

Issue #18

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RUST



Octane Booster

Acerbis – A brief history,
and a big future...

Rally to the Rock

Racing from Athens
to Gibraltar...

RTW by Average Joe

RUST follows in real time as our man
next door prepares for The Big One

THE EICMA SHOW

All the new models from the Milan Show, BMW R 1200 GS Rallye,
G310GS & R nineT Urban GS, Ducati Scrambler Desert Sled,
Honda CRF250 Rally & X-ADV, Yamaha T7 Concept, and lots more...

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BMW





NEW BEGINNINGS

BY JON BENTMAN
PHOTOS: JB

THE EICMA (MILAN) SHOW, as expected, threw up some interesting new adventure machinery that could make 2017 a little more exciting for some. The much anticipated ADV-lites arrived. BMW led with the G 310 GS, only the Indian-built machine didn't convince us (*here at RUST*) that it's the full-ticket. Likewise Suzuki's V-Strom 250 (*sprung out of the blue*) is little more than a commuter with a few styling licks. Not the real deal at all. Fortunately Kawasaki's Versys-X 300 is closer to the spec we'd like to see, but it's Honda who look to have truly grasped the ADV-lite nettle, their CRF250 Rally both looks the part and comes with an authentic spec that suggests it's indeed the real deal – and importantly it has the styling and a certain presence that puts you in the mood.

Of the new 800cc twins, also much-anticipated – and expected to compete with BMW's F 800 GS and Triumph's best-selling 800XCs – these didn't materialise at all. Yamaha at least allowed us to form a good impression of what their next Ténéré will be like (*that's to come in 2018*), thanks to their T7 Concept – and it looks real promising, definitely a machine with a sporty slant. Meanwhile KTM's middleweight ADV twin – seen so often in 'spy' shots these last two years – was (*inexplicably?*) a total no-show. Instead it was left to Ducati to tantalise us with the Desert Sled variation of their Scrambler. Not exactly an outright ADV, but close enough, and certainly – given the sweet styling – funky enough. Actually, with its air-cooled 75hp motor and back to basics chassis, it's closer than we may think to being a





travel bike. Only the limited fuel range slightly dampens the enthusiasm. Slightly.

While there's some negativity there, the show still left us revved-up. We really digged BMW's latest R nineT retro, the Urban G/S, and some nice updates to the K50 GS unit, to create the latest 'Rallye', again pleased. And with one eye on the future, we saw that the continuing developments in the electric bike market have brought the day when we park-up our fossil-burners forever that little bit closer (*perhaps*). As well, after viewing hall after hall of fascinating new aftermarket kit we couldn't help but be fired up for the new season.

Personally, I'm getting into the new season a little early, having come Down Under for a three-week tour through Australia. It's a wonderful place with wonderful people and although I've been many times before, I've never made an extended trip here on an adventure bike, never been able to access the outback in the way an adventure bike allows.

So far I've only been here 24 hours, but it's all joy. I'm at Robin Box's homestead (*Robin is the man behind Safari Tanks and Touratech Australia*) and he's lending me one of his bikes, a Husqvarna Terra (TR650) for the trip. As I've made nearly all my adventure trips on litre-plus machines I'm looking forward to trying the same experience on this smaller single (*takes me back to a ride I did in Morocco on an XR650, back in 2008*).

I'm also enjoying Robin's company, I love hearing the wisdom of riders like

Robin, who have such a wealth of experience on their home turf and who have adapted so well to their environment. It's little nuggets like his advice on chain maintenance and lubrication that can really help in a trip like this. It's not the off-road that does for chains here, he explained, it's putting in extended miles on the seal at speed, often in temperatures exceeding 40°C that can simply see the rollers explode.

It's been cool spending a day setting-up, too. Fitting panniers and bags. Fitting new tyres as well, then trying to pare down my personal kit so the Terra doesn't end up a terror – grossly overloaded and a liability on the trail. I'm of course here with six of my usual mates from Touratech and there's fun to be had helping each other, and of course the playful banter is always there, we're like family having ridden together so often now.

