could do with losing some weight to help the make it more sprightly ('cos that motor's actually pretty powerful). And if BMW could stop using those cursed Torx fasteners I'd be a lot happier, too.

But that's the moaning over with, though, because as a bike for every occasion, a jack-of-all-trades and all that, it's actually pretty good. Riding smoothly, it could be piloted around the

lanes at a reasonable lick (though a trailie-based supermoto'll run rings around it), and on the motorways (on the stock tyres, at least!) it always felt supertanker-stable.

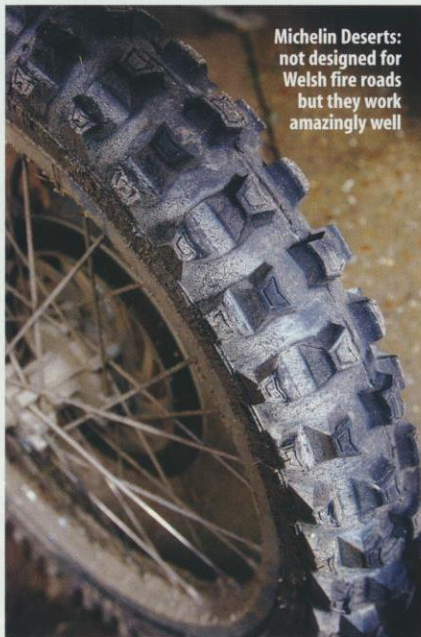
Over ten months and nearly 4000 miles, the GS has proved utterly dependable with the only maintenance being one service, a top-up of oil and a regular squirt of chain lube. The chain's never even needed adjusting!

And despite all the abuse it received at the Hafren, the Beemer stood up to it all remarkably well, the only ill-effect being a wayward side-stand spring. Impressed? You bet!

When we first asked for the GS on long-term

loan, we wanted to find out just how versatile it really was. And now I think we're in a position to answer that question: the GS is not only a true dual-sport trailie it's also one tough little cookie.
James Barnicoat

Thanks to: BMW (08000 131 282) for the loan of the GS Dakar, Kylie and Lauren at RBP for all their help, Metal Mule (01273 842094/metalmule.com) for the excellent luggage, Michelin (01782 401853) for the tyres, and Marianne and all at the Hafren Dirt Bike Club (hafrendbc.co.uk) for another fun event.



Michelin Deserts: not designed for Welsh fire roads but they work amazingly well

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God, I'm aching all over. No, I haven't just lobbed another test bike or contracted avian flu, I've just been fighting my way around the M25 to Stansted airport in the TBM staff Jumbuck.

Of course, the parlous state of Britain's most congested road has a lot to do with the pain I'm now suffering, but it has to be said that the suspension on the little Jumby is pretty harsh too. Apparently, this 'firm' ride has something to do with the fact that Lotus had a hand in the chassis' development, and there's no denying that you can chuck the truck into roundabouts like no other car-based pick-up.

But to improve the ride you really need to put some weight in the bed - a bike or two will do the job nicely. And to be fair, most people who are going to buy one of these are, in all probability, going to be driving it with their bike(s) in it to go riding a lot of the time so it shouldn't be too much of an issue.

We certainly haven't changed our minds about the Jumby's status as a bargain bike hauler, but as with anything (or indeed, anyone) you live with on a long-term basis, certain 'foibles' start to bubble to the surface after a while.

Things such as the wayward interior door trim, which inexplicably becomes attached to the seat adjuster every time you get in or out (and

which has now actually come away from the door and is living stacked behind the seats). And the alarm/central locking has played up a couple of times: once because the passenger door wasn't closing properly (which required fixing at our local dealership) and more recently because a gremlin got into the system.

But in reality these are fairly minor quibbles, and although occasionally annoying, are not the end of the world. And it's worth noting that Proton's service department have been extremely helpful and efficient every time we've dealt with them - let's face it, the last thing you want when your car needs some TLC is dealer indifference.

On crucial matters such as reliability, I'm pleased to report the Jumby hasn't failed us yet in just over 5000 miles of motoring. Mel recently took it down to Cornwall and back, drove it in heavy snow and not once did it let her down, although the front wheel drive did give her a few slideways moments! And so far it has never once failed to kick into life on cold mornings, always a bonus.

And hopefully by the time you're reading this, the Jumbuck will have visited the dealers and the aforementioned niggles should have been rectified. If only all our other vehicles were this easy to live with... **JB**

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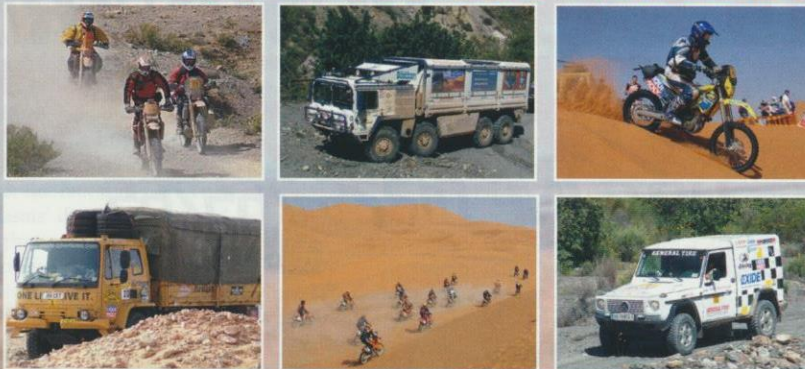
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BIKE BUYER'S GUIDE 2006



AJP

Made in Portugal doesn't get stamped on the frames of many bikes, but AJP's range of lightweight bikes are certainly worth a look for the novice rider seeking their first trailie thrills. Budget quality seems to be the order of the day but the bikes are built strong and feature some nice finishing touches which belie their lowly sticker price.

PR4 125: 124cc, a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 2-valve single, dual-start. 110kg (claimed) Taiwanese Honda-copy four-stroke motor powers this budget learner-trailie. Decent build quality and Paioli suspension matched to a strong alloy swingarm mean that the PR4 has a lot to offer for not a lot of dosh. Under-seat fuel tank and mild power delivery make this bike a cinch to ride for the novice green laner. **Verdict:** Cheap intro into dirty biking for the younger rider.

PR4 200: 198cc, a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 2-valve single, e-start. Styled the same as the 125 (albeit in black), the 200 also rides very similar. Using a 200cc Taiwanese copy of Honda's SL230 engine (though not as lively), the PR4 200 is a surprisingly competent trailie for those happy to ride at a slower pace.

ALFER

Small-scale Spanish manufacturer of two-stroke enduro bikes, and lightweight trailies using bought-in motors. Early bikes feature truly awful swirly graphics, though if you can look past these you'll find them to be great machines.

VR125:

a/c, 4-str, counter-balanced, SOHC two valve, e/s, 6-speed, 119kg, seat height 920mm. Learner legal mini-thumper styled (and specced) like its two-stroke brethren. Excellent off-road abilities, but limited on power.

VR250/260:

(Up to 2002) w/c, 2-str, counter-balanced, adjustable powervalve, 6-speed, 107kg (claimed), seat height 945mm. Powered by a versatile Rotax two-stroke motor that can have the power characteristics altered with a twirl of an Allen key, and fitted with plush, high quality suspension and a full road legal kit, the Alfer was an unusual alternative to a bike like the Gas Gas EC250. Now secondhand models are at bargain basement prices, and Rotax spares are



APRILIA RXV450/550 (prototype)

plentiful - which makes them a good budget racer. **Verdict:** Jekyll and Hyde enduro racer.

APRILIA

Italian concern who in their short history have enjoyed much competition success, with 26 world titles. Their products are generally well made, up to the minute and above all stylish. The new V-twin 450 (& 550) enduro bike should've been launched by the time you read this...

RX125/50: w/c, 2-str, single. Superb, modern trail bike in both learner legal and full power form. Peaky and powerful engine with great suspension, and massive amounts of pose. Useful off-road (particularly the 125).

Verdict: A modern Italian DT.

Tuareg 50/125: w/c, 2-str, single. Smart little trail bike with Paris-Dakar styling cues designed to encounter nothing more hostile than Rome's potholed streets.

Tuareg 125 Rally: w/c, 2-str, single. Outrageous-looking Paris-Dakar styled trailie

with a high spec inc USD forks, fully adjustable suspension etc. High seat height more than made up for by poseability. **Verdict:** Peaky poser.

Pegaso 125: 124cc, w/c, 2-str, single with a claimed 31bhp, 110kg.

Tuareg 600/650: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, Rotax-powered single, e/s. Paris-Dakar look-alike with a high specification (USD forks etc), and flashy paintjob. Reasonably light and not overly tall for this type of bike, nice machine if you can find one. **Verdict:** Posing tackle that works.

Pegaso 650: (1992-on) w/c, DOHC, 4-str, e/s single, with a claimed 50bhp, 157kg. Stylish and quick trailie using punchy 5-valve Rotax engine, good for about 110mph with tarmac cornering to match. Lighter than the BMW F650 and the Pegaso's twin exhaust is much better tucked in, but it has a higher, less comfortable seat (36 inches) and fewer layers of paint. 19-inch front wheel limits tyre choice, and beware iffy sidestand, cunningly hidden fuel tap and small reserve. Has a much softer edge to the styling with the later 'cube' model. Updated for 2001 with fuel injection and a fresh set of

plastics. Capable big trailie both on and off the road and good value. Tuscany-Tibet model gets suspension mods, 'overland' luggage and a burgundy/orange paintjob! Pegaso Strada supermoto-style version was new for 2005.

CapoNord 1000 (2001-on): w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 8-valve, V-twin, e/s, 6-speed, 98bhp (claimed). Introduced mid-2001, the CapoNord was Aprilia's first dip into the giant trailie market. To say it was 'futuristically' styled is being polite, but powered by a re-tuned version of their RSV-R Mille superbike motor it certainly isn't short of performance. The standard bike is more adventure-tourer than a true trail bike, though the Rally Raid version gets a whole host of off-road mods. Longer travel suspension, a higher seat, and bashplate etc mean that the Rally Raid should be more than capable of some gentle off-road.

RXV450/550: 449/549cc, w/c, 4-str, 77-degree v-twin, SOHC, 8-valve, e/s, 5-speed. All-new twin cylinder trail and enduro bike with looks to die for. Early reports have been promising with plenty of smooth, quiet power available. Some design details seem overly fussy, but most owners won't care. **Verdict:** The bike to be seen on in 2006.

ARMSTRONG

Grew out of Jeff Clews' CCM company of Bolton and CanAm/Bombardier bikes for the army (Bombardier were originally a French Canadian company that manufactured snowmobile engines - they are now a massive worldwide engineering company that owns Rotax, among others).

250: a/c, 2-str, singles (Bombardier engines). 500: a/c 4-str, singles (Rotax engines) with left-hand kickstarts. **Verdict:** Army surplus...

ATK

Predominantly a/c, 4-str, SOHC, Rotax-powered singles. US-made, high quality motocrossers with unique engine-sprocket mounted rear brake on some models. ATK acquired the remains of the defunct Cannondale concern and simply rebadged the bikes and added blue plastics. They also produced a crazy 700cc Maico derived stroker which was launched in 2003. But all are incredibly rare in the UK.



BETA RR50

BETA

Perhaps best known for their world championship winning trials machines, the Italian factory are now making in-roads into the enduro market. A tie-up with Suzuki produced the 'Alp' trail bikes, and now links with KTM have resulted in a range of well-specced enduro bikes, using the 250-525EXC motors.

50 Enduro: 1/c, 2-str enduro bike built for Italian one-make enduro series, available here in road-going form. **Verdict:** Spaghetti screamer.

RR50 Alp: 1/c, 2-str fifty that looks like a factory enduro racer. Alloy beam frame gives it CR styling, whilst tuning kit gives it a beautiful exhaust and a whopping 11hp!

Alp: w/c, 2-str, 250cc, 80kg. Beta's early version of the Pampera with strange pyramidal petrol tank. **Verdict:** Nice oddball.

RR125: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, e/s, 110kg (claimed), seat height 933mm. Beta's latest addition to their range is a neat little enduro-styled trailie. With Yamaha power and great styling the RR125 looks much more serious than most other learner-legal

BETA ALP 4.0



trailies.

Alp 200: (2000-on) a/c, 4-str, SOHC, e/s, 95+kg, seat height 870mm. Beta's 200 Alp is a nicely styled low-seat (light-ish) trailie in the Serow mould. Old-fashioned air-cooled Suzuki lump feels a bit dated and is crying out for a sixth gear. Nevertheless it works well and features a funky re-style for 2003 on.

Verdict: Head for the hills.

Alp 4.0: (2003-on) a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 4-valve, e/s & kick, 145kg trail weight, seat height 865mm. A low-seat height, middleweight trailie using the torquey and reliable lump from the good old DR350. Grunty and enjoyable on-road, it's compromised off-road by soft suspension and excessive weight, though as a package the bike gels nicely. Like all Alps the 4.0 enjoys individual yet highly appealing styling, but unlike some of the other Alp derivatives, this bike has got working brakes! **Verdict:** Feels like a sumo trials bike.

RR250/400/450/525: (2005-on) 1/c, 4-str, SOHC, 4-valve, dual start, 117kg dry weight (claimed), seat height 940mm. New (for 05) range of enduro bikes using KTM engines. Well built, with high spec including Marzocchi Shiver forks, Sachs shock and Nissin brakes. Quality, nearly-but-not-quite, up to Austrian standards. Despite KTM lumps, the bikes feel very different to ride thanks to the more stable chassis, linkage suspension and a slightly different riding position. **Verdict:** An Italian KTM.

BMW

Traditional air-cooled, pushrod boxer flat twins. Some rare collectibles: early pre-G/S ISDT boxers which weigh only 155kg! Genuine Paris-Dakar machines. Newer Boxer engine launched in early 1990s still with oil/air cooling, but more complicated four-valve head layouts, offering much more punch and more modern styling. 2004 saw the all new 1200 launched to great acclaim.

R80G/S: a/c, 4-str, 797cc, twin. One of the first mega-trailies. Launched in 1981, Monolever rear-end, kick and optional electric start. Special big-bore versions of which took Hubert Auriol and Gaston Rahier to four Paris-Dakar wins. Original 'Paris-Dakar' version of G/S was just the standard model with a big tank and bore no relation to the real desert racers, which were built specially by Herbert Schek. The most trailable of all

the Beemers distinguishable by its high front mudguard and simple instruments.

Verdict: Rommel wished he'd had these.

R100G/S: (1988-on) a/c, 4-str, twin, e/s. 220Kg. More powerful 60bhp engine complete with double-jointed drive shaft (Paralever) and much improved suspension front and rear. Colours were white/blue and black/yellow (the 'bumble-bee') with mini-fairing. One of the most versatile motorcycles on the planet with neat panniers, clock and heated handlebars all available from the BMW catalogue. Superb go-anywhere tourer with surprising off-road-ability but a bit thirsty on the motorway (35mpg).

Verdict: A two-wheeled Land Rover.

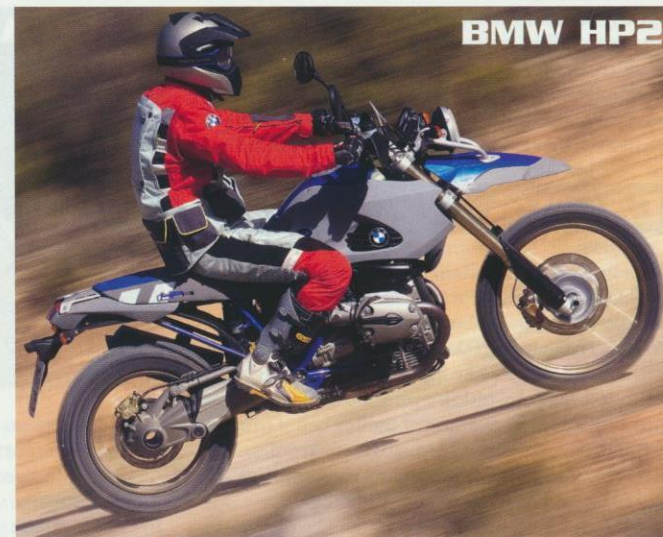
R100GS: a/c, 4-str, twin, e/s. Revised in 1991 with proper fairing and more garish paint job. Final revision for UK in 1993 with 'P-D' version when humungous plastic tank (already available on the continent) finally became legal. Also sported a set of external fairing crash bars. Single-seat with extra large rack available as option. Last officially imported in 1994.

Verdict: Big and butch.

R80GS: a/c, 4-str, twin, e/s. Small bore version of the above with same dimensions and 50bhp.

R1100GS: (1994-99) & R1150GS: (1999-2003) o-a/c, 4-str, 8-valve, 1086cc, twin, e/s, 5-speed, 80bhp. Mega-Monster trailie based around the later four-valve boxer engine mated to Telelever chassis. Huge stomp plus ABS, which can be turned off if desired. Superb road bike but heavier than the old boxers. Recall in '94 for problems with Telelever ball joints. Hogged out to 1150cc for '99, more power and torque, even funkier styling and a six-speed tranny kept the Bee-Emm on the pace. Adventure model got a light restyle (and was all the better for it), longer travel suspension and a wealth of overland optional extras. **Verdict:** The first superbike trailie.

R1200GS: (2004-on) o-a/c, 4-str, 8-valve, 1170cc, fuel injected twin, e/s, 6-speed. Not a restyled 1150 but in fact all new. A claimed 30kg lighter than the 1150, and a hefty increase in



BMW HP2

power gives it great performance whilst retaining good off-road ability for such a big bike. Has suffered some niggling warranty issues (spindles, gearboxes, rear wheels) though that hasn't stopped them selling in droves.

Verdict: Even more of a superbike..?

'Funduro'/F650 GS/GS Dakar: w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 652cc, single, e/s, 48bhp (claimed). Aprilia-built, Rotax-engined trail bike launched in 1993 to bring BMWs to the masses. Based on Aprilia's Pegaso, but with four valves instead of five, more expensive, heavier and more 'roadified', with larger tank, stainless exhaust and much lower seat, although still eminently trail-able. Great fun to ride on- or off-road, and surprisingly quick - these babies make a genuine 46bhp at the rear wheel. Beware clunky gearboxes, 19in front wheel limits tyre choice on standard bike. All models were up-dated for 2000 with fuel injection, twin cat exhaust cans, ABS option, and a new set of clothes. Dakar model is more suited to off-road thanks to its 21in front wheel, the rally-replica paint job makes the bike stand out. 2004 saw a further update, with a few technical tweaks here and there.

Verdict: Solid, stylish and sensible.

HP2: (2005-on) o-a/c, 4-str, 8-valve, 1170cc, fuel-injected twin, 6-speed, 105bhp & 195kg (claimed). BMW's stripped-down 'High Performance' dirty version of its mega trailie uses a light tubular steel frame based on the late-90s works Dakar racers, and together with a

lightly modded motor and more serious suspension (big forks up front, air-shock at rear), makes for a remarkably entertaining BIG off-roader. Fast, capable and very pricey at nearly £12,000 the HP2 is as expensive as it is exclusive. **Verdict:** Not for the faint-hearted.

