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TRBM

TRAIL BIKE & MOTOR MAGAZINE

£2.20 MARCH 1999 ISSUE 44

CCM
604E SPORT



FULL MONTE



Riding the Monte Carlo Rally

KTM540SXC



Ttainen Replica On Test

- Also
- Cannondale MX400
 - Kawasaki KLR250
 - 5 Pages Classifieds

no competition...

DAKAR

TOTAL AL 01^e TOTAL GRANADA - DAKAR



...says who?

CCM were the only motorcycle manufacturer to have a 100% finish rate in the 1999 Dakar Rally, winning a Special Manufacturers' Award for "Exceptional Performance" - our nearest rivals had finish rates of only 57% and 38%. But then, this gruelling 10,000km marathon really does test both man and machine to the limits of their endurance. So, well done to everyone at CCM, especially our riders, Vinnie Fitzsimon and Simon Pavey, supported by Chief Mechanic Paul Atkinson.

Just to complete "The Dakar" is an achievement - for Team CCM to get everyone home in one piece, proves beyond question that CCM Motorcycles provide the on-road and off-road rider with the ultimate in performance and reliability.

Statistics and source TSO.



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say what you like about the French, they sure know how to organise a bike race. No matter that they can't write a decent pop song or keep their farmers under control, they know what's what when it comes to putting on a serious two-wheeled spectacle. The Le Touquet beach race regularly attracts crowds of hundreds of thousands of spectators, the Guidon d'Or supermoto is one of the most spectacular events you'll ever see, while the Dakar Rallye gets more television coverage than any other motorsport event.

And that's just a fraction of the bike stuff. The Bercy Supercross, Indoor Trial Masters, Gilles Lalay Classic, Bol d'Or, and Le Mans races, all of these events regularly attract massive crowds, prime-time TV coverage and regular mentions in the daily press. Yet if a bike event in Britain attracts a couple of hundred spectators and isn't completely rained off, its deemed a success.

The Le Touquet beach race this year had a claimed 300,000 spectators. That may be an optimistic figure, but there were an awful lot of people at this sleepy seaside resort in February, let me tell you. Bikes are big business in France. The people who ride them are sportsmen and women with regular jobs, families and mortgages. But the organisers of bike events are clever folk. They realise the value of promotion, advertising and marketing. Billboards, TV adverts and the general media are just some of the places you see bike events advertised in France. And the



more you see this stuff, the more mainstream it becomes. So that instead of it being a slightly cranky sport (like bike racing is thought of in the UK), it's the sort of activity you don't mind taking the family too. And why not? It's exciting, interesting, affordable and entertaining, and what's more it's not the domain simply of the hooligan element. In France you're just as likely to find your bank manager cranking his XR400R around his local enduro course as Johnny Rocket from the local comprehensive on board his DT200.

So how do we start to turn the tide in our favour and generate some serious interest in bike sport in the UK? Well, we've got to have some decent events for a start. It's all well and good claiming the UK as the home of motorsport (which is how the French see us incidentally), but when we can't even organise a proper British Enduro Championship with more than five or six rounds using exactly the same course as the year before (and the year before that...), then we're not really trying hard enough. The French events are all different, they're spectacular and they attract interest from outside the specialist press. Just how interesting is it watching someone follow a single rut in a Welsh forest for hours on end, huh?

We need some serious thought and promotion put into our sport if we're not to be completely sidelined as a minority interest and then outlawed on some governmental whim. Without it we'll always be the poor relation to other, better funded and better publicised sports. And unless we can get the general public on our side (in the form of spectators), you can bet that it's not going to be very long before we don't have a case to argue for any more... **Si Melber**

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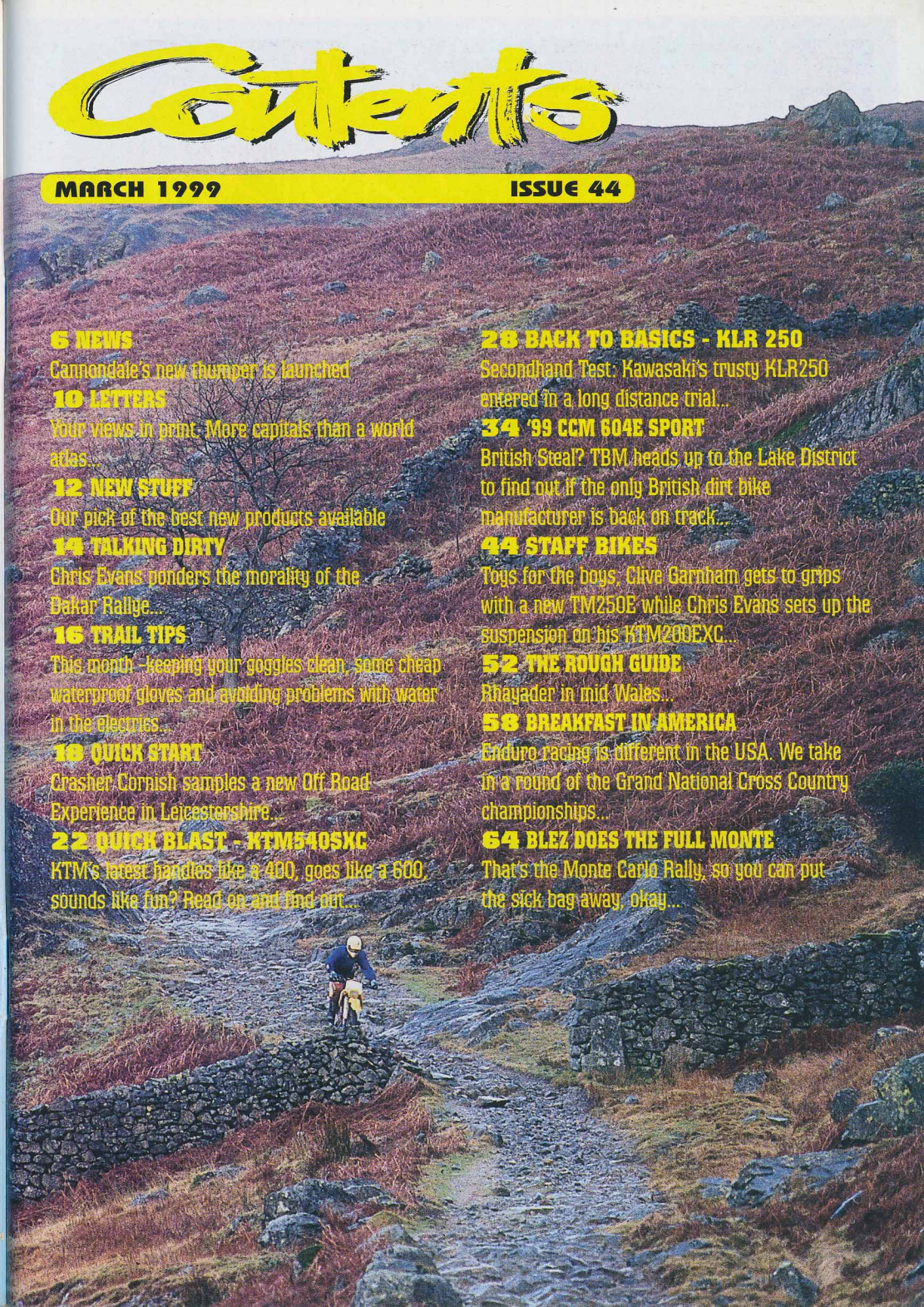
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Cannondale launch new US Thumper



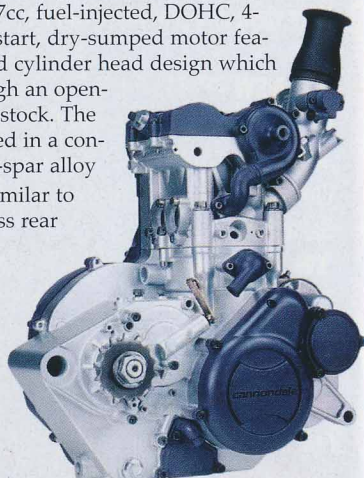
Cannondale's MX400 features an ally beam frame just like the CR250, though



the linkless shock occupies the place of a conventional airbox

US MTB manufacturer Cannondale has finally launched its much vaunted and long-awaited new thumper. The pics of the MX400 reveal a whole host of interesting details, but very little in the way of truly innovative technology and unremarkable styling compared to some of the mountain bikes they produce. The over-square (91x61mm), 397cc, fuel-injected, DOHC, 4-valve, electric-start, dry-sumped motor features a reversed cylinder head design which breathes through an opening in the headstock. The engine is housed in a conventional twin-spar alloy

frame which looks remarkably similar to a CR250 chassis, but with a linkless rear set-up. There's Öhlins suspension front and rear, Nissin brakes and a claimed dry weight of just under 110kg. Cannondale are believed to already be hard at work on an enduro version, and the MX bikes will hit the shops in America this summer.



Snippets

• The Dyfi Rally mentioned in last month's Snippets has been confirmed for 5 Sept, while the Pencarreg Rally will take place again this year on 4 April in the Brechfa Forest, just west of Llandovery in Wales. Regs by sending an SAE to Emma Baylis at Cherry Tree, Trostre, nr Usk, NP5 1LA, tel: 01291 673658.

• We goofed up last month. We put the wrong telephone number on the 'Thanks Box' in the CRE250 test. The number printed should've read 01362 698147 - the same as in the 'Spec Panel'. Glad that's sorted.

Le Touquet

The 24th running of the Optic 2000 Enduro du Touquet in France was won by Frenchman Jean-Claud Mousse on a factory Yamaha YZ250. In all, 734 riders from all over Europe (including a four man TBM team) took to the start with 690 of them making it home three hours later. The TBM team of Coke, Ammo, Jenks and 'Seized-Solid Garnham', were valiantly flying the flag for Britain against world-class opposition. Said the gutted TBM stalwart Clive Garnham afterwards: 'I spent more time sticking me numbers on than actually riding today... but you should've seen me go over the first 600m - I was flying, mate.' Eventual winner Jean-Claud Mousse who nursed his Yamaha around precisely 13 more laps of the 16km beach course than our own Clive Garnham said something like: 'I was very lucky out there today. TBM's Clive Garnham pushed me very hard for the first 600m, but then he disappeared and I didn't see him again until the following lap when I saw him pushing back to the pits. Things could've been very different, though I did notice his numbers looked very professionally applied.' The full and shocking story can be read in all its sorry detail in next month's TBM...

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Dear Trail Bike...

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Where to Go

Dear Sirs

At the weekend I like to relax and unwind. I usually do this by getting out onto a few green lanes and tracks to have some fun and explore the countryside. As many of us probably do we see a track leading off the road and naturally there is an inclination to explore it. Sometimes the OS map shows a track or a RuPP (now called a BOAT), but often I have found that these tracks are privately owned and that BOATs are restricted by local authority by-laws.

I have spoken to my local authority footpath officer to ask if he could provide me with details of tracks etc open to vehicular traffic, but he wants me to provide details of my intended route so that he can tell me if it is feasible or not, which is not exactly what I'm asking for, albeit helpful to a degree.

Could you please tell how or where I can research for myself the routes where I have rights of passage, I want to use these routes again and again, and it is not my desire to irritate land-owners by trespassing.

I would be grateful if you could produce an article in TBM to cover this issue. Thanks for a great read.

Andy Hurst
Doncaster, S Yorks

Your question goes right to the nub of trail riding in this country Andy, and is extremely complex. The simple answer of course is to say buy TBM back issue number

nine (£3.00 in stamps or postal orders to the usual address), which has (most of) the answers in it. Or you could always join your local TRF group and let them tell you where to ride. Many TRF members spend a good deal of their time researching local rights of way, and once you've been out riding with them a few times, will usually be happy to share that knowledge.

Alternatively if you want to do it yourself (and it's a good idea), you need to go to your local county library (or local Highway Authority) and ask to speak to the Rights-of-Way Officer. Ask him to provide you with the 'definitive RoW maps' (of which there will be many - large scale ones). Sit down at one of the tables, get out your own Ordnance Survey Landranger map of the area (one of the pink ones), and begin marking on the vehicular RoWs which are shown on the council's 'definitive' maps but not always on the OS map. You may well find that

some of the RoWs marked on the 'definitive' map are marked as bridleways on your OS map. That doesn't mean that you can ride all bridleways on your bike - merely that you can ride that particular bridleway which has a 'higher status' than that which is recorded. The same goes for UCRs (Unclassified County Roads), and various other tracks which may well have a vehicular right of way on them which isn't shown on the OS map.

Once you've established a right of way, mark it on your map using a highlighter pen. After a few hours work you should have worked out a day's ride in your area which is perfectly legal and able to be ridden repeatedly.

Your point about RuPPs and BOATs however is slightly misleading and needs clearing up. It's not correct to state that RuPPs are now called BOATs - they are an entirely different entity. However, there is a general reclassification going on country-wide and each local authority is

attempting to establish the true status of their RuPPs. Some will doubtless be upgraded to full BOAT status while others will probably be downgraded to bridleway depending on evidence and the results of public inquiries. There are some trail riders who believe that the very term RuPP (ie ROAD used as a Public Path) infers a vehicular right of way, and I'm inclined to agree with them. But the fact of the matter is that not all RuPPs have vehicular RoW, and the only way to establish that is to either check with your local authority or find 'evidence' of vehicular use which would stand up in a public inquiry.

BOATs (Byways Open to All Traffic) on the other hand definitely have full vehicular rights and may be ridden confidently, unless of course the lane in question has a TRO on it (a Traffic Regulation Order). This is an official sign posted up by the local authority which closes (sometimes permanently) any RoW, not just BOATs.

If you think this all sounds horribly confusing, I would agree with you, but consider the alternative. Ride your bike up a track which doesn't have vehicular rights, and if someone reports you, you're very likely to end up in court facing a hefty fine.

Lastly I would point this out to you. It's very common for local busybodies and NIMBYs to construct their own signs which say things like 'Private' or 'No Right of Way'. I tend to ignore these signs completely and roost up the track in question. The reason being that if you've done your research correctly you'll know whether that track has a vehicular right of way or not, and you're not going to be intimidated by some old selfish codger and his hand painted sign. Do your homework, know your rights, and you should be able to enjoy plenty of 'legal' trail riding around your chosen area...

Dual Sport

Dear TBM

It's well known that the best route to obtain on & off road happiness is to own two separate bikes each specifically aimed at the target environment. But after years of riding big-bore sports bikes, I've felt that I'm moving away from what I feel biking should be all about - which is top fun for a modest but ongoing outlay. Even cheap road bikes are now swaged in costly plastics, shod with expensive rubber and contain more valves than a brass band.

So my quest is to purchase an off road bike that can, with a change of wheels, be able to turn in a reasonable performance on road as a super-moto, and my primary requirements are as follows:-

- simple, reliable engine
- good build quality
- no plastics that readily shatter
- top speed in super-moto guise of about 100mph
- must have a kick start (in addition to any other starting)

I have looked at various machines ranging from Kawasaki 650s, CCMs, Husky TE610Es, XR400Rs, to WR400Fs. Although most road bikes are now liquid-cooled I see that some dirt bikes still stick with air cooling (CCM & XR400) which seems pretty sensible. As my road bike has suffered damage to the radiator fins from minute particles of grit being chucked up by the front wheel, how can dirt bike radiators cope with the bombardment from rocks and mud? Also it appears that most water-cooled dirt bikes don't have a cooling fan which could lead coolant to boil in heavy traffic - what's the answer to this?

This brings me around to the general point which is to ask if you could explain to me the benefits of one type of engine over another. As I intend to own the

bike for a number of years and your magazine's editorial team have ridden or owned almost every big-bore dirt thumper going, I thought you would provide an ideal unbiased starting point.

Richard Talbot-Smith
Stockport, Manchester

Cheers Richard. You're absolutely right about using one bike for both disciplines (street & dirt), that's what the whole dual-sport concept is about, and why more and more people like you are getting themselves equipped with a supermoto. So let's start out by dismissing the XR400 and WR400 for starters. Four-hundreds are a nice compromise between dirt and street use, but to get that 100mph top speed you're looking for, you really need to be on a 600 or 650 otherwise you're going to be thrashing the nuts off it. You can rule out the KLX650 (the trail bike version) as that doesn't have a kickstart and the enduro version is too rare to consider. So you're left with the Husky, the CCM and a couple more I would add to your list - the KTM 620 and the XR600R.

Your letter raises the point about water-cooling and how to protect the rads. The simple answer is that there's always a radiator guard (or roost deflector) which sits in front of the delicate rad fins and stops them getting bent. But even if the fins do get bent (and they always do) they'll still work okay - just not quite as efficiently. As for cooling fans, you're right, many off roaders don't have them fitted, this is simply because they don't need them. The rads are big enough to cope with the heat build up, and the bikes are rarely stationary for long. The additional weight, complexity, cost and fragility of a cooling fan rules them out for dirt use, though it would be easy enough to fit an aftermarket fan onto a bike used predominantly

Relax and unwind this weekend by finding a bog and burying your bike in it up to the crank-cases....!



Dear Trail Bike...



Robust, air-cooled, powerful. How 'bout a CCM or an XR600

on the street.

You ask about the differences between water-cooling and air cooling and why one manufacturer chooses one over the other? Watercooling allows an engine which produces a lot of power (and by inference a lot of heat) to disperse that heat build-up quickly. This moderation of temperatures in turn allows manufacturers to build engines with closer tolerances and thus greater specific power outputs. Air cooling on the other hand offers a more rugged, more reliable and easier to maintain engine, but (and I'm generalising here), air-cooled engines tend to produce less power (per se) than those with temperatures which are more evenly controlled (ie liquid-cooled).

I guess where this is all heading is that if you prefer the ruggedness and simplicity of air cooling then that only leaves us with the CCM and the XR600. Both of these bikes in our opinion make excellent super-motos.

They both have good build quality (the CCM's is superb), both can be geared-up to hit about 100mph and both are robust and fitted with enough kit to make putting them on the road relatively easily. If we had to decide between the two we'd probably opt for the CCM which is not only better specified than the Honda, but is more powerful, more distinctive, nicer to ride on tarmac and comes with an electric start as well as a kicker. All aspects which should make long-term ownership that bit more enjoyable.

Discovering Ireland

Dear Blez

Aaaaarrgh! I read the article about the Rally of Discovery in TBM42 with total disbelief. Towns such as Killorglin, Milltown, Killarney and Castlemaine are just on my

doorstep, I had to pinch myself several times to make sure I wasn't dreaming. Me and my neighbour Dave, both own KLR650s which we love to get off road from time to time, but every enquiry we've ever made to local bike shops about rallies and events are always met with the same: 'Jaysus, dere'll be nutin loike dat happenin round here for sure.'

Feck it (as Father Ted would say). The closest we get to competitions around here is chasing local farmers on their C70s up bohreens (the Irish equivalent of a green lane). So please could you print Phil Gunn's internet address so that we can contact him and ride the excellent sounding Rally of Discovery for ourselves.

Mick Higgins
Glencar, Co Kerry
PS Any other Irish trail riders out there want to contact us, we'd love to hear from you. I'm on 066 60260.

No worries Mick, here's the info you need: The RoD '99 will go ahead over the Easter weekend. The start will be in the south east corner of Ireland not more than 80 miles from the Port of Rosslare. The Format will change slightly, with more checkpoints per day. Briefing and signing-on will be in a high-standard hotel on the evening of Good Friday. Saturday and Sunday will be spent riding, and Sunday evening will be devoted to awards and prize giving. Then you can take a leisurely lie-in on Monday before departing home. For the adventurous, GPS down-

loads will be available and only one Ordnance Survey map will be required per day. As hotels fill up quickly at Easter time, get your entries in early.

Phil Gunn: philgunn@iol.ie
Phone&fax No (from UK):
00-353-21-889462
Mobile: 00-353-087-261-3162
Address: Phil Gunn, Southern Adventure
Motorcycle Club, Scarthbarry, Watergrasshill,
County Cork, Eire.

Good Guys

Dear TBM

Just thought I'd drop you a line as a newcomer to the off-road scene. I spotted your magazine last September (in the local Co-Op of all places), and having read it from cover to cover, thought I'd like a go at it myself. I contacted the TRF and various advertisers in the mag and eventually came across BogBusters. They organised a day out for me in the Peak District in November using one of their bikes and it was brilliant.

I've since bought myself an old XT350 and been green-laning with them again. The second time was even better - at least it was until my XT expired - but no worries because BogBusters got me back to the van with my bike.

So I would like to recommend BogBusters to anyone out there like me. You'll have a great day's riding - whether you're experienced or not - and I'm hoping to go out with them again just as soon as I've fixed my XT. That is unless you want to loan me your Husaberg to try out - sale or return...!

N Bell
Ashby de la Zouch

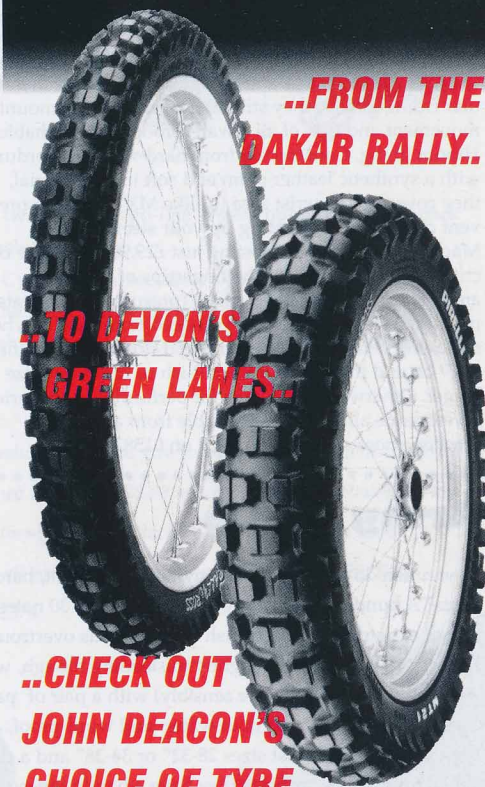
Fat chance mate. Sale yes, but no return...

You managed to break an XT350, and now you want a Husaberg? Next time you get a flat tyre try stuffing it with tenners - it'll be far cheaper in the long-run...



