



www.rustsports.com



3 EDITORIAL

JB gets all warm and fuzzy about the GS Trophy...

4 GALLERY

Mud, mud, glorious mud...

5 GALLERY

The Family Saloon, Thai Style...

6 FACTFILE

The GS Trophy explained...

8 ON THE SEVENTH DAY

The GS Trophy, Day by Day

18 THE GS TROPHY ONLINE

Just some of our favourite YouTube videos chronicling the progress of the GS Trophy...

19 IN PRAISE OF THE 524LB DIRT BIKE

JB rides the R1200GS across Northern Thailand and asks, can the GS really do enduro?

34 A WOLF IN GS CLOTHING

Brief but insightful interview with Tom Wolf course director of the GS Trophy

36 CAMPING

After the riding, the camping and cameraderie is what the GS Trophy is all about...

37 TESTED

A rundown of what JB wore on the GS Trophy...

Good job scratch 'n' sniff internet is still in the development stages!

42 SCENE BY SCENE

The blood, the sweat, the tears... the mud...

COVER IMAGE

Stephane Gautronneau





TROPIC THUNDER

BY JON BENTMAN,
PHOTO: MARKUS JAHN



ONE MEASURE OF the success of the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy is that if you were to ask any of the previous competitors if they'd like another go, then I'd guarantee in 100% of cases they'd say yes, they'd drop whatever they were doing in that instant and make for the airport. There is a closed group on Facebook for all GS Trophy finalists and they are the happiest, if wistful, bunch you could wish to communicate with.

I've been unbelievably lucky to have ridden four Trophies now, and each new one has been as special as the last, each one has its highlights, its challenges. Yet each one shares the same base formula. It's not the adventure, not the riding, it's something to do with friendship. You could pass it off as male bonding, but actually there have always been women at the GS Trophy, and this year there were women competitors – and they too

have found the same joy. So perhaps it's just plain friendship, forged in a unique shared-experience in a wilderness environment (*or as near as wilderness as you'll find on the earth these days*).

Certainly it's worthy of celebration. And aspiration for that matter. So here at RUST we thought we should create a special issue devoted the latest GS Trophy set in the tropical region of Northern Thailand. There's stuff we learned, sights we saw, things we did, that are worth sharing. There's another GS Trophy due in 2018, too, so there's time to get yourself up with the play if you fancy yourself as a team member.

And we make no apologies for this issue being 100% BMW. Perhaps it's about time some of the other manufacturers came up with their own version...



TRENCH WARFARE

April 26, 2016 – the GS Trophy hadn't even begun, but the struggle had. When torrential rain slicked up the course for the journo training run all hell let loose. Slick clay, shallow knobbies and big hills simply don't combine well, not when you have a 250-kilo adventure bike to contend with. Here marshal Akom Podaeng is looking to get things moving with Brit journo Michael Guy and German journo Thilo Kozik (*left*) – two of the lightest journos on the tour – keen to lend some heft! Others clearly aren't so keen.





THE FAMILY SALOON

While the GS Trophy riders were bossing it on the trails, time and time again the locals would make a guest appearance, on their Honda Dreams going handlebar to handlebar with the GSs. We noted the young bucks rode their Dreams with some skill and not a little verve – often rewarded with some applause or honking of horns from the visitors. Others, like this family, reminded us that motorcycles are still utility vehicles to much of the world. They'd casually ride like this down some of the bumpiest of tracks. Respect!

Photo: Markus Jahn



THE GS TROPHY EXPLAINED

What is the GS Trophy?

It's a seven-day adventure competition for amateur riders from around the world, that takes place in a wilderness setting.

Who can compete?

It's a team competition for amateur riders. Each team comprises three competitors plus an embedded journalist. The riders qualify through national or regional qualifiers organised by the local BMW importer/distributor. There are no age or gender stipulations, competitors need only be BMW motorcycle owners.

When & Where?

Every two years. The first took place in Tunisia in 2008; in 2010 the event travelled through South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique; in 2012 it was Chile and Argentina; and in 2014 in the Rocky Mountains in Canada. This year it was Northern Thailand. The next one will be in 2018 – but where?!

What's the format?

The GS Trophy competitors ride a set course, which combines road and trail, along the way competing in up to three special tests per day, these can be riding-based, or on practical skills, there is even a photo

competition. The teams are paired at the start each day – so eight riders will travel together with one marshal – and set off at intervals. Only the marshal and the journalists have the GPS plot to follow, the riders rely on them for navigation.

What else?

It's a free event for the finalists, BMW pays for everything and supplies each rider with a specially prepared brand-new R1200GS for the week, plus all kit needed save for helmet, boots and gloves.

BMW mechanics are on hand for overnight repairs, but during the day the riders and their marshal have to be self-sufficient, repairing punctures and making running-repairs. The competitors camp each night, using tents and sleeping equipment supplied by BMW.

The numbers?

This edition saw 19 international teams compete, comprising 57 riders from 25 nations, plus 19 embedded journalists. The total distance was 1300km but this reflects the technicality of the trails. In Canada, on more open going, the distance was 2400km.

The prize?

National pride and a small trophy to the top three teams. In truth the whole week is the prize, it's an experience that is a once-in-a-lifetime thing.

In six words?

It's the Land Rover Camel Trophy on bikes
(damn, that's eight)





Words: Jon Bentman Images: Markus Jahn, Stéphane Gautronneau & Peter Musch

AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY...



What's a GS Trophy like?
It's almost too much to describe.
But we'll try – and hey this is us
telling it quick...

THE 2016 BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy Southeast Asia (*to give it the full title*) was big. A lot bigger than the first, run in 2008, that featured just five teams. This one saw 19 teams, with 57 competitors plus 19 embedded journalists, plus marshals, riding doctors and others. In all, 114 BMW R1200GSs (*all brand new*) were readied to take to the roads and tracks in Northern Thailand.

The seven-day adventure-competition stuck to the traditional GS Trophy formula – a long day's riding trail dotted with special tests, quite a few this year dedicated to pinning the throttle as hard as you dared. Nice. What was different this time, this being the fifth GS Trophy, was that the trails were that much slower and technical. One day was as short as 136km, but given so much of it couldn't be ridden much faster than 20km/h it still took a good eight hours. Rest time, as ever, was at a premium.

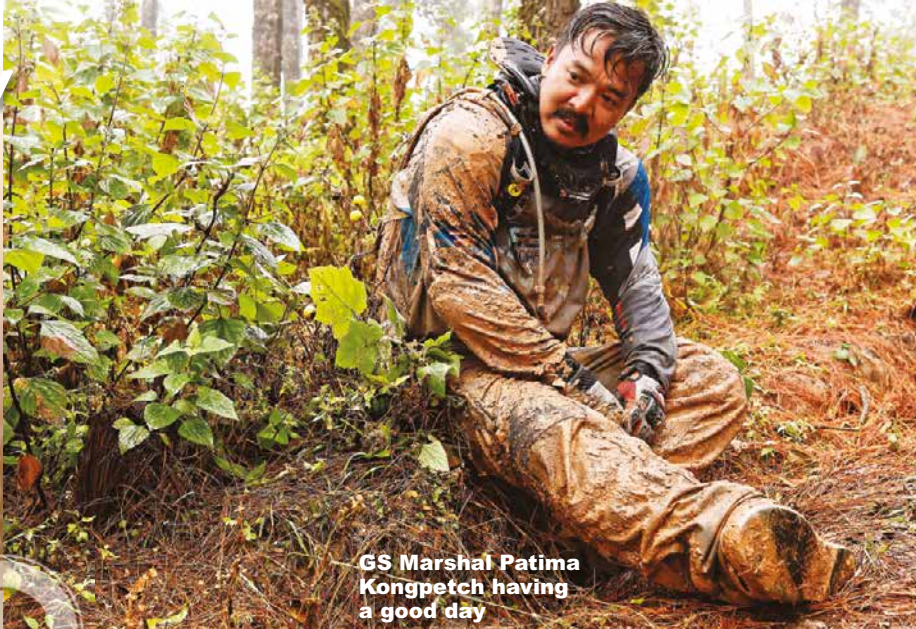
How did it look? Here are the seven days in quick review.

Day One

Rain washed away part of day one's course (*along with a few journos*), so it was a modified course that the riders took on, unlucky to miss out on some great hills and descents that would have given most a short-sharp shock to start the week.