And I'm liking the feeling of really not knowing how this ride will shape up. Try as I might to visualise what will happen, what it's going to be like riding into the outback, I've no frame of reference that I can apply. And this is of course the essence of adventure. I even like the fact that I'm not able to yet put into words what I'm feeling, that writing this editorial is a real struggle (*can you tell?*). Anyway, it's now gone 6am and I can hear my fellow adventurers rising from their slumbers, in a matter of a couple of hours we'll start riding. And I can't imagine anything more exciting and curiously more comfortable than to settle into the ride and to begin exploring this amazing land... See you soon!



Taylor Robert

Man of the Match at ISDE 2016 after a solid year in EnduroGP, American enduro racer Taylor Robert can take a well-earned break this off-season. Photo shoots to please sponsors is of course all part of such off-season relaxation. On this Red Bull shoot there was no end of extreme riding, but here at RUST we dig the chillin', so here's our pic-choice. Yeah, this we can relate to.

Image: Cameron Baird / Red Bull Content Pool



Chasing Horizons

Talking of *'relatable'* (see *previous Gallery*) we're digging this image from Honda's CRF250L Rally photo-folder, too. There are lots of kinds of riding we enjoy, but this looks super-relaxed cool and having ridden a CRF250L for a year, we know the Rally version would just glide through this scenery just as quiet as, while the rider, with 90-odd mpg in mind, will know he's not sacrificing the planet for his pleasure. We'd call it tree-hugging good, only as you can see, someone decimated the timber some centuries earlier...

Image: Honda





RUST New Metal

MILAN SHOW 2016

BMW ROCK MILAN

EICMA 2016 was always set to be an interesting one for adventure enthusiasts. It didn't disappoint, although sadly some much-anticipated models were either still in prototype form – or non-existent! But we found plenty to excite, and we even found an unexpected new model for the enduro paddock. Here are our highlights...

There was plenty of fantastic new machinery at EICMA, but BMW – in the opinion of RUST – came loaded with the best kit. For great bikes, available today, not in the future or for flights of fancy, they were unbeatable.



BMW ROCK MILAN



MILAN SHOW 2016



BMW R1200GS Rallye

We love this 2017 update of the waterboxer. The Adventure model is an awesome tool, but sometimes less is more, and so this tweak of the base GS, bringing more off-road bias, really hits the spot. Mods include the unique Rallye seat, a lower windshield, guards for the radiator and sump, enduro spec footrests, and of course the wire-spoke wheels. There are excellent options available too, from specing knobbles, to suspension upgrades (*firmer, and offering +20mm ground clearance*) and a newly updated ESA package. Great colours, too.





JUST New Metal

BMW R nineT Urban G/S

We're not totally comfortable with the name, what the Urban has to do with this bike we're not sure. But we loved our recent test ride on the R nineT Scrambler and we very much like the direction taken with this latest variation of the R nineT concept. We note that BMW has squeezed in an extra 9mm of fork travel for the G/S (*over the Scrambler*), bringing it up to 125mm, to go with the 140mm of the rear. Frankly, we'd like to see at least 140mm to match the rear and why not make those forks USD at the same time? But the look is indeed very reminiscent of the original R80G/S and while BMW suggests this bike is good for '*light off-road*' it would inspire us to ride much more. We're calling Touratech for some panniers...!



BMW ROCK MILAN



MILAN SHOW 2016



RUST New Metal

BMW ROCK MILAN

MILAN SHOW 2016

BMW G 310GS

This GS, we suspect, is not a response to the call for a light-weight small-mid-capacity adventure bike as found on so many ADV forums, but instead a tasty morsel to attract new riders in what we might condescendingly call 'developing nations'. Built in Bangalore, it's easy to see this will be very attractive to those Indian riders looking for something upmarket and yet still appropriate for local conditions. BMW could pick up vast sales numbers if this works; that it will pick up a few sales elsewhere in the world will probably be just a small bonus.

It is in many ways quite trick; the 313cc motor is a reclined reversed-cylinder unit – much like Yamaha's YZ-F/WR-F competition unit – featuring liquid-cooling and fuel-injection to the DOHC four-valve four-stroke single. Putting out 34hp it stands to be pretty lively. Featuring 180mm of suspension travel, front and rear, helps too. But as a true GS, does it have the fuel range? No, about 330km/200 miles by our reckoning. Or the luggage options? No, just a top box. But that's not to say riders and accessory companies won't fill the gap there.