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Army Game

How much do you reckon on paying for a decent, hard-wearing pair of fully waterproof Gore-Tex riding pants? A hundred quid, 150 even? How about 30 notes (or £20 if you want secondhand). That's the price for a pair of extremely tough, British army surplus overtrousers from Springfields in Staffordshire. The term overtrousers is slightly misleading though, we reckon they're tough enough (and thick enough) to wear on their own or (more sensibly) with a pair of padded lycra cycle shorts underneath. Being made of Gore-Tex they should be both water- and wind-proof, and strong enough to survive the odd tumble. They come in two waist sizes 28-32" or 34-38" and a choice of short, medium or long leg lengths. What's more, unlike most riding trousers they have a handy hip-pocket and zip-adjustable ankle closings. The camouflage pattern may not be to everyone's taste (nor the elasticated waistband, for that matter), but they are warm, well-made and designed to be tough. Good value for 30 quid we reckon.



Also available from the same supplier are army surplus Gore-Tex boot liners, designed to keep your feet dry on the wettest of days. The 18" tall ones (pictured) cost £20 while the shorter 8" bootettes (which our own Paul Blezard swears by) cost just £13. We'll be trying out both these items over the next few (doubtless rainy) months and will report on them soon. In the meantime if you want some to try for yourself, give Mark Bullock a call at Springfields on 01283 566137, and tell him we sent you...

Fly by Night

You know how it is, you start out riding in daylight, but by the time you've enjoyed a meal in the pub, fixed a flat and then spent an hour looking for a petrol station for your mate's converted YZ250, it's gone dark.

Most enduro headlamps are about as bright as a glow-worm with flu, so when you pull this amazing twin-beam Cygo-Lite system out of your back-pack and tape it to your front fender, your mates will be seriously impressed.

It comes from the world of mountain bikes but suppliers Cycle-Logical reckon it's just the thing for your dirt bike, and they should know, they all ride enduro bikes. The unit comes with a separate (rechargeable) gel-battery pack, and a battery charger, and costs £68.85. It's bright, compact and built to take the rigours of off-road-ing. Call Cycle-Logical to order one on 01443 218700.



Lamp Light

'99 Acerbis rear fender enduro light helps give (virtual) legality to your converted crosser. The newly designed unit costs £25.99 which includes a stop/tail lamp and rear number plate light (though it doesn't include a bulb - that costs extra)!

Available from all good off road shops - more details from BHR on 01582 472374.

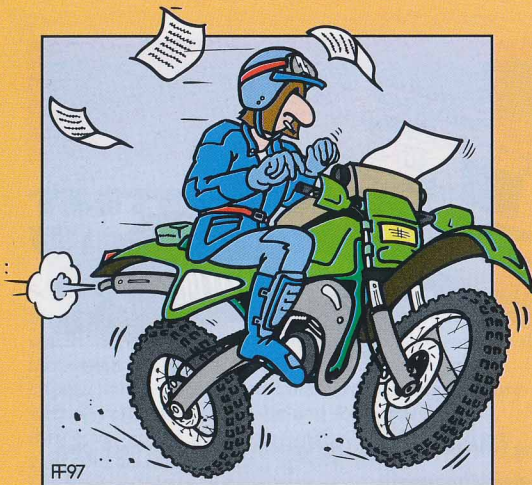


Get a grip

At this time of year, grip is at a premium, so the more help you can get from your tyres the better. That's why Bridgestone have introduced a new enduro tyre specifically tailored for the sort of conditions we get here in the UK. The new ED660A 'Gritty' is intended to help find grip on soft to medium ground, with ultra-wide tread spacing to aid self-cleaning, yet it's still fully street-legal and FIM approved. The new 660A is also joined by the new M70 MX tyre - again designed for UK conditions - for those (closed course) enduros where MX tyres are permitted. The new 660A Gritty will work out around £49 for a 120/90-18, while the M70s (in 19" remember) will cost you £47.

For a range brochure contact Cambrian Tyres at North Parade, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 2JR, or see your local tyre dealer.





FF97

TALKING *Dirty*

Chris Evans ponders the moral justification of the Dakar Rallye...

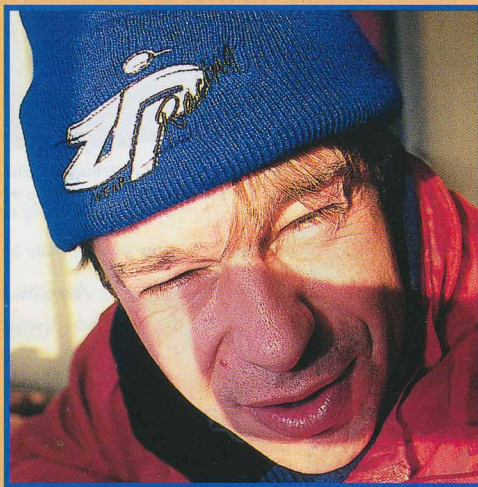
Although you're reading this at the beginning of March I'm writing it at the end of January, and so feeling rather pooped after three weeks covering the annual sand-fest lunacy that is the Dakar Rallye. And boy is it mad.

It is mad for many reasons but I think the major reason it's so barmy is that it takes place in a very crazy continent - Africa. Take Mauritania for instance - a very mad place indeed. A kind of giant sand pit (with the emphasis firmly on pit), it has the dubious distinction of being one of the poorest countries in the world. Over the last 20 years it's been ravaged by drought, forcing more than 75% of the nomadic population to settle in truly awful towns like Nouakchott. Those who choose to cling to their traditional way of life (if choose is the right word) have it much, much worse.

About halfway through the race we stopped overnight in a place called Tichit. Knock off the

first two letters and you have a very good idea of the conditions in which the inhabitants live. Incredibly this town was a thriving cultural centre only 100 years ago, with a famous library and palm groves boasting over 20,000 trees. Now it is quite literally dying on its feet. The palm trees are all dying because the salt levels in the wells are rising, while the town is being slowly covered by enormous sand dunes, that an army of JCBs working round the clock couldn't hold back. Understandably anyone who can is getting out, but 2000 people remain - 500km from the nearest civilisation, with no transport, no radio, no electricity and no medical facilities whatsoever. Never in my life have I seen people with so little in the way of amenities - and I speak as one who has seen the inside of Blez's flat.

Only 50km from Tichit, possibly one of the



maddest things to have ever happened on the Dakar took place. Nomad bandits (or rebels, depending on your point of view) were busy holding up 20 vehicles and their 50 occupants at gunpoint, and relieving them of all their worldly goods, before driving off in three trucks, four cars and a motorcycle (interestingly out of all the tasty bikes available they chose to pinch the only DR350 entered on the rallye).

This brazen act of mass desert mugging naturally aroused my curiosity and I decided to read up a little about these guys. And guess what - they've been doing this sort of thing for centuries! In the old days they used to follow camel caravans and pick off the stragglers. Now mechanised (they nicked a Tatra truck last year which they use for charging about the desert in), they are simply maintaining a long and colourful tradition of the Sahara.

The madness doesn't end when you come out of the desert into Senegal either, if anything the fact that there are more people around just makes it madder still. The infamous town of Dakar is about as mad as it gets.

After the prize-giving, tradition has it that everybody trots off to the nightclub next door for some serious R&R. And this being Africa, where everything imported is expensive, and local labour is cheap, a sizeable percentage of Dakar's female population descend on the club to take advantage of men whose resolve has been seriously weakened by too many days in the desert.

Finding the club a little too 'intimate' for my liking, I decided to step outside for a breath of fresh air. Which of course was a mistake - no sooner had I gulped a lungful than I was accosted by a horde of (shall we say) 'female freelancers' eager to top up their meagre monthly wages.

As luck would have it, a guy who had extensively hassled me earlier on, recognised me and got rid of the crowd by informing them that I didn't like girls (for him an entirely logical deduction based upon the fact that we'd refused his generous offers concerning his sisters, mother, grandmother and wife).

Undeterred however by my reluctance to 'mingle', one woman pushed past my guardian by explaining that she just wanted to talk. She asked me what nationality I was and on discovering that I was English declared that she'd spent four years in the UK working as a nurse.

What, I asked, had led to her radical change of circumstances? Working in the UK she'd managed to put a bit of money aside and went back to her birth place - Sierra Leone - to start a business. Everything went swimmingly for a while, until the country erupted into the most horrific civil war and she was forced to flee to Senegal as a refugee with no money. The weird thing was that as we were discussing all this in a completely normal manner the 'counter' was still running. Who said 'talk was cheap'?

Now I'm no specialist in third world countries, but I suspect that all this African madness has a lot to do with money. The fact that we on the rallye have a lot of it and they don't have any, probably makes matters worse still. In fact you could argue that the fact that we are there at all is the height of vulgarity. It's certainly what most of my non-motorcycling PC mates think.

Now I'm not about to try and justify the Dakar rallye, although by no means do I think it is as cut and dried as many would like to believe. What I do think however is that I'm extraordinarily lucky to see and experience the things I do and that it is absolutely incredible that I have that chance simply because I like riding motorcycles...



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TRAIL TIPS

This month - a way to keep your goggles clean, some cheap waterproof gloves and avoiding problems with water in the electrics...

Well Trail Tips is back again this month starting with a couple of ideas from reader David Lacey from Bucks. David offers these suggestions: Cut a 1" diameter hole in an old tennis ball, and punch two small holes in the opposite side. Now secure the tennis ball (large hole upwards) to your handlebars with a cable-tie, and use it to store a piece of wet sponge or rag to clean your goggles (or rear number plate) when riding in muddy conditions. Secondly, before beginning work on your bike, squirt a blob of washing up liquid into your hands and rub it in, especially around your fingers and nails. Then when you've finished working on your bike and you wash your hands afterwards, all the grease and muck will come off much easier.

Cheers David. Now a suggestion from Tony Steel in Bath who sent us some pictures of his money saving ideas regarding clothing. Tony reckoned a good cheap trick was to buy waterproof Gore-Tex military clothing from his local army surplus store (just like we recommend this month's New Stuff). Spookily enough we'd just got hold of some of this gear for inclusion in our new products pages from another military supplier, but we hadn't come across the gloves Tony recommends. These are British army Gore-Tex leather ones, which as Tony says, have a strap at the back of the wrist which can be tightened to stop water

entering and cost him £36 (see pic).

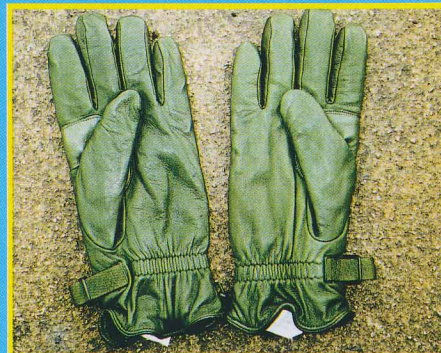
Thanks Tony. Now here's a couple of tips of our own. KTM's LC2 is a fantastic little trail bike in all but one respect - it has an aversion to water. Splash through a puddle hard enough and the LC2 will cough and splutter, then next time you try firing it up, it'll fail to start. The solution is to look under the right-side rad panel. There you'll find a large white block connector which is attached to the power-valve electronics. Disconnect this and the bike will start immediately, then you can reconnect it, and the power-valve will begin working again.

Mind you, it's best to avoid water reaching the electronics or the plug cap (on any bike) in the first place, so here's a useful tip. Stretch a couple of pieces of sticky gaffa tape across the front of your bike's frame rails, just below the point at which the single down-tube splits into two.

The idea is to prevent water from being fired straight off the front wheel directly at the plug cap. This tip is most relevant to water-cooled two-strokes, since if your bike is air-cooled, you need to be a bit careful about obstructing air-flow to the top of the motor. Likewise make sure the tape is well away from the exhaust - particularly on four-strokes where the headers run much hotter.

Don't forget, keep thinking up those tips, then send them in to us at the usual address (preferably accompanied by a clear photo or two), and we'll keep publishing them...

Tough, waterproof gloves from any army surplus store... Good tip!



Got any good Trail Tips?

We want to hear from you with your trail tips: what do you use on your bike or gear, and why. Send your tips (preferably accompanied by a few clear photos) to: TBM Tips, PO Box 9845, London, W13 9WP.

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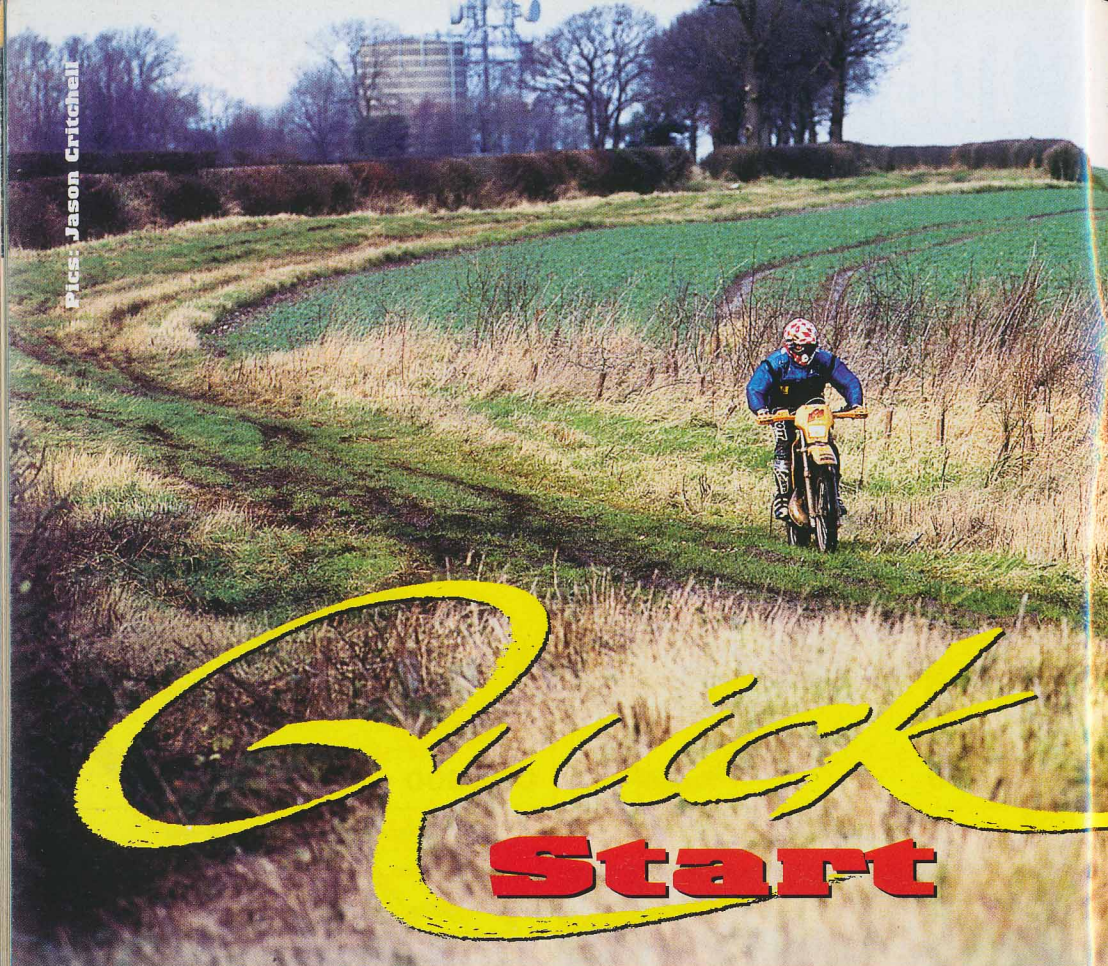
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Quick Start

How do you go about getting into dirt bikes if you've never ventured off road before and don't even own a pair of boots? We sent Dave 'Crasher' Cornish along to sample a new Off Road Experience in Leicestershire, which aims to attract novices onto a dirt bike for the very first time...

When we're not being asked to describe down the phone exactly what the wiring loom from a 1983 XL500R should look like to a punter up to his armpits in block connectors and electrician's tape; one of the most common questions we get asked here at TBM Mansions is where can the novice go to be taught how to trail ride?

It's a good question. There are any number of companies offering trail riding weekends, but few

feel the need to teach the novice dirt digger how or where to begin. And with a number of road riders wanting to make the switch into dirt bikes right now, it makes sense to be able to 'try before you buy'.

Enter Windy Corner, the Leicestershire-based KTM dealer which (thanks to some help from KTM UK) has started an Off Road Experience with the aim of not only attracting dirt virgins into the mud without the expense of buying both



the cost. Not included however is comprehensive insurance (£15-20 extra) and the cost of hiring any riding kit you might need (helmet £10, boots £5, goggles £2, jacket £4 etc). If you go for the whole shebang you'll end up looking at the thick end of 170 notes which certainly isn't cheap for this sort of day, but hey... you do get a certificate at the end of it.

Having met up with a bunch of other hacks invited along to try their hand, we left the Barwell-based premises after a brief discussion on the hows and whys of trail riding and headed off into the open trails that typify this part of Leicestershire. As most of our group had ridden off road before, tuition was kept to a bare minimum, but if a group requires a lot of teaching then that's what they'll get.

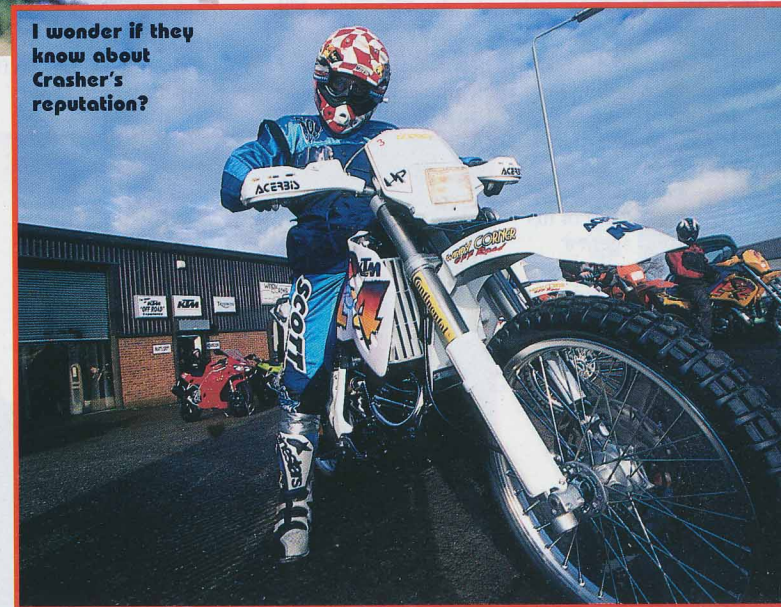
Weeks of heavy rain had turned the local trails into muddy rivers and the first badly-rutted track came as a bit of a shock to some of the assembled riders. But by the end of the trail there were mostly smiles and a few muddy bits of kit - testament to a number of get-offs already. The rest of the morning continued in a similar vein with trails being ridden at a relaxed pace and lots of encouragement from our instructor.

By lunch-time, everyone was sporting a huge grin, despite the iffy weather and we all tucked heartily into the nosh which was provided by the Mallory Park race circuit clubhouse. After a decent feed it was time to really let our hair down (er... so to speak), and take to the small moto-X track which lies within the confines of the

bike and kit, but also of giving riders the chance to try their bikes for size. Which makes a lot of sense for both punter and dealer alike, especially as the full cost of the day will be deducted from the price of the bike if you go on to buy one within a month.

So for an outlay of £125 for an LC2 (or a tenner more if you want a 400cc thumper), the novice can get riding tuition and a day's dirty fun on a shiny new KTM, on both green lanes and an MX circuit, with lunch included in

I wonder if they know about Crasher's reputation?





Quick Start

race circuit. Again it was laughs and grins all round as the novice dirt riders splashed and battled their way around the small track. After wrestling all morning with the weight of a 400LSE (on trail tyres), I managed to get hold of an LC2 125 and found I could lap much quicker and safer in the slippery conditions on the less powerful bike, which made me wonder why novices would want to ride anything bigger. But as Roger Winterburn (Windy Corner MD, and driving force behind this project) said: 'Most road riders consider a 500cc to be small these days, and when calling in to book a place, always ask for one of our 620s!'

Eventually I managed to prise Roger's personal EXC125 enduro bike out of his hands and spent a fantastic 20 minutes thrashing around in the mud and showing Kurt Nicoll (who was along for the day) some of the famous Crasher lines. But as the weak winter sun began to disappear behind the industrial units, it was time to return to base for a much-needed hot drink. Virtually every-

one to a man (and woman) had enjoyed themselves, and reckoned that novice off roaders would do likewise. The day isn't difficult and the riding may be a little pedestrian at times, but for the hesitant rider or those venturing off tarmac for the first time, the Off Road Experience should suit them.

Cheap it ain't, but nevertheless it's fun and friendly and a good way to sample off roading (and a KTM) without throwing yourself in at the deep end. For more details on dates and prices call Windy Corner on 01455 842922 and tell 'em we sent you...

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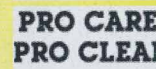
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Quick Blast



K T M 5 4 0 S X C

The secret of successful niche marketing is not just about finding a niche and then filling it with your product, but actually to create an entirely new one, and thereby create a demand which didn't exist before. String enough niche products together and you have a wall-to-wall market offering real choice for the consumer.

Take KTM for example. They already produce a comprehensive range of medium to large capacity four-strokes covering everything from tarmac (The Duke), through trail riding (EGS-LC4), enduros (Super-Comp), rallying (660 Rallye) to adventure touring (640 Adventure-R). On the face of it they seem to have it pretty much covered. So when they went and launched the 540SXC at the end of last year, you had to question just who they were aiming it at.

At the Dirt Bike Show in December last year, the latest '99 model became the Kari Tiainen Replica, in honour of the Finnish, multi-world champion who campaigns one in world enduro. It had a new flat-slide carburettor, gold anodised wheels, a Spes pipe and a clear tank (among other detail changes). But not having ridden one, I still couldn't quite figure out the relevance of the model.

Up till now if you were in the market for a KTM four-stroke, you had a choice of the mild but fruity 400, or the full-on, rip-snorting 620/640 to choose from - and that seemed a fair choice. But (and this is the clever bit), now you effectively have a choice of 400, 500 or 600cc bikes to choose from (albeit that the 620SC is not strictly available as an off the shelf enduro bike any more). And it's not until you actually ride the 540 that you realise quite why this bike exists at all.