And on the Seventh Day



GS Marshal Patima Kongpetch having a good day



'And action!' Ben Brown gives the water buffalo their cue

First test was called broken bridge – and it was just that. A big broken concrete bridge (*the annual rains here must swell the rivers massively*). Brand new GSs were hauled over a sloping broken section, then dropped a good six feet (2m) off the end. Some were controlled drops, others less controlled. So some brand new GSs were immediately missing tail-lights, mudguards, indicators and mirrors – and this not two hours into the competition.

The girls – sorry, the International Female Team – rode into the test and you might have thought some Hollywood actors had walked on set, such was the sudden frisson of excitement. No one would leave the test until they'd had their turn – and they did fine. Of course they had to fight, GSs are not light, but fight they did and the guys cheered them until they were hoarse. The girls rocked it, and if they hadn't already found a place in the event (*which they had*) after this they really had.

When you lifted your eyes though, the sights you saw! While the GSs were pushed and shoved, a herd of water buffalo drifted past in the river (*obviously taking the 'water' part of their name to heart*) while a local man used reeds to weave together bamboo rafts. Other locals watched, curious, from the banks. Then another local rode his Honda Dream scooter over a swinging rope bridge above everyone's head – now that was skill.

A slow race came later. Team South Korea thought they had this in the bag having practiced so hard at home, but big match nerves saw them out in under 30-seconds.





Team South Korea



The Ho Chi Minh trail



Team South Africa won, Charl Moolman cheered, 'Yah, we're the slowest riders in the GS Trophy!' then fixed a puzzled face. That set the tone for the week – the 'Saffies' were match-sharp and fully up for a laugh.

Tents were pitched that night as every night, and the riders were already getting in the swing of setting and striking camp, organizing and washing kit – and bracing themselves for the cold water showers. There were gibbons, apes, gorillas – well, some things obviously big and hairy – howling it up large in the adjacent jungle that night, perhaps affronted by the growl of GSs, so you kept your tent zipped tight.

Day Two

A proper day's riding with a great, almost speedy trail heading up into the hills with plenty of river crossings and the odd tricky part. The summit was at 1686m (5000ft), marked by a crashed 'Huey' military helicopter. The descent was nicely technical, the trail riven with deep washouts typically leaving just one line one-tyre-width wide. Tricky enough to take a few scalps slow enough to cause no injury.

First test was a cool timed stage, all three competitors having to race their GSs down a long bank, along a riverbed and then up a zig-zag path. Everyone loves some full-throttle madness. None more so than the South Africans. One well-drilled team.

There was a road section that followed, pure mountain road heaven. It took two fallers, shredding two shirts – heck, even a saint would have succumbed to the temptation.



And on the Seventh Day



Where's Gordon?
Team UK



Amy Harburg



Day Three

A longer day, 250km of trail, it required a 7am start. Some took the early kick-off so seriously they were breaking camp at 4:30 – just a little 'previous'.

New to the GS Trophy, Team China had by now made themselves heard. They carried a boom box from which they broadcast mostly western rock music each morning. 'Radio China' would kick in at 6:30 sharp most days, but this day at 5:30. Far from offending the rest, the camp looked forward to each morning 'show'.

The trail that day was awesome. Like a virgin enduro trail, running through high mountain pine forests. The rains left some slick parts, you couldn't see them, you'd just lose all control for a split second as the front then rear slid out. We had some close calls. The trail then ran down into some valleys, running just above paddy fields. Simply the most amazing centuries old scenery.

We were getting used to riding through villages by now, too. Sleeping dogs never moved, even alert standing dogs never batted an eye at the passing GSs. Chickens though – skinny little dudes they were too – sought sport in running between the bikes as they motored through. The chickens were fine, it was their tiny fuzzball chicks that we worried for. There were ducks too, and pigs. The buffalo mostly lurked in the underhouse area of the stilt houses. In the houses we counted so many children. We reckoned 75% of Thais are under the age of five.

There was then the now customary late-afternoon road race to the camp. And there, once darkness had fallen, started the most





And on the Seventh Day



Above: Charles Moolman gives Faizal Sukree some man-love...

This picture: Tree hugger Alfred Scheurer in the night garden



bizarre night test. It looked like a rodeo crossed with Junior Kickstart (*a 1980s TV show in the UK featuring youth trials riders*), the only light came from the GSs headlights. No one seemed to understand the rules, not even the marshals. Accordingly Team UK did well.

Day Four

The shortest day – for distance, the time taken was still plenty. It was the most fun yet, riding in and out of broad riverbed for mile after mile. The French were ecstatic ‘*we can never do this back at home, it is banned*’ explained the hirsute Sebas Saphores.

Silly things happened. Tom the GS Trophy video producer and cameraman dropped the front of his GS through a hole in a bridge fortunately rolling over the front unharmed. In fact, the film team would take a pasting over the course of the event, they lost one man to a crash in the Scouting run, and injured two more during the week, Tom was literally their last man standing by day seven. Meanwhile photographer Markus clouted a rock and locked the back brake on his GS. We got it freed only for him to ride over his own glasses.

Two tests followed – the first, a ride through a river followed by a quick fire questionnaire, like the Scottish Six Days Trial and pub quiz rolled into one. Then a ‘*manhandle your GS over fallen tree*’ challenge. Team UK were quick on this, too, despite James Berrill twice falling directly in front of their GS and nearly getting flattened.

We rode along the river-border with



And on the Seventh Day



John Harris leads
Team South Africa
into the bush



Flight time with
Kurt Yaeger



Burma, now Myanmar, that afternoon. It was like riding through the pages of National Geographic. That said, we went a bit Dakar Rally soon after with a high-speed run on stunning sand-based trails that ran along the mountain ridges.

Day Five

The day started well with an awesome trail through what felt like hillside jungle. Everyone pounded through it, not really giving much thought to the topography either side of the trail, just enjoying the romp, until Canadian Danick Cyr put a tyre over the edge and disappeared a good 20-feet. Not that anyone eased up even then.

Not a favourite day, though. Instead a long one, some 270km, and the trails punished, rather than delighted. Hands got a battering on hard pack, there was plenty of dust to breathe. And there was the dawning reality that came at two in the afternoon, when after six hours riding we realised we had barely reached half distance.

Team Japan tried to speed things up, until Tsutomu 'Tom' Morohara, lowsided on a fast dust-strewn sweeper. Road workers had left Armco along the side of the road ready to erect. Somehow Tom missed it all, while his GS rebounded off one sheet only to catch a steel pole on the other side of the road. Both bike and rider were unharmed, a lucky escape.

Just when everyone had had enough, up came one of the more grueling tests. The GPS test, where the competitors have to run – not ride – from co-ordinate to co-ordinate gathering clues to complete the task. The





And on the Seventh Day



All smiles: Sandro Ceratti, Charles Moolman, Felipe Limonta

Putting on a show: Team Brazil's Fernando Deneka



humidity was high and you could see it knocked most for six. Then followed two more hours of riding. It was a weary camp that night.

Day Six

The Ho Chi Minh Trail would you believe. We weren't so sure it was, we were a long way from Vietnam, but apparently there was some link to the famous VC supply chain. For the GS Trophy though, this was promised as a day of reckoning. A trail narrower and more devilish than any yet.

I went ahead with an advance party, to get the photographers positioned early on the trail's hotspots. Before we entered the veritable jungle I warned our little troop that we may not all make it through. Within yards we hit a short sharp hill climb that offered way too many options, none of which you could be sure would lead successfully over. It was potluck.

When we did get over the summit we found we'd lost Kurt Yaeger, our video presenter. *'He's okay though,'* explained Stephane a photographer, *'he's not trapped under the bike'.* *'Then we go on,'* demanded our captain, Tomm Wolf, *'we can't go back for him, the competitors will be here soon.'* I offered that we should at least leave with him with a grenade – but I'm not so sure the others quite got the Nam film reference. Still, it seemed wrong leaving a man behind. We caught up with Kurt later; *'scumbag'* he said.

The competitors had a ball. Two hours to travel 10km tells you how tight it got. If you were brought up on trials (*'tree-al' en Francais*) you'd have loved it. Team UK's



And on the Seventh Day



Team Mexico's Leoncio Sosa styles the big climb on the Ho Chi Minh trail

Oliver Twigg is a keen trials rider, which explained his two 5s on the biggest hill. Team South Africa cleaned that one, too, all three riders going like a freight train.