CAGIVA

Sometimes troubled Italian manufacturer now under the banner of Proton/MV Augusta/Husqvarna.

W4: w/c, 2-str, 50/80cc, single, 6-speed gearbox trail moped. Looks like a pukka enduro tool but restricted model wouldn't pull the skin off a rice pudding - 80cc version much better bet.

W8 125: a/c, 2-str, 124cc, single, 6-speed, 31hp. Excellent trail bike version of above but with a couple of ponies less and no upside down forks. Re-introduced into the UK a number of years later.

T4: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 450cc, single. A few imported to UK in 1989 by Moto Vecchia. Fore-runner to W12 and W16. Plastic tank holds 4 gals, e/s option as well as kickstarter. Alloy rims and swingarm. **Verdict:** Something different. W12: a/c 4-str, SOHC, 4-valve, 350cc single, e/s, 6-speed, 25bhp. Simple no frills trail bike (as used by the Italian military), a bit like an Italian XT350 but not as tough. Rare in the UK.

Verdict: Why bother?

W16: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 601cc, 4-valve, single, e/s, 34bhp. Tasty looking, but a little under powered at only 34bhp for new learner laws. Looks similar to Yam XT600E but lighter, lower and more colourful - less robust off-road.

WMX500DE: w/c, 2-str, single. Oh my god! 500ccs of sheer insane two-stroke terror. Built for Stateside desert racing the DE (Desert Enduro) was imported in small numbers during the late '80s. Huge 18 litre tank and over 300mm of suspension travel combine to make this bike way too big and brutal for the average rider.

Verdict: 'Nurse, the screens please'.

Elefant: mid-Eighties. o-a/c, 4-str, desmo, V-twin. Engine originally derived from Ducati Pantah. Started as 650cc in mid-Eighties, grew to 750cc by 1988, though there was a smaller 350cc version available to suit learner laws in other countries. **Pick of the bunch:** Lucky Explorer 900ie.

Elefant 350: o-a/c, 4-str, desmo, V-twin, e/s. Middleweight version of the lovely 750, with

CAGIVA W8



much less power but almost the same weight. Not many imported for the simple reason that no-one really wanted one. **Verdict:** Don't forget, curiosity value only.

Elefant 750: (1988-1990.) o-a/c, 4-str, desmo, V-twin, e/s.188kg. Distinctive looking big trailie with white/red/blue/blue paintwork and angular styling with gold anodised rims (21 inch F, 17 inch R). 750 motor was nice, but suffered from poor carburetion at bottom-end thanks to fitment of Bing carbs. Nimble handling and pretty good off-road ability.

Elefant 750/900 (Second generation 91-97?): o-a/c, 4-str, desmo, V-twin, e/s, 60bhp/68bhp (claimed). Second generation Elefants from 1991-ish are bigger, and slightly heavier than their predecessors. Lovely torquey engines are based on the Ducati 750 and 900SS. 1991 versions (with Lucky Explorer paint scheme, Ohlins suspension and electronic fuel injection), had higher spec and more power than later ones. Although they have a high CofG the second generation Elefants make a great touring bike for the road, but they're a bit monstrous off-road - more like a Super Tenere than the original Transalp-sized 750s. **Verdict:** For those who like to be seen and heard.

Canyon 500/600: (1996-on.) a/c 4-str, 4 valve single, e/s only, 165kg, seat height 795mm. Stylish faired urban trailie, but a tad under-powered with its Euro licence 34bhp motor.

Verdict: Italian Gelding.

Gran Canyon 900ie: (1997-2000) o-a/c, 4-str, desmo V-twin, e/s, 62bhp, 213kg (wet), seat height 825mm. Beautifully styled successor to the Elefant. Much more suited to tarmac than off-roading. Great fun and almost practical for an Italian thoroughbred. Service history a must.

Verdict: A sexy Italian TDM.

Navigator 1000: (2000-on) w/c, DOHC 4 valve TSCC, 90 degree V-twin, e/s, six speed, 96bhp, 210kg, seat height 850mm. Successor to the Gran Canyon, even more road biased, but with a much smoother and more powerful Suzuki TL1000 motor. The Navi is right up there with the best of the bunch, more giant motard than big trailie. **Verdict:** Italian Stallion.

CANNONDALE

US mountain bike manufacturer turned their hand to building dirt bikes, bringing about their own demise..!

E440 Enduro: (2003) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 4 valve single, fuel injection, e/s, 110kg (claimed). Innovative design from the American MTB manufacturer, featured fuel injection, reversed cylinder head and crankcases that can be stripped from the side of the bike. Despite all this technology the E440 still managed to be overweight and underpowered. Well specced (alloy frame, Ohlins shock etc) but simply didn't have the performance the 450 class demands. Unsurprisingly went out of production mid-2003 only to emerge from a buy-out sporting an ATK badge.

Verdict: Modern museum piece...

CCM

The woes of the Blackburn company have been well-documented over the past year. CCM have risen from the grave more times than a Haitian zombie, and in their latest guise, CCM (Britain) Ltd, are once again building bikes. Once majored on big-bore machines (using Rotax motors) but switched to using Suzuki 644 and 400cc engines after supplies of Rotax engines began to dwindle in 2002. Bikes are relatively tough, but a lack of attention to detail lets them down. Second-hand residuals low thanks to the bankruptcy and non-honoured warranties.

C26, 350/604 Enduro: a/c, 4-str belt-driven SOHC, 597/348cc (up to '98), single, e/s: The original modern CCM, in enduro trim only (with an optional road legal kit). All of the usual CCM 'refinements' with a choice of 50mm or 45mm Marzocchi front forks. 350 version has smaller 34mm carb. **Verdict:** Better than it ought to be.

604E Sport: (1998-2002). A proper trail bike

version of CCM's Rotax big banger. High spec with Paioli forks, WP shock, and Talon wheels. A huge range of factory options were available including rally tanks, tune-up kits, and choice of paint finish. Later bikes cheapened slightly, but kept improving. **Verdict:** British Beefcake. 644 DS: (2002 - on) a-o/c, SOHC, four valve, single, e/s. Featured the old Suzuki Freewind lump. Similar to the 604, only much more refined with a smoother engine. WP suspension front and rear. Good on the dirt considering its size and weight. **Verdict:** Still beefy but better. **404 DS:** (late 2003-on) w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, single, e/s, 5-speed. Looks good, in a parts bin kinda way (CRF rad panels, Husky headlight etc). Uses the Aussie-spec DR-Z enduro lump slotted into a decent chassis, with WP suspension and other quality components - it's the bike the DR-Z should have been, but some details let it down. Enduro model featured more suspension travel and a loftier seat height. **Verdict:** Dirt biking's MG Rover!

CH RACING

The racing arm of Husqvarna which somewhat strangely, also dabbles in budget trailies. Four-strokes utilise air-cooled Yamaha motors and all wear Husky a-like plastics.

WXE50: 1/c, 2-str, single. Proven Minarelli engine, Marzocchi forks and Sachs shock, plus cool Husky enduro looks should make it popular with the kids.

WXE125 Trail: a/c, SOHC, 4-str, e/s single. Budget 125 trailie combining traditional cool Husqvarna with e-start Japanese reliability. Not the best 125 thumper (some quality cost-cutting), but better than others. **Verdict:** Interesting alternative to a DT.



DERBI

Spanish manufacturer of small capacity machines with a long history of GP World championships.

Senda 50: 1/c, 2-str, 6-speed, oil injection, 89kg. Surprisingly capable both on and off the trail. Light weight and okay-ish suspension makes it a cinch to keep on the pipe. Three versions available: Racer, X-treme and DRD, with chassis and styling mods differentiating between each. Supermoto bike also available.

Verdict: For teenagers everywhere!

DRD Pro 50: 1/c, 2-str, 6-speed. All new for 2006, alloy beam framed 50cc trailie (& supermoto) with drop-dead-gorgeous styling. The ultimate sixteen-year-special? You better believe it.

ENFIELD

Bullet trail: (1953 - on!) a/c, 4-str, ohv, single. Indian made version of the venerable Royal Hen, now with added 12v electrics.

Verdict: Days of the Raj.

FACTORY

Another small Spanish concern - actually little more than a shop in Barcelona. Links with Alfer mean that they previously sold a re-badged version of that manufacturer's Rotax-engined 250 two-stroke enduro bike, though now they concentrate on 125s and 50s.

GAS GAS

Spanish manufacturer of trials, trail and enduro bikes with many recent world championship victories. Enduro bikes (EC) come with all of the necessary road gear, and quality components such as Ohlins, Marzocchi etc. Pre '96 bikes have TM motors. 2004 versions were refined with slim-line tanks and a host of minor changes, and the '05 models received new barrels alongside the list of updates. Unfortunately, the variable build quality remains and therefore care is required when buying second-hand.

Nomada (1989-90): a/c, 4-valve, 451cc, 5-speed single. Mini-rallybike styled trailie utilising a four-stroke cagiva engine.

GAS GAS EC 200/250/300



Endutrail 125/250: (1992) w/c, 2-str, 124/249cc, 6-speed, pre-mix and kickstart only. Serious two-stroke trailie which was more-or-less an enduro bike. Utilised a Cagiva engine and White Power suspension.

Pampera 125/200/250/280/320: (1996-2005) w/c, 2-str, 6-speed, pre-mix and kickstart only, 85kg. Curious combination of pukka trials iron and trail bike using Gasser TXT trials engine in a trail chassis. The ultimate go anywhere trailie though early ones were a little too specialised (bit too trialsy) for extended road use, and not particularly reliable. MkII version launched in '98, not so well equipped but slightly better suited to the trail. MkIII version was more trail friendly with better suspension, brakes, chassis, seat, tank and gearbox and was cheap to buy. But that meant it was built down to a price. However, they still make a superb and affordable green laner, which'll tackle any terrain - especially good for long distance trials.

Verdict: Funky and fun...

Endupam: (2006-on) w/c, 4-valve, DOHC, 399cc, e/s single. Bizarrely named trail version of the latest four-stroke enduro bike with a few cost-cutting measures and less sexy options (like 400cc engine, carb not EFI, and shorter conventional Marzocchi forks).

EC80: w/c, 2-str, 80cc, single. TM-motored

enduro bike dating from a time when there was a World Championship class for such machines.

EC125: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single. Extremely revvy, even for a 125, though easy to ride thanks to typical Gas Gas manners.

EC200: w/c, 2-str, 199cc, single. Quite possibly the best two-stroke clubman enduro bike out there. Hugely easy to ride, and ride fast, it has great stable handling and excellent brakes. Not so good on the trail and still suffers from Gas Gas' indifferent build quality, but as a racer it's hard to beat.

EC250: w/c, 2-str, 249cc, single. Quite possibly the best 250 two-stroke clubman enduro bike out there..! Not as fast as the competition, but perhaps all the better for it. 2004-onwards, the bikes are more powerful though still incredibly forgiving.

EC300: w/c, 2-str, 295cc, single. Gasser's 300 makes strong and smooth power, though can still be blisteringly quick if required. Far too much oomph for the average racer, it's nonetheless a good sport trailie for those wanting big two-stroke power. The most popular of the Gas Gas strokers.

EC400FSE: (2002-03) w/c, 4-valve, 399cc, e/s single. 6-speed. The first fuel injected production dirtbike and Gas Gas' first foray into the world of four-strokes. Came fully street legal and with

quality kit from Ohlins, Marzocchi, CRD, Nissin etc. A bit weighty for an out 'n' out racer, with beautifully smooth power it made a good stable trailie, but suffered from reliability problems.

EC450FSE: (2003-on) w/c, 4-valve, 444cc, e/s single. 6-speed. Possibly the first enduro 450 to hit the showrooms, though early bikes suffered with head gasket problems. Exhibited similar traits to the 400 (smooth power, great stability etc) but with more 'go'. For 2005 the bike underwent a complete redesign to make it a more competitive enduro machine. A new frame combined with a reworked engine and other detail changes helped bring it closer to the competition.

GILERA

Part of the Piaggio group with legendary road-racing history.

50: a/c, 2-str, single. Learner bikes - not officially imported (later w/c 50 trail and supermoto).

Apache 125: w/c, 2-str, single. Big trailie style with peaky power-valve-equipped motor. Definitely better on-road than off-, and not for those short of leg.

RC125/125R: w/c, 2-str, single. Grey import only Dakar replica, RC and more trailable R version, powerful and well suspended but obviously a rare sight in the UK.

RC600: w/c, 4str, 558cc, single, e/s. Nice-looking P-D styled trailie with unimpeachable Paris-Dakar winning pedigree. Shares engine with Nordwest. **Verdict:** Italian eye-candy.

XRT600: w/c, 4str, 558cc, single, e/s. Clumsily styled, Paris-Dakar influenced big trailie that uses the stock Gilera lump in yet another manifestation. Big, heavyish and extremely rare in the UK.

Verdict: Ugly duckling.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON

Not the V-twins, but a mish-mash of European-made stuff with the H-D badge.

H-D 90: a/c, 2-str, 90cc, single. Aermacchi-made 1970s mini-trail fun-bike. Passable off-road, but very rare these days.

H-D 350: a/c, 4-str belt-driven SOHC, 348cc, single, e/s. CCM sold the rights to the Armstrong army bikes to H-D circa 1992, and

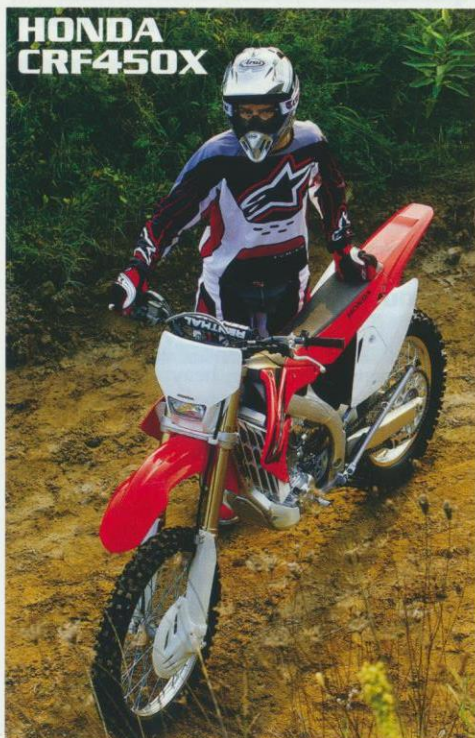
H-D duly won the British army contract. Now electric start (after heavy squaddie casualties with the old left-side kick-starts) and reportedly more robust but downsized from 500 to 350cc.

Verdict: Army Hog.

HONDA

XL: a/c, 4-str, trail. **XR:** a/c, 4-str, enduro. **MTX:** a & w/c, 2-str, trail. **CRM:** w/c, 2-str, trail. **CR:** a/c & w/c, 2-str, **CRF:** w/c 4-str MXers, CRF-X latest generation of enduro thumpers. **Basic beginners' bikes:** XL100S, XL125S, XL185S. 1970s-80s. All use basically the same SOHC air-cooled engine in twin-shock chassis (but with different gearboxes). Great bread-and-butter trail bikes, but getting long in the tooth nowadays. As with all small Hondas, frequent oil changes are the key to a long, trouble-free life.

Cub 90: Wacky off-road 'scooter' for wacky off-road riders, different, but lacking any lights or credibility! **Verdict:** For planet-e.



**HONDA
CRF450X**

MT50: a/c, 2-str, single. Many a 16 year-old's first bike. Unburstable moped-legal trail bike.

Verdict: Fun in a small package.

MTX125: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single, 103kg. Learner-legal monoshock trail bike with an unfortunate propensity for brewing up in serious off-roaders. Second gear also gave problems. Not as robust as the XLs.

MTX200: w/c, 2-str, 198cc, single. Bigger brother of 125, but never quite lived up to expectations. Quite rare and prone to boiling up - no cooling fan. Be very careful replacing ceramic seal on the water pump. Questionable reliability especially with early ones.

Verdict: Water heater.

CL250S: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Bit of an oddity sold to farmers in the early Eighties, for on- and off-road work. Unusual in that it featured a 5-speed gearbox with a range of both high and low options. More roadified than most trailies with low saddle and front mudguard, and chromed (twin) shocks. Boxy styling and front and rear drum brakes makes it rare but not highly desirable. **Verdict:** Ideal for muckspreading!

TLM200/250: a/c 2-str, 199/243cc single. Like the original 2-str Beta Alp, the TLM (and TLRs) were more or less trail bike versions of trials irons dressed up for the road. Not as single purpose as a pukka trials bike, but perfect for real snotty lanes and long distance trials.

TLR200/250: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 199/244cc single. As above but thumper version. Cheap to buy and run, also easy to ride with a low seat height. Rare 250 Jap import version available.

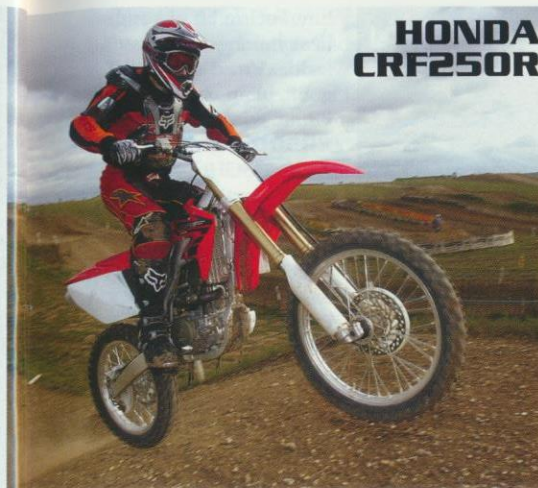
XL100: a/c 4-str, SOHC, single, 6-speed. Very basic, cheap to run and insure novice friendly trailie. Later versions were much smaller all round with more basic instruments.

Verdict: Good starter machine if you can still find a good one.

XL125: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 123cc, single, 6-speed. Basic, twin-shock learner bike used by legions of beginners in the 70s & 80s. Usually badly treated, unusually they still survive.

XL125R: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 123cc, single, 6-speed. Monoshock version of above, analogous to 250R and 500R. Later, Italian-built monoshock Dakar version with big tank and electric-start can be found as grey import.

XL125V Varadero: 1/c, 4-str, 4-valve SOHC, 125cc, V-twin. A miniature version of the one-litre Varadero for learners and commuters who want that adventure bike feel. And at a



**HONDA
CRF250R**

claimed 149kg dry, it should prepare them for a big bike..!

XL185: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 185cc, single, 5-speed. One of the definitive original green-laners. Twin shock version only, but can be upgraded with later 125R parts, including chassis!

XL250: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. Started life way back in the 1970s with the Motosport, a basic twin-shock trail bike not unlike Yam's XT500. **Verdict:** Capable plodder.

XL250S: (1978-88), a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 248cc, single, which sported a four-valve, twin-pump head, but 6-volt electrics at first; twin shocks and poor SLS front and rear brakes and an unusual 23in front wheel, giving little tyre choice. Later versions adopted the Honda Pro-Link rear end and 12-volt electrics. Good all rounder, but better on the road than off it. Comfy saddle and decent build quality make this a reasonable second-hand buy if you can find one.