You won't be surprised to learn that the 540 feels like a halfway house between the mellow

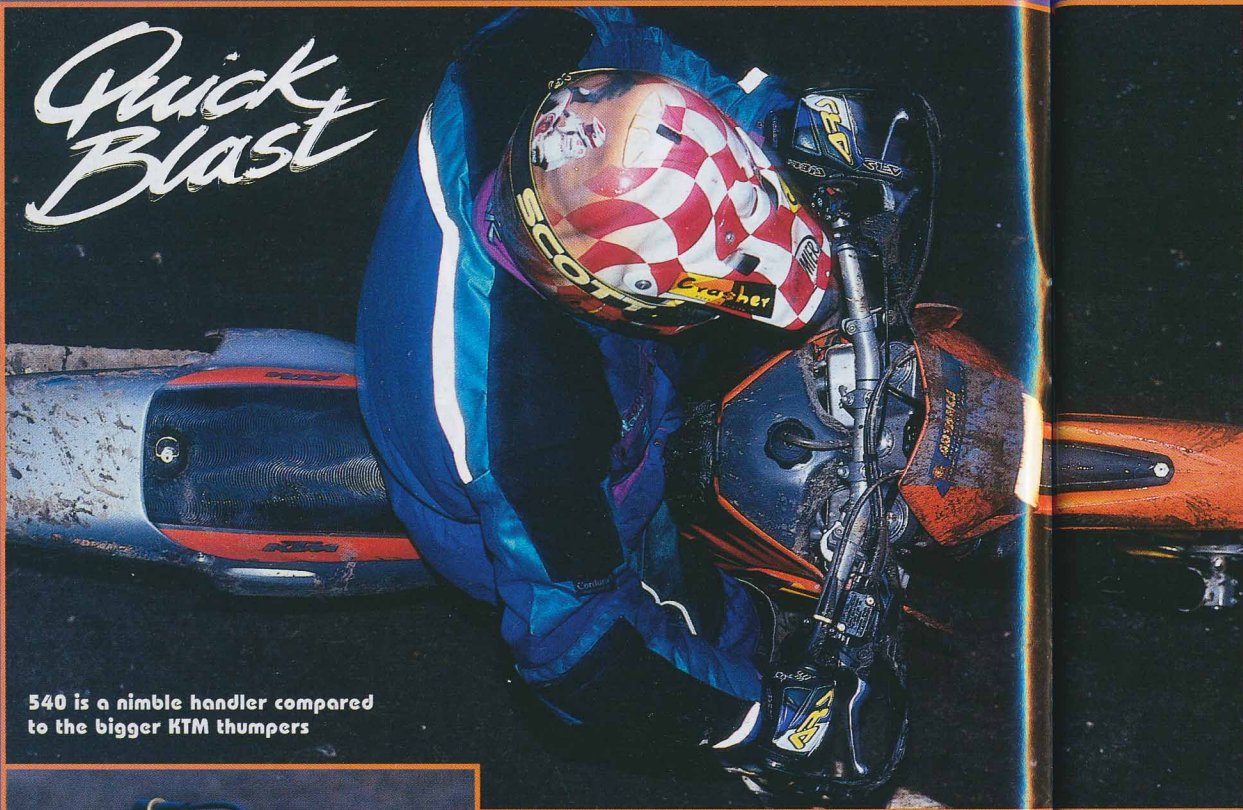


Adventure Sports:
KTM 540 is the
bike for those
that take their
riding seriously

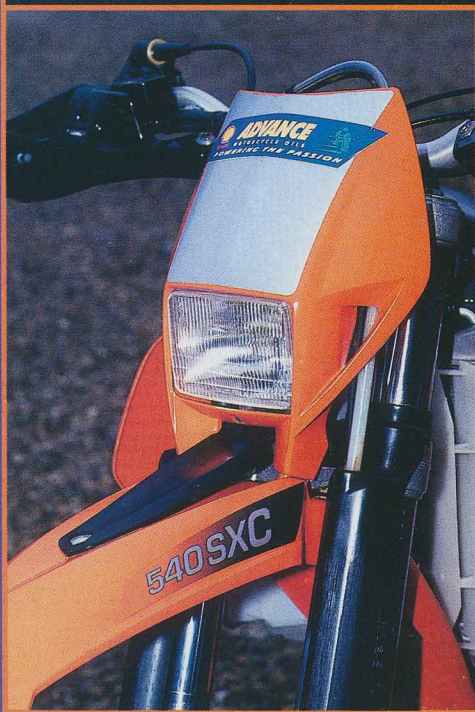
400 and the fiery 620, but surprisingly does a lot more than simply bridge the capacity gap. The 540 takes the best elements of each bike and incorporates them in a single machine. You have the predictable handling of the 400 with the top-end rush of the bigger motor. Obviously the 540's not got the full set of chest hairs from the 620, but that's what makes it so rideable.

That's reason enough for producing such a bike, but interestingly (and perhaps unwittingly), KTM have also engineered an entirely new niche. You see, there's only a handful of riders (like Kari Tiainen) capable enough of riding a bike like the 540 to its limit in enduros, and in

Quick Blast



540 is a nimble handler compared to the bigger KTM thumpers



the British context with short courses weaving in and out of tight forests, you have to question whether there's a need to ride a big open-class thumper at all.

On the other hand the 540 excels as a superb 'Adventure Sports' bike: in other words, a bike for all occasions. This is a machine on which you can blaze the trail, ride enduros, or even enter rallies. In other words it's the consummate all-rounder, and I suspect it'll be the sort of bike which'll get used for many more disciplines (super-moto, moto-X etc).

Physically, like all the KTM four-bangers, it's a pretty big bike, firmly suspended upon a set of WP's finest. The bike starts easily enough using the left-side kick-start (though you must remember to give it a little throttle), and provides a solid wall of torque no matter how many revs are dialled in. Like the rest of the KTM family which utilise this motor, it's not much of a plodder, though it does pull straight off the bottom and provide a seamless wedge of power throughout the entire range, hurling you forwards with every tweak of the light throttle.

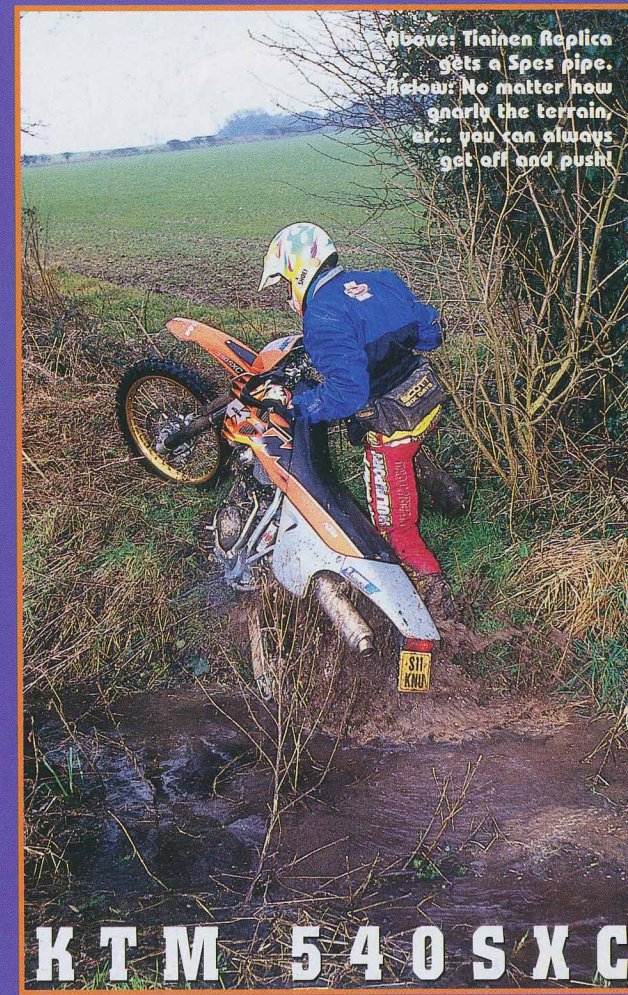
The suspension is firm, well damped yet trail

friendly, and the chassis sharp enough to carve a tight turn around most trail junk. The quick-release seat is broad, and if not exactly comfortable, then at least endurable for a few hours. There's a wide set of braceless bars, a compact electronic digital speedo and an opaque 12L tank which ought to be good for about 4-5 hours continuous riding (the clear tanks had some technical problems during manufacture and had to be discontinued).

Of course there's the usual KTM vibes to deal with, a tall left-sided kick-starter and an even taller seat which combined with a serious lack of steering lock, realistically restricts this bike to riders above 5'10". Find yourself pointing the wrong way in a narrow lane and you could be there all day getting the thing turned around.

Nevertheless, get on the KTM open up the throttle and I guarantee a broad smile will cross your face. There's something about the way a big KTM delivers its power that'll have you grinning from ear to ear. Even on the most slippery of trails we could find, the KTM tracks straight and handles predictably, with a turn of speed ready to blast you past the slower traffic.

In short, I can see this bike appealing to the sort of rider who likes to ride quickly (whether on the trail or in an enduro), but up till now has been reluctant to buy a



Above: Tainen Replica gets a Spes pipe. Below: No matter how gnarly the terrain, er... you can always get off and push!

KTM 540SXC

Back To

Basics

Pics: Si Melber

£1500 would get you a good, clean KLR250 like this one



Kawasaki's ageing but trusty KLR250 makes a cheap secondhand buy, but is it worth bothering with? Si Melber tracks down a decent secondhand example and enters it in a long distance trial to find out...

Forget about bikes for the next millennium, the ancient KLR250 looks like it was designed well before the last millennium was dispatched. In fact, this is a bike which has remained virtually unchanged since the continents split apart, and stone-age man gave up trying to fix his Husaberg with a flint axe and instead bought Japanese.

Because the KLR is nothing if not boringly reliable. In fact the DOHC, water-cooled Kwacker lump has a reputation for being more bullet-proof than a UN Land-Rover, and the similarities don't end there. My guess is that a UN Land-Rover is almost certainly lighter and nowhere near as sturdy.

Okay, so this is a bike which was never destined to set the world on fire - or even get it luke warm; extraordinarily heavy, softish suspension, excessive girth and a steering geometry so lazy, it feels like it's gone into hibernation. Then of course there's the power delivery (if that isn't a

contradiction in terms with a bike like the KLR250). The KLR's power output is so torpid, that if it were to get into an argument with the skin of a rice pudding, it would almost certainly come off second best.

But even this could be overlooked were it not for the fact that the KLR is unbelievably lardy. How does 155kg sound? It sounds damn heavy to me. Or let's put it another way. The KLR250 weighs the same as an XR600R with two 10kg weights sat on it. Quite why a 250cc bike needs to be so hefty I'm not sure, though having a bulky motor with both a water jacket and cooling fins probably doesn't help. Everything else about the KLR is chunky too: the chassis (and in particular the rear subframe) is beefy in the extreme; the clocks, headlight, seat and tank all look to have been built without any attention to weight saving; and about the only thing which appears light and flimsy are the front forks!

In fairness to the bike, it carries its weight low.

The KLR is easy to manoeuvre feet-up, but it could do with being 20 kilos lighter...



On the flip side, the KLR does have a few redeeming features. First off there's the economy. Don't laugh, some people actually care how far they get on a gallon of unleaded. Thanks to a huge XXXL-sized tank, and economy in the mid 50s, the KLR's good for more than 150 miles between fill-ups. And it's all day comfortable - that plushly padded saddle may look old fashioned by modern standards, but believe me the human butt hasn't evolved half as quickly as dirt bike seats have. A comfy saddle remains a desirable but sadly all too elusive treat on most of today's trailies. There are other niceties too: decent instruments, good road manners, big tool pouch, soft and progressive power delivery and a comfy riding position, which when all's said and done, help contribute to a day's enjoyment on the lanes.

And just to prove the point, I entered one in the Exmoor Trial - a long distance trial in north Devon - if the bike was to be any good it would have to climb some gnarly sections, stay comfortable all-day, survive on a single tankful of fuel, and most importantly of all, keep me amused on the ride. It was a tough assignment.

My trial started at 7am on the Sunday morning, with a ride from the overnight accommodation at the excellent Staghunters Inn at Brendon, to the start just south of Barnstaple. This was as

exciting as it was chilly, thanks to a combination of damp, slimy country roads and a mismatched pair of tyres. A skinny trials tyre on the front was mated to a huge 140-section TrailWing at the rear which made for some interesting handling I can assure you. Strictly speaking the KLR should've been fitted with a narrower trials tyre on the rear for this event, but because Kawasaki choose to equip KLRs (both 250 & 650) with an oddball and outmoded 17" rear wheel, finding trials tyres to fit at short notice can be a problem.

No matter, I let the pressures down to 5psi and headed for the first section: Jenny Wren. For those not familiar with long distance trials, the idea is a bit like regular green laning, only with the added interest that the tougher lanes are 'observed' by marshals who award penalty points for putting your feet down. Most sections are named and feature a restart halfway up them.

I managed to get about halfway along the first section before getting cross-rutted and having to paddle to get it straight again, but somehow the

it up into second, and hold onto that gear until the engine was labouring so hard that the firing strokes could be measured with a stopwatch. At which point I knocked it down to first and nailed it again.

Thankfully the KLR responds well to this type of behaviour, clutchless changes are a cinch and the motor chugs away with remorseless regularity whether flat-chat or just above tickover. The power available may not be very much, but it is linear in nature, and the KLR simply refuses to stall - all good attributes of a decent green laner.

On the road however, the power deficit is exacerbated by the higher speeds and greater wind resistance. Remarkably, the little KLR was capable of belting along in top gear (sixth) at an indicated 75mph on a flat road. But hills were another matter, and north Devon has some corkers. Show this bike an incline and you'll lose speed quicker than a FireBlade owner with a mirror full of flashing blue lights. I found that dropping one cog was never enough, on some of the hills I had



Excellent dials can't make up for a lacklustre motor

KLR slipped and slithered its way to the top of the hill, albeit in first gear with the throttle nailed. Everybody has their own approach to riding sections. Some ride at walking pace, picking their lines as carefully as a prospector might pick out a sliver of gold from a pan of sediment. Others prefer the full-bore approach with masses of throttle and a smoking rear tyre. I must admit to being fonder of the latter style, reasoning that forward momentum and maximum impetus is (in my case) a fair substitute to a healthy lack of feet-up skill. The problem is that the KLR barely has enough grunt to power up hills in second gear let alone anything higher. I found the best technique was to fire the KLR off the line at maximum revs, bang



KLR 250 good enough for 7th in class...



to go down three gears and still the KLR was panting at the top.

Now 250cc four-strokes always feel a little underpowered and I'm on record as stating that I enjoy the challenge of riding thumpettes to the max - twisting the power on and waiting for the revs to catch up - but sadly with the little KLR, sometimes they never do catch up. I don't want to be unfair here; the KLR has a good set of road manners, feels stable and planted, and what's more would probably outpace an XR250 on a level stretch of road. It's also probably the best equipped 250 trailie for covering tarmac distances thanks to its spacious riding position, comfortable seat and decent range. But oh dear, all that weight simply works against it when its struggling up an incline and bikes like the XR will simply romp away from the KLR as soon as the tarmac heads upwards.

Nevertheless, the trial was going reasonably well, notwithstanding the fact that I'd flunked

one of the sections and shot through the end of a special test I was supposed to stop at. I cleaned seven more sections, set a reasonable pace on the next two special tests and on the last one the KLR even wheelied away from the line when the rear tyre found a bit too much grip - something I definitely wasn't expecting.

I'd managed to make up enough time to stop mid-afternoon for a hot cuppa and a slice of delicious lemon drizzle cake at the 'Village Shoppe and Tea Room' in the little hamlet of Atherington, and was feeling reasonably pleased with the Kawa's achievements. The brakes definitely lacked bite (the rear's an old fashioned drum), but otherwise it was performing capably.

Suitably refreshed, the final few sections in the afternoon were actually much more straightforward; the KLR keeping its heels clean on most of them though the tricky High Bray which consisted of a stony (almost cobbled) surface covered with a thin layer of wet mud was its undoing.

The KLR's tyre was smoking virtually the whole way up, but eventually the bike clambered to the top albeit completely out of my control.

At the end of the day as I rolled back in to the finish, and collected my certificate, I reflected on the KLR's achievements. True it had managed everything I'd asked of it. It never needed refuelling despite covering more than 120 miles (there was still loads of fuel left), it stayed comfortable, never broke or complained, and performed pretty well off road all things considered - good enough to earn seventh in class. It was also simple to start, highly tractable, splendidly quiet and actually very capable as a trailie.

But, and this is a big but, was it fun? The answer to that has to be a guarded maybe. In other words it was fun, but it could've been even more so with a bit more poke and a lot less weight to sling around.

This prompts the question: to what sort of person is the KLR250 going to appeal? Arguably it might interest the novice or more pedestrian trail rider - one who relishes its steady flow of torque, from bottom to top without the rush of something more powerful. Or perhaps someone who requires a bike for use on the roads during the week and only ventures off road occasionally. You see it's not that the KLR is particularly bad off road, on the contrary it works surprisingly well - particularly the suspension - it's just... well... it's just, that there are so many bikes out there now that can do the job a whole lot better. Bikes like the DR350, XR250 (or even the old XL250) are more than a match for the KLR. And if you want something specifically for classic trials, then the good old XT225 Serow is hard to beat. And that's just the thumpers.

True, the KLR is probably the nicest of all these bikes when it comes to riding any distance on tarmac, but even then it can feel underpowered at times, and most people would probably want to opt for something a little bigger in capacity. For £1500 which is what you'd pay for the clean secondhand one we tested, you're likely to get a KLR which is in exceptionally tidy condition. They're strong enough to survive years of off road riding and there's no doubting you're getting a lot of metal for your money - too much really!

Believe it or not I've had a lot of fun on KLR250s in the past and I hoped to

be able to say that the little Kwacker has its virtues. But after reacquainting myself with one I can't help feeling that this is one trail bike that's finally past its sell-by date. Buy one if you must (and the price is right), but don't expect too much of it, bar, tireless reliability.

Thanks a lot to the Container Company for supplying the mint condition test KLR with the appropriate tyres. If you want one, call them on 01362 698147.

Time for tiffin...?

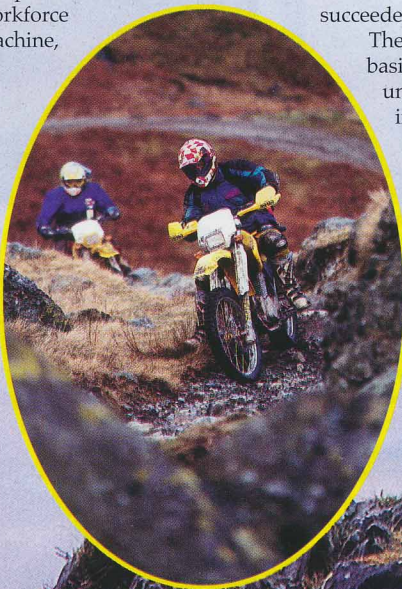


BRITISH STEAL?

With an updated model and a new pricing structure, the '99 CCM 604E Sport looks like good value right now. TBM headed up to the Lake District to try out the latest bikes and discover whether the only British dirt bike manufacturer is back on track...

CCM are on a roll right now, the Blackburn factory's immediate future has been secured thanks to an injection of capital, a revitalised and re-motivated workforce is turning out an even better machine, and what's more their bikes are suddenly popular again, with new and exciting models in the pipeline.

Not since the early 1980s have CCM been as enthused about the future as they are right now. To say they are stoked about the prospects for this unique British dirt bike would be an understatement. There's insufficient space in this test to discuss the whys and wherefores of how the CCM renaissance has come about, except to say that none of it could've taken place had the product not been



good enough to build on. Without the right product, and a belief in their bike, CCM could've had all the help in the world and still not succeeded.

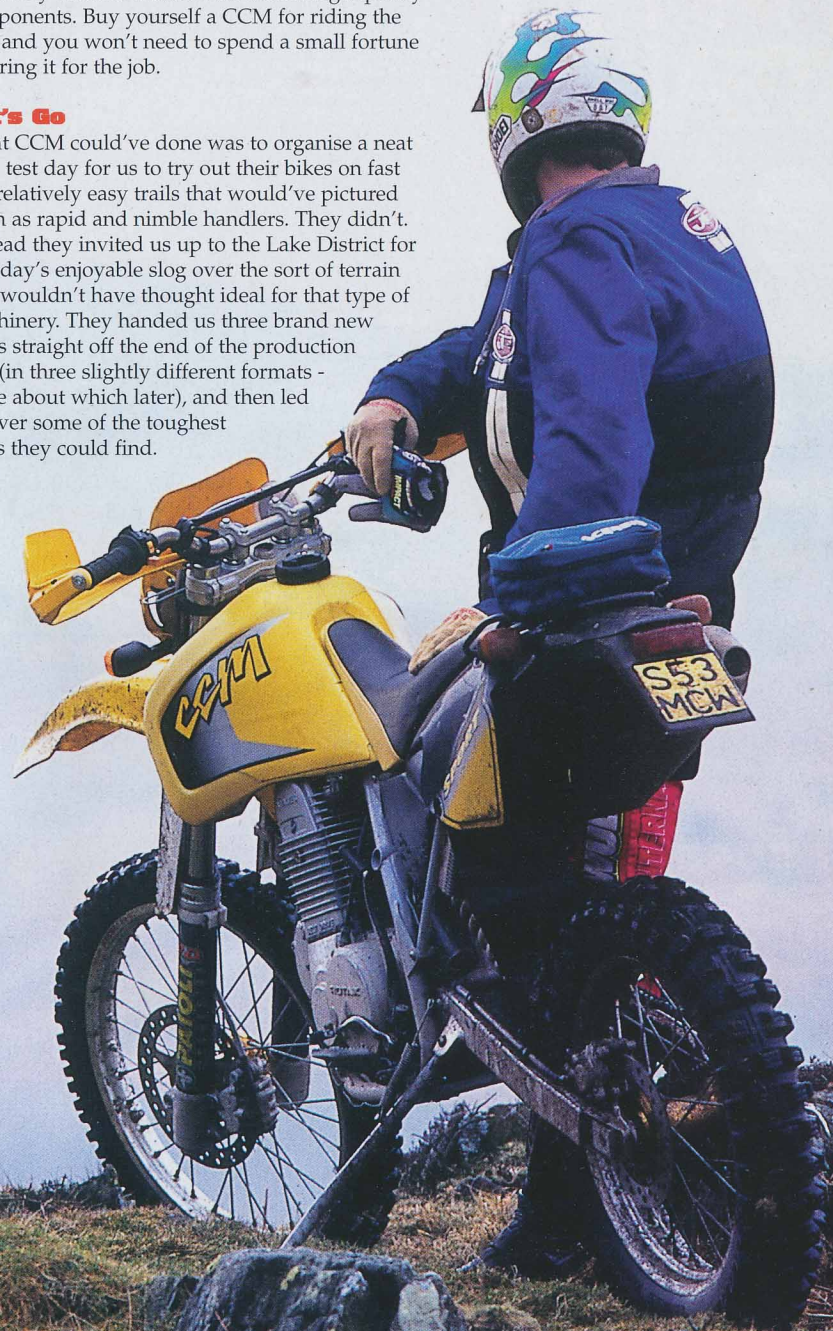
The fact of the matter is that the basic machine remains virtually unchanged for '99, bar a few very important improvements. What the financial backing has allowed them to do is to finish off the final details so that every single one which leaves the Shadsworth factory is not only fully equipped for the road (indicators, lights, horns, key ignition etc), but equally equipped for the rigours of the trail. That means bashplates, serious suspension, alloy bars, strong levers, a substantial and

extremely durable chassis and decent high quality components. Buy yourself a CCM for riding the trail and you won't need to spend a small fortune tailoring it for the job.