Another 10km later another hill, much more technical, created more carnage. Bloody awesome of course.

Day Seven

Team South Korea had somehow buried all three of their GSs on the exit bank of the trials test at the beginning of the last day. Don't ask us how. The International Female Team rode the test immediately after and to their eternal credit all three cleaned the climb, skillfully avoiding the vast craters left by the Koreans. Sometimes guys just can't think their way through a problem.

The last day's trails were like a celebration of the entire week. It finished with 30km of yet more pristine pine forest trail that the GSs ate up as voraciously as they had on day one, followed by an epic Isle of Man TT of a road section to the finish.

In the past the final test has been something of a gymkhana of various trials or novelty-based exercises, like riding blind-folded. This time, there was an element of that, but with a Le Mans start and a motocross track forming much of the course it was a bit more pacy.

Only one of Team China's hardmen got too pacy over the whoop section, making for a Ken Roczen style dismount while his GS ended (*expensively*) down the track. He picked it up and it ran to the finish, but its residual value had been halved. Team Southeast Asia's Peerpat Woratham wasn't



And on the Seventh Day



Team South Africa



Team Mexico's Pizza King
Carlos Avila takes a dive

to be outdone on his home turf and replied by launching his GS vertically off the final 3m bank before the finish. He had presence of mind to keep a hold of the bars, otherwise the GS might have flattened half the spectators.

So the 2016 GS Trophy ended with a bang. And but for the line-up of destroyed cameramen at the A&E in Chiang Mai, everyone was pretty much in one piece – and, as ever, very reluctant to go home. It was damn good one. Like all of them.

WANT A GO?

The GS Trophy international final is entirely BMW funded – aside from the cost of Toblerones and gonks for the family at home, the competitors pay for nothing. They even get to keep the riding and camping kit. How cool is that?

The final takes place every two years, so the next one will be sometime in 2018 – somewhere. If you'd like to go, there are three places per team for which you compete in national or regional qualifiers. Details of those you'll find with your local BMW importer/distributor. The qualifiers typically are not free, but often subsidized and still awesome fun in their own right. You do need to own a BMW, but it can be any BMW, even an R45, and you can't be more than an amateur racer (no professionals).



And on the Seventh Day



Running through the jungle: Team Italy



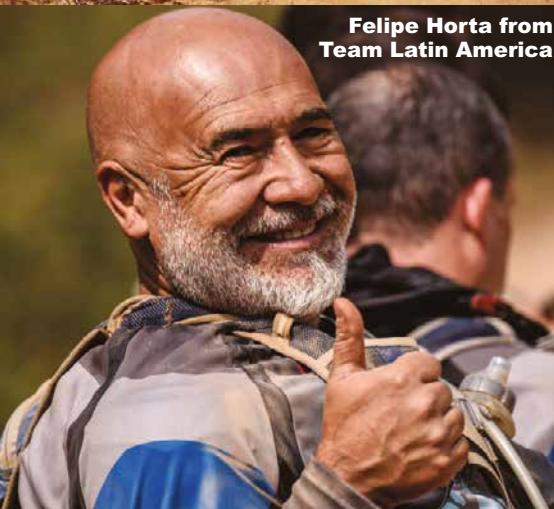
Team South Africa won!



Team Latin America's Carlos Lopez on the Ho Chi Minh trail



Team Russia's Roman Soldatov



Felipe Horta from Team Latin America

BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2016	
Final results	
1	South Africa - 299
2	Germany - 268
2	UK - 268
4	CEEU - 254
5	Latin America - 244
6	Brazil - 242
7	China - 234
8	USA - 229
9	France - 208
10	Italy - 200
11	Argentina - 188
12	Mexico - 181
13	Russia - 180
14	Canada - 176
15	South Korea - 146
16	Japan - 138
16	South East Asia - 138
18	Alps - 117
19	International Female Team - 116



The 2016 BMW GS Trophy

ONLINE

Catch up with RUST's vlogs here – and our pick of the best of the rest...

Find the RUST vlogs and video snippets at:

GS Trophy 2016 - Montage

www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVYqp3biTnc

GS Trophy - JB's kit reviews

www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3VvqAaC3N4

GS Trophy - Nolan N44 helmet test...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxasLtTKP8E

GS Trophy - Kurt Yaeger mudslide...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XEkJabHLi4

And for all things GS Trophy go the BMW Motorrad dedicated website: www.gstrophy.com

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 01

<https://youtu.be/WFa2udqS4UU>

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 02

<https://youtu.be/gfNPr8LnBb8>

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 03

<https://youtu.be/FTCVq97tr3o>

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 04

https://youtu.be/2_s8p3L4nXE

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 05

<https://youtu.be/40LBDXxl1uc>

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 06

<https://youtu.be/XCQxS0Vi464>

The BMW GS Trophy 2016 - Day 07

<https://youtu.be/D4UZKIdQXzA>

Laurent 'Lolo' Cochet is a French vlogger, this was how Team France saw the GS Trophy:

001 - En Thaïlande la patinoire

<https://youtu.be/iVMI8s5EXG4>

002 - It's not a race... It's a war

<https://youtu.be/wEeszqk015k>

003 - Moto des epreuves de fou

<https://youtu.be/Rv3lBsw3y6s>

004 - GS Trophy moto

<https://youtu.be/PP3IMT6yMf4>

005 - Off road trip moto de fou

<https://youtu.be/lxa-29cSa9Y>

Ben Brown is a Brit vlogger based in South Africa, this was his GS Trophy experience:

Mixed emotions in Thailand!

<https://youtu.be/4i0kJHlw11E>

Let me explain something.

<https://youtu.be/SceLrKasM8g>

Motorcycle Injury

<https://youtu.be/Z82dQq4Dpk4>

Finally 500,000 Subscribers

<https://youtu.be/WlOmXT3qyvs>

SP Vlog Takeover!

https://youtu.be/R9hOLY_TQ4A

The Broken Bridge

<https://youtu.be/jwkPHnwHqXQ>

I've Never Broken a Bone...

<https://youtu.be/aa1vjWifuPQ>

Michael Guy of Motorcycle News was Team UK's journalist, his daily blogs start here:

www.motorcyclenews.com/news/2016/february/gs-trophy-diary-day-one1/

Zack Courts of Motorcyclist was Team USA's journalist, his daily blogs start here:

www.motorcyclistonline.com/authors/zack-courts



IN PRAISE OF THE 524**ub** DIRT BIKE



There may be more thorough tests, but there's unlikely to be a more rugged test of an adventure bike than riding a GS Trophy. This year the distance was less, *'just'* 1300km, but the technicality and intensity in Northern Thailand was certainly high. Could the GS really do enduro?

Words: Jon Bentman Images: Markus Jahn



IN PRAISE OF THE 524lb DIRT BIKE



THE GS IS one ridiculously huge phenomenon. As one pundit quite sagely put it a few years ago, *'there hasn't actually been an adventure boom, it's been a GS boom'*. BMW dominate the adventure sector. Ever since their R80G/S of 1980 they've been the market leader, and this despite often having quite the wrong technologies for the job (as it would seem – like linkage (Telelever) forks, shaft drive, 'boxer' across-the-frame orientated air-cooled twin motors). Honda, Yamaha, even KTM have challenged them time and again, with some great machinery, but always, over time, BMW's GS has proven itself the buying public's adventure bike of choice.

In 2013 BMW passed the 500,000 mark on GSs made/sold. Since gearing up to the latest water-cooled 'K50' series GS the numbers have accelerated even faster, the plant in Berlin now having created over 55,000 GS and 16,000 GS Adventure variants of the 'water boxer' – 42,000 of those in 2015 alone. It seems the worldwide demand for GSs is insatiable.

And it's not even as if the GS is a budget offering. Far from it, prices in Europe start at the £12,000 / €15,000 mark and the optional extras – many of which you will want to make your adventure ride fully operational – aren't cheap. It's a premium product, and yet everyone wants one, it would seem.

Adventure Test

NICE & EASY

You kind of understand why there's that demand, when you ride one. The beast – and it is a beast, tall, wide, supersized in most dimensions – bristles with technology, this thing has bells and whistles on its bells and whistles. And yet when you turn on the ignition and ride away it's dead easy. Operation is simple, the sense of bulk disappears once it's moving, and you can ignore the techno-wizardry for a good long while. That said, when it comes to the rider-aid options you'll need time and patience (*and probably a notebook*) to keep track of all the permutations there.