XL250 Degree: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve single, e/s only, 119kg, seat height 790mm. Grey import low seat trailie with smooth high-tech liquid-cooled motor but off-road capability limited by soft suspension. Ideal bike for the short novice rider who spends more time on the street than on the dirt. **Verdict:** Green laner for the vertically challenged.

XL500S: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Practically identical to the XL250 apart from the bigger cylinder and head and a longer frame, but loads more stomp and the same poor front brake and 23in front wheel!

XL250R/500R: (1984-??), a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. With cylinder heads now blessed with Radial Four Valve Combustion (RFVC), vastly superior Pro-Link mono-shock suspension, beefier forks and much better TLS front brake with a 21in wheel, and 12-volt electrics - a much better bet all round than the 'S' models. The 250R finally lost its metal tank and was developed into the XR version.

Frequent oil changes are essential cos cam runs direct in head although bearing conversions are available. Some 250s suffered from iffy gearboxes and frequent top-end problems.

Verdict: Cheaper than an XR.

XL350/400: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Grey import originally built for French and Japanese markets - a big-bore version of the 250 rather than a sleeved down 500.

Verdict: Very rare.

XL600R: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Larger version of 500R later swapped its drum front brake for a disc.

XL600LM: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Paris-Dakar version of above with big tank, flashy twin headlights, red painted engine, tubeless gold spoked rims and electric start. Unfortunately it didn't go as well as it looked - only 26bhp at the rear wheel.

Verdict: Individual but soft.

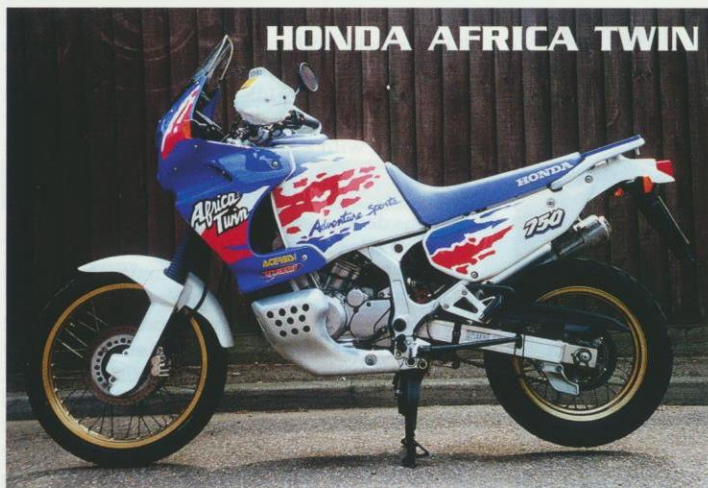
XR75/80: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. Small wheel mini-bike with poky engine for teenagers. **Verdict:** The perfect start.

XR100: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 99cc, single, 6-speed, 68kg. Mini off-roader based on XL100 engine but with 19in front and 16in rear wheels. Great, fun bike on which to learn basics. World champion road racer Kenny Roberts uses them to teach sliding techniques to GP hopefuls.

XR125L: (2003-on) a/c, 4-str, SOHC 123cc, single, 6-speed. New take on an old idea. Built in Brazil for novice, learner trail fans on a budget. Great on-road, not so good off-. Has sold in huge numbers. **Verdict:** Cheap and cheerful.

XR200: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single, 5-speed. Early twin-shock bikes (originally based on the XL185) made brilliant green-laners. Still fairly popular though later monoshock versions are better and more plentiful. Drum brakes let it down though some late Japanese spec models come with discs. Light enough to pick up if need be. **Verdict:** Still a great trail bike.

XR250(R): a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Based on both XL250S and 250R with identical frames but more suspension travel, disc front



HONDA AFRICA TWIN

buy. Feels a bit old and heavy alongside current tackle. **Verdict:** Still good, in an old-fashioned kinda' way...

XR500: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Bigger version of XR250, early version was developed into the XR550RR on which Cyril Neveu won the 1982 Paris-Dakar rally.

XR600: (1984-1998) a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Several versions since 1984, mostly imported from USA until Honda UK started importing in 1994. Early

versions easy to identify by their drum rear brake and twin carbs. All are great off-rovers, with pukka suspension and light-ish chassis, but some can be real pigs to start. Euro versions came with proper speedo and head and tail lights (but no indicators). XR600 still makes a decent overlander - light, relatively simple and very robust. Official HRC hop-up kit with big bore (630cc) is available but tons of other people make bits for them. **Verdict:** Big but capable...

XR650L: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 644cc, single, e/s. Grey imported, fully street legal version of the XR600 using electric-start Dominator engine and some of the road going niceties. Weight penalty, but balancer shaft makes this a much nicer animal on the road, and not much worse off it. Not to be confused with the newer, liquid cooled XR650R.

Verdict: Worth searching out.

XR650R: (2000-on) w/c, 4-str, SOHC, 4-valve single, 5-speed, kickstart only, 144kg (wet), seat height 935mm. Alloy framed, liquid-cooled successor to the XR6. Seamless grunt off the bottom together with arm wrenching mid-range and seriously quick top-end makes the XR650R the one to beat. Feels its weight and small brakes don't help. And where's the electric start, Honda? **Verdict:** Good but flawed...

NX125: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 123cc, single, 6-speed. Mini-mini Dominator for continental learner market, based on the XL125 motor. Popular commuter in France, not seen much over here.

NX250/350: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC,

single, e/s. Mini-Dominator, much smaller and lighter than big brother and surprisingly quick (85mph) thanks to a relatively highly tuned water-cooled engine. Ideal for the vertically challenged and for doubling up as an economical commuter. 350cc (Sahara) version built in Brazil for South American market.

AX1: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single, e/s. Japanese home market version of the NX250, built for the street only, with cast wheels and twin tail lights. Rare in the UK.

NX650P Dominator: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 644cc, single, e/s. The definitive civilised big-single four-stroke trail bike, with genuine off road ability. Torquey motor with handy electric start - early versions had kickstart as well. Classy cosmetics make crashing expensive and despite the mini-fairing still much more tiring than something like a Transalp on motorways. Nevertheless, a good touring bike providing you don't want to go too fast. Watch out for rotted wheel rims on early models. Plentiful in UK but high build quality means secondhand prices are quite steep.

XLV600VP Transalp: w/c, 4-str, 6-valve, SOHC, 583cc, V-twin, e/s. Called the Rally Tourer, its name fits its description. True dual-purpose machine, great all-rounder. Engine based on the VT500, and larger versions power the Bros and Africa Twin. Unburstable and torquey motor churns out a claimed 55bhp but can be tricky to work on unless out of the frame. Expensive cosmetics worth protecting if you're going to venture off-road. Early versions had drum rear brake which was prone to going oval. And some suffered rotting wheel rims (like Dominator), and high disc wear. Slight facelift in 1993 improved fairing protection slightly. Later versions also come with handy centre stand which was an option on earlier models. Beware handlebar rubber-mounts wearing out giving 'twisted' and remote feel to bars. Sensible secondhand prices. **Verdict:** Superb trail tourer.

XL650V Transalp (2000-on): w/c, 4-str, SOHC, 6 valve V-twin, e/s. The latest 'Trannie' is blessed with a larger 647cc lump which offers a tad more power and torque than the 600 model it replaced. Smoother more rounded styling give this Italian-built all-rounder a new lease of life, and continues to get detail changes to this day.

Verdict: Same as before only more so!

XLV750: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, V-twin. Grey imported mid-80s precursor to Transalp and Africa

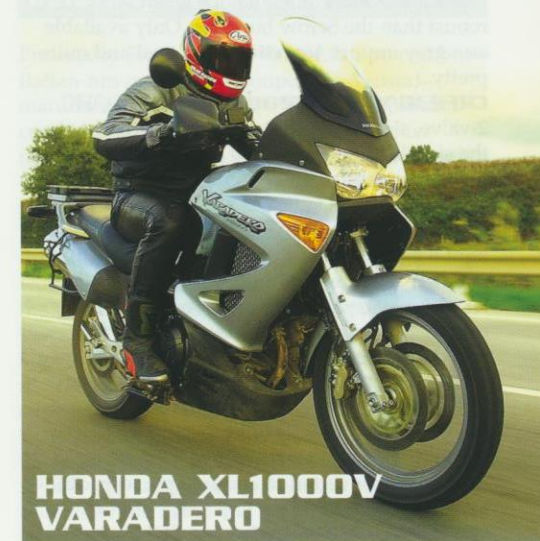
Twin but featuring shaft-drive, no fairing and distinctive red engine.

XR650 Africa Twin: w/c, 4-str, 6-valve, SOHC, V-twin, e/s. Even closer to HRC P-D specials, mass-produced monster trailie that was extremely popular in Europe in 1989. About 100 were specially built for HRC-supported mass entries to Paris Dakar.

XR750 Africa Twin: w/c, 4-str, 6-valve, SOHC, 742cc, V-twin, e/s. Bored out from 650cc to 742cc in 1990 to make an impressive but rather top-heavy Paris-Dakar styled mega-trailie. Much more expensive than the competition at the time, though they had high build quality and came with trick on-board computer. Better off-road than you'd imagine, especially on fast and dusty trails.

XR750R Africa Twin: w/c, 4-str, 6-valve, SOHC, 742cc, V-twin, e/s. Lightened, lowered and improved 1993-on version of its forbear. Superb, top quality all-rounder.

XL1000V Varadero: (1998-on) w/c, 4-str, 8-valve, V-twin. Huge (and some say ugly) cast wheel shod super-trailie featuring a cracking re-tuned FireStorm motor. Weird and over complex linked brake system coupled to a dry weight of over 220ks gives the 'Dero' only limited off-road ability. ABS an option from '04 onwards. Honda luggage system available and together with a true 130mph plus performance makes this bike a serious adventure tourer.



HONDA XL1000V VARADERO

brake and slightly hotter cam giving small power increase. Early monoshock with twin carbs could be difficult to start when hot. Later single-carb model better. The XR250 makes a good off-road all-rounder - reasonably light weight and adequate power makes it great for trail riders and novice enduro riders alike, and tolerable on the road. Thorough redesign in 1996 helped keep it up to date though it's still not a match for the new generation 250 thumpers. Baja version available with huge twin headlamps, among other detail changes. Fully street legal Jap import version sports e-start and other road going niceties. **Verdict:** Popular for a reason...

XR250L: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single.

Grey import with road-legal lights, speedo and indicators. Slightly heavier than the R.

XR350: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single.

Mid-Eighties twin carbs, (monoshock) version, only imported for a very short time and now rare in UK. Much the same as the early 250 but with extra poke and unfortunately extra weight.

XR400R: (1996-on) a/c, 4-valve, 4-str, SOHC single, 5-speed, kickstart only, 118kg. Seat height 930mm. Simple and rugged off-roader in the traditional XR style. Enormously popular at first but lack of e-start and development held it back. Undergone only minor updates (such as red plastics in 2000) during its lifetime. Heaps of useable grunt coupled to a quick-steering chassis provides all the real world performance you could ask for. Decent suspension, good build quality and a bullet-proof motor and build quality make the XR400 a popular secondhand

Verdict: Point south, next stop Marrakech!

CRM50/125: Smaller learner versions of the popular CRM250. Very rare in Britain.

CRM250R: (1989-2000) w/c, 2-str single, balancer shaft, oil injection, kickstart only. Grey import trailie which though no longer made, continues to sell well secondhand, and has single-handedly changed the face of the British off-road scene. A fantastic smooth, powerful and more importantly grunty two-stroke motor endows the CRM with more than enough performance to tackle just about anything.

Surprisingly little changed until the advent of the Active Radical AR model in '97. **MkI:** (1989-91) Conventional forks, oil in frame, red plastics.

MkII: (1991-94) USD forks, beefier rear shock, updated graphics. **MkIII:** (1994-97) Re-styled, up-rated suspension, separate oil tank, stainless steel silencer. **Colours:** Pink/purple, white/black and white/purple. **AR:** (1997-2000) Complete redesign of the motor with its 'eco-friendly' Active Radical ignition. More torque but less power. **Colours:** Black/purple, white/black/red and purple/white. **Verdict:** Quite probably the finest trail bike ever made.

SL230: (1998-on) a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 2 valve, single, e/s only, 112kg. Big H's attempt to muscle in on the successful Serow market. Smooth, soft motor and supple suspension give the mellow 230 a sensible trail bike image. This combined with a low seat height of 810mm and frugal appetite for unleaded, make this an ideal bike for the short of leg novice green-laner. Less robust than the Serow however. Only available as a grey import. **Verdict:** Unusual and quite pretty...

CRF230/XR230 (2003-on): a/c, SOHC, 2-valve, single. Available as a grey import only, the simple but effective 230 is the latest in a long line of diminutive air-chilled Honda thumpers. Popular with the ladies as well as those of diminished stature thanks to its low(ish) seat, light weight and easy going trail manners, it's got a great engine and pretty good chassis, but let down by drum rear brake. Some rear disc models now available. Looks great, too!

Verdict: Good things come in small packages...

CRF250R (2003-on): w/c, SOHC, 4-valve, k/s, single. Great new generation MX thumper, with dedicated chassis built to suit small motor. Torquey 'Unicam' motor makes it very easy to ride. Some converted to enduro spec, especially for hare 'n' hounds use.

CRF250X (2004-on): w/c, SOHC, 4-valve,



dual start, single. The most eagerly awaited enduro bike of recent times. Not quite as quick as the MXer promised, and requires derestricting for serious racing, but still a great bike for clubman racers. Good and torquey, with great suspension, it was by far the best selling enduro bike of 2004, despite not coming road legal! Problems with valves receding into the valve seats and rear wheel spokes loosening off have now been sorted.

CRF450R (2001-on): w/c, SOHC, 4-valve, k/s single, e/s, 5-speed. Trick alloy beam-framed CRF thumper comes with a fantastic Honda pedigree. Plenty were converted into trail/enduro spec but really produces too much (fierce) power to make a decent enduro bike.

Verdict: Much too much...

CRF450X (2005-on): w/c, SOHC, 4-valve, dual start, single. Honda's entry into the trail/enduro thumper market was worth the wait. Alloy beam frame, great suspension and handling, plus Honda reliability. Great midrange and a great overall package, though sadly not homologated for road use as standard.

Verdict: Solid middleweight performer...

HM ITALIA

The Italian Honda importers convert CR and CRF 'crossers (plus the little 230F) into enduro (and trail) ready machines. Almost bewildering range of models and spec. Relatively expensive to buy new and still rare in the UK thanks to a lack of importer.

CRE Six/Baja 50: 1/c, 49cc, 2-str, single. Enduro-styled, ally-framed, two-stroke 50s that look more than capable off-road. Same cosmetics

as other HMs, though not badged as Hondas.

CRF230 Easy Trail/Enduro: a/c, SOHC, 2-valve, single. HM give the little thumper their special treatment. Enduro wears more serious rubber and comes with increased suspension travel. Both come road-ready and with discs front and rear.

CRE125/250/500: w/c, 2-str, 5-speed CR transmission, kickstart only. Modifications to all bikes include a heavier flywheel with lighting coils, re-sprung suspension, quieter silencers, and lighting kits. Versions include steel and alloy framed 125 and 250, and a fire breathing CRE500. The CRE250 remains the pick of the bunch. **Verdict:** Good, but DIY is cheaper.

CRE450F/X: w/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. As with the stokers, Honda's MX thumper gets the enduro treatment.

CRE250F/X: w/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. The Italian HM crew beat Honda to it with this enduro-ised version of the 250 four-stroke 'crosser (CRE-F). The CRE-X is an HM worked version of the X-model enduro bike.

HRD

A range of French-built enduro bikes using Yamaha WR125 and YZ250 motors and a sensible mix of quality European/Japanese high spec running gear. Sadly went out of production in 2003.

125/250 GS: (up to 2001) w/c, 2-str, single, (6-speed 125, 5-speed 250), 118kg (wet). Paioli fork, Ohlins shock, Excel rims and Nissin brakes together with the powerful Yamaha YZ power-plant give the GS bikes a trick factory feel.

Verdict: Sensible exotica.

HUSABERG

Swedish-designed (though now KTM owned) range of competition inspired four-strokes which use what is basically a two-stroke style bottom-end mated to a four-stroke barrel and head. Light, powerful and fast. Early ones suffered reliability problems but later bikes much better. Gained leccy starts in 1995, but splash-fed top-end lubrication featured until oil pumps arrived in 1997! Redesigned in 2000, the Bergs have undergone a piecemeal change and they seem to improve year on year. Production has now shifted to Austria, where quality control

should prove more stringent. All w/c, 4-str, 4-valve singles with 6-speed gearboxes. Some 470s around, mixing parts from the 400 and 501.

FE350: Low powered early/mid-Nineties model. Same frame as bigger bikes with smaller, less powerful motor meant that they got thrashed... and then broke. Now very rare (thanks to mechanical 'disadvantage') and not a particularly good secondhand buy..!

FE400/450: Original 400 not particularly fast (tuned for torque thanks to small-valve head), and now very rare. Later (2000-on) models were easily a match for the new generation thumpers and made excellent clubman racers. Changed to 450 for 2004, retaining its easy to ride nature, with good mellow power. **Verdict:** A great alternative to the orange crowd!

FE501/550: Perhaps the best known bike in the Husaberg range, and possibly the nicest. Long and low with smooth power, the 501 was amazingly easy to ride for a 500 and made a decent race bike. Like all early 'Bergs, suffered reliability issues, but was rarely thrashed like the smaller models. Was due to be dropped in '04 when the 550 appeared, but popular demand kept it in production. **Verdict:** Fast and light.

FE600/650: Ballistic big-bore Berg, far too much for off-road use. 650 version appeared for 2001 and is now much more popular as a supermoto. **Verdict:** How scared do you want to be?

HUSQVARNA

Previously Swedish, now Malaysian-owned but Italian-run company (Gruppo MV Agusta) manufacturing a range of trail, supermoto and competition enduro (and MX) bikes. Earlier models (esp four-strokes) were renowned for their good power-to-weight ratios, though used basic old-style motors similar to the Husabergs. Thanks to financial problems the new DOHC thumpers took an eternity to arrive, though when they turned up in 2003 they continued the tradition of good power and light weight.

WRE125: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single, oil injection. Superb, high spec trailie with powerful revvy motor and electronic powervalve. SM125S supermoto also available.

WR125/250/360: w/c, 2-str, single, 6-speed, 93kg to 104kg (claimed), seat height 890mm. Stylish and well appointed enduro racers. Motors a little dated and quite vibey but still very strong and competitive - 360 especially



HUSQVARNA TE250

the first of the new generation of DOHC Husky thumpers, and very nice it was too. Lightweight, with a blistering top-end, it was fun to ride but never really saw production as the class moved on to 450cc. The extra 50cc filled in some of the bottom-end power, but the 450 is now almost too quick. Early bikes suffered from some carburetion woes. 2005 models received a range of mods and beautiful new bodywork, but it's still a handful in anything but open going. SM450R supermoto version also available. **Verdict:** There are better 450s out there.

torque. Major cosmetic make-over for 2000 models, and more updates for 2005 & '06. Big 360 model dropped from the range in '04 but 125 and 250 soldier on. **Verdict:** Oldies but goodies...