Do we like it? On balance, for now, it's a yes. But it'll need a test ride to check out the engine characteristic. This against the new Honda CRF250 Rallye would also be an interesting head-to-head. And we'd feel more comfortable if there was a wire-spoke wheel option.





RUST New Metal

GAS GAS DROP A BOMBSHELL

Gas Gas came back from the dead in 2016 (thanks to the acquisition by electric bike manufacturer Torrot), and while they detailed a full range of trials bikes, they've so far offered just two enduros – their ever-popular EC250/300 (which you might think were just overstock units found half-built at the factory in Girona...).

Now, and a little out of kilter with the rest of the enduro world, they've at last debuted a new-for-2017 model, the Phoenix. Not sure that name will last for long, for it's aka EC/XC 250/300, but the name is there to help explain this model is all-new.



MILAN SHOW 2016





RUST New Metal

**GAS GAS
DROP A
BOMBSHELL**



MILAN SHOW 2016



Developed, evidently with some passion, by a team led by Miki Arpa (1997 *European 175cc Enduro Champion*), the new EC/XC (prefix dependent on Europe/US markets) features an all new chassis and significantly reworked motor. Weight is down to a fighting fit 105kg, while the suspension has been upgraded to excellent Kayaba equipment. The entire matter of bodywork and ergos is all-new too. We like (we liked their old models, too) and so we'll be looking to test one very soon.



 RUST New Metal

YAMAHA TÉNÉRÉ – NOT QUITE YET



MILAN SHOW 2016



Yamaha's replacement of their excellent XT660R Ténéré has been much anticipated – and was expected to make its debut at Milan. Well it did, but not as a production model, instead as the 'T7 Concept'. We should expect the production version to arrive in 2018.

The T7 Concept did at least confirm that the new model will indeed be based around the MT-07 twin-cylinder motor (*which Yamaha call the CP2 unit*), and if the T7 is anything to go by, then Yamaha are indeed looking to make this bike distinctly off-road biased, with 21"/18" wheels and rally-spec suspension (*USD forks*) and bodywork. Yamaha are suggesting stats like 74hp and 180kg, so it could indeed be a very dynamic adventure machine. And yes, of course, we like!





RUST New Metal

HONDA - LEFT FIELD & CENTRE

Honda CRF250 Rally

Now if this was a 450 we'd be seriously juiced, but even as a 250 it's pretty cool kit. No question, the CRF250L has been a star for Honda and this Rally version stands to only broaden its appeal. Given quite a few people have been adapting their L's for long-distance adventure work then the Rally really will be manna to a good many.



MILAN SHOW 2016



RUST New Metal

The rally-type screen and bodywork (*with LED lights*) will be a great help in battling the elements while the enlarged 10.1-litre tank will see the Rally up to around 200 miles between refills. We only wish it could have been just a bit bigger still, ADV-wisdom is that a range of 250 miles (400 kilometres) is about optimal. That said, as the seat doesn't look changed, most riders will be seeking rest long before the fuel runs out!

The suspension is longer and apparently features new settings, so hopefully is a little firmer than the L's. Retaining the 21"/18" wheel sizing of the L also means good choice of dirt tyres.

It's going to score well this bike, both with young guns wanting to look a bit 'Bang Bang' Barreda, and with mature types looking for a light (157kg), super-effective adventure bike. Nicely done, Honda!

HONDA - LEFT FIELD & CENTRE



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IMAGE CREDIT: FUTURE 7 MEDIA



Honda X-ADV

Every now and again Honda do something a bit left-field, kinda wacky, but so cool (*their funky MSX125 comes to mind*). This is the case with the X-ADV. At 745cc it's a super-scooter, but with wire-spoked 17"/15" wheels and fairly long travel suspension (*including USD forks*) it's like no other super-scooter.

The DCT-equipped motor comes from NC range of roadsters, but the rest is unique to the model.



HONDA - LEFT FIELD & CENTRE

MILAN SHOW 2016

Obviously it'll be unlikely to give a Ténéré much competition in the rough stuff and we can't see us finding a natural standing attack riding position (*what with footboards and all*), but the styling (*more than a little Africa Twin about it*) and sheer fun-factor make us super-keen to try one!