So it's hi-tech, but with a super user-friendly interface. And while a BMW of the now distant past would take a good while to 'settle' on a rider, for him/her to become au fait with its operation and start to appreciate its virtues, this modern GS is an instant like. From the word go it feels right, familiar.

AND NOW WITH ADDED...

It seems the first K50s only arrived yesterday, but already the 2015 model year GSs we were riding in Northern Thailand are in effect second generation models. These latest GSs now have larger flywheels than originally fitted in 2013/14 (*in fact as found*



IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE





IN PRAISE OF THE 524lb DIRT BIKE



on the first RTs and GSAs). Up from 6189grams to 7004grams – and matched to a heavier primary drive gear (*up from 850g to 1162g*) this makes for a far smoother ride, and the engine feels to have marginally more torque as a consequence, reacting to throttle input a little less abruptly.

As an added bonus BMW have also fitted the GS with their new 'Gearshift Assistant Pro' a power-shifting set-up for the gearbox that must have come from their world super-bike R&D section. It's not something you'd immediately call for on an adventure bike, but say if you were trying to make a quick getaway from some crooked armed border

Adventure Test

guards then being able to hold the throttle pinned while clutch-less upshifting through the 'box, yeah, you might be thankful for it.

For the GS Trophy we had other additions too. There were the Metzeler Karoo 2 knobbly tyres to deal with the extreme off-road (*in terms of adventure*) we were to ride, plus a host of guards, bars and pegs all designed to withstand minor crashes, or to stop us crashing in the first place. There was also the optional plug-in unit that activates the Enduro Pro riding mode – ultra important for this ride.

BUT FIRST: RAIN

Getting to know the GS was made easier on the journos this year by way of a two-day refresher before the competitors arrived. This is savvy planning on BMW's part. In the past the high-level of riding involved in the GS Trophy has over-taxed the embedded journos, for instance I recall in South Africa in 2010 we 'lost' five journos to injuries in just two days.

Day one of the refresher involved a little 'parcours' – sort of soft trials riding. Doing figure of eights, crash-braking tests and obstacle techniques like bank climbs and descents certainly highlighted just how docile and easy the GSs can be. No issues.





IN PRAISE OF THE 524lb DIRT BIKE

Day two saw the journos tackle part of the scheduled day one ride, to see how they'd cope. However with heavy rain falling unexpectedly not only did the journos (*wearing just motocross shirts and body armour*) get drenched but the course got washed-out as well.

But the rain did show the GSs any-time, any-terrain capability. With a multitude of modes to choose from, I selected the default setting I'd run at the last GS Trophy in Canada – 'Rain' with ASC (*traction control*) turned off. This allows probably about 90 of the total 125hp to be accessed, but also tunes the throttle response to gently-gradual; no doubt the GS's super-computer also softens off the suspension a tad, too, for more traction-finding capability.

On tarmac alone, I'd just select Rain and leave the ASC on, but on gravel or soil in rain mode the traction control is far too invasive to allow enough rider control to make decent progress. With ASC off, you get a lovely creamy power supply that allows for good traction or lovely super-lazy power slides. In this mode, even on a slick wet clay hill I could get the GS to tractor up, no sweat. I shared this setting with others in our team and it worked for them too. Subsequent teams – I suspect, from discussing it with them later – still rode in Enduro Pro and this was probably too snappy for the kind of deft

Adventure Test

throttle control required in these conditions.

Once we'd hit the summit of the day's climb – the only team to do so, the others being forced to turn back – I switched to Enduro Pro for the equally tricky descent. This mode, gives a premium braking set-up allowing ultra-sensitive off-road smart ABS to the front brakes and some clever super-computer fore-aft brake balancing to make for mountain-goat sure-footed descending. You can alternatively stamp on the rear brake and lock it if the need arises, such as for backing into a berm. We were coming down some super-slick descents with little margin for error – get a 240-kilo hunk of metal flying down a steep hill, unchecked, and you've got a world of trouble.

I'd have to score BMW 100 out of 100 to BMW for this feature. To show just how effective the mode was, one of the Latin American journos – a motocrosser of some years – neglected to make the mode switch to Enduro Pro for the descent and sure enough careened out of control down one hill and only just avoided a major crash and injury. Putting him straight on the ideal mode and he continued safe as houses – and not a little relieved.

These were extreme conditions, or as we say in these parts, '*typically British*', but the

IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE





IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE

GS, through its techno-wizardry had mastery and it allowed even average riders to feel equal mastery given the sophistication of the rider aids.

FASTER?

Come the event itself, the rain disappeared and aside from a few devilishly slick spots left under trees (*on road and trail*), we enjoyed dry, often dusty conditions. On faster trails again Enduro Pro was the call. It does fast gravel immaculately. There's enough spin allowed in the traction control to get the back drifting on corner exits – which sometimes you need if the corner is tightening. Meanwhile the braking is again spot-on, you can pin it without fear of a front-end washout, then drag the back-end out one way or another using the back brake to align for the corner.

I'd tailored the set-up on my GS to suit the semi-aggressive riding. I love the GS for this adaptability. First job was the simple switching of the locating plugs under the seat to lift it into the high position; at 6'0" that suits me better and I like a high seat feel as it best replicates an enduro bike. I don't go for a low seat as I never plan to paddle a bike of this size anywhere, I'll make the odd steadying dab maybe, but best plan, I think, on a GS is to ride stood up and feet-up.

I got to tailor the suspension set-up, too. I

Adventure Test

wanted ground clearance and I wanted bottoming resistance. Enduro Pro helps with the latter in its programming, but setting the electric preload to 'rider and pillion' lifts the suspension to almost full height, the rear must stand a full two-inches taller in this mode. I then set the damping to 'hard'. You might argue soft is better for finding traction, but in my experience while that might work at trials speeds, when you start hitting rocks and bumps at 80km/h plus you don't want a bike as big as the GS doing a buckaroo.

The enduro-type footpegs, the raised rear brake lever doddad, the narrowish saddle, and the Fatbar styled handlebars all give the GS a surprisingly enduro-bike feel. It's not wide through the mid-section (*despite the shaft drive*), and you can move around the bike with surprising ease. We had a German freestyle motocross rider along on this tour and he was shocked just how dirtbike-ish the GS rode. More thrilled, in fact – you could see his thinking (*same as everyone's*): 'Feels like an enduro, but makes 125hp! Wahey!'

AND TWO CAME TUMBLING DOWN

One of the strengths of the GS is that it is strong everywhere. That's on tarmac too. In Northern Thailand this was a concern for the organisers. The roads here were sublime,



IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE





IN PRAISE OF THE 524lb DIRT BIKE

curve after curve after curve – with excellent tarmac as well. And every day at some point we needed to do a few miles on these roads to link the sections. It was road race heaven – but we needed to be safe.

So we got to love the GS again, for this other facet of its character. Play with the modes and you can optimize it for asphalt, too. Given the correct tyres, you'd probably dial in 'Dynamic' for this kind of riding and go chase some R1s. In Thailand, though, we were on knobbles and you could perhaps over-ride the tyres with that kind of a gung-ho approach. Me, being Mr Steady, I chose to remain – rightly or wrong – with either Enduro Pro, or plain Road, my reasoning being that Dynamic probably allows for grippier tyres than we had fitted and so sets the traction control and ABS accordingly fine-edged.

As it was I could feel the ABS and ASC were working quite diligently given the still quite energetic bend swinging we were doing. A few of us were finding we would pin the front hard into the slower bends and have the back skipping and swaying like a regular WSB race bike and mid-corner we'd be feeling for the edge, while under power most certainly the ASC was doing that exercise too. I'm not sure if it was the Karoos or the ASC kicking in, but there was definitely a vibro-feel to corner exits.

On day one two competitors dropped their

Adventure Test

GSs in the road sections, while deep-deep cornering, at least one of those two actually flipping (*high-siding*) on the exit. Both confessed that they were riding with ABS and ASC switched-off, having chosen to switch the assists off for the off-road (*which was some riders' preference*) and forgotten to re-activate before setting off again. Both confessed to pilot error. In any case, it's worth remembering BMWs own words of caution – their rider aids allow you to ride safer, but they can't completely overcome the laws of physics. Use their systems, but try not to abuse them. Or in the case of these two (*uninjured*) fallers – just use the system!