TE350/400/410/510/570/610: (1989-on) w/c, 4-str, 4 valve single, RAL lubrication system, 6 speed, 118kg, seat height 900mm. 350 quite revvy and a good, well-specced enduro bike of the time. 400 came after the 410 but was essentially the same bike, renamed to fit in the 400cc enduro class. 510 was one of the first modern open-class thumpers, and widely liked at the time. 570 gave heaps of grunt and an eye watering top-end rush.

TE/E 410/610: (1998-2005) w/c, 4-str, 4 valve single, 6 speed, e/s, dual oil pump, balancer shaft. Externally similar to the enduro model but this is a completely different machine designed as a fully equipped, civilised (and much heavier) trail bike. Kick-start on the right (early models only) and electric start, luggage rack, full instrumentation and a dual 'cat' exhaust makes the TE/E a well-specified if heavy mount. Factory SMS supermoto also built, though now out of production.

TE250: (Early 2003-on) w/c, DOHC, 4-valve, 4-str e/s, single, 6-speed. The lightest of the new 250 thumpers, and one of the best. Sharp handling and a revvy motor offers a rewarding ride, plus it's fully equipped for the street. Cosmetically updated for 2005, plus a range of technical mods for '06. Keihin carb cured the carb glitches of the earlier Mikuni-fed machines.

Verdict: We love it!

TE400/450: (Late 2002-on) The TE400 was

TE510: (2004-on) w/c, DOHC, 4-valve, 4-str, e/s, 6-speed single, 118kg. Stroked 450 motor gives Husky a bike in every enduro class and offers a nice and torquey ride. Limited edition Centennial model (TE510C) built in 2004 to celebrate Husky's centenary, with titanium pipe and carbon fibre everywhere all matched to retro red and white plastics, and a polished alloy tank. Priced at a wallet straining 12.5k, the Centennial is more of a work of art than a dirt bike. Standard 2005 TE models get TE-C inspired plastics, which look awesome. SM510R motard also available. **Verdict:** Sexy alternative to the KTM 525.

HYMO

GY125/200/250 (2004-on): a/c, 4-str, 2-valve (pushrod), e/s single. Cheaply built Chinese trailbike offering little more than a low purchase price and next to nothing in the way of resale value. Crude, weighty and appallingly slow in 125 guise, yet strangely lots of people seem to buy them. Go figure. **Verdict:** Walking's cheaper and not much slower.

HYOSUNG

XR125 (2001-on): a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, e/s single. Korean built trail bike based on an early Suzuki DR motor. The XR125 offers the first time ride a cheap but not cheerful entry into the world of trail riding. **Verdict:** Not much in the way of eastern promise...

JAWA-CZ

Penta 125: a/c, 2-str, 123cc, single. 12bhp learner legal trail bike from the Czech manufacturers - unknown quantity.

KAWASAKI

KE: a/c, 2-str, trail. **KL:** a/c, 4-str, trail. **KLR:** w/c, 4-str, trail. **KLX:** w/c, 4-str, trail/enduro.

KMX: w/c, 2-str, trail. **KDX:** a/c and w/c, 2-str, enduro & trail.

KE 80/100: a/c, 2-str, 79/99cc, single. Very basic disc-valve learner trailie with drum brakes both ends which has been around donkey's years.

KE125/175: a/c, 2-str, single. Early twin shock, disc valve trailie dating from the Seventies. Later versions styled to resemble KDX. Lengthy production run means Kawasaki must have got it right. **Verdict:** Long lived.

KMX125: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single. 98kg. Very able little trail bike powered by reed valve and KIPS power valve engine, which can easily be de-restricted. Most will have been mercilessly thrashed by learners.

KMX200: (1987-92) w/c, 2-str, 191cc, single, 6-speed, 100kg. Big-bore version of the 125 which makes a more capable all-rounder. Though not as reliable as the 125. Suspension feels soggy by modern standards, and 17in rear wheel is a pain. Occasionally KIPS valve can give trouble, as can clutch and radiator.

Verdict: More tea vicar...?

KDX125SR: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single. 124cc. Similar engine to the KMX (with KIPS power valve) but with the stronger competition-derived 'perimeter', square-tube chassis. Later ones had upside-down forks, but were slower than cheaper KMX in restricted form.

KDX175/200: a/c, 2-str, single. Originally sold as a competition-only machine with no speedo or horn and a plastic tank when they were still illegal on the road. Fine for enduros but a bit uncivilised on the road. Peaky and a bit raucous, the first models were however lighter, lower and torquier than the later w/c models.

KDX200/220R: (1989-2004) w/c, 2-str, 199cc, single. Completely redesigned from a/c version with increased suspension travel, revised Uni-Track rear end, and more top-end power. Went on to become an extremely popular

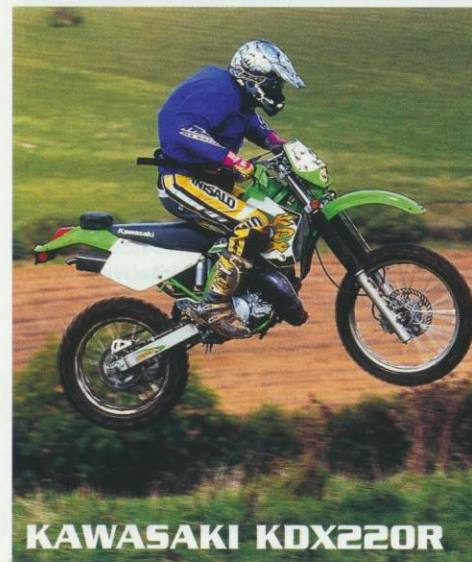
clubman enduro bike (helped by a one-make race series) but just as happy on a green lane. 220cc version from '95-on claimed to offer more torque but it's hard to tell the difference. Now dropped from the UK range. **Verdict:** The original clubman weapon.

KDX200/220SR: 2-str, 199/220cc, single, oil injection. Street legal Jap-market trail bike version of the venerable KayDeeEx. Looks the part but rarely impresses, and in truth there are far better Jap trailies. **Verdict:** Looks can be deceiving.

Super Sherpa 250: (1998-on) a/c, 4-str, DOHC, e/s, 249cc, single, 113kg dry (claimed), 830mm seat height. Low-seat, grey import trailie in the mould of the Yamaha Serow. Neat and compact design with a sweet little twin-cam motor and excellent digi dials. Though not particularly light and with slightly low pegs it's nevertheless a great bike for shorter riders. Some models featured strange retro/military styling but others have really nice two-tone colourschemes. **Verdict:** Smooth green Serow.

Stockman: a/c, 4-str, DOHC, e/s, 249cc, single, 113kg dry (claimed), 830mm seat height. Super-Sherpa with front and rear racks designed for the Aussie farm market.

KDX250R: w/c, 2-str, single. Rather large for a 250 enduro bike but plenty of power from its lusty motor. Only officially imported for a couple of years during the early '90s.



KAWASAKI KDX220R



SUPER SHERPA

KDX250R: w/c, 2-str, single. Rather large for a 250 enduro bike but plenty of power from its lusty motor. Only officially imported for a couple of years during the early '90s.

KDX250SR: Street legal oil injection trail bike version of the above. Good, well damped suspension at both ends and more power from the harsher motor than the CRM makes the 250SR the boy racer of the trail bike world. Oil tank a swine to get at and motor is not as robust as the CRM. **Verdict:** Fast 'n' furious.

KL250: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 246cc, single. Late Seventies twin shock trail bike derived from the 200cc road bike commuter. Pretty basic but also pretty reliable, and extremely frugal.

KLR250: (1987-on) w/c, 4-str, SOHC, 249cc, single, 120kgs (dry). Reliable if rather unexciting trailie which goes better than it looks. Despite the complexity of a w/c engine they're very robust, and easy to service but feel heavy. More than capable of economical daily commuting, but not very fast on- or off-road. Revived as a budget trailie alongside more expensive KLX having been dropped a few years before.

Verdict: Excellent starter trail bike with good manners.

KLX250: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, 246cc, single. Enduro version of the early twin shock KL, with less road manners.

KLX250R/S/SR: (1994-on) w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, 249cc, single. The four-stroke equivalent of the KDX, with similar perimeter chassis. Looks good, with handling and suspension to match, but performance of the street-legal S (e-start) trail version is a bit flat. The lighter enduro version is a lot more satisfying to ride,

but early ones had carburetion difficulties and were difficult to start when hot. All need to be revved hard to produce their power and are quite tall in the saddle. SR grey import offers a slightly better suspension set up than the S model. **Verdict:** Good but don't stall it.

KLX300R: (1997-2004) w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, 298cc single. Despite broadly similar spec to the KLX250 on which it is based, the 300 is a completely different animal to ride. More grunt, more top-end and a superb sweet-handling chassis makes this bike a serious and svelte alternative to the XR400. Low pegs and wide frame rails are a problem in ruts and the 300s can also be difficult to start when hot, but pretty handy. **Verdict:** Underrated clubman thumper.

KLX400R: (2003-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, single, e/s. The tie-up between Kawasaki and Suzuki produces a green DR-Z. For some reason not officially imported.

KLE500: w/c, 4-str, 8-valve, DOHC, 498cc, parallel twin, 178kg. Oddly styled 'town trailie' which shares its engine with the EN500/GPZ500. The revvy little KLE makes reasonable power but is far less trail-friendly than the torquier Transalp and more tiring on the road with its minimal fairing. **Verdict:** If you must...

KLR600: (1984-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 564cc, single, 164kg. Big banger trail bike which started out with a kickstart but became the first big trailie to be fitted with an electric-start. Some suffered from balancer chain problems and early ones overheated due to poor siting of the thermostat, but otherwise a fine handling road machine with plenty of trail-ability.

Verdict: Reasonable thumper.

KLR650: (1987-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 651cc, single, 171kg. Bored-out version of the 600.

Verdict: Competent rather than spectacular.

KLX650 & (Tengai): (1989-95) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 651cc, single. Bored out to 651cc in 1987, Kawasaki have never had any success in the African rallies, but the Tengai (launched in 1989) is their be-fairinged homage to the genre.

KLX650 (& R): (1993-97) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 651cc, single, 153kgs. Bigger version of the 250 with the same drop-dead looks, but with USD forks. Early ones were designed without enough clearance between the rear wheel and the mudguard which meant the wheel hammers into the CDI unit at max compression with expensive consequences. No bashplate either. Not as torquey as the Dominator or the Pegaso

but great for smooth dirt roads or gravel-strewn tarmac. Ideally suited as a supermoto or town bike. Fast(ish) but not much plonkability. Grey import KLX650R Enduro version was much meaner but overly wide tank and excessive weight meant it couldn't match the less sophisticated XR6. **Verdict:** Good, but not quite good enough.

KLX1000: (2004-on) w/c, DOHC, 8-valve, V-twin. Thanks to the tie-up with Suzuki, Kawasaki get themselves a big trailie. A badge-engineered V-Strom.

KRAMIT

Small Italian manufacturer who built enduro and supermoto bikes. Using high quality components, these rare machines offer more than their fair share of Latin style. At least they did before production of the Rotax motors stopped during 2002 and the company ceased bike production. Had planned to employ a big-bore Jawa-based thumper motor, but decided against it...

250GS: Rotax, w/c, 2-str, single, adjustable powervalve, counter balancer, left side kick-starter, 6-speed, 107kgs. Drop-dead gorgeous styling together with high quality kit (Ohlins, Marzocchi, Excel) plus alloy fuel tank and carbon-fibre airbox and panels gave the Kramit a works bike look. Slim and fast but slightly too specialised for some. Pretty rare, but they do crop up occasionally and spares are still available. 17in rimmed supermotos were also available.

KTM

EXC: 2T, w/c, enduro bikes, 5-speed except 125/200 (6-speed). **EXC Racing:** 4T, w/c, 6-speed enduro bikes, which come with road kit in the box. All EXCs well specced and well built. **EGS:** street legal versions of early enduro bikes. **LC4:** four-stroke trail bikes. **SC:** early four-stroke competition bikes. A major player in the off-road enduro/trail/rallye scene. Older KTMs are reasonably abundant, and while most are competition bikes, there are a few trailies as well. But it's the newer EXC models which are the most popular, selling in huge numbers. All modern EXCs are road legal and blessed with extremely quick-turning (some may say 'flighty')

chassis and linkless PDS suspension. Suspension on early bikes was harsh but improved year on year. Six Days models are crossover bikes between model years built specifically for the ISDE, incorporating many of the following year's changes into the existing spec.

LC2 125/Sting: w/c, 2-str, single, 6 speed, oil injection, e/s, cat exhaust, 121kg, seat height 860mm. Trail bike with a top specification.

Brembo, Paioli, Dell'Orto etc make the LC2 a cut above the average 125. Sting 17in rim supermoto version also available with 'Duke' style ergos. Went out of production in 1999.

125EXC: Superlight, with the torquiest motor in class, makes this the 125 of choice for the



KTM 250EXC

serious racer. As with all enduro 125s they don't sell in huge numbers so scarce second-hand.

200EXC/GS: Launched in 1998, the 200 is essentially the same bike as the 125, with a bigger barrel and piston. Power builds quickly from low down, and at times feels like it overwhelms the light 125 chassis, but most owners seem to love 'em. EGS model arrived alongside the EXC in 1999, with autolube, softer suspension and other trail details. 2000 saw the EXC(GS) replace the EGS. This was essentially the same as the EXC but with autolube and larger tank, and proved hugely popular. Was eventually scrapped in 2002, leaving the EXC. Plenty of 200s out there to choose from.

250EXC: Lightweight superfast racer more suited to the experienced rider. Earlier bikes had almost brutal power delivery and you had to be fit to compete on one. In 2004 gained a new motor (an enduro-ised version of the SX motocross lump), which made even more power

KTM 450EXC



though with far smoother delivery. Adjustable powervalve allows fine-tuning of the power on what can be a very rewarding bike to ride.

300EXC: Too much to race, the 300 is a popular sport trail bike. Perhaps not quite as strong as the Gas Gas low down, it still makes heaps of mid-range grunt and has a good top-end. Doesn't feel quite as flighty as the other EXCs.

360/380EXC: w/c, 2-str, 5 speed. Now long out of production, these were true open classers. Unlike a 'tuned for torque' 300, these were all about big power and therefore could perhaps best be described as 'a bit of a handful'. If you could hang on long enough...

350/400/620SC: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve single, 5 speed, 121kg, seat height 940mm. Kickstart-only competition bikes that were the mainstay of the KTM range until the new EXCs arrived. Power, stability and dependability are the LC4 powered SC's strong points. Left-side kickstart and weight are the downside. Out of production since 1999, and now quite rare.

5405XC: 1999-only Kari Tianen replica built to honour the multi-world champion Finn. Broad strong power made it feel halfway between the mellow 400 and storming 620. Amazingly easy to ride, but dated now and not many around.

400EGS: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single, e/s, 139kg, seat height 900mm. Trail bike version of the old LC4-powered enduro bike, but with the added civility of a balancer shaft and e-start. Tall seat height and left-hand kickstart made it tricky for shorties. Top notch suspension, but not as light as it looked. Major revisions for 1998 model. LSE low seat (870mm) and supermoto version was also available.

Verdict: Tough, dependable, heavy.

620/640EGS: As above but more so. Major restyle for 640cc models for 1998 and 2001, LSE

low seat model available.

640 LC4 Enduro: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, dual start, single. Alongside the Adventure, the 640 is the only LC4 motored dirtbike still in production. Good dual sport ability but probably more popular in supermoto guise.

250EXC Racing (2002-on): w/c, 4-valve, 4-str, e/s, 6-speed, single. Sleeved down version of the bigger EXC lump. The 250 version suffers slightly from carrying the same weight as the more powerful bikes, with early versions slightly reluctant to rev. Later bikes (March '02-on) a vast improvement on the original, and almost as good as the competition. But the class has moved on, and the Austrians have a new DOHC motor waiting in the wings. **Verdict:** Choose an alternative 250 four-stroke.

400EXC Racing: The EXC 4T motor took the off-road world by storm when launched in 2000, and initial concerns over rebuild intervals have proved largely unfounded. Regular maintenance still a must, though. Squeezed into the 250 stroker's chassis, it was lightweight, quick-turning, and with good power. And an immediate hit. The 400 was dropped from the range at the end of 2002 to make way for the 450, but it was resurrected for 2004 when many found the new bike too powerful. Still the same very over-square motor, but with the latest upgrades. Great on the trail and still a good clubman racer.

450EXC Racing: THE enduro 450. Sold in vast numbers when it was launched in 2003, thanks to extremely grunty (stroked, rather than bored-out) motor in the nimble chassis. Lays down its power extremely well, though perhaps



**KTM 640
ADVENTURE**

a little too much performance for some. However it's happy (and easy) to ride at trail pace.

520/525EXC (MXC) Racing: As you'd expect from a new generation open-classer, the biggest bike in the EXC range is a bit of a missile. But the power only intimidates if you let it, and it's happy to grunt along in tall gears. 525 is simply an updated model of the 520 (still measuring a true 510cc). MXC version built for desert racing (and 'European rallies') with cooling fan and larger 13L tank.

Adventure (& R) 620/640: (1997-on) w/c, 4-valve single. 166kg, 940mm seat height. KTM's attempt to cash in on their successful rally raid bike, the Adventure is a street legal rally replica featuring a 28L tank and a rally style twin headlamp fairing complete with trip computer/ GPS hook up facility. Early versions featured twin low level exhaust and no centre stand facility, later versions (98-on) came with high level single pipe and restyle. **Verdict:** You too can be Kini!

660 Rallye: w/c, 4-valve single. Virtually ready to race Dakar bike, available to select few privateer rally racers. Uses 'big power' version of the 660 LC4 motor. **Verdict:** The real deal. **Adventure 950 (& S):** (2003-on) w/c, 4-str, V-twin. Awesome monster trailie with great off-road ability. Carries its 200kg low, and therefore feels light and nimble for a big bike. By far the best off-road performance in class, and with purposeful styling to match. Originally launched as base model (silver) or more off-road oriented S-model (orange paint, longer-travel suspension etc), though the 'S' became special order only in 2004 and available in Dakar rep colours only. First year's clutch recall should've been sorted on all used bikes, check if buying second-hand. For 2005 the standard bike is markedly lower as many found the flat seat that bit too tall. V-twin motor formed base for 990 Super Duke and next year's 950 Supermoto. **Verdict:** Crazy Horses.

KYMCO

Stryker 125: a/c, 2-valve, 4-str, 5-speed. Old Honda motor slotted into Malaysian chassis. More for tarmac learner than young dirt junkie. Acres of plastic bodywork and humpy styling look like an accident between a TDM and a Mitsubishi Galant. Unfortunately without either

MAICO

The famous marque still produces some bikes in the Netherlands, albeit in limited numbers. Dated styling gives the bikes limited appeal, as does the claimed 67hp that the 500cc stroker spits out!