Let's Go

What CCM could've done was to organise a neat little test day for us to try out their bikes on fast but relatively easy trails that would've pictured them as rapid and nimble handlers. They didn't. Instead they invited us up to the Lake District for two day's enjoyable slog over the sort of terrain you wouldn't have thought ideal for that type of machinery. They handed us three brand new bikes straight off the end of the production line (in three slightly different formats - more about which later), and then led us over some of the toughest trails they could find.

Pics: Si Melber & Henderson Grime Assoc



BRITISH STEAL?



Believe me we're talking 'black runs' here which in the depths of winter with rain and mist to contend with, are a serious challenge on any dirt bike, let alone a big thumper like the CCM. Routes like Walna Scar and Gateskarth Pass can really test a machine to the limit: big rocks, steep climbs (with little grip), slippery loose-surface descents with hairpin bends, slimy bogs and some of the most breathtaking scenery we've come across. All this on three street-legal, properly silenced machines running road-legal dual-purpose tyres. We were impressed.

The Product

For those not already familiar with the CCM package let's elaborate a little. Originally designed as a four-stroke motocrosser, the 604E Sport has mellowed over the years and now found its niche as a truly versatile big-bore dual-sport machine, utilising a trusty (if bulky) Rotax motor shoehorned into a hand-built, tig-welded steel frame. At the front a set of conventional Paioli forks replace the rather unyielding Marzocchis of old with perhaps the best mass-produced fork legs currently on the market. The rear end is supported by a rising-rate (but linkless) WP shock which seems to work just fine. Talon build the wheels using their excellent lightweight hubs, laced with spokes nearly as thick as your little finger, stitched to tough Excel rims, which are then shod with Pirelli MT21s.

All the plastics on the bike are made by UFO with the exception of the tank which was designed in-house and holds 16L of juice - enough for a decent day's riding. The seat is narrow, plushly padded and all-day comfortable. Behind you sits a small but cleverly designed rack which adds versatility as well as two useful grab-handles and helps protect the rear indicators from damage. In front of the rider there's a pair of aluminium bars, good quality switchgear, a lightweight throttle and a proper set of instruments emblazoned with the CCM logo. The riding position is excellent with a good forward-leaning stance (when stood up), and the best set of footpegs we've come across. Sitting down works equally as well, with a comfortable seat/peg/bar relationship and plenty of room for fore and aft movement on the saddle.

Below you sits the heart of the machine, a trusty air-cooled Rotax thumper with a belt-driven, sohc, four-valve head. This is the Geoff Capes of the dirt bike world: physically big, but also solidly dependable, visually distinctive and chocked full of beans. There are plenty of examples of smaller, lighter dirt bike engines which make the bulk of their power at sky high rpm. The Rotax isn't like that. Its combination of low-end grunt, feisty midrange and pumping top-end is supplemented by easy maintenance, good reliability and push-

button starting. It may be a bit of a bulky mill, but it builds the sort of seamless power that trail riders love. The Honda XR600R is probably the closest in terms of torque, girth and dependability, but it can't boast the Rotax's electric start, nor for that matter, its plentiful power output.

Ride On

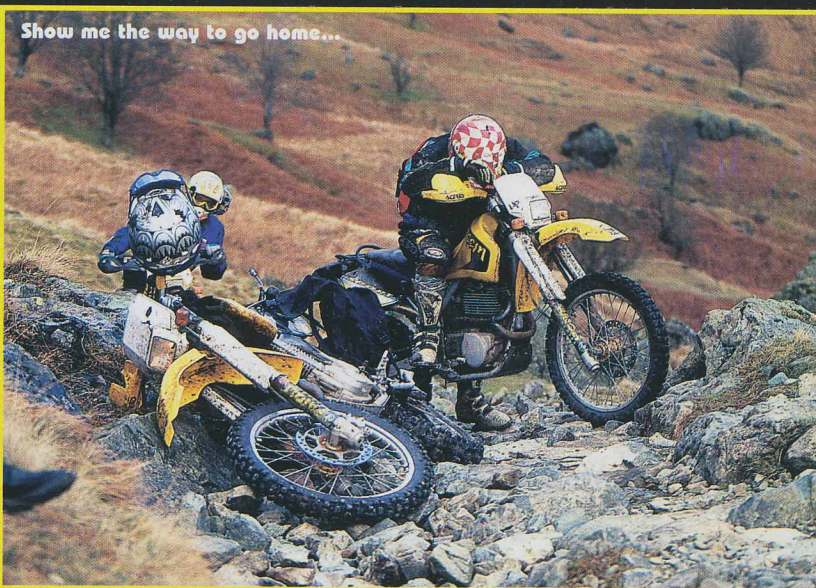
There's an annoyingly fiddly choke lever to engage before firing up the engine (which once you get used to it, becomes less of a pain), and thereafter a turn of the key and a prod of the starter button gets the motor spinning into life with a characteristic growl. It used to be that starting a CCM on a quiet Sunday morning was the quickest way to annoy your neighbours short of parking your van on top of their cat. For '99 the raucous pipe has been replaced by a smaller, neater and significantly quieter one (manufactured by Supertrapp). There's the same rumble as before, but without the associated loss of blood through your ears. You trade a couple of horsepower, granted, but you stay on good terms with your neighbours and attract less attention from the feds.

About 40 seconds is enough to warm the engine and despatch the choke for the day and thereafter, blipping the throttle will send the engine note soaring and raise the hairs on the back of your neck. A pull on the light clutch and a stamp on the gearlever gets you away.

Such is the true dual-sport nature of the CCM, that it's actually as much at home on the road as it is on the dirt. There's no temperamental snatch from the chain (there's no cush-drive remember), the engine hardly vibes at all and it will pull cleanly right off the bottom. Plus it idles, handles superbly and possesses a decent amount of steering lock. And remember, unlike bikes like the XR600, the CCM comes with a full compliment of roadgoing accessories (like indicators) as standard, and is sold by the manufacturer as suitable for road use (are you listening Mr Honda?). About the

only gripe we could find on the tarmac (apart from a notchy gearbox), was that the front brake needs a decent squeeze to elicit any retardation, rather than the usual two fingered pull we're used to with most bikes these days.

But it's when you turn off the tarmac and onto the dirt that the 604 really begins to make you smile. There's no getting away from the fact that you're riding a big, physical bike, although quick steering, narrow flanks and a lowish centre of gravity ensure that it hides its weight pretty well. Perhaps it doesn't dance over obstacles in the same way that a lighter bike might, but believe me, the 604 is no supertanker. On the contrary it feels, well balanced, excellently suspended and



rapid in the turns, even when pressing on across loose rocks.

Unlike some big four strokes, it doesn't push the front, plough straight on in loose corners, nor struggle to turn when you yank on the bars, though it helps if you use a bit of bodyweight to steer it through a corner. Whereas bikes like the XR600 can feel flabby and wallowy at times (especially at speed), the CCM never does. It's suspension remains well controlled without feeling harsh, so that the Sport responds to the rider's input yet soaks up the hits both large and small. In fact considering the pounding the bikes were getting from the terrain, it was amazing that we weren't bounced into the scenery more often.

Much of that is down to the excellent suspension. Build a bike with too stiff a fork, and you end up getting punished by the terrain as it simply

CCM 604E Sport

Price:	£4995
Engine:	Air-cooled, belt-driven sohc, four-valve, single
Bore & stroke:	97x81mm
Capacity:	597cc
Carburettor:	39mm flatslide Dell'Orto
Transmission:	5-speed
Frame:	Twin cradle steel (oil bearing)
Forks:	46mm Paiolis fully adjustable, 300mm travel
Shock:	WP fully adjustable 350mm travel
Brakes front:	260mm disc, Brembo caliper
Brakes rear:	220mm disc, Brembo caliper
Wheelbase:	1530mm
Seat height:	925mm (optional lower version)
Fuel capacity:	16L
Trail weight:	144kg
Colours:	Yellow/black, white/purple
Manufacturer:	CCM 01254 691500

The Blackburn Banger is in our opinion one of the best looking dirt bikes available. Low seat option drops the saddle by 1.5" if required



Top: Sturdy, well designed rack doesn't intrude on your riding.
 Right: Bulletproof Rotax mill keeps churning out the horses. Still slow to shift though.
 Below: Talon wheels and Paioli Blue Steels make for a great front end.



BRITISH STEAL?



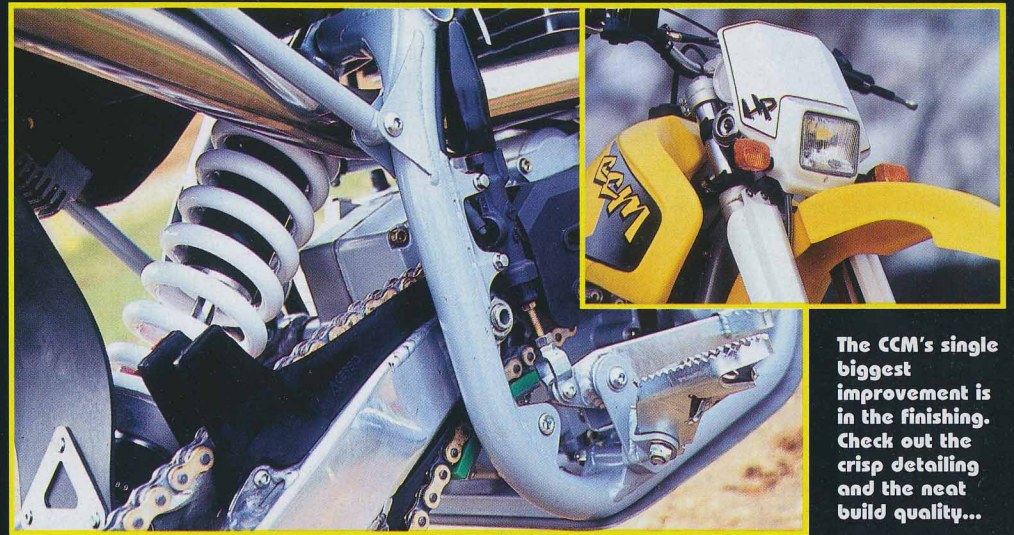
passes on the bumps to the rider; plus, given the CCM's rapid steering and (relative) front heaviness, this can sometimes manifest itself as instability in certain circumstances. In the past this has been something we've felt a little unhappy about with CCMs, but I'm glad to report that the new Paiolis seem well matched to the bike and allow it to track the terrain much better than the old 'Zocchies' ever did. In turn giving the rider much more confidence. We never got to test the bike in deep mud (with the exception of the odd bog we found), but the feeling was unanimous among the three TBM testers, this bike not only steered neutrally but was excellently suspended - front and rear.

Other Stuff

There's little doubt that when you feel confident in a bike, you ride it better and enjoy the ride more. The CCM instilled a lot of confidence in all of us.

I'd be lying if I said we never fell off (though 'Crasher' fell off more than the rest of us put together - surprise, surprise), but not once did we reckon it was the bike's fault. More importantly, despite being upended, tipped over, bounced off rocks and flung at immovable bits of the scenery, the bikes suffered no breakages, other than those we caused - bent levers etc. And what's more every single bike started up every single time on the first push of the button. Brilliant.

Perhaps the 604E Sport is not your idea of the perfect dual sporter, maybe it's too tall, or you think you want more power. If that's the case then CCM can tailor a bike to your individual needs. I



The CCM's single biggest improvement is in the finishing. Check out the crisp detailing and the neat build quality...

Big open tracks are where the CCM feels most at home, but our test proved it can turn its hand to anything if required



BRITISH STEAL?

mentioned earlier that we tried the Sport in various guises, one was a low seat option which drops the seat height by approximately 40cm (1.5"), which makes the bike superbly user friendly. It's still going to feel tall if you're particularly short in the leg, but we reckoned it was the way to go. Unlike some low seat bikes the CCM doesn't require smaller wheels or lose a lot of its suspension to do it. In fact it doesn't look any different at all - it simply sits a tiny bit lower.

Power wise, CCM also offer a 636cc kit which uses a 100mm slug to up the output considerably. Personally, I felt the stock motor in the standard or lowered chassis was the best combination, as the hotted-up one (like a lot of high compression motors I've tried) tends to work you harder on the trail. But you may feel otherwise.

So finally we come to the price. This time last year a similar (though not as well equipped) bike from CCM would've set you back more than six big ones. Now the price is a smidge under five grand, and at that level don't expect any discounts. Such has been the phenomenal interest in the marque since the takeover that there's currently a waiting list for new bikes, and the machines

sell themselves. What's more, with CCM's factory ride-outs generating even more interest, if you're undecided about buying one, you can sign up for a test ride and judge for yourself.

Summing Up

At the end of it all, what impressed us most about the CCM was not the bike's excellent handling, its grunty motor, fluid suspension nor the tireless reliability of its electric start. It was the fact that the CCM factory felt confident enough in their machines to take us to the gnarliest terrain they could find and let us loose on their bikes. There were times when we had to get off and push, or lug the bikes over rocks, bogs and washouts, but they never once let us down, nor failed to deliver, no matter what abuse we meted out.

I'm going to stick my neck out here and say that the 604E Sport is quite probably the best of the big-bore dual sporters on the market at present (it's certainly the best specified), and if you're in the market for such a bike you'd be foolish not to try one. Not only is it well built, extremely well equipped and seriously strong, but it's also a lot of fun and by Jove it's British. **Si Melber**

Second Opinion

I make no excuses for my fondness of the famous British built CCM mark. To me, the name CCM always conjures up images of our brave lads taking on Johnny Foreigner with an outdated BSA mill during the mid 1970s. That true Dunkirk spirit has proved vital over the past 25 years for a factory which has lurched from one economic crisis to another, but now thanks to new owner/investor Peter Swift, CCM are finally on the up. With an updated 604E Sport trail bike (and a super-moto option available), as well as soon to be launched 604R sportster waiting in the wings, the new regime looks to have made a number of impressive changes already.

Most impressive of all is that although the '99 Sport model resembles last year's enduro bike, it's now being sold strictly as a 'supersport' trailbike in fully street-legal trim. And after spending two days riding (not to mention pushing) one

across some challenging trails, I'm pleased to report that in my humble opinion the 604E is probably the best big street legal 'proper' trailie, money can buy. Let me explain why...

Well first of all the CCM looks the part. Quality construction and componentry lend the bike a 'works' look, but that's only part of the story. The proportions are right, giving the CCM a muscular but somehow attractive stance. Approach the bike and you'll find it's actually a lot narrower than you imagined, lift it off its side-stand and it feels lighter than you'd think. Close up the detail is as good as it looks from a distance. Tig-welded frames have that tasty hand-made look with non of the splatter-gun welding of a Jap chassis.

Sit astride the rather tall saddle (well it is for me), press the starter and the 97mm slug explodes down the barrel with a familiar yet strangely subdued boom. The new street-legal exhaust contains the volume but it can't contain the CCM's aural thunder. This is music to the ears for the cognoscenti, and a far cry from the ear-splitting enduro cans the factory passed off

on us last year. For road and trail use it's an ideal compromise between socially acceptable and hi-performance, though ultimately peak power and to a certain extent, throttle response suffer accordingly.

Once on the move it becomes obvious that although outwardly identical to the '98 bike, the latest Sport handles far better. How much of this is down to careful set-up by the factory or just the switch to the supple Paioli Blue Steel forks, I can't be sure of. But what I can say is that our test bikes demonstrated none of the twitchiness we found when we tested them at last year's Hafren Rally.

On the gas the trusty old 597cc Rotax shows no sign of its advancing years, tweak the new lighter throttle (thanks mainly to a new flatslide 39mm Dell'Orto), and the old girl will haul with the best of them. In fact despite the air-cooled lump's outwardly bulky and (let's face it) plain old-fashioned profile, if you shut your eyes I guarantee it'd be impossible to tell just how modern the motor was. Only a rather stiff and notchy gearshift spoil an otherwise near-perfect trail bike powerplant.

On the steep and slippery ascents the 604E never missed a beat, bouncing from one television-sized boulder to the next. On or off the gas the big thumper would carburete perfectly and providing the rear MT21 found enough traction, the CCM would always get me there - even if I wasn't always on board when it finally arrived! And despite being thrown down some horrendous drops, the leccy start motor never once failed to spring into life immediately - try that on your kick-start trailie.

So you could say I was impressed with the latest efforts from CCM. Since the last time I rode a 604 most of my previous criticisms have been ironed out, while detailing such as wiring connectors and instruments have improved dramatically. In fact only the bike's occasional reluctance to swap cogs easily blots an otherwise perfect copybook.

With CCM's proposed 20-dealer network, bullet-proof reputation and seemingly endless list of owner options, it's never been as easy or as cheap to own a beautifully crafted, multi-purpose 'supersport' trail bike. As for me, I'll take a bright yellow, street-legal silenced, low seat height 604E (with optional fork-top adjusters), and a pair of supermoto wheels for when the sun shines. Nice one!! **Dave 'Crasher' Cornish**

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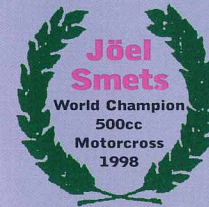
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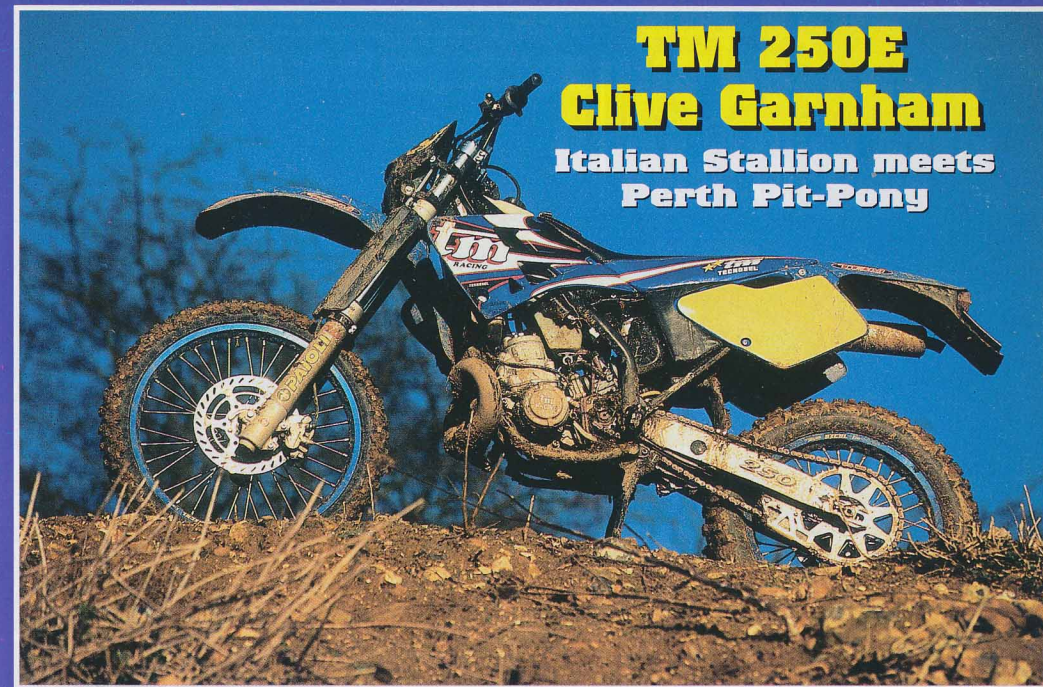
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STAFF BIKES



Get on up...



TM 250E
Clive Garnham
Italian Stallion meets
Perth Pit-Pony

Well the '99 TM250E has now taken pride of place in Garnham Towers' sumptuous lock-up in central London, relegating the trusty KX125 to the darker recesses of its dungeon-like interior. We'd been so impressed with our initial acquaintance with the new range of TMs that we thought we'd like a longer term view - particularly on the 250E. The TM importers were also sure enough of their product to allow us to have one for longer term evaluation, and figured that if we could get on with one, anyone could!

Like all good long termers the new TM will have to be versatile to earn its keep here at TBM. It'll spend much of its time at enduros up and down the country, in both local events as well as selected British Championship rounds plus maybe a few foreign jaunts as well. And it's going to be used in both the Le Touquet and Weston beach races this year - a tough season for any machine.

As usual we'll be bringing you the details of what we like, what we don't like, what went wrong or what survived the ordeal, and at the end of it all we should be a little wiser about TMs in terms of both long term ownership and familiarity.

Having picked the bike up in early January I spent the first half-hour of ownership looking more closely at it, itching to find something to

tinker with or adjust. Unfortunately short of altering the bend of the bars or adding hand guards there is little if any scope for tweaking, it's all there already. So it looks as if I'll just have to content myself with riding it more and spannering less. Shucks!

We were heading north of London the following day to test the Honda CRE250 (TBM 43), so it seemed like an ideal opportunity to run the TM in and compare it (briefly) to another 250cc enduro bike. Richening the mixture for the initial running in period, the needle was raised two slots up to its highest position. Then after checking liquid levels in both ourselves and the bikes, we fired it up and let it idle for five minutes as we readied ourselves for the off.