MORE OF THE SAME

The motor, by the way, was just great. The boxer has always made good off-road suitable power, the waterboxer simply make more. You can ride it anywhere in the rev range, from bottom to top, it's great everywhere. Sat on it, it sounds tough and gruff. Stood to one side, watching the competitors boss their GSs, the exhaust note sounds a few octaves higher-pitched, especially when revved hard, but you can tell the GS has got fight. The gearbox is good too, the gears spaced well for all occasions. It took a while



IN PRAISE OF THE
524iB
DIRT BIKE





IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE

to get the hang of the Gearshift Assistant Pro, though. This works best at the two extremes. For upshifts, hold the throttle wide and push the gears home, it even makes a nice pop as the ignition is momentarily cut for each shift. For clutch-less down-changes you need a totally closed throttle to allow the system to size for itself the auto-blip of the throttle on each down-change – again, used well this is accompanied by a sweet audio track with a good ‘brap’ on each gear down. Maybe it’s to do with the racing background to this feature, but its best use is when you’re riding really ‘on it’, under proper load it’s a marvel, whereas for smooth casual riding, usual rider-operated gear and clutch operation feels smoother and better coordinated.

Anyway, that pretty much set the tone for the seven days riding in the GS Trophy. Great bike, great riding – and lots of both. So many riders did push their luck, or maybe had lapses of concentration, and so did fall off, but nearly all at slow speed. And the bikes, given the effective crash protection, always came back for more.

I noted two big crashes – not caused by any particular issue, but something that’s statistically likely to happen when so many guys push things day after day for seven days. In the first, a Japanese rider took a fast fall on a grit covered tarmac/concreted

Adventure Test

curve. He was damn lucky not to hit something. Analysing his GoPro footage, we could see he was seated at the time and leaning the bike through the turn – even ASC can't correct for the kind of side loads that puts on the tyres. Many of us through that same section cornered stood-up, keeping our weight over the tyre contact patch, not inside of it, weighting the outside peg, doing our best to force the tyre onto the road.

The second big crash came when a Chinese competitor endoed his GS in the whoop section of the final test of the event. There ain't nothing gnarlier than watching a 240-kilo bike endo. It didn't make contact with the rider, fortunately, and both surprisingly made it from there to the finish line, albeit somewhat battered. Lesson there: as much as the GS feels like a 100-kilo dirt bike, it's really not, it's two-and-a-half times that, and even the genius of semi-active suspension can't stabilize a unit this big given motocross whoops of a certain size hit at a certain speed. Clint Eastwood's Dirty Harry said it clear, *'Man's got know his limitations.'*

STILL THE KING

Much talk of late has been about the new Honda Africa Twin. And that is one hell of a

IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE



THE MODES

Explained, sort of...

- There are five modes: Rain, Road, Dynamic, Enduro & Enduro Pro
- There are apparently three electromotive throttle actuator settings (that is to say three levels of throttle response – this is kind of fly-by-wire), which the bike sorts according to the mode you select
- There are three ABS settings, which again the bike varies according to the mode, although you can manually deactivate
- There are four ASC (traction control) settings again that the bike deploys according to mode and settings, which you can deactivate if you prefer

Note: Enduro mode suits the use of the bike off-road using road oriented tyres (like Metzeler Tourance), offering a soft throttle response with traction control and ABS optimised to allow for the limited grip. Enduro Pro assumes a more aggressive off-road biased tyre (like the Karoo 2) and offers a more 'spontaneous' throttle response and resets the ABS to suit the tyres, with the ABS deactivated to the rear when you use the rear brake pedal. Enduro Pro also resets the ESA (suspension) for traction and bottoming resistance, and resets the ASC (traction control) to allow the rear wheel a fair degree of spin





IN PRAISE OF THE
524lb
DIRT BIKE



bike, I can't wait to get on one again. But the R 1200 GS is still the king. It's the king because it does all this dynamic riding – on and off-road – so incredibly well, better than any bike before (*arguably*), while still also doing the whole two-up touring thing in consummate style.

BMW have been refining their GS for 36 years now, without a break. That's enough in itself to make for an exceptional product. But without a shadow of doubt, the waterboxer, the K50 – call it what you will – has been a quantum leap ahead of what we expect from BMW's annual round of improvements. With every ride, with every new understanding of the many, many modes and functions it offers, you find even more appreciation.

And yes, I need a rest now.

Adventure Test

SPECIFICATION BMW R1200GS

Engine: Air/liquid-cooled DOHC,
8-valve horizontally opposed twin
cylinder four-stroke

Capacity: 1170cc

Bore & stroke: 101x73mm

Claimed power: 125hp at 7700rpm

Claimed torque: 92lbft at 6500rpm

Compression ratio: 12.5:1

Fuelling: BMS-X fuel injection

Ignition: 12v, electronic, 580W alternator

Starting: Electric

Transmission: Six-speed

Clutch: Anti-hopping wet multiplate

Frame: Tubular steel bridge, engine
self-supporting

Front suspension: BMW Telelever,
37mm stanchion, 190mm travel

Rear suspension: BMW EVO
Paralever, 200mm travel

Front brake: Twin 305mm discs,
four-piston calipers radially mounted, ABS

Rear brake: 276mm disc, ABS

Tyres: 120/70-19, 170/60-17

Weight: 238kg

Seat height: 850/870mm

Wheelbase: 1507mm

Fuel capacity: 20 litres

Top speed: Over 200km/h

Price: €14,700 before options

Contact: www.bmw-motorrad.com





A WOLF IN GS CLOTHING

Words: Andy Dukes
Images: JB & BMW

Tomm Wolf is the course director of the GS Trophy. He checks out the countries, scouts the routes. It's something that takes six months work, physically in the country, on the ground. And it's something he's done for every one of the five GS Trophy events since 2008

TO FANS, ENTHUSIASTS and former participants, Tomm Wolf is affectionately known as “Mr GS Trophy”. Having been involved with the event since its inception, he is without a doubt the ‘face’ of the biennial international adventure riding competition for amateur BMW GS owners.

AD: *Perhaps Thailand wasn't an immediate first choice of location for the latest GS Trophy, but judging by the satisfaction of the riders it's possibly been one of the best yet?*

TW: For sure, everyone on the GS Trophy now agrees that Thailand is a wonderful country, full of beautiful nature and culture. There's no doubt that this year's route has been quite hard – much harder than the previous event – with much more technical riding involved. The last Trophy was faster, wider and more open but out here we are talking about lots of single trails in tough riding conditions, with plenty of tight, up and down sections to experience. I can guarantee that everyone in this the GS Trophy will have ‘made their lives a ride’!

AD: *This is your fifth GS Trophy. Would you say it was your most challenging yet in terms of preparation?*

TW: The first GS Trophy involved just five teams, but now we are nearly 20 so there's a huge level of planning involved. The fact the GS Trophy has grown so much – we now have nearly 200 people involved on location – shows it was a great idea in the first place, and a lot of countries have jumped on board. In terms

Adventure



of pure riding and skill levels required, it seems to get tougher ever year, and now countries and teams start practising a long time in advance. This means that I have to start planning, practising and riding much earlier too! The latest GS Trophy is quite a hard enduro event.

AD: Did you ever dream that the GS Trophy would grow from such small beginnings to such an impressive global spectacle?

TW: In a word, 'no'! On one hand it's nice to see just how much it has grown, and it's great to see how many people are now taking part in this. GS riding is my world and my life, so I guess you could say that I'm more than just a little bit proud to see how big the GS world has become.

AD: You must be delighted at the presence of film

teams, photographers and so many journalists who have come here to share all the news, views and stories with the wider world?

TW: For sure! When you look at all the social media and see what's going on around this event now, it's like the Olympic Games of adventure riding and I'm really proud to be part of this. It's not just about the teams that are here though – it's also about the many thousands who are following online from across the globe. In the past months, I've received so many emails, questions and requests for information. It is a huge family that is following and that's why we need the professional media teams here to deliver the films, photos and stories from the event.

AD: There were plenty of additions for 2016, such as three new teams and pre-event training for the journalists. Was the training necessary because of the challenging nature of the route?

TW: The journalists have to accompany their teams throughout the GS Trophy and ride the same trails as them, so this year we were having a special media training event to make sure that they were capable of this. The GS Trophy is not a leisure trip – it's tough.

AD: It must be refreshing to also finally have a female team participate?