MALAGUTI

Monte 50: (1975-77), a/c, 2-str, single, pre-mix, 6-speed, 50ccs of frantic, 9bhp screaming fun. Fitted with a full sized enduro chassis and running gear the 16er-legal Monte offered the 70s teenager real Italian racer performance unfortunately at the expense of reliability.

Verdict: The best and worst of the Italian bike industry rolled into one.

XTM Enduro: l/c, 50cc, 2-str, single. Cool looking learner trailie, styled similar to a CR Honda. One of the best looking fifties out there. Even better looking in supermoto trim.

MORINI 350 KANGURO



MORINI

Camel: a/c, 4-str, ohv, V-twin. Oddball twin shock, V-twin trailie utilising the heron-headed Morini lump. High saddle and limited spares can be a problem, but otherwise quite robust and great fun if you can master the left-handed kickstart. Not very plentiful, but fairly cheap. **Verdict:** Eccentric transport.

Kanguro: a/c, 4-str, ohv, 344cc, V-twin.

Looks like an accident between an XT350 and a Transalp. Lovely engine is a bit dated really, but the Kanguro (couldn't they spell Kangaroo?) is definitely worth a look if you're after something a bit different and don't mind the left-hand kickstart. Sold very slowly and remained in production for a number of years - cheap for an Italian bike. **Verdict:** Strangely alluring.

MOTO GUZZI

V65TT: a/c, 4-str, ohv, V-twin. Middleweight Guzzi trailie of average ability. Hard work on the dirt... and on the road. Not many around.

Verdict: Not many around... for good reason!

Quota 1000ie: a/c, 4-str, ohv, V-twin. Big Guzzi that like Triumph's Tiger is really just a road bike in trail bike clothing, but without the Triumph's impressive on-road performance. A truly monstrous beast with a seat-height that makes even the Tiger feel small by comparison. Agricultural engine with torque reaction from the shaft and dangerous lack of groundclearance both on- and off-road. Good fuel consumption thanks to fuel injection and high gearing. Incredibly expensive when it was launched, but prices did come down. Strictly for straight dirt roads and motorways. Should come with a government health warning.

Verdict: Proof that the Italians have a sense of humour!

**MOTORHISPANIA/
MOTO-ROMA**

Spanish company producing a range of small capacity bikes, quads and scooters. Moto-Roma is a brand name for the UK marketplace, rebadging other manufacturers' machines.

Furia Cross: w/c, 2-str, oil injection, 49.7cc single, 6-speed. Capable little learner-legal (16) trailie. Well screwed together and easy enough to derestrict. Conventional Paiolis replaced the USD Showas of the '02 bike.

Verdict: Teenage trail tackle.

MRX125: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, e/s, single Well specced learner four-stroke trailie powered by the ubiquitous Yammie TT-R125 lump in a very similar (read identical) vein to the Rieju. Pro model comes with extra anodising, alloy bars, handguards and knobbles.

MZ/MuZ

Ex-East German manufacturer with a reputation of making stodgy but solid bikes. A few a/c, 2-str, 250 ISDT specials around, though most road MZs are robust enough to be 'trailified'. Cheap and cheerful.

500 Saxon Country: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, Rotax-powered single. Old-fashioned looking trail bike, that's really just a roadster with a set of trail clothes on. Expensive for what it is. **Verdict:** Proof that the Germans have a sense of humour!

Baghira/Mastiff: w/c, 4-str, 5-valve single, e/s. Yamaha XTZ660 powered and downright weird styling gives the MuZ Baghira and Mastiff supermoto a good punchy and reliable motor as well as a unique profile. Sort of capable off-road but much happier on the blacktop where the Yam motor shines. **Verdict:** Germany's Rubik's Cube!

PRAGA

Czech built enduro, trail and supermoto bikes with reasonably high spec components but old technology motors - at bargain prices.

250ED: w/c, 2-str single, oil injection. Fully road-kitted trailie with low compression engine based on a works Jawa lump from the '80s. Solidly built but heavy for a stroker and slightly dated looks. High comp, pre-mix enduro version also available. **Verdict:** Two-wheeled Skoda.

610: w/c, 4-str single. Styled same as 2-T with engine similar in design to old Husky and 'Berg thumpers.



RIEJU

Spanish manufacturer of small bore bikes and scooters.

RR50/125: (1997-on) w/c, 2-str single, 6-speed, oil injection, 89kg. Good looking Minarelli-powered mini trailie that can be great fun both on and off-road. 50 has very basic suspension but still performs surprisingly well in the dirt. Even rarer (full-size) 125 has up-rated running gear but faces much stiffer competition.

Verdict: Cheap 'n' cheerful...

MRX125 (2002): a/c, 4-str, SOHC 2-valve, e/s single. The Spanish factory has really gone to town with the styling of its new Yamaha-powered MRX. Beam frame and Showa suspension make the bike look much more serious than it really is. A similar SRX supermoto version is also available. **Verdict:** Chip shop racer.

SACHS

ZX125/ZZ125 (2001-on): w/c, 2-str, single, e/s, electronic power valve, 6-speed. The German made Sachs ZX125 is a competent and well-built (if slightly overweight) alternative to the usual offerings. Weight penalty makes for modest performance, but Sachs impresses with solid engineering and fine handling. Supermoto version also available. **Verdict:** Teutonic trailie...

SHERCO

French/Spanish alliance and popular amongst the feet-up trials posse. Sherco are seriously committed to expanding their off-road enduro range.

125 CityCorp: 123cc, a/c, SOHC, 4-valve, 4-str, e/s and kickstart, 6-speed. Formerly an HRD bike, the Sherco uses the tried and tested formula of putting someone else's motor in your own frame. Off-set shock looks a little odd, but low seat height and smooth styling are a plus.

Enduro 4.5i/5.1i (2004-on): 448cc, 1/c, SOHC, 4-valve, fuel-injected, 4-str, e/s and kickstart, 6-speed, 109kg (claimed). Newish brand of enduro bike with a motor which bears more than a passing resemblance to a KTM lump. Featuring fuel injection and a conventional chrome-moly steel frame, the 4.5i (and now 5.1i) come with

SHERCO 4.5i



Kayaba-Paioli suspension front and rear and Spanish AJP brakes. Smooth power and easy-going manners make them great clubman enduro weapons. New 250cc DOHC coming. **Verdict:** Take a look, amazingly good.

SUZUKI

TS: a/c then w/c, 2-str, trail. **PE:** a/c, 2-str, enduro. **SP:** a/c, 4-str, trail. **RMX:** 1/c 2-str enduro & trail. **DR:** o-a/c 4-str, trail & enduro. **DR-Z:** 1/c 4-str, trail & enduro. Four-stroke RM-Z250 crosser makes a reasonable enduro conversion, but really should be built at the factory. New four-speed RM-Z450 obviously not as ripe for modification.

RV125: a/c, 2-str, single. Strange looking fun bike from the Seventies with small wheels and balloon tyres designed for riding on sand. Looks a bit like a full size monkey bike. Quite fun, but rare and more than a bit odd. Now re-done as the Van Van and looks pretty funky... ish!

TS120 Trailcat: a/c, 2-str, single. One of the first purpose built trail bikes to come into the UK in the early Seventies, with unusual, Land Rover style high and low ratio 3x2 gearbox. Lightweight and easy handling twin-shock chassis. A bit of a collector's item, if you like that sort of thing. **Verdict:** For anoraks only.

TS125/185: a/c, 2-str, single. Early Seventies twin-shock trailie with distinctive high-level pipe, which was unusual at the time. Not many left now - thank goodness.

TS125/185ER: a/c, 2-str, single. Peaky learner bike from early Eighties still with twin shocks. **Verdict:** Not bad considering its age.

TS250: a/c, 2-str, single. Much the same as the early 125 but with punchier 250cc motor,



SUZUKI PE175X

and low-level chrome front mudguard.

TS250ER: a/c, 2-str, single. Early Eighties trail bike that's a bigger version of the 125 with twin shocks and electronic ignition.

TS50: a/c, 2-str, single. Undistinguished twin-shock trailie.

TS50ER: a/c, 2-str, single. As above.

TS50X: a/c, 2-str, single. Modest trail moped with a roaring 3bhp on tap, and 'Full Floater' monoshock suspension. Good for a 50 though.

TS125X: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single. Very competent learner legal trailie. Better than the equivalent DT at the time.

TS125R: w/c, 2-str, 124cc, single. Later version of above with powervalve fitted that just needs connecting up to get full power.

TS200R: w/c, 2-str, 199cc, single. Grey import had its own French championship. As above but with more poke and better spec (alloy rims etc). Relatively popular Jap import.

PE175: a/c, 2-str, single. Basic twin-shock clubman enduro bike from the Seventies, styled on the RM motocrosser. Poky at the time, but not by today's standards. Last ones had 'Full Floater' suspension. Reasonable number of tatty ones still about.

PE250: a/c, 2-str, single. Similar to 175 but with a better spread of power. Lots of fun, but noisy as hell. Not as nice as the 175.

PE400: a/c, 2-str, single. As above but with more power than most people could use in this chassis off-road. Not as nice as the 250.

Verdict: Wild.

RMX250: w/c, 2-str, single, 5-speed, 113kg, seat height 955mm. Enduro bike based on early RM moto-crosser, the RMX evolved slowly to become a regular sight in the enduro paddock.

A tad heavy by modern standards the well suspended and grunty RMX is more KDX than

CRE - but makes a good racy trailie thanks to plush suspension, 12L tank and comfy seat. Unfortunately for enduro fans, it never followed the RM's line of development. Cosmetics can soon look shabby but basically a sound bike - secondhand ones incredibly cheap. Powervalves can give problems, so maintenance is essential.

Verdict: Lots of bike for the money.

RMX250S: w/c, 2-str, single, oil injection, 5-speed, 121kg, seat height 895mm. Fully street legal version of the above with metal tank and indicators etc. Decent suspension for a trailie, with slightly more power than a CRM - motor can be vibey though, and can have indifferent build quality. **Verdict:** Suzuki's CRM!

SP370: a/c 4-str, SOHC, single. Early eighties twin-shock trailie that seemed to go on and on. Frugal, robust and reasonably reliable.

SP400: a/c 4-str, SOHC, single. As above only even more so.

DR125: o-a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. Small and not very powerful trailie but with the benefit of being robust, reliable and frugal.

Verdict: Slow but solid.

DR125 Raider: o-a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. As above but with false header pipe and (marginally) bigger P-D style tank.

DR200: o-a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. As above but despite bigger motor, still a bit underpowered. Not sold as street legal.

Beware rear wheel collapse on early ones.

DR200 Djebel: o-a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single, e/s. Japanese home market version of above with more street mods (including electric boot), and less trailability.

DR200AE: o-a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. A truly hideous looking farm bike built for NZ sheep farmers to carry their girlfriend back to the farm! **Verdict:** Hurry up or all the pretty ones will be taken!

DR250: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single. Grey import baby brother of the 350 we get here in the UK, only with USD forks and a brilliant ride height control making it more accessible to little people. Big headlamp Djebel version available.

Verdict: Worth searching out.

DR250 (& Djebel): o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, e-start single: Later version of above with much more modern DOHC engine and leccy boot - most had electronic dials. Good suspension, nice styling and easy to live with. Fine trailie for those that like quarter litre thumpers - Djebel version came with big headlamp.

Verdict: Mini DR-Z?

DR350S: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Superb little trailie with dry-sump motor, excellent suspension, but tiny petrol tank. A bit cheap in places, but lightweight and fairly robust. Better off-road than on it. Front disc brake not very powerful and wears out rapidly. Can look tatty quite quickly. Kickstart only (until '95), and high seat height rules it out for sub five and a half footers. Engine feels unburstable and will rev and rev though some have been known to drop valves occasionally.

Verdict: The definitive trail bike of the 90s.

DR350: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single.

Enduro version of above which is slightly 'harder' all round. Different carb, stiffer suspension, altered geometry, simpler lights and no dials - but no 'leccy start versions available.

Verdict: Cheap thrills!

DR400S: a/c 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 396cc, single. Updated SP400 from the mid-Eighties with alloy petrol tank, but still twin shock and 6-volt. Beware camshaft rattles at high mileages. Very economical, but without the benefit of balance shafts. Watch out for things shaking loose like engine bolts or perhaps your leg.

Verdict: Shake, baby shake.

DR-Z400S: (2000-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 4-valve, single, e/s, 5-speed, seat height 935mm. The replacement for the DR350, a worthy successor to the much loved oil/air cooled trailie. Fully equipped for the street, the e-start only trail version has a superbly versatile liquid cooled lump that pulls well off the bottom and makes reasonable power all the way up to the red line. Suspension offers masses of adjustment for the compulsive fiddler (but lacks grease nipples). Over-gearred and a tad porky for serious off-roading and the general fit and finish could be improved upon, but overall the 400S takes the DR-Z range a step in the right direction. Starting to show its age a bit now, though as what is essentially Britain's biggest selling trailie it seems plenty of people like 'em.

SUZUKI DL1000 V-STROM



Verdict: Hugely popular all-rounder.

DR-Z400 (& E): (2000-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, 4-valve single, e/s (E version), 5-speed, 127kg, seat height 945mm. Enduro version of the above with far less in the way of road going niceties but more power/suspension, flat-slide carb, simpler electrics, altered geometry and ridiculously noisy (baffle-less) exhaust (factory baffle is now available). Huge amounts of grunt means you're never stuck for power but the suspension feels soft for a race bike. Rare kickstart versions are about 4 kilos lighter, but not so desirable. Cheesy finish and an exhaust system that'll wake the dead - as standard it's too loud for enduro use!! Oh, and watch out for the output shaft seal (behind the front sprocket) failing and losing the engine oil. Essentially the same motor as the CCM 404 but in a worse handling package. **Verdict:** Time for an update?

DR500S: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. Foreign market, bigger-bore version of the 400.

DR600S: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 589cc, single, 136kg. Classic big banger with modern monoshock rear end and balancer shaft motor. One of the best (and most sensible) of the DRs, but a bit overgeared and heavy. Can be awkward to start when hot till you get the knack.

Verdict: Good secondhand buy at the right price.

DR650RSE: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 640cc, single, e/s. More road than trail bike, longer, heavier than earlier DRs and with civilised half fairing and twin silencers. Good road bike, but first gear very high for trails and despite half-decent suspension, still a bit of a handful on the dirt no thanks to its seat height. Engine sounds like a tractor and vibrates like one. Carbs can give iffy running at low revs.

Verdict: Okay I s'pose.

DR650: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single, e/s. Last version of above without the half-fairing or twin exhausts. Was still over-geared, and still rather tall, but featured the best suspension in class. Not very refined and felt a bit cheap. **DR750:** o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. The original 'Dr Big' - Suzuki's first attempt at a Paris-Dakar style big trailie. No one has built a bigger single - except Suzuki themselves. **Verdict:** Not for the faint hearted.

DR800: o-a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, single. The ultimate ultimate. Monstrous single with gargantuan tank, massive seat height and weird styling. Could win awards for ugliness, but pretty good handler and surprisingly nimble. Massive tank gives good range. Dropped from the UK range in about 1993, suffered badly from Norwich Union's capacity-based insurance grading, but should be much cheaper to insure now.! Many engines found their way into singles racing. **Verdict:** Why bother?

DL1000/650 V-Strom (2002-on): w/c, DOHC, 8-valve, V-twin. Monster trailie using detuned TL1000 motor. Excellent handling but cast wheels and limited off-road ability make this more tourer than trailie. Oddball looks are typical of the class. New in '04 650 version proving popular, less weight and bulk together with a lighter price tag to boot. **Verdict:** Stick to the hard stuff.

TM MOTO

Small Italian concern with a long history of getting big horsepower out of small two-strokes. Extremely well equipped enduro racers with high quality running gear, but not particularly suited to the novice rider. Pink plastics up to 1996 ensure cheap secondhand prices for those! Completely restyled perimeter frame design in 1999. For 2005 there was a range of updates including new frames and engine mods. They've also mellowed the bikes to broaden their appeal,



TM 125 ENDURO

but they remain hardcore race machines.

80/125/250/300 Enduro: w/c, 2-str, single, 6-speed (300 5-speed), 85 to 102kg, 10.5 litre tank (optional alloy tank). High quality Ohlins and Paioli suspension matched to a stable sweet-handling chassis and big horsepower motors. 125s can feel peaky to ride, 250s ballistic, 300s even more ballistic (though hopefully now a little less so). Definitely not designed to be potted along green lanes! Engines are strong and spares relatively cheap. **Verdict:** For race use only...

250/400/450/530 4T (2001-on): w/c, DOHC 4-valve, 4-str single. Early models kickstart only, later versions came with both. Beautifully styled, well-specced racers, though never perform as good as they look. 250 quite good, but slightly down on power compared to class leaders when we tested it. Kick-only 400 proved virtually impossible to start and all top-end power. Electric start wasn't that much more reliable, though modified for 2005 bikes. 450 should have a better spread of power. **Verdict:** For Italophiles.

TRIUMPH

Tiger: w/c, 4-str, 12-valve, DOHC, 885/955cc, triple. Good (though softly suspended) road bike, styled to look like an off-roader. Grunty engine makes it quick on the road but don't bother venturing off-road, as the suspension leaves a lot to be desired and smooth motor not suited to the dirt. Mk2 fuel injected version much improved with lower CofG and neater styling. 2001 saw the latest 955 lump from the Daytona sports bike fitted, and the Tiger received cast wheels and luggage as standard

for 2004. Suspension requires setting-up to make the most from the stonking motor.

Verdict: On-road Only...

VERTEMATI

The Vertemati brothers developed their high performance gear-driven SOHC thumper motor together with superbike builders Bimota. Following a short link-up with VOR, the brothers went their own way again to produce a more expensive development of the original. Superb attention to detail on these exotic enduro thumpers, though occasionally let down by niggling faults. Went out of production in 04, though are apparently now running under a different name. No UK importer at present.

V492/400: w/c, 4-str, 4 valve, gear driven SOHC, 5 speed, 116kg, seat height 940mm. More suited to serious competition use rather than more casual trail/play riding. Weird non-primary kickstart is forward acting, but works great once you get the hang of it. Needs to be ridden hard to get the best from the chassis and motor. Very few around.

E450: (2004) w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, gear driven SOHC, e/s, single, 6-speed. Gorgeous to look at but simply didn't produce the goods. Considerably more expensive than the competition, too tall and heavy, and the under-seat fuel tank led to some odd handling characteristics. Ultra rare and with good reason.

E501/570 (2002-on): w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, gear driven SOHC, e/s, single, 6-speed. Awesomely quick open-classers. The 570 enduro bike was factory order only, though the 501 was more than enough on the dirt. Originally sported a weird forward acting kickstart which was then replaced with an electric boot. Undersat tank, again, did nothing for the handling and the bikes were much more popular as supermotos. **Verdict:** Odd for odd's sake.