As we commented in the CRE test, there was quite a surprising difference between the two bikes. The converted MX-er felt soft and a little tame (though eminently rideable of course) in contrast to the pure enduro TM which was taut and flighty by comparison. Even blubbering richly, the TM out-performed the CRE by no small measure and in addition (though it seemed to require more input), the TM chassis also looked to hold much more potential speed in reserve too, things were looking good.

The bike was cleaned and lubed before another brief outing the following weekend at an MX practice track down in Thruxton, just to get a

STAFF BIKES



On first impressions the '99 TM feels much stronger in the engine room than last year's bike

Waaaaaa-hoooo

couple more hours on the bore. We dropped the needle one position (still richer than stock), but left the suspension as standard to get a feel for the way the TM would work in special-test type conditions. The track was fairly gloopy and as that gloop was a mixture of flint and chalk it made for some difficult riding conditions. Even so the bike impressed (though I was circulating at a very steady rate), and was quite confidence inspiring in the way it looked after its rider; helping me out of the odd slide or miscue and generally providing a smooth and controllable platform for me to build familiarity with my new workmate. The Paioli forks showed a tendency to bottom off one of the jumps with a rough landing area, so I logged that information for future adjustment.

It was a pleasure working on the bike afterwards (God I must be sick) despite it being predominantly Allen-bolted rather than the 8mm bolts that I'm used to with Japanese bikes and KTMs. Still a T-bar is a T-bar whether its got an 8mm socket or an Allen key on the end, so as long as the bike is well washed to get the gunk out of the end of the Allen heads, it should make little difference. What makes a difference though is things being well thought out, like the rear wheel assembly. Previously I've always had to catch the various bite components that fall from the back of my converted crosier (into the mud!), how refreshing then to just pull the axle out and pull the wheel out..... and that's it. Nothing

dropped out or needed re-adjusting, and it all went back together just as easily. If working on the rest of the bike is this easy it could well instigate a whole new maintenance regime, rather than my usual 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' approach!

My first (allegedly) competitive outing was at the infamous Jack Frost enduro in early February run by the Club in Mid Wales. Well known for its severity, I guess I must've been feeling a bit crazy when I entered, but I wasn't feeling half as enthusiastic when I actually peered through the mist at the start line two weeks later - wondering just what the hell I was doing here with 60 other loons. I just couldn't get into the riding on the day even though the course was good and testing, but the TM was having a great time. I would point it at snotty, rutted, root-strewn hills in the wrong gear and it simply grunted up them finding grip where there wasn't any. I must admit there were times that day when I wished the TM could've sprung a little radiator leak or thrown its chain just so that I could've claimed an easy NF. But it didn't, we both finished unscathed (I never fell off once), which bodes well for future events where my mind is a little more focused.

I'd twiddled with the suspension for the ruts and mud prior to the event, softening the rear pre-load and backing off the compression clickers front and rear. I went from six-out on the front to three-out; and from ten-out on the rear to four-out. I also clicked two back on the rebound on the rear to compensate for the reduced pre-load. Did it make much difference? Who knows... I rode like a Jesse all day so it's hard to tell. But the TM was plush and rideable and surprisingly I still felt pretty fresh at the end of the race.

Next event is the Le Touquet beach spectacular in France, and that requires a bit more thought to the set-up. At this stage the plan is to drop three teeth from the rear sprocket for a bit more straight line speed (for the five mile start straight), but perhaps stick with the over rich jetting to compensate for the extreme cold and severe demands of this particular race. Brush guards will be fitted, I've managed to borrow a big tank (hand made in alloy no less - very 'works'), and a tyre should round off the preparations for what is perhaps my favourite race of the annual calendar. If anything's going to break, this is where it'll happen. Let's just hope it's not on me this year! Watch this space...

KTM 200EXC

Chris Evans

Registered Racer



For someone of limited ambition and talent (someone like me in fact), a 200cc two-stroke is about the ideal off-road tool. Powerful enough to be fun, without being so potent as to be intimidating, it combines all the virtues of a 125cc (light weight and flickability) with none of the vices (like a throttle to the stop mentality and a lack of mechanical sensitivity I just can't muster). So when KTM announced that they were about to launch a 200 to rival Yamaha's and Kawasaki's ageing offerings, I was immediately interested.

What sealed it for me though was Si's first test of the KTM (TBM 34), where he concluded that it was definitely not a trail bike, but in fact a full blown racer. Now for someone who only trail rides and doesn't race (like me) you might wonder why such a bike would appeal - let me explain. What I thought Si was trying to say was that the 200EXC was like my much loved (or should that be much abused...? - ed) WR200 but a little more hard-edged and sophisticated. For once however our illustrious editor was in fact sport on with his judgement - the Austrian

factory's 200 is indeed a racer, first and foremost.

Which meant initially at least, I had the distinct impression that I'd bitten off a little more than I could chew. That in the 'easy to live with, versus fun' equation I'd weighted the fun factor a little too heavily. Now with 1500km under our belts, I've come to realise that while a few aspects of the KTM make it a less than ideal trail bike, in general it is surprisingly easy to live with and most importantly of all, even more fun to ride than I'd dared hope.

Getting the negative aspects out of the way first, it is true that as a day to day trail bike the KTM isn't exactly a comfy ride. Reasonably padded myself, I don't suffer from a hard seat as much as others. In fact given the choice I prefer a good, firm perch over one that you have to struggle to get out of. But even I find the 200EXC a little too unforgiving. As US Dirt Bike Magazine put it: '...if KTM were to make their pistons out of the same material as their seat foam, the engines would last forever...' Quite.

Another downside of narrowly focused dirt bikes is their dislike of anything resembling

STAFF BIKES

tarmac, and again the EXC is no exception. For example it doesn't like to be held at a steady throttle on the road and in really cold weather it runs like a pig-on-paraffin on anything resembling straight and boring black-top.

In all other respects however, the KTM's narrow focus has proved absolutely no inconvenience whatsoever. Traditionally the term 'narrowly focused' has been a euphemism for 'hopelessly unreliable', yet happily the KTM has proved 100% dependable to date. It's true that I haven't had the thing that long, but I've covered more than 1500km already and so far it hasn't shown a hint of a temper tantrum. And of course while I might have bought the bike without ever having tried it, I'm not completely mad. I've seen plenty of KTMs on my raids and unlike certain European brands that I

(and no doubt the ed) could mention, KTMs now appear to be just as reliable as their Japanese counterparts.

Apart from regular maintenance there's been precious little to do, and the routine stuff which has been needed has been greatly simplified by the KTM's sensible design. Changing brake pads or swapping air filters for example, are both two minute jobs which can be carried out by any ham-fisted mechanic, even someone as mechanically-challenged as Blez.

As standard it comes equipped with top notch components and while (prior to purchase) I confidently predicted I'd have to mess around with the handlebars and grips at the very least (and purchased these items in advance), having initially had no time to change them, I now find myself totally

happy with the standard set up.

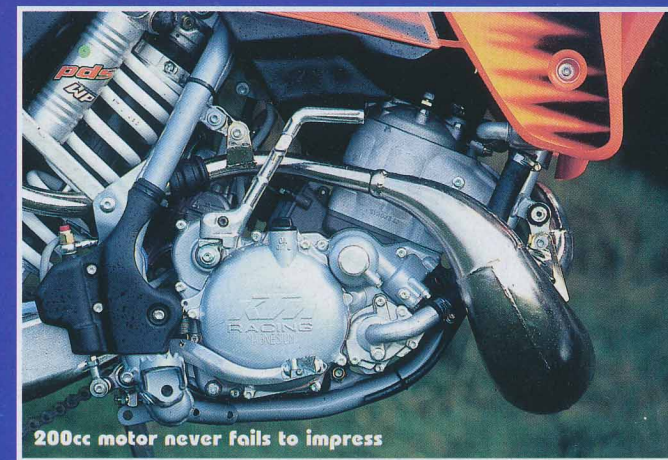
The only thing that the KTM does lack as standard are a couple of bits of protection. While it does come with frame guards, there were no hand protectors fitted so I added some Acerbis Rallye guards to try and cut down on lever consumption. The other area that is very exposed is the exhaust pipe,

which hangs down low at the front. For 45 quid I remedied the problem with a very effective (though not very pretty), fibreglass guard from French accessory manufacturer, First. I also splashed out on an extremely tasty and slightly more expensive Works Connection bash plate. Almost too pretty to fit, it is superbly made and went on without a whimper.

The only other mods I've been forced to make have been to the suspension settings which aren't exactly DR350 plush. Having read and failed to make much sense of the owners manual, I decided to enlist the help of somebody who knew what they were looking at.

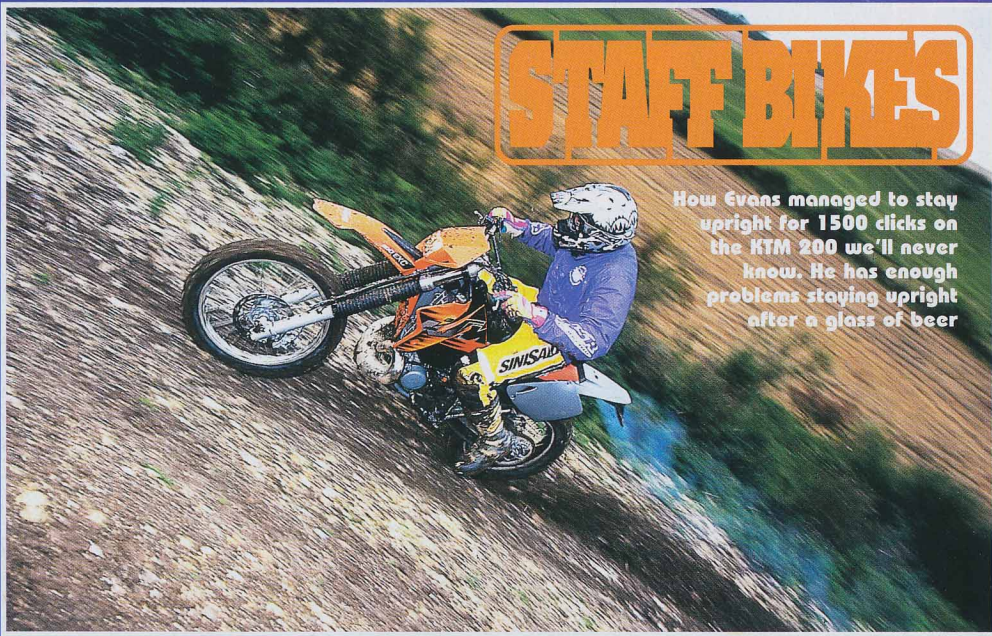
According to my mate Cyril (who knows what's what on a dirt bike), the rear shock didn't have enough pre-load as standard, making the bike sit too low at the back and kick out over small bumps. So he gave the top collar three turns, decreased the rebound damping to stop it coming back so fast and decreased the compression a tad to keep the whole thing reasonably soft.

The front end didn't escape the maestro's attention either. The first thing he did was lower the front end by pushing the fork tubes further through the yokes and then reduced the compression damping. He still thinks the forks are transmitting too much shock to the arms and may decide to mess around with the oil levels and



200cc motor never fails to impress

STAFF BIKES



How Evans managed to stay upright for 1500 clicks on the KTM 200 we'll never know. He has enough problems staying upright after a glass of beer

viscosity in the near future. As it stands however the bike is behaving much better and no longer has weird reactions to trail sized bumps.

Given that the bike is so well equipped and finished, I suspect my tinkering will probably stop there. I wouldn't mind seeing if a different pipe might smooth the power out a tad and I've heard that there are flywheel weights available to tame the 200's hit, plus I've ordered a larger front sprocket to make the gearing more suitable for long distance trail riding. Finally I might well splash out on a side stand. The centre stand is great for fixing punctures but almost impossible to use on the trail, and if it turns out that I can fit a side stand while retaining the other one, I almost certainly will.

Comfort and maintenance aside, the other potential downside of narrowly focused dirt bikes is my tendency to lob them with monotonous regularity. When I actually decided to buy the KTM the ed confidently predicted my crash quotient would rise dramatically. In that department thankfully he has proved totally incorrect, because even after a terrifying day out with the French National B-category enduro champion, training for the Gilles Lalay Classic (him not me), I've still managed to maintain my 100% sunny side up record. I'd like to put all this down to a miraculous and inexplicable improvement in my riding technique, er... unfortunately, it's more likely thanks to the bike's impeccable manners. The ed's predictions were apparently based on

his view that the bike's combination of quick steering and fiery powerband would catch me out - as it did him. But while I wouldn't deny that the 200 possesses both those traits in spades, they are more than compensated for by excellent suspension and spot on geometry, that helps you through situations that look frankly terminal, plus of course he can't rider for toffee, ahem.

But it is the way the bike makes you look like a superstar, without scaring you stupid that makes it all such fun. As we all know, two-strokes only come alive when they're in the powerband. The trouble is that out on a trail, when anything 250-sized or bigger hits the fun-zone, mere mortals like me struggle to cope. Which means that on a bigger bike we only ever flirt with a bike's potential before being forced to shut the throttle pronto. On the KTM 200 however the powerband is reached quicker and can be stayed in longer, meaning you can enjoy the 'hit' while still feeling you are in control of the bike, as opposed to the other way round.

If all goes according to plan I'll be doing roughly 10,000km off road in the coming ten months and frankly I can't wait. At the end of it, I confidently predict I'll be a better rider and of course should have a much better idea of the bike's long term performance. Whatever happens I'll keep you posted on both counts.

Next month the ed gets to grips with his weird CRM250CR, and Blez gets a new bike.... at last!

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KTM

"OFF ROAD" Experience

The Rough Guide to Britain

OS map 147

Mid Wales

In the heart of Mid Wales there's a great day's trail riding to be had centred around the town of Rhayader.

TBM is your guide to a day spent exploring some famous Welsh lanes like the Monks Trod and Strata Florida...

Mid Wales and especially the bit around the Elan Valley was a veritable trail riding paradise right up until the 1980s. You used to be able to ride all day around the Welsh town of Rhayader without ever venturing more than ten miles away from the place. Then thanks to apathy and ignorance on the part

of a lot of riders (not to mention some allegedly dodgy local politics between nameless club officials and local big-wigs), 90% of the RUPPs were re-classified as bridleways and lost to the trail riding fraternity for good.

However a few pleasant days rides are still possible even if it means more mileage now, and for this day out there is a good mixture of going, from boggy open moorland to hard stony tracks with plenty of water to cross. Unfortunately there is only one petrol station on the route nowadays and this is fairly near the end, however a ten litre tank on a four-stroke should suffice, with a 15 mile detour for thirsty bikes half way around.

Begin by leaving Rhayader on the B4518 towards the Elan Valley and then

take the first road on the right (signposted Mountain Road) to Aberystwyth. After half a mile turn right onto a minor road and the first lane is 200m on the left at (962,686). It is signposted Byway/Clifford. This is not the name of the track but Welsh for byway! This track is a rocky gentle climb to the high point at the standing stone, Maen-Serth. It then becomes grassy until it reaches the mountain road at (921,707).

Follow the mountain road down to the river at (899,791) which is the start of the infamous Monks Trod. Behind you is the mountain Moel Geufron which is

a favourite haunt of hand glider pilots in summer as well as the local red kite. The traffic sign at the start of the 'Trod', says no entry except for authorised users: motorcycles are authorised but 4x4s are not!

A word of warning here, do not cross the Trod on your own. And if you are at all in doubt of your bike's ability over difficult terrain, wait until you can be shown across by an experienced rider.



Beware of the bog!



It wasn't a bog which caused the XT600 to sink into the ground...



The Rough Guide to Britain

You should also cross with a minimum of three riders as you will almost certainly get stuck at some point and usually pulling on the bike just makes your feet go deeper into the mire.

Cross the streams, then the river, which although it is not usually deep is swift running, and carry on up the hill which is a bit boggy so pick your way carefully until you reach a hard track cut with two 4x4 ruts. Follow this track for a couple of miles until you reach a small muddy 'patch' - you'll recognise it when you get there. Don't be fooled this can catch out the unwary rider. Continue on until the track becomes extremely boggy (some riders say you should religiously follow the track as shown on the map, but I believe the maps are not that accurate and the monks of old would've followed the easiest route). Therefore I recommend that you should stay on the right of the track and you will find jumping the small ditches better than pushing through the bogs.

Carry on until you reach a black bog that seems to stretch as far as the eye can see. This is where the 4x4s have actually made things easier as they have cut right down to the rock underneath. Follow the track around to the right going

through the black puddle, it's not as deep as the rest of the bogs. Again opinion is split as to the best route after this point. I favour following just to the left of the track climbing up and away as necessary. You could also climb high to the left and you will find lots of enduro tracks to follow, or it's possible to follow the track closely just to its right. Whichever way you choose you should come across two large black puddles. They look extremely deep and it's tempting to try and go around them, but you'll find the best way is just straight through.

The next reference point should be some rock outcrops on your right and the track drops down to a small stream. Continue on up the slope which is much more grassy now until a faint track goes off to the right at (831,685). This takes you steeply down to the river crossing at (823,682) and marks the end of the RUPP in Powys and the start of an unclassified road in Ceredigion.

Here again, after the crossing, opinion is divided on the easiest route. You can follow the river downstream for about 200m and then blast across the bog to the track up on the hillside, but this is not the way for big trailies or novices! The other way after crossing the river is to turn upstream for about 200m and then turn sharp left across the bog to meet the track which can be seen about 200m in the distance. Whichever route you choose to take from the river, you should end up at a pile of rocks (which is actually a ruin) at (821,681).

Keep to the left of the ruin and try to cut across the ruts rather than along them and this will bring you back up onto the grassy track. Follow this track keeping left of the next bog and then cross upwards keeping above the track. There is no good way across the next two bogs but you should see on the horizon a sheep feeding trough. Head slightly to the right of this but be prepared for many boggy patches.

Once past the sheep trough, keep right and you should come down onto the hard rocky track that comes from the Claerwen Dam on the left at (808,677).

Look out for unexpected ditches...



For those of you who have had enough already (and I know some will have), turn left here and follow the stony track all the way to the Claerwen Dam and then tarmac back to Rhayader.

Those keen on a full day should follow this track until it turns into tarmac and then carry on into Pontrhydfendigaid. There are two pubs here but no petrol. Nearest petrol is seven miles down the B4343 in Tregaron. Now take the turning on the left signposted Strata Florida Abbey. This is the Abbey the monks were heading for, across the Trod, on their way from Abbey Cwmhir. Sadly most of the route is now bridleway or tarmaced but the bit you crossed should have given you an idea of what it was like crossing in the depths of winter in sandals and a habit! At the Abbey turn right and follow the tarmac to the forest gate at (755,646).

The track is straight in front of you, not the forestry road on the right. Follow this track as it crosses the forestry road until you come to a gate out onto open moorland. Follow this stony track through the next gate and again across the forestry road keeping left onto the correct track. You have to be careful here and follow the stony

track not the forestry road or you will end up in the middle of nowhere. Finally you'll start to cross streams at (787,624) and this is the start of about seven river crossings between here and Nant Ystalwyn. The track is well defined and stony but the rivers, although not always deep, can be very fast running after rain, so great care is needed if you want to avoid being washed downstream.

At the tarmac road turn left and then right at the next junction (811,563). (For an interesting diversion, turn left at the junction and follow the road down to the river via the devil's staircase at (835,555), then return. This was part of the Welsh Three Day Trial in the 1950s, before it was surfaced).

Turn right at the next junction over the bridge at (805,538) and follow the road through the forest to a left turn at (785,533) signposted Soar Y Mynydd. Across the bridge opposite the chapel, the next lane climbs up over the hill to the youth hostel at (752,534). There are incredible views here and the track is now much easier since graded by the council (it is a UCR) - the youth hostel will let you make a cup of tea or coffee but make

The Rough Guide to Britain

field and around the large house to the tarmac at (782,422). Go straight across and follow the tarmac to a sharp left bend. Turn right here down the track and just before the sheep pens ahead turn right through a gate at (784,418). Continue along this grassy track across the fields to emerge through a house courtyard at (784,407). The old chap who lives here is in his 80s and stone deaf so take care if he's out and about.

Now turn left here and follow the road under the railway and out onto the A483 at (806,397). Turn right on the A483 and after half a mile turn left onto a 'C' class road. Follow this road until it forks right at (840,415), then go straight on up the stony track, which is an old Roman road. Beware the two puddles along here are quite deep and a detour around them both



sure you leave a donation and wash up!

Follow the stony track onto the tarmac and after a mile turn left, still on tarmac, down to Bryn Glas at (736,516). Now follow the track through the farmyard making sure all the gates are closed and be sure to pass the time of day with the farmer as trail riders are the only people he gets to meet. He should let you go up the hill on his sheep field rather than the boggy route but please don't abuse this privilege. Continue on this grassy track over the hill and down to the river through a gate at (741,503). This is not quite the route shown on the map but I've never been able to follow it exactly despite trying several times. Take this track up to the forestry road and continue to a gate onto open moorland at (745,482). Proceed along this grassy track (watching out for drainage ditches), across a couple of boggy bits to the standing stone at (755,473) and then take the stony track down to the farm and tarmac at (756,459).

Follow the tarmac over the stream to the T-junction, then turn left and left again at the pub to go across the bridge. Turn right at the next junction and follow the road to another pub at Rhandirmwyn. Turn right here and then go left just before the camp site. Take the track across the

is recommended. Follow straight on until reaching the tarmac and picnic area at (882,435). Go straight (on the tarmac) through Cefn-Gorwydd, (passing a stone-clad caravan!) to turn left at the ford at (920,469). follow this track, which is also part of the old Roman road, north through the farmyard and then straight across the crossroads which is now tarmac, to turn right at the next junction. Turn next left over a bridge and then straight on through a gate into the next lane.

This lane is very overgrown and boggy for the first half mile but then opens out to go across open fields to the A483 at (941,496). Turn left here and Bealah is two miles ahead, where there is a pub and petrol station. Now take the B4358, direction Newbridge, and at the bottom of a steep hill at Glandulas turn left on a 'C' class road. Continue north on this tarmac road until the next lane begins at (948,594). Follow the four wheel drive tracks across the open moorland and after the two stream crossings keep to the right and eventually the track turns more stony and then into tarmac. Follow this road down into Llanwrthwl, turn right and then go over the bridge to the A470. Turn left here and this takes you back into Rhayader and the start of your ride.