TW: In the off-road trainings at our enduro schools we are seeing more and more women coming along. In fact, it's rare to see one without women taking part, so it's made it absolutely necessary that we have a

female team here at the Trophy this year. We are certainly very happy to have a ladies team with us and I have got to know all the girls now and they have proven they really good riders. They were never the last team on any day, had no issues with the bikes or the trails and when it came to the physical challenges they completed every one.

AD: Finally Tomm, when you look back over the past five GS Trophies and think about all the countries visited, all the friends made and all the memories shared, you must feel proud?

TW: For sure, after riding and battling together during a typical week of the GS Trophy, you form a bond and become friends with many of the competitors from every event. We all stay in contact and lots of them want to come back and work to help support us at the next GS Trophy. It's created a great family and it's a special feeling to be a part of this.





THE CAMPING

CAMPING IS A fundamental part of the GS Trophy. It kind of recalls the years of the Dakar Rally when the riders, from the leader to the last man, would sleep on the desert floor in bivouacs. Today the top Dakar riders sleep in air-conditioned motorhomes – there's no absolutely sense of camaraderie, no bloody romance, in that.

So by having all the competitors – and journalists – camped, it brings everyone together every night. Everyone gets to laugh at each other as the gasps, even screams, emanate from the cold water showers as the first ice-cold drop hits skin. You share the sunset and the dawn, the snoring, sometimes the sleeplessness of a sub-zero night (*in Canada*). Then there's the morning bonhomie, smiles and salutations as everyone flip-flops from tent to ablution block, and back.

The sights and sounds are the strongest in all of the GS Trophy experience, things you'll remember for a lifetime. Such as in South Africa, early riser Billy-Rex Dragoo, in cowboy boots, stetson and underpants doing his stretches in the first light of dawn in the middle of the wildlife reserve. In Thailand, the collective Team China, boombox and morning smoke on the go – and again in just underpants.

The camping is, as I said, fundamental.



Tested

What to wear on a seven-day adventure ride in the tropics? Our man JB made these choices...

JB's BMW GS TROPHY KIT

YOU KNOW, WITH age you can become real fussy about kit. You form opinions on what works, and what doesn't. Most of it is based on experience; some of it might just be old habits... But when it comes to the GS Trophy you've got to make the right choices, if it's not right on day one, by day seven it's going to be causing a world of anguish. So going into my fourth GS Trophy here were my picks. And what you can't see in these images I'll describe, not everything needs photographing!

Words & images: Jon Bentman Main image: Markus Jahn





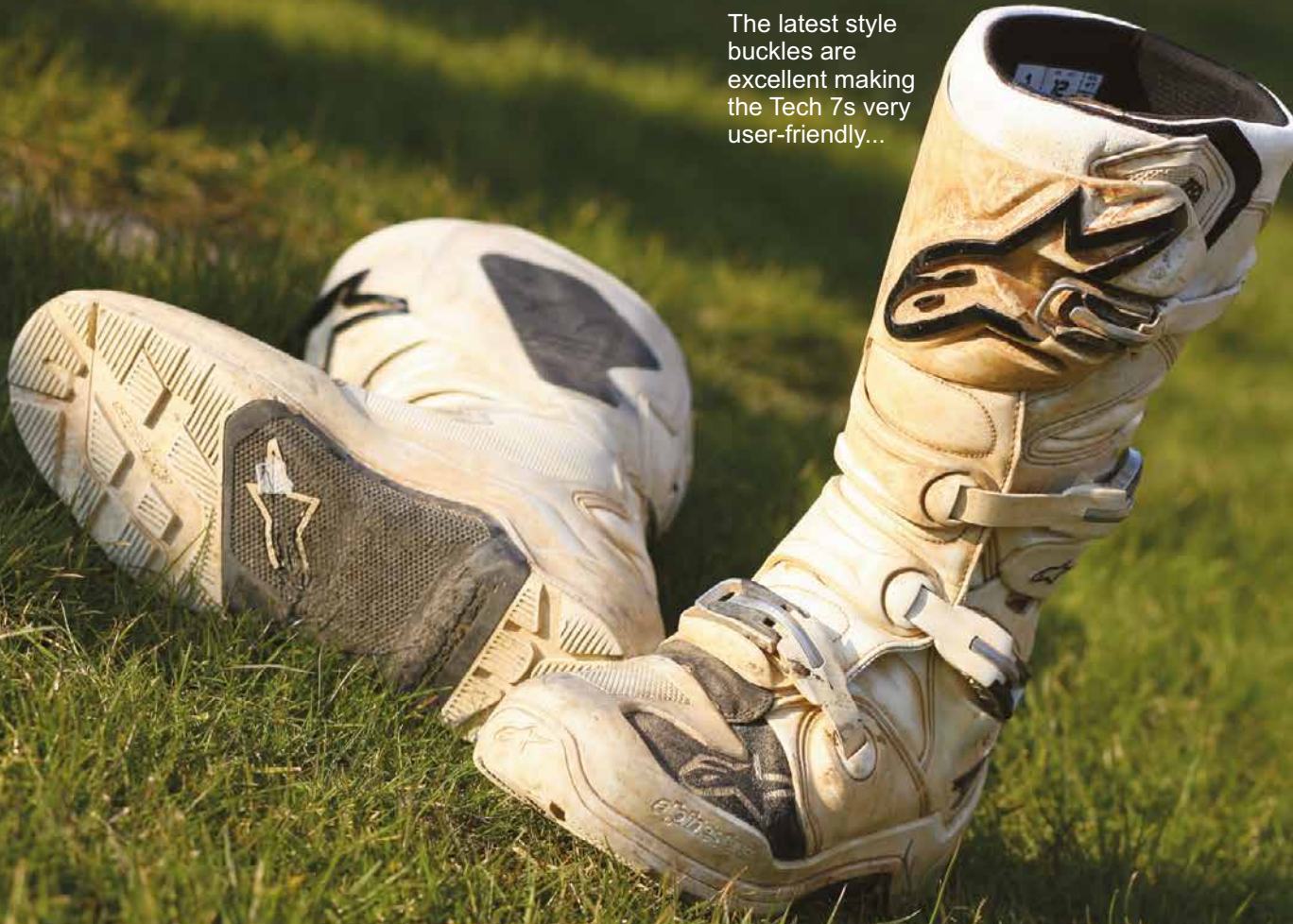
SEVEN FOR THE BOOTS

Supplied by www.alpinestars.com

I WORE ALPINESTARS Tech 10s at the last GS Trophy in Canada and it was the wrong choice – they're not good for all-day comfort, too robo-boot. So I chose the 7s this time, they felt the nearest to a foam moon boot, cosseting the feet, and had the least



The latest style buckles are excellent making the Tech 7s very user-friendly...



hardware internally to cause grief. I liked the walking boot sole too, which proved useful in the slick mud conditions. If I hadn't soaked them through at the beginning they'd have been spot-on. As it was with short nights and high humidity, drying them proved a chore. But underlying comfort was good, the latest buckles are excellent and I think they make a good adventure as well as enduro boot.

ZERO FOR FEET

Supplied by www.bmw-motorrad-store.co.uk

On my feet I wore BMWs own 'Function' moto-socks, nothing much wrong with them, like your typical motocross sock. I had two pairs for the week, and I got both wet, plus the boots, and subsequently suffered a form of trench foot (*where the foot gets super-wrinkles after spending days sodden*). Yeah, I scored zero for adventure foot prep. When things got too bad the tour Doc treated my feet with itching powder to dry them out (*it worked*) and I raided a portalo, stealing all the bog paper to stuff in the boots and pull the moisture out (*overnight*). After that everything was cool again. Just about...

ACE ACERBIS

Supplied by www.acerbis.com

I was wearing BMW's Rallye pants like everyone, but this time I chose to remove the fitted chunky kneepads and instead relied on my trusty ten-year-old Acerbis Profile knee guards. Simple and light, they were comfortable and they worked. Some might prefer knee braces, but with lots of trials type riding (and walking) the flexibility of simple knee guard was spot-on.





A-STAR FOR ADVENTURE

Supplied by www.alpinestars.com

For my hands I chose Alpinestars crossover glove, the Megawatt Hard Knuckle. In enduro type going a leather glove gets too sweaty and doesn't offer the tighter fit and light feel most dirt bikers prefer. The Megawatt takes a motocross glove base and gives it an armoured outer. That includes a carbon knuckle protector and leather in the key stress points. It's a great glove. I soaked them but they dried easy and my hands stayed cool. They last well too, I've a previous incarnation that I've had six years now and they're still going strong. In fact I wear these gloves for enduro too, they're that comfortable.