VOR

Offshoot of the original Vertemati concern (VOR - Vertemati Off-Road), went on to become a producer in their own right manufacturing exotic gear-driven SOHC thumpers. Bikes aimed at thumper pilots who want something a little different. Up to the end of 2001 VORs were all kickstart only (with strange forward-acting

kicker). Redesigned for 2002 with more mainstream look, oil-pumped engines, perimeter frames and electric starting. Unfortunately, like many Italian manufacturers, they were plagued with financial and technical problems and halted production. Supermoto versions available.

400/450/503 enduro: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve gear driven SOHC, 5 speed. Smooth, powerful motors coupled with high quality running gear makes the VOR an exotic alternative for the serious racer. Fantastic attention to detail, but no primary starting. New engines and chassis launched in 2002 with a 450cc option and electric start. **Verdict:** Good but strange.

YAMAHA

IT: a/c, 2-str, enduro. **WR:** w/c, 2-str and 4-str, enduro. **XT:** a/c, 4-str, trail. **TT:** a/c, 4-str, enduro. **TTR:** a/c, 4-str, trail. **TW:** a/c, 4-str, trail/fun. **BW:** a/c, 4-str, trail/fun. **DT50/80:** a/c, 2-str, single. Dependable 16-er special that changed little throughout the years. Until now. Latest 2004 model water-pumper European built DT50 features trick digi-dash and big bike looks and feel. Also available in supermoto trim. Unfortunately it's barely powerful enough to pull first gear.

YAMAHA DT125RE



TY50P: a/c, 2-str, single. The original Yam trail 50. Early unrestricted versions came with moped legal pedals! Not many around now. **Verdict:** Field bike special.

DT125/175MX: a/c, 2-str, single. The DTs are the bike that brought trail riding to the masses. Started out as a basic twin-shock trail bike back in the late Seventies before adopting cantilever rear-ends. They built up a reputation for being an extremely competent trail tool and taking an amazing amount of punishment. The 175s were

YAMAHA TW125



dropped when the 125 learner laws came along in 1981. **Verdict:** Certainly one of the best trail bikes ever.

DT125LC/R/E: (1987-on) w/c, 2-str, single. The DT came of age with the adoption of water-cooling, motocross styling, and most important of all, a power valve. Lost some of its torque but gained a revvier motor and lots more top-end, together with sophisticated suspension front and rear. In 12bhp restricted form they're easy to ride, but with the adjustable power valve kit fitted, even better! Later models ('96-on) harder to derestrict, almost to the extent that it's not worth bothering. Although in the fashion stakes they've been overtaken by tricker looking tackle, they were still top the sales chart until the latest Euro 2 emissions regs saw the original DTR pensioned off. New '04 DT125RE variant is a worthy replacement and features an electric start as standard equipment.

DT200(R): w/c, 2-str, single. Grey import big bore version of the DTR125 with slightly higher spec (alloy rims etc). Extra oomph made it easier to ride and altogether more useable than the 125. **Verdict:** Competent all rounder.

DT200WR: w/c, 2-str, YPVS, oil injection, single. 115kg, seat height 895mm. Grey import trailie version of the WR200 enduro racer. Slim, well suspended lightweight trail bike with a superb quick revving and powerful motor. Not as civilised as a CRM either on- or off-road but addictive top-end surge more than makes up for it. **Verdict:** Cheap thrills.

DT230 Lanza: (1998-on) w/c, 2-str YPVS, oil injection, single, electric and kickstart, 125kg (claimed), seat height 875mm. Unusually civilised trailie with superb grunty motor which has the benefit of an electric boot. Let down by

an overweight chassis and less than perfect suspension, though still not a bad bike. Supposedly featured 'traction control' though we never found it.

Verdict: Well worth a look.

DT250MX: a/c, 2-str, single.

Late-Seventies cantilever shocked version of the smaller bikes, more power but less agility.

DT400MX: a/c, 2-str, single.

Hairy-chested version of above, not many left now - thank God.

IT125/175/200: a/c, 2-str, single.

Early eighties enduro tool. Useful off-road, but a bit hairy on it no thanks to the dodgy drum brakes. 200 is the

better bet if you can find one.

IT250: a/c, 2-str, 246cc, single. Less peaky, bigger bore version of above with enough power for any off-road activity. At the time it boasted more power and much less weight than the equivalent water-cooled RD250LC twin!

IT425/465/490: a/c, 2-str, single.

Fire-breathing, hard to tame, old monster stroker. Only for those with lots of skill or very large gonads. Not the most reliable bike in the world. **Verdict:** Melts goggles at 50 paces.

WR200: w/c, 2-str, single. Brilliant clubman enduro bike with lightweight chassis and 'soft-tune' engine, but plenty of power and largish tank. Easy to ride with a nice light front-end.

Verdict: Modern classic.

WR250: w/c, 2-str, single. Enduro version of the YZ motocrosser but with wider ratio gearbox and slightly softer tune. All WRs make great enduro bikes. Early ones had big tanks, but the later the model, the better they are. Last model (98 & 99 & some 2000 ones!) the best of the bunch - still very much in demand. In fact, the Aussies & French still get a version of the WR (YZ250WR) built from the MX bike.

Verdict: Once the best 2-stroke enduro bike. Sorely missed!

WR500: a/c, 2-str, single. As above but using air-cooled YZ motor. **Verdict:** Why would you?

TDR250: w/c, 2-str, parallel twin. A TZR250 in trail/SM clothing. Great road bike with demon brakes thanks to dinner-plate sized front disc, and all or nothing powerband. Peaky motor makes it difficult to use off-road apart from on fast fire roads, supermotard or competition road rallies for which it is ideal. A thoroughly uncivilised motorcycle - raucous, peaky and

excruciatingly uncomfortable with an unquenchable thirst for fuel - and absolutely fabulous. Beware seizures on left-hand cylinder, and high speed wobbles on the road. Has a few passionate and delinquent supporters.

Verdict: For petrolheads everywhere.

XT125: a/c, 4-str, single. Learner-legal motorcycle without the need for restriction!

Verdict: Reliable but intensely boring.

XT125R: a/c, 4-str, single. Styled to look like the XT660R (only worse), the new for 2005 XT-R is unlikely to get teenagers' pulses racing. Supermoto version also available.

Verdict: Save up your pennies for a DT...

XT225 Serow: a/c, 4-str, single. Small but perfectly formed grey import trail bike with kick and e/s versions. Quite light, manoeuvrable, and easy to ride. Brilliant attention to detail such as mini indicators and sensibly placed grab handles marks this out as a superb green laner. Small engine needs to be worked hard especially on the road to get decent performance, but it's a small price to pay for such a good little trailie. A steady development over the years means that the Serow is still a superb buy, and holds its value well. Looks dated though. Huge variation in spec, depending on country of origin.

Verdict: Makes sense.

XT250: a/c, 4-str, 249cc, SOHC, single. Early Eighties cantilever shock trailie of some note. Light and strong with balancer shaft engine, though occasional early ones suffered valve problems. Nice and low though not very fast.

Verdict: Good all-rounder.

XT250 (1989-on): a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, single. Foreign market mini XT350 with all the benefits but slightly lighter and smaller. Rare.

TT250-R/Raid: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, single, e/s. Modern mini-thumper trailie that is as civilised as it is competent. Revvy motor and a reasonable spread of power, but metal tank and excess weight a drawback. Watch out for restricted header pipes on later Aussie spec bikes. Big tank/big headlamp Raid version more suited to tarmac. Later all-blue plastic-tanked (2000-on) model has both kick and electric starters, and revised geometry and suspension. Officially imported from '03 onwards.

Verdict: Mr Nice guy.

XT350: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, single. Plain Jane trailie that's better than it looks. Early versions boasted 31bhp (claimed), but later ones emasculated to 17bhp due to noise regs. Chassis

YAMAHA WR250F



and suspension a bit limited but nevertheless still pretty competent. Plenty of bottom-end, not too tall in the saddle, and excellent economy (80mpg possible if you try hard). Long production run shows it was good.

Verdict: Carry-on trailing.

TT225: a/c, 4-str, 2 valve, single. Kick start only enduro/play bike version of the brilliant Serow built for US market. Basic spec, but nice and low and great fun to ride - starting to show its age now.

TT350: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, DOHC, single. Grey import enduro version of the XT, with improved suspension, more power, and more basic instruments and lighting. **Verdict:** Not bad.

TW200/125: a/c, 4-str, 18bhp, single, e/s. Fattish-wheeled fun bike which makes a brilliant and economical (though odd-looking) trail bike for the short of leg, with both electric start and kick. Surprisingly good on the road, and makes a competent commuter (70+mpg possible), but let down by lousy SLS front drum brake on early models. Trendy 125cc UK model (learner legal) gets a much needed front disc, but needs an extra gear. Suspension very basic and tyres can be expensive. **Verdict:** Strangely attractive.

BW200: a/c, 4-str, single, e/s. True beach

balloon-tyred version of above but not street legal. Not recommended for anything other than sand. **Verdict:** Sand sled.

BW350: a/c, 4-str, single, e/s. More powerful version of above using XT350 lump.

Verdict: What?

WR250F (2001-on): w/c, DOHC, 5-valve, 249cc, single, k/s & e/s, 5-speed, 105kg. Without a shadow of doubt one of the best 250 thumpers available to date. Superb quick-revving motor makes more power than some 400s and simply demands to be caned to within an inch of its life. This bike was so good when it was released, that it sent all the other manufacturers scurrying back to their respective drawing boards. All that and a rolling chassis to match. Electric start for 2003 saw it edge even further ahead of the competition, until the CRF-X came along to spoil the party! Updates for 2005 include slimmer tank/rad shrouds, a lower seat, and 48mm forks.

Verdict: Still got it...

WR400F/426F: (1997-2002), 5-speed, 121kg. Yamaha's latest generation of enduro thumpers promised much when launched. Fantastic, powerful high revving lump coupled to a decent chassis made the Yam a quick but stable enduro weapon. Early bikes could be troublesome starters (particularly when hot) and the quality of finish wasn't up to Yamaha's best. Much improved 2000 model featured slimmer ergos, tweaks to the steering geometry and suspension. The motor also got a few carb and ignition mods to help improve hot starting. The fit and finish were also improved. 426F offers lots more go but little extra torque.

WR450F: (2003-on) w/c, 4-str, DOHC, five-valve single. The big WR gained an electric start for the first time, though also picked up a couple of extras kilos. Combined with an awesomely powerful motor, this made the 450 feel more like an open-classer and it often struggled to put its power down in slippery conditions. Great on fast, open going but too much of a handful in technical conditions. Lower and slimmer for 2005, enjoyable to ride, but there are more dynamic 450s. **Verdict:** Muscle Machine.

WR450F 2-Trac: Having played with two-wheel drive for over a decade, Ohlins/Yamaha finally put it into production on the 2004 model 2-Trac. Hydraulic pump driven off the countershaft sprocket sends power to the front wheel via fluid drive. And boy does it work! The 2-Trac drives where others sit and spin! Costs eight grand, but comes with Ohlins

suspension and steering damper.

Verdict: The way of the future..?

XT500: a/c, 4-str, SOHC, single. The original big banger trailie that started it all. Produced for years and years, even when superseded by later versions. Twin-shock, 6-volt, character-building bike that could often get into more trouble than it could get out of. All sorts of special parts were produced for it for the would-be overlander. Vibrates like a jack hammer, and very basic by modern standards but the lack of sophistication is part of its charm, and the low seat height makes it much easier to 'paddle' than some of its more monstrous successors. Can be horribly unreliable and a pig to start, but it's easy to work on and plenty still around. Classic buffs have inflated the prices. **Verdict:** Your dad would love it.

XT550 (1982-86): a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, 558cc, single. Updated version of above with 4-valve engine, twin carbs and cantilever rear end. Smoother than 500 but hard to get excited about, some had gearbox problems. Not many around now.

Verdict: Not as good as the original.

XT600 Tenere Mk1, II & III: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single. Superb Paris-Dakar inspired big trailie with unburstable engine, supple suspension, mammoth tank and comfy saddle. Loved by overlanders the world over thanks to its huge touring range. Later versions inherited a full fairing and twin headlights. Feels like riding a great big cosy armchair, and regardless of Yamaha's claims to the contrary seems to have more power than later 'cooking' versions. Real off-road ability in most hands, but high mileage ones break second gear. **Verdict:** Best of the big Yams.

XT600E (500): (1989-2003 R.I.P) a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, e/s, single. No frills version of the much loved XT. Heavier and more sluggish than the original thanks to steel rims and generally lower spec. Unsophisticated especially in the suspension dept, but thoroughly crashable and respectable plodder. Heaps of grunt, but pricey for what they are. 500cc version in Greece.

Verdict: Not as good as the original.

TT600E: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single, e/s. Much higher spec (Ohlins, etc) Belgarda Yamaha-built model using the same old air-cooled XT lump.

Grey import only. **Verdict:** Nicer than an XT!
TT600: a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single. Grey import enduro version, with off-road suspension, more power, more basic instrumentation and lighting,

and plastic tank. A few around, they make a more suitable serious trail bike than an XT.

Verdict: Worth looking for at the right price.

TT600R/E: (1998-on) a/c, 4-str, 4-valve, single. High spec running gear with a stone age powerplant. Tall and early grey import models kickstart only. Italian built serious trailie but certainly not a race bike. Ohlins, Paioli, Brembo etc give the TT600R more show than go. 2003 saw an officially imported leccy start E model take over where the old XT6 left off - or fill in until the XT-R turned up! **Verdict:** Nice face, shame about the legs!

XTZ660: w/c, 4-str, 5-valve, DOHC, single. Another attempt at making a long-distance overland/road version of the venerable XT. Heavier, with less range but plenty of power. Less crashworthy than the first and the taller saddle may put some off. Nevertheless eminently trailable (in the dry). Twin headlamps 96-on. **Verdict:** Another good Yam.

XT660R: w/c, 4-str, 4-valve, SOHC, fuel-injected single. New in 2004, the latest Italian-built XT features a bulky under-frame twin exhaust set-up complete with some extra kilos to lug through the mud. Very little in the way of off-road ability, but the torquey motor is good. Notchy gearbox less so. XT-X supermoto available, and if you're sticking to the blacktop a better bet. **Verdict:** Not the all-rounder the old XT6 was...

XTZ750 Super Tenere: (1989-96) w/c, 4-str, 10-valve, DOHC, parallel twin. Yamaha's answer to the Africa Twin. Cheaper build quality makes it a good value, comfortable all-rounder on the road with plenty of touring potential and 200 mile tank range. Engine is strong but lacks a little bit of bottom-end, and gearbox is atrocious to use. Also known to lose second gear. Genuinely fast and not too bad off-road especially in the dry, but the standard exhaust is rather wide. Decent suspension, but a bit bouncy. **Verdict:** A good try.

TDM850: (1991-on) w/c, 4-str, 10-valve, DOHC, parallel twin. 'New sports' road bike with trail styling developed from the XTZ750 but with much grunter 850cc lump. Lower seat height, much torquier engine and better brakes and handling. Early versions had appallingly clunky gearbox. Much improved from '97 onwards, fresh styling and updates to the gearbox. Updated 900cc version in 2002. Not a true trail bike but no less trailable than the Triumph Tiger. **Verdict:** Good roadster.

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SPEED

'TO BE HONEST I'D RATHER RACE A LAP OF THE TT COURSE THAN DO THE DAKAR - I RECKON IT'S SAFER...!'

A

fter my States trip last month I thought that I'd finally have a little time at home during December to catch up on all the jobs I haven't managed to do before my preparations for 2006 start in early January. How wrong I was!

On my way back from Vegas I got a text message from KTM's Motorsports Director Kurt Nicoll saying, 'fancy testing our new rally bike in Tunisia?' Of course my answer was an unequivocal 'Yes'.

So in mid-December I found myself packing my bags once again for what would be my final overseas trip this year. To be honest, getting on a plane to

THIS MONTH, DAVID DOES A BIT OF DESERT STORMING...

Africa was the last thing I wanted to do after such a busy season, especially at five o'clock in the morning, but it turned out to be a memorable way of bringing 2005 to a close for me.

Having never ridden a proper rally bike before and having never ridden on dry, desert sand, getting to ride the new KTM rally bike was a great experience. With both the Spanish Repsol KTM team and the US Red Bull KTM team testing suspension, running in engines and doing photo shoots ahead of this year's Dakar it was great to meet the riders and teams and see how they do things.

I was surprised at how light the Katosh felt. I was expecting it to be tricky to ride for some reason, especially full of fuel, but it wasn't. In fact I was able to ride the bike quite hard and in the soft dunes I could throw it around almost like a motocross bike. The only problem was that the bike had a rear tyre designed for the hard tracks, which was great on the roads but rubbish in the soft stuff.

With two bikes for me to ride, the one I spent the most time on was fitted with a mass of data logging equipment as the bike is still in its development stage. Told to ride the bike as hard as I could I spent two days thrashing around while KTM technicians took readings from the bike every time I stopped.

Although I was racing around the same loop time and time again and got to know the tracks that I was riding on quite well I still had a few scary moments which were enough to frighten me at times.

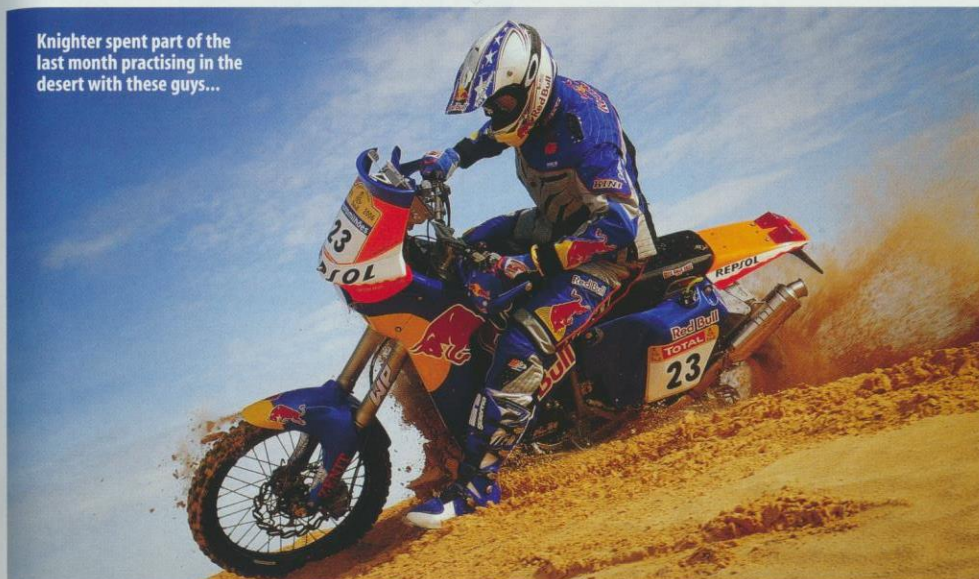
At over 150kmh it's almost impossible to see stones sticking out of the sand. While the bike weaves constantly underneath you, trying to keep an eye out for rocks is almost impossible, especially as everything seems to be the same colour in the desert. I can't imagine what it must be like having to look down at a road book at those speeds.