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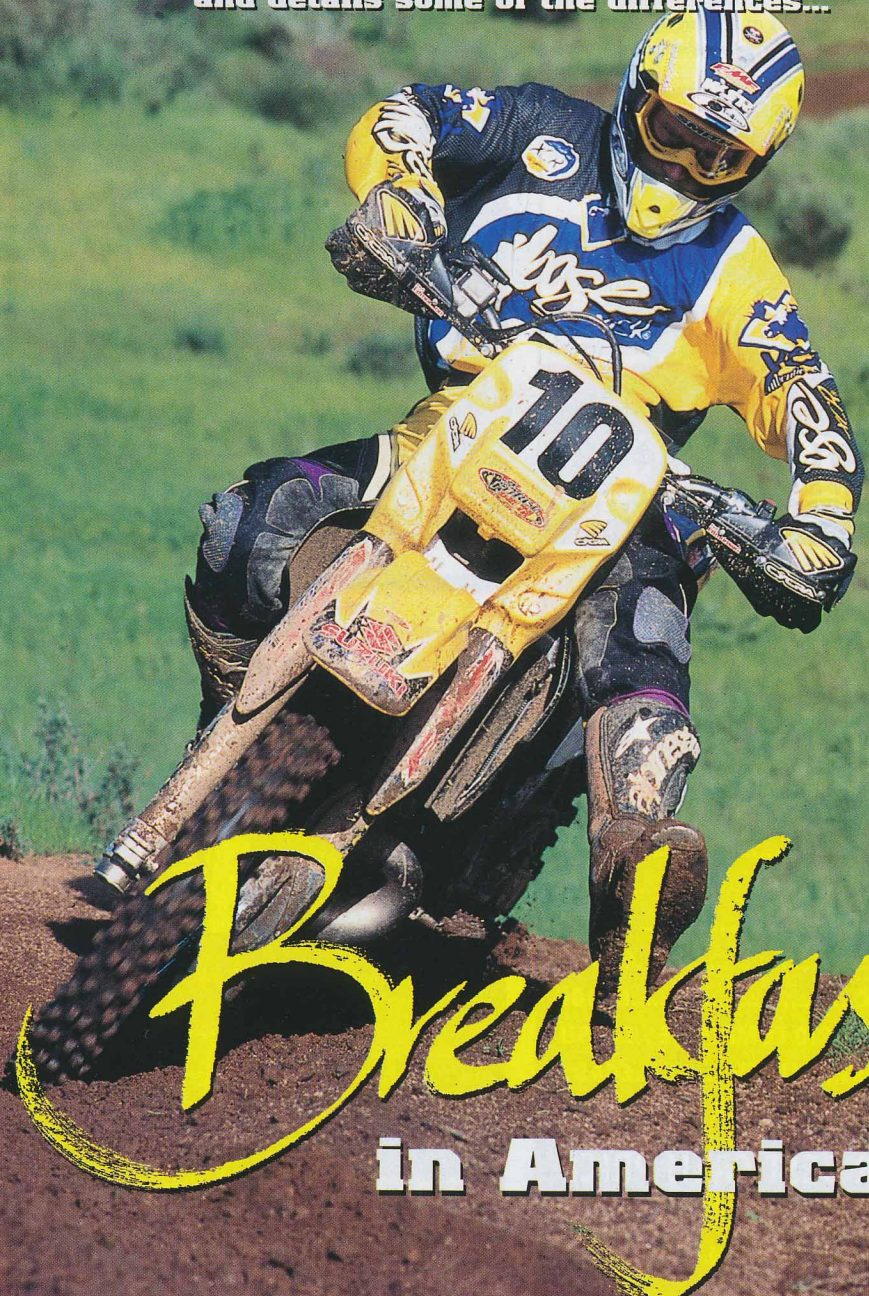
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The 13-round US Grand National Cross Country series (GNCC) is often described as America's premier off-road championship, but how does it differ from the European style enduro? Jonty Edmunds went to a round of the GNCC championship in the company of Paul Edmondson, and details some of the differences...



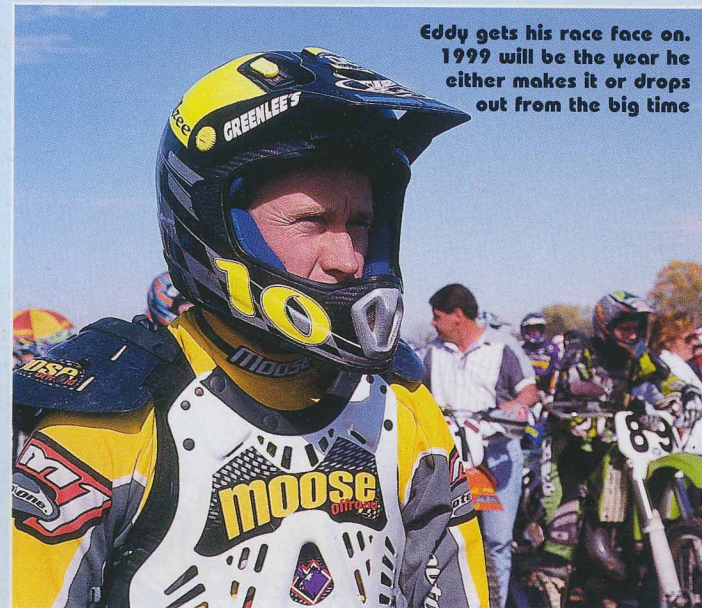
Breakfast in America

Everything's bigger in America, the cars, the homes, the people and definitely the rewards for dirt bike racing. But it wasn't so much the size of the winning purse, as the size of the challenge which attracted ex-world enduro champion Paul Edmondson to cross the pond and try his hand at enduro - US style.

The Races

The first and most obvious difference between the US 'Hare Scrambles' and a typical European enduro, is that GNCC riders don't require a timecard. Truth is the GNCC format is much more akin to a 'hare and hounds' event with races consisting of as many laps as possible of an off road loop in three straight hours.

Riders are lined up on the wide start grid in class order with the Pro-AA racers (Eddy and the other top boys) in front of the Pro 250s, Pro 125s, Four-strokes etc. With no start gate, the race begins with a dead engine and each class is released at 15 second intervals. From the start the riders head into what is usually a seven to ten mile lap comprising of typical off-road obstacles and hazards. Much of the lap may be single track making passing difficult, but it does serve to keep the action tight, with only a handful of seconds



Eddy gets his race face on. 1999 will be the year he either makes it or drops out from the big time

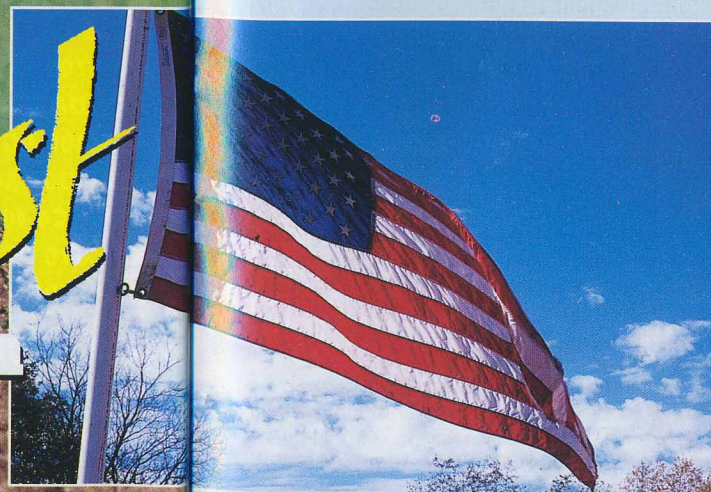
covering the top riders for much of the early part of the race.

Each race starts at noon and finishes at three o'clock with one stop for fuel at the halfway stage. Nascar-style dump-fuel systems are used giving riders only seconds to change their goggles and grab a drink, though all wear back-pack drink systems as well. Depending on how the race is developing, the fuelling area can become quite congested at times, with as many as six riders all pitting in quick succession. Pit-stops must be performed flawlessly to ensure any advantage gained in the first half of the race is carried over into the second part.

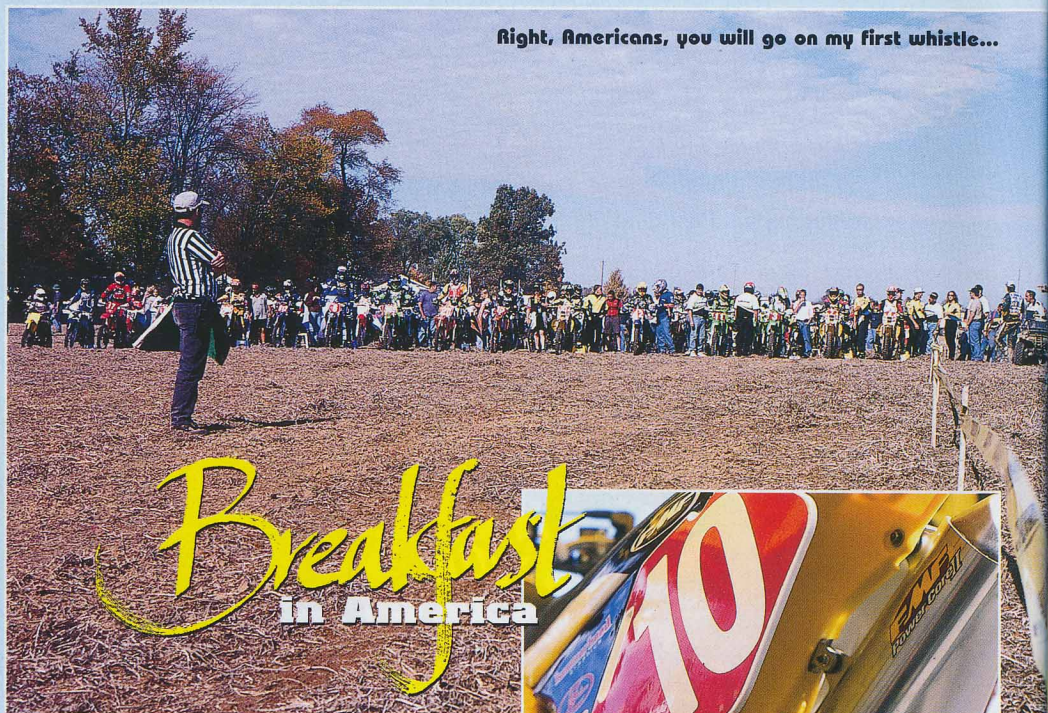
The only time a rider stops other than to refuel, is when he or she is 'scanned' by the lap scorers. Small bar-code stickers are attached to each rider's helmet, giving the organisers instant information as soon as the rider is swiped. Not only is this system an extremely accurate way of lap scoring, it also acts as a deterrent to anyone thinking of course cutting. With one or two check points (in addition to the one at the start/finish area), the lap can be split into sectors and each time from a given sector can be compared to other times from the same sector. If any cheating has occurred it will be obvious immediately to the race officials.

The Teams

It all begins early on the Sunday morning of race day (unlike enduros, the GNCC races are only ever one day affairs), as the crowd's attention is



Right, Americans, you will go on my first whistle...



Breakfast in America

drawn to the pit lane where the pro teams begin setting-up shop. Each team uses large box vans for transport which are parked with the rear doors facing the track. From these, giant awnings

Going the Distance

With an underlying MX feel to the GNCC races you may well ask what's the connection with enduros? The simple answer is endurance. Unlike with a 45min or even 30min motocross event, the GNCC riders must pace themselves to ride at or near full race speed for three solid hours without let-up - something most enduro riders don't usually have to do. The endurance aspect lies in the riders' ability to maintain a fast and aggressive pace for the entire duration of the race, since a rider who runs out of steam within the three hours will quickly find himself caught and passed by a slower but fitter guy. Both anaerobic and cardiovascular fitness play a large part in GNCC races and are an important part of a pro rider's training. Last year it was championship winner Rodney Smith's ability to 'up his pace' during the latter stages of a race, which so demoralised and destroyed his opposition.



are unloaded and assembled, and these act as corporate advertising hordings as well as shelter from the inevitable sunshine. The accessibility of the teams helps increase public interest in the sport, and fans are encouraged to chat to the riders and mechanics. Large queues form as spectators and autograph hunters gather round to eyeball the stars and their machinery.

As you'd expect, all of the top teams are extremely professional in their appearance with a

heavy emphasis on corporate image. Team Suzuki (which Eddy rides for) is typical with their pit boards painted in the same livery as the race trucks. Although both European and Japanese manufacturers are represented in GNCC, it is the Japanese who dominate the sport and it's not hard to see why. Not only is America their number one dirt bike marketplace, but the pure off-road nature of GNCC means that it is another outlet for selling MX bikes rather than the more specialised (and costly) enduro bikes prevalent in Europe.

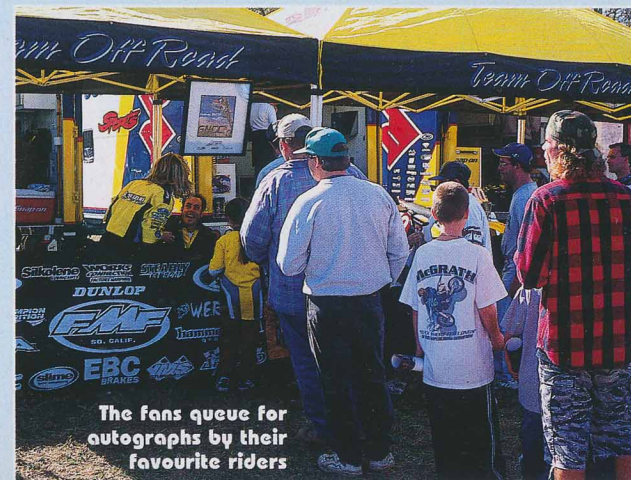
The Bikes

Although the bikes are based on production motocrossers, most are adapted with a range of aftermarket performance and protective parts more commonly associated with enduro bikes. Engine and suspension mods as well as a host of bolt-on goodies help tame the power of the MXers and protect the bike from the much more inhospitable and demanding terrain of a GNCC track. All machines are fitted with large (3.5 US gallon) fuel tanks and dry-break (quick-fill) fuel caps. Likewise guards feature heavily on most bikes with everything from the sump, frame, radiators and exhaust gaining protection from specialist aluminium or carbon accessories. Aluminium bark-busters are a must for the tight, wooded courses of the east coast, and few riders venture out without them.

The Riders

Though the bikes are important, it is the riders who are the stars of GNCC with the best known ones (like Scott Summers, Steve Hatch and Rodney Smith) being virtually household names - at least in any household which takes an interest in dirt bikes. Riders have the luxury of a lie-in on race day, as their teams take care of race-bike preparation. There are no maintenance worries for the riders to think about as mechanics are able to work on their machines right up until the beginning of the race. Instead they must deal with the crowds of spectators gathering around their race trucks, as well as television crews and a public announcer who keeps everyone informed as to what's happening throughout the day's proceedings.

At the end of the event, those who make it onto the podium will be well-paid sportsmen receiving deserved financial reward for what they do. Racing is only part of their duties, facing the public and the inevitable media interest is just as



important. This not only provides young fans with heroes they can emulate, it ensures maximum publicity for the sport and helps the GNCC format flourish.

The Future

For certain, no sport can exist in isolation, and the success of GNCC is as much down to good marketing, and a compact and attractive format, as it is to the quality of the racing. By keeping races short and interesting - with a mass start, continuous action and first past the flag winners - GNCC has managed to thrive in a country blissfully wedded to motocross and supercross. Unlike its distant cousin enduros, GNCC races are much more fan-friendly, with the feature race starting at 12 noon, accessible venues, an informative PA broadcast, and an easy to follow format, not forgetting exciting pit-stops (just like in Formula One). And it's easy to see why it has rapidly achieved an impressive following.

It might not be as mentally nor technically demanding as a good timecard enduro, but it sure is much more of a spectacle.

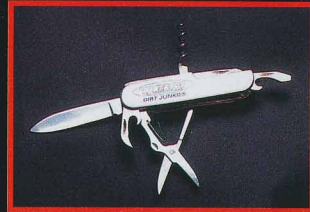
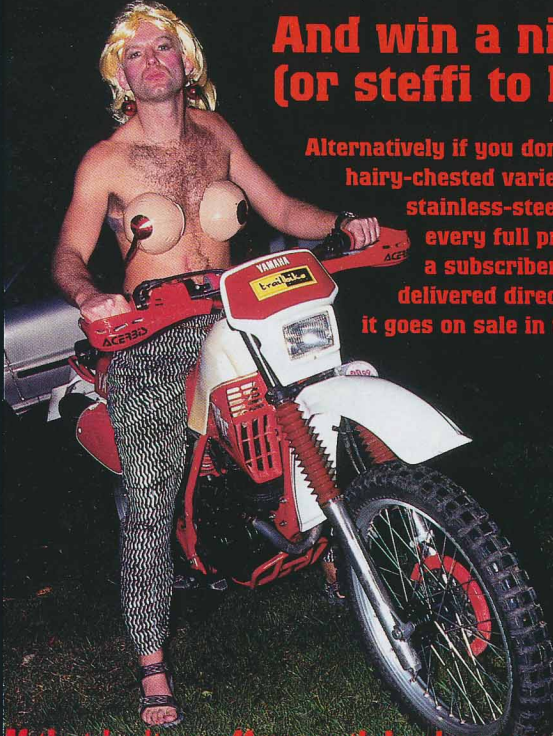
Over Here

If you fancy watching a GNCC event here in the UK, then get yourself along to Hawkestone Park in Shropshire on 15 August and see the first ever Fast Eddy GNCC race featuring Britain's best motocross and enduro riders head to head. Based at the famous MX circuit but with a proper off road loop, leading out around the nearby woods, this is one event you shouldn't miss. Best of all, spectating will be free...

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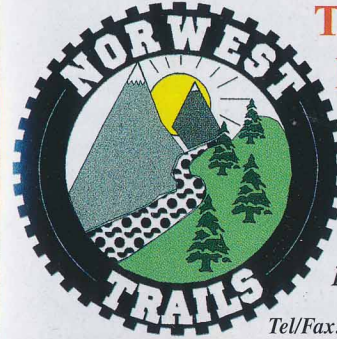
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THE FULL MONTE

In France they've been merrily racing bikes and cars on closed sections of the public highway for nearly a hundred years. Of course far more interesting and challenging than simply hooning around the same bit of (road-based) track over and over again, is to tackle a whole variety of terrain and conditions over several hundred miles and several days of competition. And that of course, is what happens in a competition road rally.

You're not racing all the time, a lot of miles are covered in 'liaisons' rather than in timed 'special stages'. You still have a maximum time schedule (and therefore a minimum average speed) to keep to,

but so long as you do, your time in liaison makes no difference to the results. This same principle applies in such diverse events as the RAC rally, the Welsh Two Day Enduro, the Oz Safari, the Cambrian Rally, the Circuit des Pyrenées and the mighty Dakar itself.

Monte Carlo or Bust

Probably the most famous competition road rally (though it's strictly for cars) is the Monte Carlo, the bulk of which takes place in France. It first ran in 1911 and is still going strong today. But did you know that there was also a Monte Carlo motorcycle rally? It was run along identical lines to the car event and took place just the once, back in October 1988.

The Monte Carlo Moto was organised by the CMPN - the motorcycle club of the French national police - and ran for eight days over 2000 miles from Paris to Monaco, taking in no less than 27 closed road sections (of which three were raced at night) and three road race circuits (Carole, Ledenon and Paul Ricard).

There were four solo classes, (up to 125, 125-250, 250-600 and 600-1300cc), each subdivided into Road and Trail, plus another all-in class for sidecars. There was £20,000's worth of prizes at stake, which included awards for best performance of the day, best performance on the circuits, best press, best from each country, best woman and so forth - and a brand new Citroen AX on offer for the overall winner.

Organised Lunacy

The organisers were hoping for about 200 entrants and were disappointed that only 69 riders actually took part, especially since the heavily subsidised entry fee was only £250 which included all food, drink and lodgings for the whole eight days! However, the wide selection of classes ensured a great variety of machinery, from Cagiva Freccias (a fully faired 125 two-stroke sportster) to full-on enduro bikes with supermotard wheels, lots of bog standard big trailie thumpers right up to 1000cc Honda sixes and seriously modified sidecars.

The riders were as varied as their steeds. At one extreme there was the likes of '60s Grand Prix road racer (and Barcelona 24hr winner) José Busquets from Spain riding a hotted up BMW twin, Dakar veteran Daniel Pescheur on

a DR750 and French road race champion Michel Gatellier on a TZR250. While at the other there was a guy on a bog standard DT125. There was also a smattering of Belgians and



Pics: Phil Masters, Paul Blez & B Thiebaut

THE FULL MONTE



Blez and the trusty Transalp. Below: Gilera roadster was just one of the unusual bikes entered in this incredible event



several Swiss, including two guys on spanking new Honda RC30s. Thanks to the efforts of a British based Frenchman, Bernard Conche, a motley crew of 14 Brits assembled to take part on a similarly varied selection of machinery, from Chris Bray, an experienced road racer riding the same FZ750 he'd thrashed to a ton-up lap in the Manx Grand Prix, complete with back-up van and support crew to Marianne Watt (now Walford) on a bog standard KMX200 completely on her own, with all her worldly goods bungeed aboard. Yours truly blagged a 15,000 mile Transalp off Honda UK for a... erm, road-test, ahem.

The Sparks Fly...

In best Monte Carlo tradition, there were official starts (and scrutineering) in several cities all over

Europe before all competitors converged on the town of Troyes in Eastern France, taking a common route to Paris for an overnight stop and parc fermé at the Chateau de Vincennes. My own Monte Carlo very nearly ended before it had begun when the Transalp's rear tyre let go on some lethal overbanding in an 80mph sweeper on the N19. As the bike and I slid down the road for more than 100 yards in a shower of sparks I had plenty of time to reflect upon the irony of

leaving my leathers in the support van. Then to cap it all I attempted to stand up while still doing about 30mph and somersaulted head first into an Armco barrier. Amazingly, the bike and I both survived with only minor injuries (though the Armco had to be treated for shock, ha ha - ed), although I had to ride and race for two days with completely bent handlebars and no real grip in my left hand.