I've had my last pair for 6 years and they're still going strong!



RISK FREE

Supplied by www.riskracing.com

Under my gloves I wore Risk Racing Palm Protectors. These little neoprene jobbies are insurance against killer-blisters. In fact the going in Thailand wasn't so tough but back in Canada in 2014 these Protectors were hand savers and I ended up farming out my spares to save fellow riders who were in big trouble with ripped hands.

LEATT NECK BRACE

www.leatt.com

It's BMW branded, and it's virtually the Mark I unit, but I joined most in wearing the BMW Motorrad branded Leatt neck brace for this tour. I've found comfortable settings for these devices, I've got hoops on the A-Star armour to locate the brace too, and it just plain doesn't bother me to ride with it. Neck braces are now compulsory in the Dakar Rally so clearly the ASO's investigations are suggesting there's value (*safety*) to be had here. One day soon I'll upgrade to a fully integrated system, that's probably the way to go. Now for just plain old day-to-day adventure riding would I wear a brace? No. But the GS Trophy isn't plain old adventure riding!



Most riders at the event wore a neck brace, it would have been foolhardy not to...



Tested



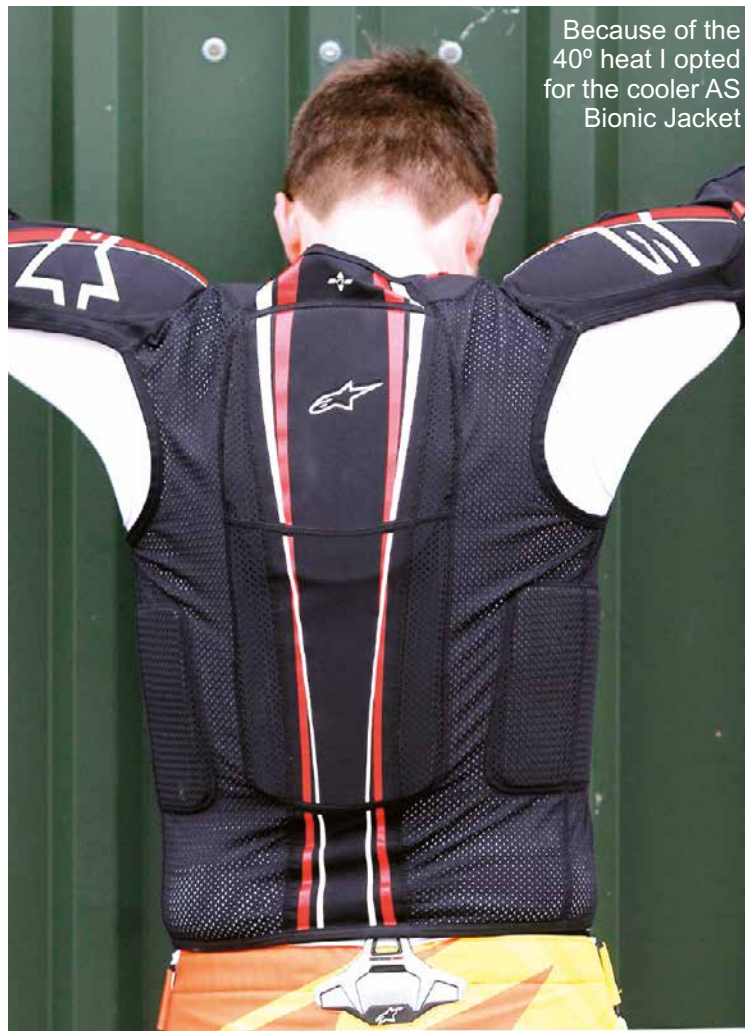
BIONIC MAN?

Supplied by www.alpinestars.com

This year, given the heat, most of us rode without the usual BMW rallye jacket. But given the tarmac miles it was important we had some under-shirt protection. Most rode with the Leatt 5.5 armour BMW supplied. It's proper grid-iron and as we found from the crashes that

came, it did a brilliant job. My concern at the outset was with predicted 40° heat it would be too hot and heavy. So instead I elected to wear the much lighter Alpinestars Bionic Plus jacket. Okay, it's less protective, but it offers a lot more protection than none-at-all and has the key back protector, chest, shoulder and elbow protection. But what I really like is that it's light, breathes well and you almost don't see it under your shirt. So I didn't get hot and was comfortable all day. As discreet adventure, or enduro, body armour I really rate it.

Because of the 40° heat I opted for the cooler AS Bionic Jacket



DO THE HUSTLE

Supplied by www.scott-sports.com

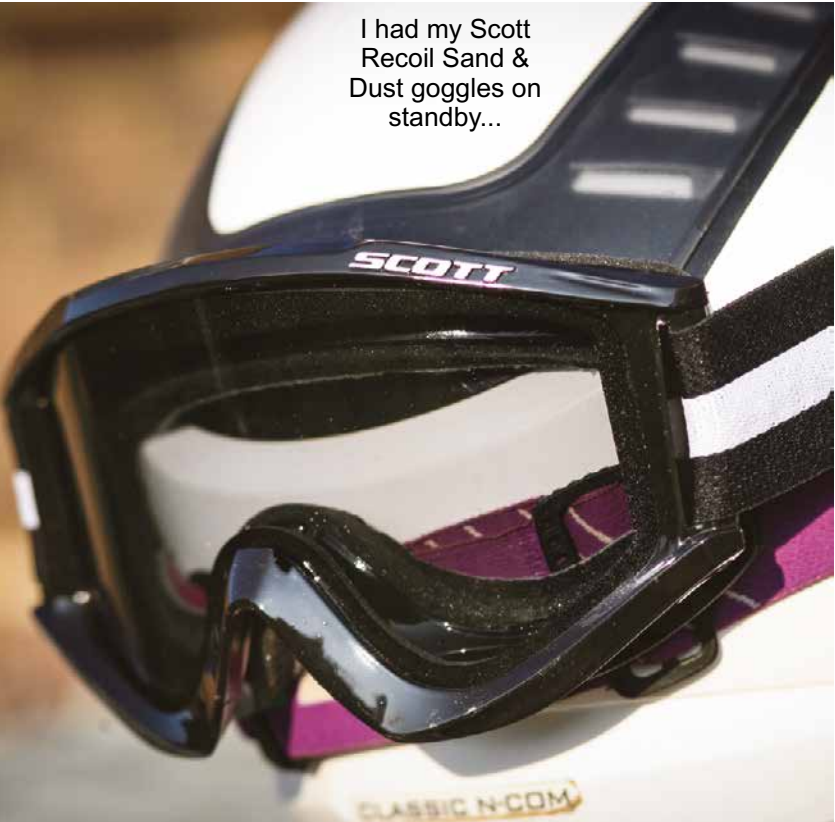
I always wear Scott goggles. I rate their quality and their lenses are some of the best optically. Given the hot climate in Thailand, goggles also meant I got more air through the helmet aperture than if I'd used a visor. ▶





So I was cooler and freer breathing. My favourite goggle is the Hustle, it's a great shape that's also adjustable so it really hugs the face without pushing down on your nose. I wore the one goggle the whole week and despite lots of dust only once did I get grit in the eye. If the dust had been worse I had Scott's Recoil Sand & Dust goggle on standby, which I always equip with a double-glazed lens to stop fogging as they don't circulate so much air.

I had my Scott Recoil Sand & Dust goggles on standby...



The Nolan N44 six-in-one had all the bases covered

THE CONVERTIBLE

Supplied by www.motogear.co.uk

Again, expecting high temperatures and slow riding, I wanted a helmet that would allow a cool head. I looked far and wide and came up with this solution, the Nolan N44. Nolan call it a cross-over helmet and given the mix-and-match capability with visors, peaks and chinbar they also call it a 6-in-1 design. As said, the chinbar is quick-detachable yet still meets EU standards for a full-face helmet. This I liked and I think makes this an ideal trail helmet, too. For the road I'll always run the chinbar, for riding lanes the open face set-up is spot on (*I find when other trail*

users see a human face, rather than alien-mx-racer, they always react positively). I tested the helmet riding through sections with and without the chinbar and for slow trials type going, in hot temperatures, riding without it makes for easier breathing, and you feel cooler. The lining is antibacterial and moisture wicking and stayed comfortable and fragrant all week. The Microlock2 chinstrap was quick and easy to use. In all a great helmet for adventure/trail riding.