One thing I now have is a much better understanding of what it's like to compete in a desert rally. Having spent a lot of time riding on the beach and having done numerous beach races I do know that sand riding at high speeds isn't easy and riding in the desert is a lot harder.

What the likes of Despres, Coma etc do requires a whole different bag of skills to what I do and a serious amount of bravery. To be honest I'd rather race a lap of the TT course than do the Dakar - I reckon it's safer.

So will I be entering my first rally anytime soon? The short answer to that question is no, although I was asked if I could make myself available for this year's Dakar. But no, I won't be entering any rallies in the foreseeable future for a number of reasons, the first of which is time. With my busy schedule and commitments to both the WEC and the BEC I simply don't have time to prepare myself

Knigher spent part of the last month practising in the desert with these guys...



properly for anything other than those two championships.

And besides, WEC competitions and rallies don't mix. I'm a big believer that if something is worth doing it has to be done right and there is no way you can simply jump on a rally bike and compete, not if you want to do well. You need to be in tune with the higher speeds involved as well as aware of desert hazards if you are to stand any chance of a good result and, more importantly, not get hurt. That said, I would like to have a go at one of the shorter, less gruelling events like the Dubai rally at some point in the future.

One thing I would consider though is mixing indoor and extreme events with an event like the Dakar, if there were enough of them to make a living. If you're a good rally rider you lose your speed on an enduro bike - you only have to look at a rider like Cyril Despres or Marc Coma to see that. For them it's not a problem, racing rallies is what they do, but for me to try and do WEC and rallies, well, I think any rider would become a Jack of all trades and master none of them, which I can't afford to do.

Anyway, next up for me is either a trip to Iceland, Finland or possibly California. With the first round of the 2006 WEC series being held in snowy Sweden I want to spend some time riding a bike with spiked tyres, just so that I know what they're like to use.

I don't see any point in getting too carried away with setting my bike up for the race as it's the only one in the snow and ice and there are seven other



rounds that are all equally as important. I was hoping to get that trip in before Christmas but as there was no snow in either Iceland or southern Finland I'll have to wait until January or February.

As for going to California, well, I got invited to do some training with Ryan Hughes while I was in Vegas and as I'd like to improve my motocross skills it seems like the perfect opportunity to do so, as well as watching a couple of supercross races and enjoying some decent weather.

With several 'pre-season' events like the Genoa Indoor Enduro and Hell's Gate to also get in before the British championship opener in late February my first competitive event of 2006 will be WOR's *The Tough One*, which I'm really looking forward to.

Last year it was my first as a factory KTM rider, this year it will be my first as world champion. Hopefully I'll see some of you there...

DAKAR AND DELIVER

This year, at her fourth attempt and with an all-new 'lightweight' bike, Patsy Quick is determined to make it to the beach at Dakar. In an exclusive interview she reveals to TBM why 2006 is going to be *'the year'*...



'The thought of not getting there or contemplating failure is not something I can cope with again...'





SAND AND DELIVER

It's been three times unlucky for East Sussex pine-furniture dealer Patsy Quick in her attempts to become the first British woman to finish the gruelling Paris-Dakar Rallye. But as the super-fit 40yr old blonde stands on the start-line in Lisbon this month, she can be confident in the fact that she has the best chance of finally realising what has become an all-pervading ambition, as she told me when we met up just before this year's Dakar...

'This year's plan has been to keep everything as simple as possible. My decision was to return to the desert armed with a much lighter bike - a 450 or 525 - because as much as I love the big 660 Rallye bike, there's no point in being stubborn, and I was just making life difficult for myself.

'My reasons for choosing the 525 were that for 85-90 percent of the time you can ride the 525 as quick as the 660, and because of the actual physical size of the machine - being much more compact - there are times when you can actually ride it faster.

We found this out when we went testing in Morocco this year, we were riding an open section of Dakar piste - quite fast and stony - and I would say that the bike felt every bit as quick as my 660, even though the 660 is ultimately more powerful.



After three unsuccessful attempts on her KTM660 Rallye Bike, Patsy has instead opted to use a standard 2006 525EXC fitted with a range of Dakar accessories from French aftermarket supplier MecaSystems. The real beauty of the Mecasystems arrangement (apart from the quality of the engineering) is that items can be purchased separately and simply bolt onto the bike's existing mounts. For instance the twin plastic main tanks (above) each hold 11L and hang off a central aluminium truss which attaches to the existing tank mounts. The sturdy



alloy bashplate (above) is a three-piece design which contains the tool box and compulsory 3L water tank, each of which can be separately dismantled for working on one side of the engine or the other. The bashplate is also vented to avoid heat build up from the low-slung exhausts. One of the biggest problems with using a stock EXC is that it doesn't generate enough electricity to power all the rally nav-gear and the Xenon lights etc (top left). The solution was to use a Baja Designs stator-plate which plugs into the existing KTM loom and changes the single-phase AC output to a two-phase DC output upping the power to the battery to 150amps, and then all the electrical take-off is from the 7a/h battery. The rear alloy tanks hold an additional 5L of fuel (each) and use a small vacuum pump from a 660...



'I have moments when I imagine standing on that podium and the hairs on the back of my neck stand up...'

'We've had to work a bit harder on the cooling system (oil and water) because the Dakar being the Dakar you can't just trail ride every day - sometimes you have to push fairly hard and we know that the 525 can be a bit marginal in terms of cooling at times. Probably the biggest pitfall of taking anything other than a 660 is that KTM Austria only cater for the Rallye bike in terms of spares out there, so we have to take everything we think we're going to need with us. That's meant that for any alterations we've made to the bike, where possible we've tried to use parts off the 660 because we know we can get them out there and we haven't actually got to carry them as spares.'

'The five days we had out in Morocco testing was the best time and money I've spent in terms of preparation over the last four years. We tested ourselves and the bikes, we did some night-time riding and we also just played on the bikes in the dunes. The first time out on the bike I felt immediately at home.... It rides just like a standard enduro bike.'

'The weight is distributed so evenly across the bike. It's not top heavy, it's very nimble in the dunes. I could make it go exactly where I wanted it to go. With the 660 you actually have to steer it by its arse, using the throttle, but the 525 isn't like that. I can honestly say, hand on heart, that no matter what sort of piste or terrain comes up on this year's Dakar it won't be a problem handling it. If I do come off - which I don't think I will - picking that bike up (it's 70-80kg lighter) compared with 250 kilos for the Rallye bike, should be no problem.'

'Even though I haven't raced as much this year - both for financial reasons and because I hurt my knee earlier this year and had to have a (second) operation to remove a piece of cartilage. I work out regularly at the gym, and I think I'm in excellent physical shape... for a 40yr old! I don't feel 40 and I think I'm more than capable endurance-wise and riding-wise.'

Actually I'm riding differently because I'm so much happier on the new bike - mentally.'

SAND AND DELIVER



'As a woman, I've only ever had respect from the guys. As a woman racer you have to be one of the lads. I think only on a couple of occasions have I used the advantage (you could say) of being a woman. When you're really stuck, you whip off the helmet and show them you're a woman and sure... nine times out of ten they'll stop and give you a hand. But there is a lot of camaraderie on the Dakar - certainly among the motorcyclists.'

As you might imagine, Patsy is pretty fired up about her chances this year, but she's also mindful of her age and past experience in this tough event which has made her philosophical about the whole thing.

'I don't want to appear, at the age of 40, like some old boxer who's past it where they just keep coming back for the sake of it. I'm more than capable of finishing the Dakar. I've had more than my fair share of bad

luck and this year is going to be THE year.'

'Our whole set-up is a little bit different this year. All our spares are on an English truck. Most of the Brits are working from that truck and I think there'll be a really good atmosphere which makes such a huge difference.'

'But the thought of not getting there or contemplating failure is not something I can cope with again. My goal is to get to Dakar and to give something back to everyone who has supported me over the past four years.'

It's been such a personal issue with me to cross that finishing line. I have moments when I imagine standing on that podium and the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. But if I do finish I shall cry my eyes out and then go and get very pissed.'

'How do I want to be remembered? As the mad, eccentric woman of Dakar with a smile on her face.'

You can follow Patsy's progress online at dakar.com, and read her exclusive post-race report on the highs and lows of this year's race in next month's TBM

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W

hen my wife and I had our son, I soon realised, that the time to raise the boy was going to interfere with the points chase in the Texas cross-country racing championship I was entered into. And in an effort to give equal time to both, I decided to research and purchase a less maintenance-intensive mount - one that would allow me to pursue my interests without too much in the way of garage time.

A GOOD RACER CAN RACE ANYTHING, RIGHT...?

So after the proper research, I decided on an air-cooled, two-stroke, 400cc scooter made by ATK. And sure enough, it proved to be a simple and maintenance free ride. I think it only had 12 moving parts (two of which were the wheels), and I don't recall changing the oil or plug in two seasons of racing. And thus it allowed me to share in the rearing of the child, and still race with my friends.

But it was a dated machine, I was one of the few who still rode an air-cooled bike, and the ATK's Rotax (snowmobile) engine wasn't nearly as smooth or polished as the other offerings from the Japanese. Not to mention that the (admittedly rare) requirement of any spare parts resulted in a month long search, and the aftermarket was non-existent.

So it was with a heavy heart (I loved that bike), that I took it to my local bike dealer to see if the guys there could modernise me. I looked at the Honda XR400 - of course, a bunch of guys were doin' good on those things, and there's no doubt that Scott Summers

used to kick ass on the ol' 600, but those things just have too many movin' parts for me.

In the end I came away with a Suzuki RMX250, this, after I brought my considerable negotiating experience to bear on the poor guys (they didn't stand a chance). Anyway, so I got a more modern bike, this one uses water to cool the cylinder (imagine that), has a petrol tank that's skinnier than most women that I've dated, and can turn around the trees and stuff!

And there's a lever on the handlebars that will make the whole bike stop! The ATK had a similar lever, but I never knew what it was for, it didn't really do *anything*.

That was on a Friday, just before the third race of this season. Of course I started it up and cruised it around the block a few times to warm up the oil and then set the sag and figured I'd mess with the boingers on Saturday at practice. But as luck would have it, my services were required at the airport on Saturday (I'm a jet engine specialist), and I completely missed the practice session. Being determined to race my new bike in the morning race, I packed up early and headed out.

It musta' been a thousand light years from my house to the track, 'cause not only did I miss practice but was also ten minutes too late for signing on. However a well placed 20 bucks and much wailing to a harangued official, secured my name on the start roster.

Now folks, I'll never admit that I'm fat... I like to say... robust. But still, I'm apparently, bigger than Mr Suzuki had planned on when he chose the springs and suspension settings for the RMX.

Once on the start grid, surprise num-

'I CAME AWAY WITH WHAT APPEARED TO BE A YOUNG LADY'S BIKINI TOP ENTANGLED IN MY CLUTCH LEVER... ORANGE AND RED... 34B, I THINK. SORRY MA'AM...'

ber one was that this thing was thin. Like a bicycle compared to my old mount. And light I noticed, as I rocked it from side to side, trying to 'feel' it's lack of weight. As the *over-30* experts took off, one row ahead of my line, I glanced over at Mr Brian Speed, who'd taken up position on my left and thought to myself, 'Ha! These guys don't have a chance. I got me a new scooter, and I'm feelin' very positive about the whole thing.

'Pre-ride the track? I don't need to pre-ride no stinkin' track.' This thought, along with the unfamiliarity of my new steed may have been a miscalculation on my part... to some extent.

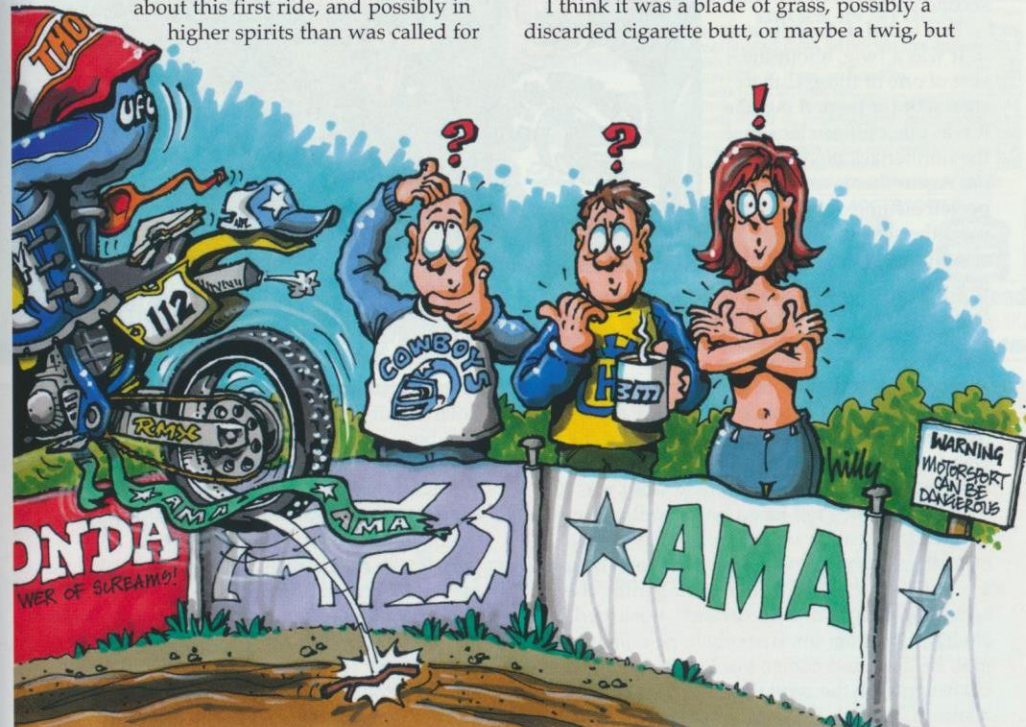
Yes, I was certainly enthusiastic about this first ride, and possibly in higher spirits than was called for

in a situation like this. So we got the signal, I put it in second and opened the throttle to what felt like about half way. The flagman suddenly performed his sole service, and BOOM! Away all!

Ya know, for a little 250, the RMX is surprisingly peppy (well, compared to the ATK). For a moment, just a moment, the other bikes seemed to go backwards as in my enthusiasm I lurched forward at full throttle (the Suzuki, only has a quarter-turn throttle, ya know).

Oh yes I was leadin' the pack to the first turn... Quite remarkable for the first five seconds of my new bike's racing life. Then it happened. Of course, the reason they call it the first turn is cause ya gotta turn there.

I think it was a blade of grass, possibly a discarded cigarette butt, or maybe a twig, but



PATMAN

whatever it was, it launched me and my new scooter skyward and sideways. And yes, the first turn was upon me, and yes, I grabbed a handful of brakes, those wonderful brakes, that work so well... when the wheels are on the ground. And yes, the entire pack blasted by like I was tied to a tree. No don't laugh, there's more.

It was about that moment that I came to the sudden realisation that the spectators stand much too close to the first turn berm... and so did they. I screamed, they scrambled. Though they all got out of the way, I think I collected a portion of someone's cool-bag on my starboard side footpeg. No problem though, 'Just got off in high spirits' I thought. I recomposed myself, spun that puppy around, dumped the clutch and rocketed down the next straight towards the second corner.

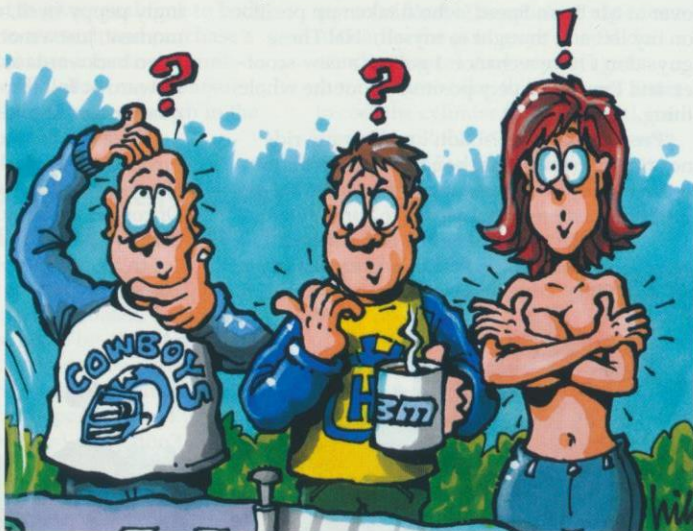
This time I definitely saw it. It was a twig, about the size of one of those Cuban cigars. But it treated me like it was one of those logs that the lumberjack boys play on. Again there was unexpected airtime. Again there were the screams, and the scrambling spectators, only this time I came away with what appeared to be a young lady's bikini top entangled in my clutch lever... orange and red... 34b, I think. Sorry ma'am.

I discovered that there were a couple of points that I would have to touch on, during my next (first) maintenance session. One was that there was some suspension tuning to be done and two was a steering damper... this new scooter was just a tad... twitchy. I felt like a bright yellow pinball careering down the track, bouncing off what ever didn't turn and run away in time. I believe it was the fourth corner, that after getting the bikini top caught in a tree branch, I usurped an elderly man from his lawn chair, he managed to grab his beer and cooler, but his first and only chance to grab the partially eaten sandwich was a failure... I think the Dunlop got it... ham and

cheese I believe... on rye. Sorry sir.

The new Suzuki cut like a blade, accelerated like a rocket, and stopped on a dime... all in directions and quantities that I had no apparent control over. It was lighter, skinnier and faster than my old bike, and the lack of a practice session was certainly evident to me, my competitors, and clearly the spectators. Even the throttle, compared to my trusty old ATK, was more like an on/off switch than anything I could modulate.

By the end of this, my most miserable race to



date, I had extreme monkey butt, had hit every tree on the course and collected the piece of cooler, the bikini top, a part of a sandwich, several course markers, a tail-light from a blue Polaris four-wheeler, and later found a Dallas Cowboys baseball cap wedged between the front numberplate and the fender.

I did, however, finish the race, and would've been last in my class were it not for Mr Speed not being able to complete more than a lap or two. It was sheer anger that kept me going, or maybe determination brought on by anger... Or maybe it was the fact that my throttle hand was pinned to the grip with a Mesquite cactus thorn.

Whatever. Oh yeah, one more thing, I discovered that the RMX goes only 48 miles of a 50 mile race on a tank of gas...

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Yrjo Vesterinen



There have been a number of riders who have secured the prestigious World Trials Championship more than once; our own Dougie Lampkin has seven titles to his name whilst three riders, Thierry Michaud, Eddy Lejeune and Yrjo Vesterinen have each been successful three times. The first of those multiple winners was Vesterinen, once known as The Enigmatic Finn he claimed the crown in the successive years 1976, 1977 and 1978.

Vesty, once the mystery man of trials is now very much the British businessman, and the success that he channelled into securing those three crowns (as well as two runner-up spots and two

third places), is now directed at running his Burnley based off-road accessory business. Vesty UK has been built up over the past 22 years, beginning as an importer/manufacturer of Apico clothing - an own-brand product - to the position the company now enjoys as the importer/wholesaler of over 40 recognised brands.