I wasn't the only one to have a spot of bother on the way to Paris though. Corsican Pierre-Jean Padovani managed to write off his race-prepared Aprilia Tuareg in a little contretemps with a car in Valence but was given special dispensation by the organisers to replace his mount with a brand-new Tuareg from the nearest dealer showroom, complete with standard tyres. He then proceeded to ride the wheels off the bog-stock Rotax-engined trailie for the

next six days, winning several stages along the way and the third day outright. Having performed high speed miracles on precipitous mountain roads, his Monte ended in the most banal fashion in a little village near Digne when he locked his front wheel on some gravel at a crossroads, fell off at walking pace and broke his ankle.

Lambs to the Slaughter

Despite a largely sleepless first night, the road race 'prologue' at Circuit Carole the first morning was a walk in the park compared to what was to come. Riding a behemoth of a GSX-R1100, Performance Bike's young staffer (at the time) Mark Forsyth had actually been quicker than anyone else at the twisty circuit outside Paris, but his overall lead only lasted until the first special stage 130 miles away near Chaumont, the same night.

We actually waited for darkness to fall before being flagged away at one minute intervals into the gloom and we Brits could only look on in amazement as all the serious continental competitors produced car-sized rally headlights from their back up vans and bolted them on to their bikes. I had to make do with a 100w bulb in the standard Transalp headlight.

That very first five-mile special stage ran downhill through a pine forest and was fast, damp and slippery and within a mile of the start both the Swiss RC30s had crashed out of the rally and Brit Gary Crosby had dumped his Norton Rotary big time, bending the frame - though he managed to restart and kept going all the way to Monte Carlo. Marian Watt stayed on in the special but lobbed her KMX spectacularly at a T-junction on the open road, and the kerb she slid into left such an impressive bruise on her hip that a photo of it featured in the following week's MCN.

The second special stage of the rally, that same night, was nearly my last when my clever ploy of using both high and low beams together in an effort to see where I was going blew the lighting fuse. I was plunged into inky blackness at about 70mph but mercifully managed to stay upright as I slammed the brakes on. I had no option but to wait for the next man along who unfortunately turned out to be a deranged lunatic on a Husky WR400 (two stroke) who was doing his best to make up for his lousy lights by riding on the ragged edge -

sliding into banks on every corner. I survived the chase but his Husky gave up the ghost before the rally was even half over.

The winner of that first night section, and many more besides, was the aforementioned José Busquets on his hotted up BMW. 'Biscuits' (as we soon nicknamed him) led the rally overall for the first four days of the event, but on the first special stage of the fifth, he crumbled. He had the misfortune to crash his trusty GS100 into an electrified fence and had to extricate himself alone as the nearest marshal wasn't keen to touch the fence while it was still crackling.

Having extricated the gently smoking Beemer, he quickly whipped out a spanner, turned his boxer's holed and leaking cam-cover the other way up and continued on his way. He lost a lot of time and several places but by the end of the event the Catalonian bike dealer had fought his way back up to third overall and a place on the rostrum - not bad going for a 50 year-old!

Continuing Carnage

Busquets certainly did a lot better than two of his similarly-mounted compatriots who both came to grief on one of the nastiest hazards of the whole week. The special test called 'Marac-Beauchemin' is engraved on my brain because it was the self-same



Big trailies and roadbikes mixed it up on the gravel-strewn tarmac stages

one where my lights had gone out two nights before. By the time we returned to race it for a second time in daylight, a local farmer had unfortunately dumped a load of mud on one of the fastest corners. Mayhem ensued. Mark Forsyth was one of the first to go down but miraculously got away with nothing worse than a wiped off footrest and a helmet full of mud. He was just picking himself up in the adjacent field when he heard - then saw - the unfortunate Antoni Marcet



Two-stroke Husky WR400F only lasted half the event

cartwheeling into oblivion and out of the rally. He'd just won the previous stage as well.

That same corner not only accounted for another ace Spaniard but our own David Betts or 'Cap'n Ahab' as we called him. Fiercely patriotic, David is best known for his second hand army Armstrong business, but in the Monte he was mounted on another Brit bike which was far from ideal - an expolice Norton Rotary complete with full touring fairing. The Cricklewood Cap'n was carted off to hospital with a broken jaw, tooth, collarbone and ribs while another Brit on an FZR600 came to grief on the self-same corner.

When I saw the mud I decided not to even attempt to get round the corner but simply jumped straight off the road and into the ploughed field, riding out of the gate and back onto the road without stopping - glad to be on a trail bike.

That was only the third morning of the eight-day event and already seven of our 15-strong band had crashed. By the end of the week all but one of us had tasted tarmac and many of us had crashed twice. In fact, very few of the 69 entrants emerged from the Monte completely unscathed, either physically or mentally!

Circuit des Pyrenées veteran Richard Avent had come to grief on the very first daytime special stage when he'd ridden his Cagiva Elefant off the edge of a hillside and lost a lot of time getting restarted. Fortunately for him (and unlike most of the special stages) that one was held on the outskirts of a town so there were lots of spectators to give him a hand.

Like the rest of the Brits, he'd been riding every special stage 'blind'. What we didn't realise until we were about halfway through the Monte Carlo, was that most of the serious competitors had done at least one 'recce' of every special stage - or had one of their back-up guys do it for them - often the night before

in a van. As rally virgins we attacked every single stage sight-unseen, which was a huge disadvantage, as became ever more apparent as the week wore on.

The Good Book

There was a road book to ensure we took the right route as we zig-zagged back and forth across France from Alsace in the East, to Le Puy in the Massif Centrale, then on down south to Provence. It was

mostly on small roads - very few 'Routes Nationales' and strictly no autoroute. It really was a 'book' too - a ring-bound A4-affair nearly an inch thick, with all distances in kilometres, and all the instructions in French - naturellement. It was actually much easier to follow than the non-diagrammatic instructions used in MCC long distance trials (that I was used to), but none of us had a road book reader. I just bungeed the book to the Transalp's tank, which was okay till we had a continuous day of pouring rain and my road book turned into a solid papier-mache table-mat.

Fortunately (and unlike most rallies, on or off road) the road back instructions were backed up with massive green 'Monte Carlo' arrows at all major junctions. We all made mistakes though, and some of the best riders lost precious minutes in time penalties on the open road which they had literally risked their lives to gain in the special sections. Miraculously, I never did, but some of the hardest riding I did all week was on the open road trying to make up time lost in stupid errors. In theory, you didn't have to ride quickly on the open road at all - the average speed required was only 60kmh (37mph) - but when you take in to account stops for food and fuel, and chatting to fellow competitors, a 60kmh average can soon become a 60 mile per hour average - on wet mountain roads! Over long distances, you can usually make up the time, but over short ones, the task can become impossible, especially on back-roads in the Alpes Maritimes.

Le Rozzers

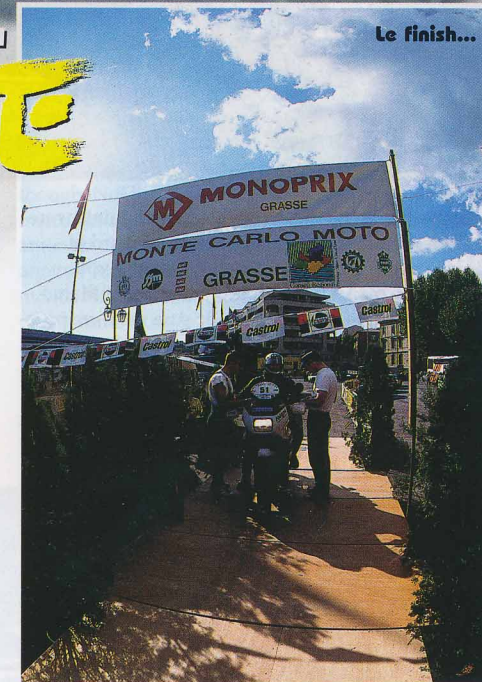
In theory we could have been thrown out of the rally for speeding on open roads, but in practice our 'Monte Carlo' number plates were as good as having



THE FULL MONTE

a flashing blue light. One of my sweetest memories is of sweeping past a French motorcycle cop, flat out on the wonderful road up to the Paul Ricard circuit. He didn't even bother to try to keep up. I wouldn't have dreamed of doing that at the start of the week, but by the end I'd seen uniformed bike cops (who often escorted us into town centres) popping wheelies away from traffic lights and seen fellow competitors with the tell-tale 'CMPN' letters on their leathers commit some of the most brazen acts of speeding I'd ever witnessed. A large proportion of the entry were rozzers, including the eventual winner, Patrick Orioli, riding a pretty standard Kawasaki GPX750. There's no doubt that he was an extremely gifted rider, but his achievement seemed less impressive when we discovered that he'd helped lay out the route!

Most of the special stages were much, much longer than your average tarmac sprint or hill-climb. All were several miles long, the longest over ten, and there were often several turnings at junctions to negotiate along the way, sometimes in the middle of villages, so it paid to have a quick glance at the road book even in the middle of a stage. And with hundreds of corners in some of them there were lots that were unmarshaled. I remember thinking to myself 'Cripes, if I went off the road here it could take

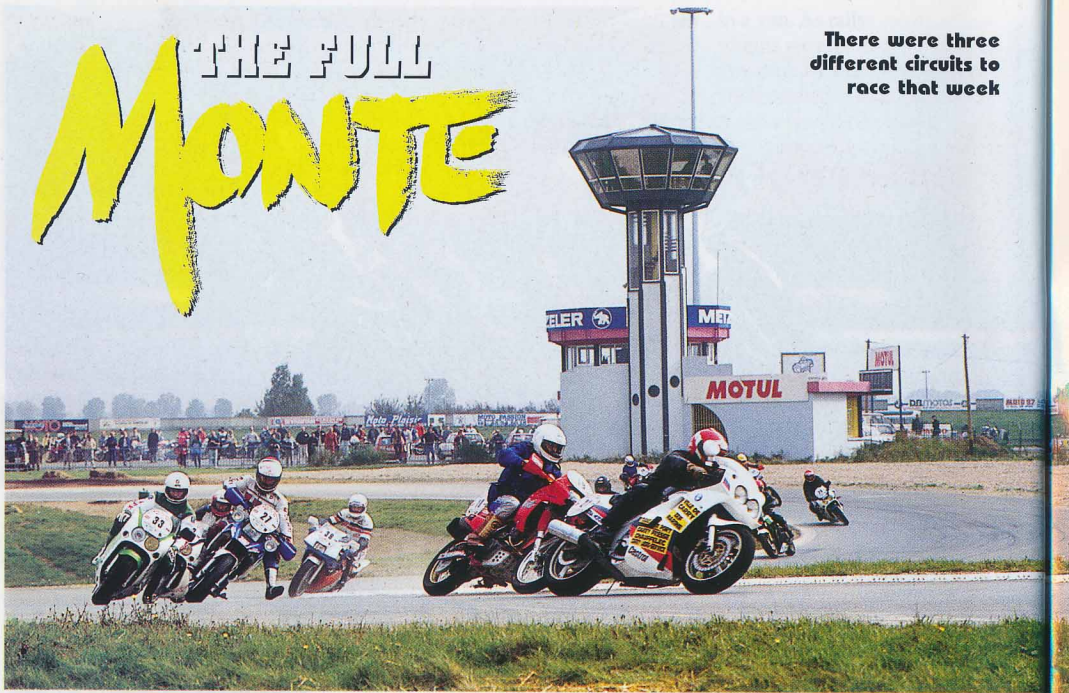


Le finish...

hours to even find me!

Fortunately they did find Yves Gras when he rode his Dominator clean off the side of a mountain on day four. Miraculously, he was okay and the bike was still rideable, but he lost 22 minutes while they dragged it back up to the road and kicked it straight dropping him right down the results. Unperturbed, Gras fought back to a reasonable finish, which included winning the last six special stages and the final day outright!

THE FULL MONTE



There were three different circuits to race that week

Some, but by no means all the danger points were indicated, either on the road book or by word of mouth in the case of brand new hazards (if you spoke French). After the multiple-disaster at Marac-Beauchemin, the organisers made sure we were properly warned about another 'mud on road' hazard a few days later.

On the other hand their marshalling wasn't efficient enough to save one of our number on another Ele 750, from crashing at high speed on the oil deposited by a competitor's GSX-R 750. Karl was a beefy ex-motocrosser who had been riding the wheels off the Cagiva to keep in sight of the top men, and judging by the state of the bike, it must have been a spectacular prang. The forks were torn clean off the big V-twin and Karl himself took several bricks out of a nearby wall - miraculously walking away with just a few bruises. He said afterwards, 'the warning marshal was so close to the oil that I was on it before I could slow down' - gulp.

On the second night-time section down near Dignes, the organisers put the fear of God into us with their warnings of the dangers ahead, so much so that when we came to ride it, it didn't seem too bad. Other times the information given was actually worse than having none at all. On the last day top Brits Chris Bray and Mark Forsyth were lulled into a false illusion of grippy tarmac by one of the start marshals who said one of the stages was 'clean'. Both crashed on gravel and were lucky not to end up at

the bottom of a ravine. I shall never forget the drained and ashen look on their faces at the end of the stage.

Some hazards were completely unpredictable. It seemed fitting that having assured us that the roads were always properly closed to all non-rally traffic on the special stages, it was the organiser himself who met a Post Office van out on its rounds in the middle of one of them... Then there was the freezing fog, the pouring rain, the farmyard animals (and their by-products), the marble-like conkers on the road and even the detour for roadworks which suddenly upped the open road average speed to racing speed. One special stage start even had to be delayed because there was a herd of llamas on the stage!

Somehow I never crashed once in a 'special', although I left the road several times and had a second spill on some diesel on the open road.

Gravel-a-Go-Go

As we got closer to the finish and both the open roads and the special stages became more gravel-filled I became ever more thankful that I was on a trailie rather than a pure road bike. A couple of the stages had so much gravel in them that they were more like riding a fire break in the Cambrian Rally than a tarmac road, which makes it all the more amazing that the only one of the Brits who managed to stay shiny side up throughout the entire eight days of lunacy was 'Mad' Phil McIver, riding a six-cylin-

der CBX1000! He knowingly rode the Prologue with no spring clip in his chain and by the start of the last day he had tendonitis in his right wrist, the canvas was showing through his rear tyre, his exhaust was worn through from grounding in corners and his rear number plate was missing entirely! In fact it's a miracle that only one of the 14 Brits failed to make it to the finish.

The sports bikes obviously had the advantage on the circuits, especially at Paul Ricard, but even on the circuits the quickest trail bike riders were much faster than the mediocre sports bike riders. Padovani came ninth at Ricard on the Tuareg single and even I managed to stay with our fearless leader M Conche on his race-tuned RG500, making up on the corners what he gained on the straights, until he finally fell off in front me .

TDR Terror

In the 250 race at Ricard, TZR-mounted Bob Farnham (who was an experienced club road racer) was gob-smacked when Guy Carchereux just rode around the outside of him at the Signes right-hander with his TDR supermoto nailed to the stop in top gear. Like many of the Brit contingent, Bob had never done any off-roading before the Monte Carlo and had no idea when he entered it that dirt-bike skills would come in handy. He was a bit freaked out by the gravelly stages and as he picked his way gingerly along was astonished when an identically mounted Michel Gatellier came past him standing on his TZR's footrests just hanging the back end out as if he was on a knobbly-tyred 'crosser rather than a fully-faired sports bike.

The very last seven mile special stage of the whole event was actually my best result of the entire week as I revelled in the gravelly conditions. I actually caught up my two-minute start time deficit on the rider in front of me and finished about a minute ahead of him on the road. Until then he'd been beating me overall but the three minute difference on corrected time meant our overall positions in the rally were reversed. And to make things worse he was also overtaken by class winner Pierre Bermond on a KMX125 as well as Andy Linford, on a GSX-R which started the event with a full fairing but finished without it!

That diversity in machinery was reflected in the top ten as well. It just so hap-

pened that the winner and runner up were both on four cylinder sports bikes (GPX750 and CBR600) but their final positions had more to do with lack of crashes than faster times in the stages. Third to tenth overall, in finishing order were: BMW R100GS twin, DR750 single, XT600 single, TZR250 twin, Husky 510E single, DR750, TDR 250, and Best Brit Chris Bray on his FZ750 four. Eleventh was a Husky 400 two-stroke, 12th was an FJ1200 sidecar outfit and Mark Forsyth was 13th (and best journo) on the twice-crashed GSX-R1100. How's that for variety!!

Glad to be Alive

If the Monte Carlo taught me one thing it's that quick riders will be quick whatever they ride. And I mean seriously quick. The top men were faster through some of the most famous Monte Carlo stages like the Peira Carva than the top car rally men, and that's without a 'navigator' shouting directions from pace notes. Dangerous? I should ffflippin' coco! I think it's a miracle no-one was killed; the rally medical team were kept busy ever single night patching people up with a mixture of traditional and alternative medicine. For my dislocated metacarpals they put a stud in my ear and did a bit of osteopathic manipulation, though wrapping it in a bandage would've sufficed.

I wouldn't have missed the Monte for the world though. Not just for the challenge, fun and excitement, but also for the great feeling of camaraderie amongst all the competitors. Sadly, there hasn't been another Monte Carlo Moto since 1988, but next month I'll talk about three years of Francilien Rallies, which came close to giving me the same thrills on a Boxer, a TDM 850 and a Pegaso - plus details of other competition rallies on the continent.

PS For what it's worth, I ended up 34th overall out of 69 starters and 55 finishers; I was also 4th out of 14 Brits and best Brit under 750cc. **Paul Blezard**



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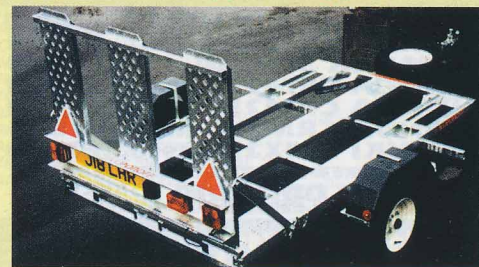


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Husqvarna TE610, 1997, mint cond, very low mileage, they dont come any better, £3300. Tel 0125 232 6050 or (mobile) 0385 336608 (Surrey)

Suzuki RMX250, M-reg, T&T, good cond, Boyeson Reeds, h/guards, recent bearings and sprockets, spares inc piston & rings, £1495 ono. Tel Philip on 0127 842 8917 (Somerset)

Kawasaki KLX650, M-reg, good cond, new rear tyre, Lazer Pro-Duro pipe, new bike forces sale, £2400. Tel Anthony on 0145 354 9547 (Glos)

Kawasaki KDX250, J-reg, taxed, 2200m, exc cond, newish tyres, brake pads, wheel bearings, h/guards, extremely reliable, £1550 ono. Tel Colin on 0194 270 6822 (Wigan)

Suzuki DR200, 1988, F-reg, 11,500m, MoTs to prove, one mature owner, reliable and easy starter, ideal green laner, £900. Tel Ron on 0127 132 6653

(N Devon)
Kawasaki KDX420, unitrac, 1984, Y-reg, needs tidying for MoT, otherwise very good, fast & reliable, first kick starter, serious machine, only £400 ono. Tel Mark on 0127 132 7815 (N Devon)

Honda XR600, N-reg, Excel rims, Talon hubs, FP pipe, Acerbis h/lamp, exc cond, standard parts inc wheels and new tyres, £2950. Tel Paul on 0127 076 3461 (Cheshire)

Honda XR400RV, exc cond, trail use only, MXA Graphics, nice example, constantly maintained, £3400 ono. Tel Martyn (after 5 pm) on 0191 534 1394 (Tyne & Wear)

Yamaha XT600E, elec start, 1998, R-reg, 2200m, fsh, house purchase forces sale, £2750 ovno. Tel Mark on 0181 559 1332 (Essex)

Honda XLV750R, limited edition Jap import, 1983, T&T, air cooled, shaft drive, V-twin, 12,000km, good cond, £1700 ono. Tel Nick on 0169 072 0382 (N Wales)

Honda XL185 Twinshock, T&T, new tyres, shocks, engine overhauled, plastic tank, £600. Tel 0170 546 2762 (Hants)

Husky TE610, Supermotard, S-reg, 800m, competition spec, £1800 gold Talon wheels, unused MX wheels, Racing pipe, showroom cond, plus spares, £5700. Tel Kevin on 0178 261 9246 (Staffs)

Yamaha YZ250, 1997, P-reg, full enduro kit, vgc, £2100 ono. Tel Dylan on 0123 981 1287 (Dyfed)

Suzuki DR350R enduro, R-reg, one owner, 1800m, new tyres, c+s, green lane use, in exc cond, £2500. Tel Steve on 0116 277 5186 (Leics)

Honda XR250, 1995, T&T, e/start, 6-speed box, digital speedo, Rental bars, vgc, £2100 ono. Tel 0128 354 2210 (Staffs)

Kawasaki KLR250D6, 1989, Acerbis h/guards, T&T, 8500m, O-ring chain & recent sprockets, DEP exhaust, £1095. Tel Dave on 0180 381 2940 (Devon)

Yamaha YZ400F, 1998, ex Hanson Racing, immac cond, Dakar Rally payment forces sale, may p/x for XR600 or similar, why, £3400. Tel Darren on 0181 778 1616 (London)

Suzuki DR350S, e/start, N-reg, alloy exhaust, alloy disc guards & bash plate, good cond, green lane use only, well maintained, £2395. Tel Lawrence 0118 978 1850 (Berks)

Kawasaki KDX250SR, H-reg, T&T, some spares, body & pipe in good cond, £1500 ovno. Tel Trevor on 0195 345 6885 (Norfolk)

Suzuki DR385S, 1994, easy start, lots of mods, properly maintained, only ridden by the vicars daughter!, includes spares & tyres, £1750. Tel Russell on 01344 621275 (Berks/Surrey border)

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Yamaha XT350, 1988, F-reg, MoT, 12,000m, bog standard, £1100; also **Yamaha RD250**, original, ideal for monks trod, £225; and also **XT350** engine in RM250 chassis, standard exhaust, airbox & electrics so it all works, lost interest, £500 no offers. Tel Richard on 0143 886 9407 (Herts)

BMW R100GS, black/yellow, 1993, 40,000m, BMW luggage, heated grips, progressive front springs, Y-pipe exhaust, tall screen, Metzeler enduro 4s, £2999. Tel Justin on 0196 344 0878 (Somerset)

BMW R100GS, E-reg, new g/box, clutch, tyres, brakes, r/shock, 42 ltr tank with new black paintwork, reluctant sale, only £2600. Tel 0181 319 2211 (London)