Honda Africa Twin Enduro Sports

Was Honda testing the market, or just plain goofing off with the AT Enduro Sports? We're not sure, but rather than innovating, this concept model merely apes the race-spec specials we've already seen campaigned by the likes of Touratech at the Hellas Rally. We like, up to a point – but history sadly tells us going fast on 1000cc plus adv/rally bikes is extremely hazardous to your health. We'll pass on this one...



THE SCRAMBLER PHENOMENON



Ducati Scrambler Desert Sled

With a name like Desert Sled you've got to think Ducati are after Californian sales with this one. Meanwhile European dudes (*of a certain age*) keep wondering if this isn't homage to the Yamaha XT500 given the paint on the tank.

Either way we like the DS's longer travel suspension (*200mm travel, f&r*), raised ground clearance and stubby exhausts (*the latter because it leaves more space for bags or panniers – gosh, we're getting old*). We pretty much like the wire-spoke wheels, too, the 19" front is much welcomed although a 21" would have been real interesting (*let's not mither*).



RUST New Metal



The spec makes good reading. We like that the motor is air-cooled (*less plumbing and complexity*) and at 75hp is plenty powerful enough, we also like that Ducati have spec'd decent Kayaba suspension. At 207kg with 90% fuel load it's not too heavy, either. That said it's only a 13-litre tank. Damn. In all it might just work as a mid-size ADV...



THE SCRAMBLER PHENOMENON



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THE SCRAMBLER PHENOMENON



MILAN SHOW 2016



Triumph Street Scrambler

Can Triumph's Scrambler compare to Ducati's? With only 54hp on tap it might not be as engaging, and without the long travel suspension it hasn't the ground clearance – certainly there's more street in this Scrambler, as the name implies.



RUST New Metal



That said, the aesthetic and the build quality is high and if we were only going to ride gravel roads it could just do the trick. It's not as out-there as the Ducati, and probably won't be as capable, but we can't deny we love the look...

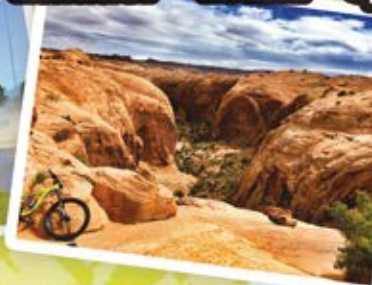



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RUST New Metal



THE JAP 300s

Kawasaki Versys-X 300

A real mash-up of town and country this one, using Kawasaki's established 296cc 38hp parallel twin (from the Z300) as its base. Wire spoke wheels in 19"/17" sizes are very ADV as is the general styling. And the tank range – which Kawasaki suggest can stretch to 240 miles.

Suspension comprises 41mm conventional forks and a Uni-Trak monoshock that Kawasaki say will be off-road capable (*well, for unpaved roads at least*). There is even the option of spec'ing panniers (*if ordered as 'Adventure' spec*) – so Kawasaki clearly has travel within the scope of its uses. Interesting...

MILAN SHOW 2016

Suzuki V-Strom 250

Okay, not quite a 300, and nowhere near as plucky, just 25hp. This is certainly a lesser-spec'd option, for the 'price conscious' we dare say. With 17" cast wheels we'd also say it's not a real V-Strom, borrowing the name only. A mini-ADV? No not this time – don't get hoodwinked!



RUST New Metal

JB's taking the Honda on the left,
WM the one on the right – neither
wanted the one in the middle...



MILAN – our highlights from around the halls

Photos: Warren M.

MILAN SHOW 2016



Yep, you can buy
Bell Moto IIIs again,
brand new. Awesome!

Below: Knee guards for
Gorillas? No the
Gorilla knee guard by
Acerbis – very nice



BRAKING now offer
complete braking
systems for off-road –
trick kit indeed



100% goggles,
had a huge
display of
which this
was just a
small part
(about to
be one
set less...)



Solar panel on an
enduro headlight – novel!





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RUST New Metal

Icon boots are cool, but do we need
beards and tats to wear them?



Sorry, we can buy this? No?
Oh, okay, it was a nice thought...

MILAN SHOW 2016



A white Sherco!



Some dumb-ass design





RUST New Metal

Beautiful engineering...



Hmmmmmm...



The Zero DSR, average 95mile range,
98mph top speed...