Brought up in a village just outside Espoo (Finland's second largest city after Helsinki), Yrjo recalls: 'I only had to ride out of the garage door and I was immediately into the woods where the best trials sections in the world could be found. I didn't appreciate it at the time and

What's the Story?

just used to play around there on my moped with three brothers I was friendly with in the village.

'My own brother Jussi was a keen biker, he rode motocross, enduro and as a sidecar road racing passenger was Finnish Champion several times. He rode trials as well and that was what I liked most.'

Having a trials playground in his backyard must have paid off for the young Vesty because back in 1969 he won the Finnish Junior Trials Championship and then a year later immediately won the adults championship. And with that boost to his confidence, he tackled a couple of European Championship rounds in Scandinavia.

'I rode against Sammy Miller and Gordon Farley the first time and finished fourth - I was still at school at the time, and at that trial I was offered some help from Montesa. I rode Montesa again in 1971 and then at another Euro round in '72 Oriol Bulto offered me a fully supported Bultaco ride.'

From that point on, Vesty's life was to change for ever. As a professional trials rider with all the travelling and training that requires, he began dedicating his life to trials, and as well as being the first multi World Champion, Vesty also claimed 11 successive Finnish Championships, seven successive Scandinavian Championships and a single British Championship in 1982.

'That was my last major success' said Yrjo when we chatted recently. 'I had terrible back trouble which I never mentioned at the time, but I knew I couldn't carry on much longer, and though I rode a few trials after that, it was effectively the end of my career.'

With a young wife to support, Yrjo and Diane

needed an income and back in 1983 Vesty UK was born, the business that began with Apico clothing as the product. 'I knew a clothing manufacturer in Finland and they produced the products to my specifications. However, it was expensive because of Finnish labour costs and quality materials, but it stood me in good stead with a reputation for quality.'

Since then, and whilst Yrjo is too modest to acknowledge the fact, his well respected name has enabled him to secure the importership and specialist manufacture of a wide range of products for the off-road marketplace, and the thousands upon thousands of lines now available from Vesty UK make the three-time world champion a major player in the dirtbike wholesale trade.

But whilst Yrjo is quietly pleased with his business success, it's as the first multiple world trials champ that he is best remembered. On a bitterly cold, frosty and snowy morning, deep in mid Wales near Rhayader, I can well remember the young Finnish rider, who as defending World Champion, pulled off stunning ride after stunning ride on icy rocks that he must have encountered many times before in his native Finland.

Several years later we travelled to the Milan Show together where his fame and personal friendship with so many people made it a unique experience for me. And now, two decades later he tells me he's become: 'a fat, balding trader with a son who rides trials. I look back at those days and can't believe it was me', he laughs.

But it was, and the name Yrjo Vesterinen will be revered for many years to come as the first truly great World Trials Champion...

'I rode against Sammy Miller and Gordon Farley and finished fourth. I was still at school at the time...'

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KTM 640 LC4 SM, 2004 model, 4000 miles, one year warranty remaining, Akrapovic race can, rejetted, airbox mods, handguards, crash bobbins, alarm/immobiliser, immaculate, £3500. Tel 01761 432936 (N Somerset)

Gas Gas EC200, June 2003, road reg'd, some spares, good cond, £2100. Tel (mobile) 07970 192342 or 01278 641446 (Somerset)

Honda CRM250 AR, late 1999, black/red, one owner, 6000km, good condition, on Isle of Man, could arrange shipping to mainland, £2000 ono. Tel Bert on 07624 456876 (IoM)

Honda CR80 big-wheel, 2001, new piston/c+s/swingarm and steering head bearings, handguards, black Excels, ProGrips, genuine bike, £895. Tel 07799 881147 (Lancs)

KTM 200EXC (GS), 2000, W-reg, T&T, autolube model, sump/handguards, translucent tank, little use, various spares, vgc, £1650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07771 774978 or 01625 299572 (Berks)

Yamaha XT225 Serow, 1999, V-reg, very little use, exc cond, £1950. Tel (mobile) 07811 186510 or 01298 214093 (Derbys)

Yamaha WR400F, 2001, road reg'd, MoT, trail use only, White Bros E-Series silencer plus standard, flywheel kit, Endurance computer, £2100. Tel 01622 631350 (Kent)

Kawasaki KMX125, L-reg, 1993, MoT, 15500 miles, new rear tyre/handguards/c+s, good cond, £795. Tel (mobile) 07778 054226 or 01483 534098 (Surrey)

Honda CR85 big-wheel, 2003, Doma system, Woody graphics, very little use, exc cond, £1150. Tel (mobile) 07813 986502 or 01795 873766 (Kent)

Honda CRF450R, 2003, road reg'd, full lighting kit, FMF Q-pipe, new plastics/tyres/c+s, well maintained regardless of cost, £2800 ono. Tel (mobile) 07967 585223 or 01543 274358 (Staffs)

Honda XR400R, 1997, T&T, white, 5000km, new tyres/c+s, vgc for year, £1495. Tel (mobile) 07917 593352 or 01883 622407 (Surrey)

KTM 450EXC, 04-reg, 55 year old owner, new pads/bearings/c+s/tyre, serviced, vgc, ready to race, £3100 ono. Tel 01797 344452 (Kent)

Kawasaki KLX250, 1994, road reg'd, T&T, CRD system plus original, AC10 tyres, some spares, well maintained,

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

£1500. Tel 01793 336709 (Wilts)
Honda CRF230, 2004, road reg'd, little use, ideal green laner, exc cond, £2300. Tel (mobile) 07831 308407 or 01455 557211 (Leics)
Honda CRF250X, 2004, road reg'd, Renthals, rad braces, skidplate, K-Tech suspension, Michelins, very little use, immaculate bike, ready to go, £3400. Tel 01283 713002 (Staffs)
Suzuki DR350E, 1993, enduro model, DEP exhaust, Renthals, engine rebuild, spares, reliable bike, vgc, £1000 ono or may p/x 125 2T. Tel 07863 268797 (Hants)
Yamaha YZ400F, 2000, new tyres, Tag braceless bars, good green laner, mint cond, £1500 or poss p/x for 250 2T. Tel 07963 975195 (Swansea)
Suzuki DR350SE, 1998, T&T, Acerbis tank, Renthals, frameguards, digi speedo, Hel brake lines, tidy, £1700. Tel Steve on (work) 01904 668662 or 0113 275 6892 (N Yorks)
Gas Gas Pampera 250, 2003, 1300 miles, sump/handguards, heavier springs front and rear, toolbag, exc trail bike, £2100. Tel (eves) 01484 328342 (W Yorks)
Honda XR600, 1989, currently has road wheels / tyres fitted, comes with spare set of wheels with off-road tyres, £1200 ono. Tel 0118 973 1668 (Berks)
DNA 110, red, six months old, hardly used, lady rider moving up, ideal first bike from 12 years up, vgc, £525 ono. Tel (mobile) 07813 322369 (Northants)
Suzuki DR400S, T&T, 15000 miles, all MoTs and books, very reliable and easy starter, exc cond, £875. Tel (mobile) 07949 452821 or 020 8397 3607 (Surrey)
Honda XR250RT, 1996, T&T, 6700km, new c+s, good tyres, vgc, FMF Q-pipe also available at extra cost, £1400 ono. Tel 01241 874957 (Angus)
Gas Gas Pampera, 2002, 2000 miles, mature owner, ideal green laner, £1450. Tel 01327 877094 (Northants)
Husaberg 600, 1997, recent tyres/service, starts and runs fine, well maintained, great bike, good cond, £1095. Tel 07885 418090 (Essex)
Suzuki DR350, 1999, black, T&T, only 1200 miles, two owners, exc cond for work or trail, £1850 ono. Tel 02920 593457 (Cardiff)
Honda XLV600 Transalp, white, E-reg, T&T, good clean bike with donor bike for spares, £895. Tel 01302 859857 (S Yorks)
Honda CRF450X, 55-reg, eight hours' use, taxed, over £1000 worth of extras, awesome bike, £4700. Tel 07939 042720 (Yorks)
Suzuki DR-Z400E, Y-reg, T&T, light green lane use, fully serviced, vgc, £2400 ono or swap for Gas Gas EC250 or consider KDX. Tel 07725 633118 (Worcs)
Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2004, 54-reg, Renthals, handguards, very little green lane use, original bike, good cond, £2695 ono. Tel 01757 706513 (N Yorks)
KTM 400EXC, 2001, T&T, documented services, new plastics/graphics, sump/handguards, clutch saver, exc cond, bargain at £2395. Tel 01303 862793 (Kent)
BMW F650GS Dakar, 3000 miles, heated grips and BMW panniers, showroom cond, £4500 ono. Tel 01292 292971 (Ayrshire)
KTM 200EXC, 2003, little use, exc cond, £2500 ono. Tel 07966 275108 (Hants)
Husqvarna TE510, 2004 model, 05-reg, nine months old, trail use only, mint cond, cost £5500, quick sale at £3695. Tel (mobile) 07711 306306 or 01722 501306 (Wilts)

Yamaha TTR250, 2004, taxed, 1600 miles, elec start, knobbles plus original tyres, fender bag, £2150 ono. Tel (mobile) 07776 146906 or 01603 259373 (Norfolk)
Suzuki DR-Z400E, 2003, T&T, CRD exhaust/bashplate, Gadget frameguards, Acerbis brushguards, vgc, £2650 ono. Tel (mobile) 07817 745967 or 01455 230546 (Leics)
Yamaha WR450F supermoto, 53-reg, taxed, 3000 miles, Talons/Excels, Fatbars, handguards, off-road wheels, other extras, £3250. Tel 07929 533469 (Leics)
Gas Gas EC200, 2004, new in Feb '05, road reg'd, used five time plus running-in, very little use, over 40s rider, £2650. Tel 01905 26726 (Worcs)
Honda CRM250 mkIII, 1994, yellow/purple, T&T, vgc, £1395 ono. Tel (mobile) 07773 319399 or 01691 658447 (Shrops)
Honda CRM250 mkII, 1994, 7000km, new rear tyre/c+s/fork seals, well maintained, £1600. Tel 07884 296136 (Oxon)
Kawasaki KDX220R, 2003, 1200 miles, road kit, well maintained, green lane use only, £2250 ono. Tel (mobile) 07979 700706 or 01905 757950 (Worcs)
Honda TLR250R, 1986, monoshock, T&T, lights, indicators, never been off-road, few road miles only, mint cond, £1550. Tel 01792 522444 (W Glam)
Aprilia Tuareg Rallye 125, 1992, MoT, 160cc kit fitted, Michelin enduros, reliable, superb trailie, as new finish, £1250 ono. Tel 07710 133888 (Northants)
Gilera Dakota 350, 4T trailie, T&T, elec start, new parts inc clutch, well sorted, workshop manual, vgc, £850 ono. Tel 01273 241035 (Sussex)
Honda XR650, 2000, MoT, low miles, not used off-road, Arrow system, vgc, £2395 ovno. Tel 07866 449378 (Berks)
KTM 400EXC, Jan '04, 10.5 hours' use, mature owner, protection parts, all original spares included, immaculate cond, injury forces sale, £3500 no offers. Tel David on 07974 368174 (Oxon)
Gas Gas Pamera 250 mkIII, 2002, MoT, lady owner, green lane use only, new bearings all round, chromed expansion chamber, beautiful bike, £1650 ono. Tel 07956 316258 (Herts)

WANTED

Wanted exhaust front pipe to fit KTM 300EXC, any make, for 2002 model. Tel 07748 338030 (Kent)
Wanted Honda TLR200 Reflex, must be in good cond. Tel 07717 093228 (Worcs)
Wanted rear pegs for DR350, with brackets. Also sidestand, call with details. Tel Dave on (mobile) 07909 614817 or 01908 565006 (Bucks)
Wanted Suzuki DR350S frame, complete with V5 logbook and numbers, any year but late model would be preferred, cash waiting. Tel 01322 526111 (Kent)
Wanted left-hand light switch for WR400F, indicators, lights, horn, kill button etc. Tel (mobile) 07836 205440 or 0161 799 1885 (Manchester)
Wanted forks and Ohlins shock from 1998-2002 TTR600, cash waiting or swap for my shorter 2003 TT600RE versions plus cash. Tel 01304 812486 (Kent)
Wanted wheels for Honda CRF250X. Tel 07886 345621 (Gloucs)
Wanted old MX or field bike, runner or non-runner, anything considered in Cumbria area.

Tel (mobile) 07745 937648 or 01768 352549 (Cumbria)
Wanted parts for 1968/70 Triumph TR6C, bashplate, 19in front wheel with brake plate, high-level exhaust pipes which exit on nearside, good chrome please. Tel 01268 413136 (Essex)
Wanted triangular lower plastic sidepanels for 1978 DT250/400 MX. Tel (mobile) 07887 526649 or 01227 262997 (Kent)
Wanted Acerbis or IMS tank for XR400, right money paid for good condition. Tel 01457 834359 (Lancs)
Wanted Clarke 3.9 gallon fuel tank for DR-Z400S. Also good cond rear wheel for same. Tel 01432 273046 (Hereford)
Wanted rear subframe for Honda CRF450R, 2004 model. Also other parts trick bits, WHY. Tel (mobile) 07813 322369 or 01933 391411 (Northants)
Wanted BMW R1150/1200GS or KTM 950 Adventure, in p/x for my Mercedes 609D motorhome, 21ft long, N-reg, new MoT/service, can accommodate dirtbike, worth £14000. Tel (mobile) 07944 279803 or 01795 661911 (Kent)

SPARES

Lazer Racing 3 helmet, small, black/silver/grey, removable lining/peak, used twice, cost £120, only £45. Tel 01403 741307 (W Sussex)
First Racing body armour suit, black, large, built-in kidney belt, never used, cost £100, only £45. Tel 01403 741307 (W Sussex)
Garmin Etrex handheld GPS, runs on two AA batteries, unused, still in box with receipt for £122.98, will take £60. Tel 07859 374047 (Staffs)
KTM Duke II and LC4 spares, wheels, plastics, forks, race cans, rads plus more. Tel (mobile) 07762 376422 or 01279 310862 (Essex)
Gripper seat cover to fit Kawasaki KLX250/300, with timcard holder, new, £24.99 inc p&p. Tel 01285 720921 (Gloucs)
TBM back issues, 59-116 inclusive, plus 15 various issues from 6-57, all vgc, £65 plus p&p. Tel 01246 859765 (Derbys)
Suzuki off-road wheels, 21/18in black rims, polished hubs, stainless spokes, discs, sprocket, rear tyre, not sure which year, bought in error, exc cond, £250 ono. Tel 01296 330994 (Bucks)
Parts for Suzuki DR350SEW, tank, sidepanels, rear mudguard and headlight surround, been used for green laning so not 100 percent good but worth having, £40 ono. Tel 07900 086169 (Wilts)
Akrapovic Ti exhaust system to fit KTM 525, MX version, vgc, £350 ono. Tel (mobile) 07909 535475 or 01322 332770 (Kent)
Dave Cooper two-bike trailer, only used twice, light board, loading ramp, £225 ovno. Tel (mobile) 07808 168783 or 01525 237525 (Beds)
KTM supermoto wheels, complete with tyres/discs/sprocket, plus Talon caliper adapter, all for £450. Tel 01603 754679 (Norfolk)
Rear wheel to fit Honda CRF250X, complete, spokes need tightening, £25. Tel 07748 327618 (Leics)
K-Tech HD fork springs for Honda CRF250X, £25. Tel 07748 327618 (Leics)
Standard silencer for Suzuki DR-Z400SK5, approximately 50 miles use only, £100 ono. Tel (mobile) 07971 253284 or 01646 697935 (Pembrokeshire)
Remus Race can to fit CCM 604, Rotax model, very little use, £75. Tel 01730 260300 (Hants)
Trail wheel kit for CCM 604, wheels, tyres, discs,

sprocket, sidestand, front caliper bracket, used once, as new, £325. Tel 01730 260300 (Hants)
Yamaha WR-F spares, tank and seat for 400, also fits 426, £165. CRD can for 426, £150. FMF Powercore 4 with Powerbomb, to fit 2004 250F, £170 ono. Tel 07974 978177 (Devon)
Alloy can and Y-piece to fit BMW R1150GS, as new, £250. Tel 01873 880549 (Gwent)
FP titanium exhaust system to fit Husaberg, £300. Rear shock for Husaberg 650 SM, complete, as new, £175. Tel Dick on 01483 571369 (Surrey)
Collection of TBMs, every issue, in eight TBM binders with remainder in crate, mint cond, all 124 editions plus Supermoto Magazine, £150 plus postage. Tel (mobile) 07950 934823 or 01636 673212 (Notts)
DEP system to fit Yamaha YZ/WR436/450F, vgc. Tel 01274 421537 (W Yorks)

80 copies of TBM, Oct '98 - Sept '05, all good-to-perfect cond, £75 plus postage. Tel 07979 780943 (Cleveland)
Supermoto tyres, all 17in, front and rear, assorted makes, wets and slicks, from £45. Tel (mobile) 07944 083405 or 0161 707 5142 (Manchester)
Breaking Husaberg 650 SM, 2003, engine, rads, carb, tank, plastics, seat, digi speedo, exhaust and more, no wheels or suspension. Tel (mobile) 07944 083405 or 0161 707 5142 (Manchester)
Pair of Asterisk knee braces, size large, as new, £300. Plus loads of Gas Gas spares and trick bits, phone for list. Tel 01656 785438 (Mid Glam)
Three-bike trailer, Indespension suspension, built-in lights, good condition, £160. Tel 01992 892180 (Essex)
Standard exhaust for 2004/05 CRF250, complete, as new, £125. Works Connection skidplate and rad protectors for 2002/03 CRF450, £50. Axxo RX2 helmet, vgc, £30. Tel 01283 713002 (Staffs)
Shift supermoto leathers, red/white/black, size large, as new, £400 ono. Titanium boot sliders, used once, £25. Race gloves, large, £20. Tel 01283 713002 (Staffs)
Supermoto wheels to fit CRF450, gold Talon/Excels, 5in rear, with tyres/sprockets, as new, £600. Ezi-Up awning, 3x3 metre, inc zip-in sides, £325. Tel 01283 713002 (Staffs)
FMF Q-pipe to fit XR250R, £85 ono. Tel 01241 874957 (Angus)
Sinialo jacket, large kitbag, odds and ends for sale. Tel 07752 888216 (London)
Husaberg parts, sumpguard, case saver, front spindle puller, carbon exhaustguard, Berg/KTM levers, Rental Twinwalls, please ring for prices. Tel 01380 729982 (Wilts)
Trail wheels to fit 1999-2000 KTM 640, newly powder-coated hubs, new stainless spokes/Excel rims, with tyres/discs/spacers, £300. Tel 07840 011141 (Glasgow)
Supermoto wheels to fit CCM 604, £425. Dual sport tank, £80. Tel 01597 823805 (Powys)

STOLEN

Stolen Yamaha WR250F, 2005, reg LK05 EVM, engine no G343E0001773, stolen from Manchester in mid-December, thieves used blue Transit van reg L983 UUS, crime ref no 320990p-05. Tel 07738 537839 or Manchester Police on 0161 872 5050 (Manchester)