Husqvarna WR400, 1989, one owner, £900;

Yamaha DT175MX, £550; **Yamaha** IT175, £550, all in exc cond. Tel Nigel on 0122 286 0762 (Gwent)

Honda XR600, 1998, R-reg, UK bike, taxed, 400m since new, immac, standard cond, £3000 ono. Tel Tony on 0143 042 4381 (E Yorks)

Suzuki DR350S, 1998, R-reg, only 950m, UK bike, absolutely immaculate, carefully run-in, genuine reason for sale, £2975. Tel Adrian on 0177 834 2829 (Cambs)

KTM 300EXC, P-reg, good cond, only used three times in twelve mths, £2200 ono. Tel Stephen on 0158 261 8492 (Beds)

Suzuki RMX250, 1996, N-reg, well maintained, lots of money spent, FMF Fatty, Boyeson Reeds, rings etc, £2100 ono. Tel Bill on 0127 842 1595 or 08650 009925 (Somerset)

Aprilia Pegaso 650, 1993, 30,000km, fair cond for year, £1550 ono. Tel Ian on 0152 472 0506 (Lancs)

Honda XR400RW, 1998, UK bike, 800m, exc cond, green lane use only, must be seen, £2950. Tel 0177 834 1376 (Lincs)

Honda Transalp, F-reg, good all-rounder, 20,000m, genuine reason for sale, £1600. Tel Dave on 0148 783 1852 (Cambs)

Yamaha DT125R, white/purple, 1996, P-reg, 9500km, fsh, new back tyre, de-restricted, DEP exhaust etc, exc cond, £1400 ono. Tel Tim on 0179 376 5589 (Wilts)

Armstrong MT500, 1985, bright red, MoT, 3500m from new, Dell'Orto carb, O-ring chain, very sweet, £1000. Tel Rupert on 0178 255 1113 (Staffs)

Honda Dominator NX650, L-reg, MoT, 12K, reluctant sale due to studies, therefore low, low price to sell, £1600. Tel David on 0160 441 5850 (Northampton)

KTM 600 enduro, H-reg, mint for year, f+r discs, usd forks, ideal for both enduro & green lanes, must sell, £1595 ovno; also **Armstrong** MT500,

MoT, ideal green laner new tyres, usual ex-army cond, cheap & reliable plodder, £795 ovno. Tel Jason on 0148 235 1381 (Yorks)

Kawasaki KDX200H4, 1997, only 1500m, superb cond, sadly must sell as new bike arriving, genuine bargain, £1950 inc spares. Tel 0153 677 1105 (Leics)

Yamaha DT250MX, 1980, MoT, c+s, engine rebuild, new tyres, Fresco exhaust, very reliable, £475. Tel Ray on 0118 973 4851 (Berks)

Honda XRV650 Africa Twin, r/w/b, Honda France HRC, UK reg, T&T, 25,000m (44,000km), orig cond, house purchase forces sale, going to Africa? Tel 0171 385 5037 (London)

Suzuki DR650SET, white, 1996, N-reg, 5800m, low ride setting, exc cond, £2700 ono. Tel Gev on 0116 284 8679 (Leicester)

Honda CRM250/2, H-reg, 9000km, road use only, £1800. Tel Nigel on 0178 445 8778 (Middx)

Suzuki DR350 enduro, L-reg, MoT, new tank graphics, plastic coated frame, £1550 or may p/x for XL600 or similar up to £1000. Tel Mark on 0149 532 0572 (Gwent)

Honda XR400, P-reg, Renthals, Talons, Excels, £2800; may consider straight swop for 3 bed house in Cotswolds. Tel Tony on 0163 422 0624 (N Kent)

Honda XR600R, 1995, M-reg, 8000m, Renthals, guards, new MT21s, big tank, lovely cond, £2500 ono. Tel Robert on 0170 487 8474 (Merseyside)

KTM 250EXC, 1997, exc cond, loads of spares, maintained regardless of cost, unused last 5 mths, spare sprockets, pipe, new Michelin Comp 4 tyres, £2250 ono. Tel 0122 286 5384 or 0467 205543 (Gwent)

KTM 360EXC, 1996, taxed, used twice in 1998, too fast, swap for XR250, KLX250, KDX200, DR350 or sell £1900. Tel Andrew on 0193 758 5183 (N Yorks)

Kawasaki KLR600, 1984, A-reg, T&T, profess eng rebuild, big end, camchain etc, vgc, £1300; also **Honda** XL500R, Italian import, T&T, good cond, top fun bike, £1000. Tel Lance on 0152 282 2947 (Lincs)

Honda XLV750, B-reg, T&T, V-twin, shaft drive trailie, bags of stomp, extensive receipted engine work, £1050 ono Tel Tom on 0973 825267 (Notts)

Kawasaki KDX125, G-reg, T&T, 6600m, £850 ono; also **Yamaha** XTZ660, M-reg, 23,000m, one owner, £1975 ono and **Honda** Transalp 600, E-reg, MoT, 49,000m, £1325 ono. Tel 0127 950 1187 (Herts)

Suzuki DR350 SET, e/start, 1996, P-reg, 3000m, exc cond, little off road use, totally standard spec, £2550 ono. Tel Mark on 0180 360 7348 (Devon)

Honda XL185, 1984, two owners from new, all

MoTs, 15,000m, good cond, £500. Tel Paul on 0116 243 4304 (Leicester)

Honda XR400, 1998, full HRC engine kit fitted, Talon Gold hubs, Excel rims, Acerbis headlight, handguards, Renthals etc, £2000 worth extras, price £3250, no offers; also Talon Supermoto wheels, cost £1000+, price £575. Tel Chris on 0147 640 0476 (Lincs)

Honda CRM250R-1, G-reg, T&T, road use only since import, Renthals, exc cond, reluctant sale, £1600 ono. Tel 0122 326 2846 (Cambs)

Suzuki DR350SE, e/start, Nov 1995, MoT, 2400m, unused & stored for 12 mths, new tyres, hand fork, disc guards, fsh, mint cond, £2800. Tel Gary on 0142 056 2348 (Hants)

Yamaha XT600, 1987, red/white with gold alloys, small tank model, 16,000 genuine miles, wonderful bike in incredible condition, £1800 ono. Tel Robert on 0129 987 9508 (Worcs)

Bultaco 370cc Frontera, 1979, 164m on clock from new, road legal trail/enduro bike, very rare, classic machine, offers. Tel Derek on 0151 336 8123 (S Wirral)

Kawasaki KX250, H-reg, road legal, needs tyres for MoT, £950 ono or swap for KDX or similar, possible delivery. Tel Steve on 0192 261 3867 (W Midlands)

Husqvarna 350, 4-stroke, 1993, K-reg, MT21s, twin pipes, very nice, £1600 ono. Tel Peter (after 6 pm) on 0190 831 1100 (Milton Keynes)

Fantic 303 lightweight outfit, Rushman chair, trials tyres, good runner, log book, road legal, OK for long distance trials, £650 ono; also **Yamaha** XT225, 1400km, disc f/r, elec/kick start, grab handles, luggage rack, new Trelleborgs, £2250 ono. Tel Martin on 0117 950 5709 (Bristol)

CCM 604E, 1998, S-reg, gold Talon hubs, Excel rims, Paioli forks, just run in, injury forces very reluctant sale, £3750 ono. Tel Laurence on 0186 576 9755 (Oxon)

Suzuki PE250N, 1980, late reg, T&T, ridden daily, 100% original and all fun, rebuilt 200m ago, need space, £950 ono. Tel 0410 310681 or 0137 346 7949 (Somerset)

Suzuki DR350SE, e/start, August 1998, taxed, 500m, £2800 ono. Tel Tony on 0160 386 8350 (Norwich)

Honda XR250, 1992, P-reg, T&T, low mileage, vgc, £1775 ovno. Tel Steve on 0177 383 6621 (Derbys)

Kawasaki KLX250 trail, N-reg, 4500m, DEP pipe + std, Werx graphics, brush guards, spare Acerbis tank, mostly road use, super cond, £2350. Tel John on 0122 988 9109 (Cumbria)

Yamaha TTR250 Raid, 1994, e/start, T&T, new c+s,

tyres, exc cond, trail use only, £2200. Tel Sheldon (after & pm) on 0181 386 8932 (Herts)

ATK 560, on Q plates, full lighting, WP suspension, Supertrapp, Acerbis plastics, tank cover etc, nickel plated frame, quality 4-stroke, £1295. Tel Dave on 0193 582 2712 (Somerset)

Honda XL250S, T&T, new cam, rockers, cam chain, exhaust, front tyre, c+s, and battery, £650; also **Honda** CR250, fitted XL250 engine, drum rear, disc front, new cam, rockers, piston, cam chain, 12v electrics, road regd, £695. Tel 0194 986 0407 (Leics)

Honda CRM250 MkII, red/white, K-reg, T&T, Fatty pipe, green laned only, very fast, quick sale, £1750 ovno. Tel Phillip on 0181 473 2372 (London)

Kawasaki KLX650, e/start, M-reg, MoT, Renthal bars, new c+s, never been off road, mint cond, £2400 ono. Tel 0152 442 5081 (Lancs)

Kawasaki KDX200, 1997, TRF member, light green lane use only, frame guards, bash plate, superb cond, £2495. Tel Ian on 0113 244 5505 (Leeds)

Yamaha XTZ750 SuperTenere, K-reg, 18k, blue/white, MoT, tinted screen, Renthals, v reliable, £1950 ono. Tel 01707 895641 (Herts)

KTM Adventure 620, R-reg, orange, 1400m only, £4600 ono. Tel 01295 712584 (Oxon)

Kawasaki KLR600, G-reg, 19k, black/red, excellent cond throughout, £1400 ono. Tel 0171 259 2640 (SW London)

Suzuki XF650 Freewind, 7000m, P-reg, excel cond (not used off road), £2600. Tel Danny or Dave 01276 475835 (Surrey)

Yamaha XT600Z Tenere, 86, kick/e start, stainless exh, Renthals, new batt & c/s, good reliable cond, £1000 ono. Tel 0181 384 6501 (Middx)

BMW R100GS, 89/F, ally tank, s/s silencer, new r tyre, BMW panniers, susp mods, £2500 ono. Tel 01453 836215 (Glos)

Yamaha XT500, 1976, 21,000m, exc cond, superb example of this rare classic, £1100 or p/x for KDX250 or similar trail bike. Tel 01282 606821 (Lancs)

Honda XR250RJ, F-reg, excel orig cond, MT21s, DEP t/pipe, many new parts, road legal, long MoT, £1150. Tel 01394 380082 (Suffolk)

Suzuki PE250B, excel orig cond, document history, £800; also **PE175** runner, registered £450; also **Triumph** Cheney, T&T, 500cc unit eng, £1950. Tel 0161 980 6697 (Cheshire)

Suzuki PE175X, 79/V-reg, as new inc spare wheels & knobbles, 80% spare eng, alloy tank, new exhaust etc, £850. Tel 01744 735501 (Merseyside)

Suzuki RMX250, 98, R-reg, 1200m, yellow/purple, superb cond, Metz road tyres plus Bridgestone MX, £2750 ono. Tel Neil 01634 666602 (Kent)

Honda XR600R, 1990 import, new chain bearings & brakes, many extras CRD s/s or std pipe, totally mint, £2050 with CRD or £1900 as std ovno. Tel 01706 367166 (Lancs)

Montesa Cota 242 1984, red trials bike, low miles since rebuild, road-reg, some spares plus single bike trailer, £575 ono. Tel James 01803 615901 (Devon)

AJS trail (Fluff Brown model), 250cc Rotax, all orig, T&T, 99.8kg, £850 ono or swap for modern trials or pampera cash either way. Tel 01257 263137 (Lancs)

Husaberg/Cagiva special, 350cc, 1995, brush guards, Renthals, many new parts, well maintained, not used for 12 months, injury forces sale, £1550. Tel 01634 221087 (Kent)

Aprilia Pegaso 650cc, 31,000km, T&T, 94, new c/s, new shock, immac cond, Datatag, Kappa adaptor for top box, £2200 ono. Tel Raymond 0133 988 2591 after 6pm (Nr Aberdeen)

Kawasaki KDX250SR, 91, road-reg, T&T, green, Pro-circuit exh, good cond, £1595 ono. Tel 01737 554149 or 0370 665030 (London)

Kawasaki KLX250, 96/P, vgc, brushguards, well maintained, £2595; also Gas Gas JTX270, 97, reg, trials bike, £2100 ono. Tel 01654 702393 (M Wales)

CCM 604E Sport, 98, 3000m, e/start, road kit, brush guards MT21s, unique twin exhaust, only twice off road, £3900 ono. Tel after 6pm 01260 271999 (Cheshire)

Rotax special 500, 34mm Dell'Orto, Honda MX forks, KTM single shock, T&T, ideal laner, rebored, £1500, price inc donor bikes atc. Tel 01403 823924 (W Sussex)

Yamaha XTZ660, Tenere 91, H-reg, 13,000m, mint cond, FSH, Datatag, T&T, completely standard, one owner, priced to sell, £1950. Tel 0115 923 1013 (Notts)

Aprilia RX125, M-reg, T&T, 7000km, Renthals bars, brush guards, £1195 ono. Tel 01430 440293 (E Yorks)

Kawasaki KMX200, G-reg, v clean, 17" & 18" rear wheels, trail use only, genuine reason for sale, £1050. Tel 01626 354662 (Devon)

WANTED

Wanted KTM250GS enduro/mx, 1976/77/78, anything considered, even parts, engine or cycle; also manual. Tel 0196 453 2184 (Hull)

Wanted exhaust system or end can for Honda XR600, 1996 or later. Tel 0152 482 4557 (Lancs)

Wanted moto-x or enduro, must be in good

cond/running order, well looked after, swap or p/x for my Suzuki RGV250, H-reg, well maintained, value £1500. Tel Pete (after 5 pm) on 0151 336 5375 (S Wirral)

Wanted ally panniers & rack to fit Africa Twin. Tel Liam on 0123 247 3226 (Belfast)

Wanted Suzuki SP400. Tel 0171 351 6111 (London)

Wanted for Yamaha TY80, exhaust, mudguards, side panels, handlebars, anything considered. Tel Nick (after 6pm) on 0137 540 0351 (Essex)

Wanted trail bike, must be mechanically sound, cosmetic damage not objected to, around 1990, not for road use, XR250, KDX200 or similar. Tel Richard on 0132 734 0018 (Northants)

Wanted Yamaha WR400 or similar late 2 or 4-stroke road legal enduro to swap for YZF600, 1996, N-reg, 12,000m, mint cond, £3995. Tel Mark on 0145 786 8588 (Derbys)

Wanted exhaust system for 1983 XL500R, standard or aftermarket, anything considered; also workshop manual for Yamaha XTZ750 Super Tenere. Tel Paul on 0156 137 8438 (Aberdeen)

Wanted Owners manual and/or maintenance book originals or copies, all costs covered. Tel David on 0148 046 6181 (Cambs)

Wanted 17 rear wheel for KMX200. Tel 0127 950 1187 (Herts)

Wanted MX clothing and helmet, 32 waist, 38 chest, small helmet, size 9 boots and goggles. Tel 0160 866 4782 (Warks)

Wanted XR250 or DR350 enduro, cash waiting for the right bike, will travel for a well maintained example. Tel Geoff on 0122 262 3620 (S Wales)

Wanted Yamaha TT600, drum brake model, 1983/84, low mileage, good cond, will pay good price, will travel. Tel Shaun on 0162 860 2001 (E Berks)

Wanted party animals for Faroe Isles and Iceland, early June, approx 2 weeks, details available, Supermotard most welcome. Tel Billy on 0150 550 2441 or 0411 270622 (Ayrshire)

Wanted XTZ panniers. Tel 0122 570 7092 (Wilts)

Wanted 36 hole, 18" alloy rim (KLX650C), whole wheel (KLX650A) considered, also needed aftermarket exhaust esp header pipe, other bits considered. Tel Graham 0191 336 5179 (Tyne & Wear)

Wanted Suzuki PE175 rear shocks or any MX or enduro shocks 18". Tel 01744 735501 (Merseyside)

Wanted Excel rims f&r. Tel 01244 583855 (Cheshire)

PARTS

Paioli 46mm Blue Steel conventional forks (the ultimate enduro forks), as new, v little use, £425 ono, also yoke to fit WR400 & CR250 available. Tel 01285 860257 eves (Cirencester)

Yamaha XT600E workshop manual on microfiche, c/w reading machine, plus parts book, £50. Tel Nick on 0169 072 0382 (N Wales)

KTM 250 carbon fibre parts, bash plate, £55; fork guards, £25; disc guard, £25; clutch cover, £25; chain guide, £25; unused. Tel Tim on 01481 66140 (Guernsey)

Electric roadbook, ICO trip, Garmin 12XL GPS, may split. Tel Stuart on 0147 470 8973 (Kent)

Pirelli MT21 tyres, 120/90/17, rear, nearly new, 90/90/21 front, £25 the pair. Tel David on 0171 366 6559 (London)

Honda XR350 engine complete but dismantled, inc carbs, £250 ono. Tel Chris 0173 081 3791 (Sussex)

Suzuki DR650, forks, wheel, tyre, disc, caliper, lever, yoke, etc, 41mm, may fit MT500 etc, £130.

Tel Adrian on 0157 934 3209 (Cornwall)

M Robert body armour, £25; body belt, £5; knee pads, £10; KLR600 rear wheel, £25; Sidi MX boots, size 10.5, £40. Tel Richard on 0143 886 9407 (Herts)

Wheels & Avon tyres to fit KDX250SR, plus other parts, for supermoto conversion, possible fit to other Kawasaki models, £300. Tel Trevor on 0195 345 6885 (Norfolk)

Yamaha XTZ750 pattern CDI unit, £90; Kawasaki KDX125, Fresco front pipe, top & bottom yoke, front wheel & disc, rad, seat, shocks, most engine parts (cheap); quadrant p/d shock for BMW, as new, could post, £85. Tel 0127 950 1187 (Herts)

Talon Supermoto wheels, XR400/600, 17 polished Akront rims, Pirelli Dragons plus spare tyres as new, exc cond, £575. Tel 0147 640 0476 (Lincs)

KMX200 spares, new plastics, tank, seat, clocks, new 18 wheel & tyre, front wheel, some other bits. Tel Stephen on 0164 282 0662 (Cleveland)

KLX650 genuine Kawasaki workshop manual, all models, £20; also Suzuki TS100-250ER Haynes manual, up to 1981 models, £5, Suzuki DR125, £5; Suzuki big DR750-800 back hub, offers; Honda CR125-250, 1989 model, plastics, new & some used, offers, private garage clear out. Tel 0130 285 9857 (S Yorks)

RMX parts, 1993/95, s/h front pipe, rad panels, side panels, new parts, rear light, sprockets, spokes, Michelin Comp 2 rear tyres, and more. Tel Chris on 0158 247 5034 (Beds)

Breaking Honda CR250, 1987, parts available,

forks, yokes, £80; Renthals, £10; wanted parts for YZ80], why, manuals, DR125S, DT250MX, and TS50. Tel 0152 941 3894 (Lincs)

XR400 Supermoto wheels, as new, 300m, Talon red hubs, Excel rims, stainless spokes, Bridgestone tyres, spacers, ready to use, £550. Tel Andy on 0170 346 4632 (Hants)

Kawasaki KDX125 bottom end, less generator, £75; workshop manual, £10; rear shock, £20; genuine piston rings, £8; throttle cable, £5. Tel Robert on 0178 524 5922 (Staffs)

Enduro jacket, Alpinestars Global, large size, exc cond, hardly worn, £80. Tel Paul on 0179 236 0580 (Swansea)

XTZ Predator exhaust, £30. Tel Dave on 0122 570 7092 (Wilts)

Supermoto wheels, Talon hubs, Akront rims, MT60/80 tyres, suit Husky, exc cond, £400 ono. Tel David on 0148 330 0707 (Surrey)

I sent in an advert looking for CDI unit for my 1994 DR350S but I ended up buying a bike to get it! Now all I have to do is sell all the other parts!! What have I started? Breaking DR350SEV. For details tel Dave (eves) on 0123 286 6675 or mobile 07803 202651 (Co Antrim)

XT350 forks, m/shock, s/arm, barrel, piston & sack of various bits, all reasonable. Tel 01604 832162 (Northants)

Acerbis 16L tank to fit DR350, yellow, all fittings, excel cond, cost £175 new, £110 ono. Tel 01670 511625 (Northumberland)

Galvanised single bike trailer, 3-piece for easy storage, ramp, spare wheel, 4 h/d ratchet straps, £85. Tel 01737 780247 (Surrey)

Pirelli MT21s, 90/90-21 & 140/80-18, new £75. Tel 01394 672139 (Ipswich)

Yamaha IT175 front forks & wheel £75, DR600 low gear c/s £25 set, DR350 enduro odometer 315, rear lamp £5. Tel 01984 632036 (Somerset)

Bultaco Sherpa wheels, complete f&r with tyres, £50. Tel 0161 980 6697 (Cheshire)

DR350 wheels, f&r, enamelled hub, new spokes, c/w good tyres, discs & spindles, £195 ono; also Wiseco 385cc piston and barrel (to fit DR), hardly used, £120 ono. Tel 01244 533855 (Cheshire)

XR400 Supertrapp silencer, MSR sump guard, IXS disc guard, Moose chain guide, new alloy 45T sprocket, £225 the lot. Tel 01302 722769 (Yorks)

Wulfsport enduro jacket, new £55, Premier MX helmet, new £75, MT60 90/90/21 new £30, w/shop stand £20. Tel 01425 477758 (Hants)

Honda XR200 brand new speedo, round type with large trip meter, still in Honda box, cost £68, sell for £40 ono. Tel 0161 723 1008 (Manchester)

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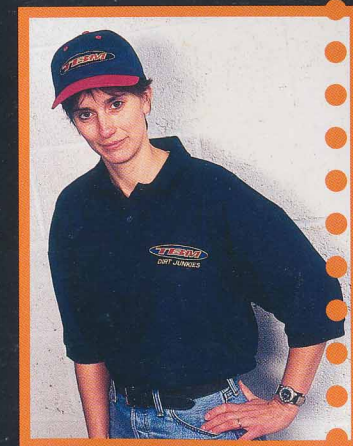


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