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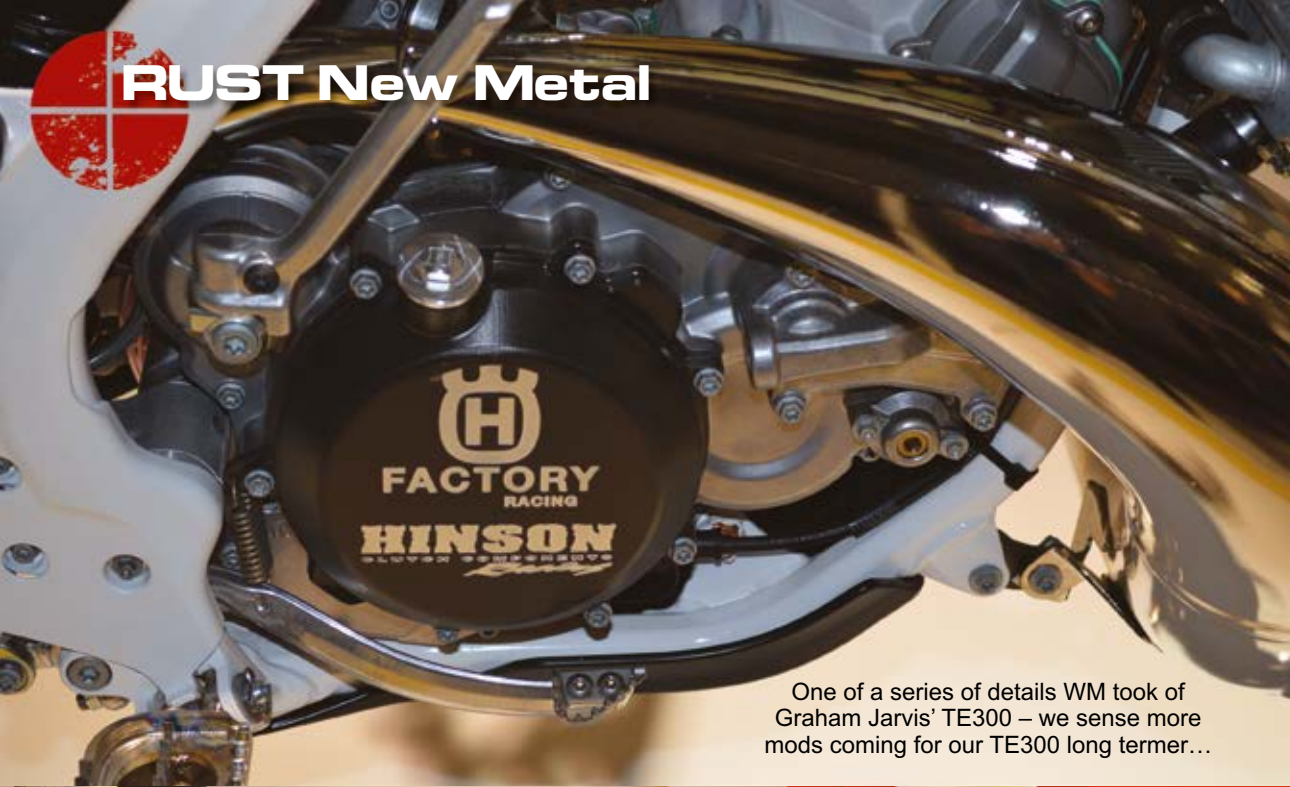
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RUST New Metal



One of a series of details WM took of Graham Jarvis' TE300 – we sense more mods coming for our TE300 long termers...



We'll take this one over the Enduro Concept (sorry Honda!)

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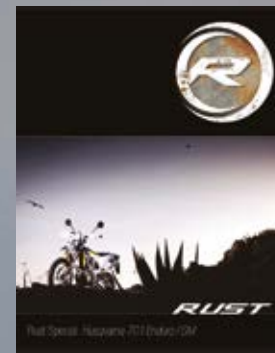
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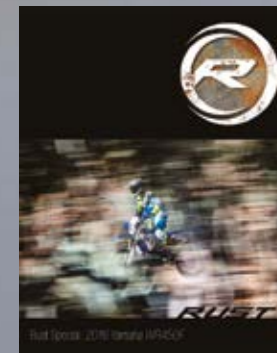
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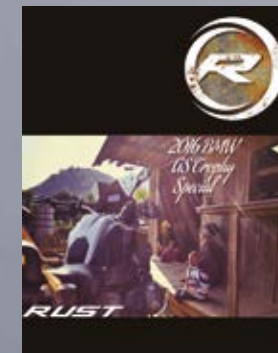
**HONDA CRF1000L
AFRICA TWIN
SPECIAL EDITION**
RUST gets the exclusive world's
first test of the new Honda
CRF1000L Africa Twin!