Picture Post



The GS TROPHY scene by scene...

UNITED NATIONS

Arrival day. Clean faces, clean shirts, clean tents. The friendships start here, to be forged ever deeper and more meaningful with each day on the trails. It's all to come...



Photos by Markus Jahn, Stephane Gautronneau & Peter Musch

THE DAY BEFORE

Just 24 hours before the arrival of the competitors, the journalists – who would be embedded in the teams for the entire event – were given a last training run. Extreme-training is what it became after unexpected torrential rain saturated both the riders and the terrain. The clay base to the trails became ice-like, making the hills almost impossible. Here MCN's Michael Guy is gingerly pulling at the front wheel, while local marshal Moo is pulling with full weight on Marshal Jolandie Rust's GSA in a bid for more altitude. Dare I say it, your RUST correspondent (JB) snagged a place early in the group so made it over these climbs in decent form before the trail slicked-up too much...





PUSHIN' & A SHOVIN'

First day, first test, and here starts the pain. Problem solving is a big part of GS Trophy challenges. So how do you get two GS motorcycles over a broken bridge that can't be ridden? It takes planning, teamwork and not a little strength. Only you have to do it against the clock. Team UK here turned in one of the faster times of the day.





YES, WE ARE QUITE MAD

We were riding through the locals' backyards. It would have been quite rude not to stop for a chat. Turns out Thai is as impenetrable to us, as English is to the Thais. But respect and politeness, and a smile, are pretty universal in the world. Of course it was impossible to convey just what all these BMWs and their riders were up to. We'd be gone inside an hour or so, would the locals still remember us beyond evening teatime?



RUNNING BLIND

Despite the earlier rain the course soon dried out and running in packs of eight bikes and a marshal, the riders not *'on point'* were soon struggling with dust. Hanging back was the answer for most. That and nightly washing/cleaning sessions on kit and clothes in an effort to remain reasonably hygienic...





ALIENS CAME TO MY VILLAGE...

Not aliens, South Koreans on this occasion. The schoolteachers were liberal enough to let the kids out of class to watch the GS Trophy pass by. There was plenty of interaction between the riders and the kids, with the BMW-riding Thai marshals doing their best to explain to the locals what was going on.





PHOTO CHALLENGE

Twice in the event the teams need to compose a photograph for public voting. The guys do their best to be creative. Here's Team South Africa trying one composition.



STOPPPPPP!

Some tests are real simple – in concept. Start at this line and get to the next line, 100 metres away, as quick as you can. Just make sure you stop on or before the next line, not after it otherwise you'll lose time and points... Team UK's James Berrill takes the finish line with him as he buries his GS in the stop-box.



WRESTLEMANIA

We all love the challenge of a decent hill climb. When you do the same with a 238kg GS the whole deal gets a little more real, so to speak. Here Team Brazil's Felipe Limonta shows fine style – if you've the momentum, sure you can use the banks...





LOST CAUSE

Without momentum, well, you feel every one of those 238-kilos, that's for sure. More than you feel the loss of pride.



DIRTY GIRLS

Cheap pun there, here's the International Female Team taking a rest. From left – Stephanie Bouisson (*France*), Morag Campbell (*South Africa*) and Amy Harburg (*Australia*). The girls hung tough, Stephanie was the star turn, probably a better rider than 90% of the guys, but the grit and determination of the whole team meant they were equal to the guys all the way.

LAUNDRY DAY

Laundry day was every day. The GS Trophy camps every night and so the riders soon get into the rhythm of pitching their tents, and sorting and washing gear in the typically half-hour left before sunset.



SINGLE TRACK

There was plenty of this kind of stuff along the way. And that's female marshal Jolandie Rust again leading the way ahead of Team Brazil. Plenty to keep a rider occupied for eight hours a day.





SLEEPING DOGS...

The last day and Team Mexico and Team Latin America hit the siesta button outside a local supermarket. Leoncio (*far right*) was easily the youngest rider at just 18, it was the ride of his life, he said...



SAWASDEE

American BMX star turned actor, Kurt Yaeger, was the presenter of the daily BMW GS Trophy video updates for the second time. Like everyone, he fell in love with Thailand and the warm open villagers we met at every turn.

EYES FRONT

Photographer Markus Jahn and I missed a turn on the GPS and ended up in a village well away from the GS Trophy route. It was lunchtime at the school so the kids rumbled us just as soon as we edged into their village. With their head teacher alongside we shared a little of what our lives were about. They smiled and laughed, but some of the kids didn't even have shoes, which speaks gently of some of the inequalities of the world. That said, Thai culture celebrates schools like no other I've seen, their schools are like shrines.



LIKE THE SCOTTISH...

There was a lovely section of riverbed to be ridden on day four. Hidden rocks gave a few riders a workout, if not a drenching. Team South Africa were again in control even when the rocks were kicking them hard.





THROWDOWN

Morag Campbell was far from alone on getting caught out on the very last three metres of the 2016 GS Trophy. The issue was the tight turn at the bottom meant zero run-up, that and a sudden injection of 125bhp could make a GS a lively ride on the bank. Just proves that old adage, it ain't over until it's over...



EYES FRONT 2

The BMW marshals have the job of keeping the GS Trophy rolling and doing their best to keep the riders, and public, safe. It's a job that's 95% joy, 5% hard graft and serious responsibility. It's their dedication and thoroughness in the task that means they can make the event fun all the way for the competitors.





AND THEN THERE WAS THIS...

When you stopped, when the growl of GSs ebbed away, you were left with just Northern Thailand, so quiet, so peaceful a world the digital age has left behind. It was all you could do not to throw your iPhone into the nearest pile of buffalo dung and go native...



Back Issues



RUST
WWW.RUSTSPORTS.COM



www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XCKJ8HIL4



www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrOoVPEK1_E



www.youtube.com/watch?v=gylUxbymUMU



www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQ8n2qblpY



www.youtube.com/watch?v=HX4-14sloHE



www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8ePyI2E4M



www.youtube.com/watch?v=yriJw_FU910



www.youtube.com/watch?v=8i54XQQYcPc



www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0PAurYxQzI



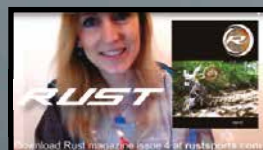
www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oHMTpB0Rnw



www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntfplT6Z-ACQ



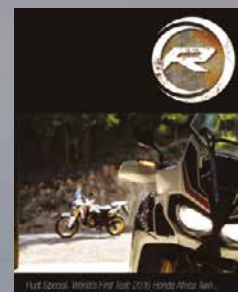
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntK07l63tuA



www.youtube.com/watch?v=yp04hGeECA



ISSUE #1



AFRICA TWIN SPECIAL



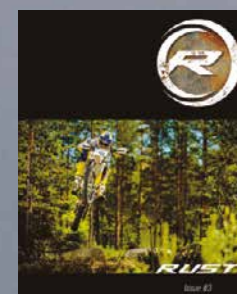
ISSUE #2



HUSQVARNA 701 SPECIAL



YAMAHA WR450F SPECIAL



ISSUE #3



ISSUE #4



ISSUE #5



ISSUE #6



ISSUE #7

Subscribe for free at www.rustsports.com
and we'll e-mail you when a new issue comes out...

Visit www.rustsports.com for the latest video content,
social media feeds and issues...
To view any of these videos just click on the link below the
thumbnail to go direct to the Rust Sports youtube channel...

All material appearing in RUST is copyright to Rust Sports Ltd and may not be reproduced
in part or full (including electronically) without the express permission of the publishers.



Contact



RUST is brought to you by:



RUST

RUSTS SPORTS LTD

www.rustsports.com

Warwick House

The Grange

St Peter Port

Guernsey

GY1 2PX

Editor: Jonathan Bentman

editor@rustsports.com

Designer: Andy Riley

Contributors: Markus Jahn (DE),
Stephane Gautronneau (FR), Andy Dukes (UK),
Peter Musch (DE)

Commercial Manager: James Linane
james.linane@rustsports.com

Managing Director: Warren Malschinger

Copyright: Rust Sports Ltd. All rights reserved.

Reproduction of any part of RUST is prohibited without the
express permission of Rust Sports Ltd.