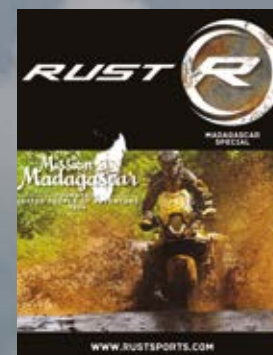
**HUSQVARNA 701
ENDURO/SM
SPECIAL EDITION**
Test of the new Husqvarna 701
Enduro and 701 Supertmoto



**YAMAHA WR450F
SPECIAL EDITION**
RUST tests the all-new Yamaha
WR450F in the hills of Andalusia,
Southern Spain...



**2016 BMW GS TROPHY
SPECIAL EDITION**
RUST joins the GS Trophy riding
across Northern Thailand on
board the latest BMW R1200GS



**MADAGASCAR
SPECIAL EDITION**
JB joins the Touratech United
People of Adventure expedition
to the island of Madagascar...



**2017 BETA RANGE
SPECIAL EDITION**
JB braved the heat and went to
Beta's home town just outside
Florence to test ride all the
latest 2017 models...



**2017 HUSQVARNA
SPECIAL EDITION**
Full test of the 2017 Husqvarna
model range, with New for 2017,
some history and the final
conclusions on JB's favourites...





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To view any of these videos just click on the link below the thumbnail to go direct to the Rust Sports youtube channel...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDKKdUS_rbo
BMW R nineT, Scrambler, Cafe Racer
 The BMW R nineT seems to be the flavour of the month at the 2016 EICMA Show... The range of bolt-on accessories, and modified bikes on show is truly mind-boggling...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLdKBsqg8d4
RUSTSPORTS.COM: THE EICMA MOTORCYCLE SHOW MILAN 2016
 RUST Magazine takes you for a walk around the Milan EICMA show with all the new models and a whole load more interesting stuff...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=xH0E2Ra1TL4
2016 Welsh Two Day Enduro THE MOVIE – RUST rode the Welsh and lived to tell the tale... just. The trials and the tribulations all here, in glorious colour. Enjoy...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_EGuentg3s
2017 HUSQVARNA Range Launch
 The 2017 Husqvarna enduro bikes, ridden and rated by RUST's Jon Bentman... Check out the 2017 Husqvarna Special Edition at rustsports.com.



www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwK49cZ4yvs
2017 BETA Range Launch
 The 2017 Beta enduro bikes, ridden and rated by RUST's Jon Bentman... Check out the full review in the 2017 Beta Special Edition at rustsports.com.



www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjZEeDKEYY
Beta works rider Steve Holcombe
 FIM EnduroGP World Championship contender Steve Holcombe talks to RUST editor Jon Bentman about going pro and the challenges ahead...



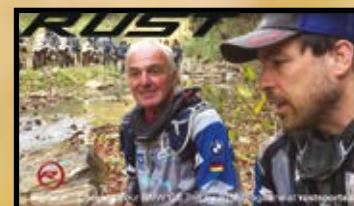
www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gL9oTh6LNQ
2017 BETA Range Launch
 Stephano Fantigini tells us about the continuing development of the Beta range and the secret of their recent success...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0K02x9reLQ
2017 KTM Range Launch
 Warren Malschinger and Josh Snowden go to Portugal to ride the extensively redesigned 2017 KTM enduro range...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=54lfOS3nMfE
STILLWELL PERFORMANCE
 Alan from Stillwell Performance explains their A-Kit tuned forks for RUST Magazine's long term Husqvarna TE300 and KTM 200EXC test bikes...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVYqp3biTnc
2016 BMW GS TROPHY THAILAND
 Montage of scenes from the South-East Asia GS Trophy featuring comments from Kurt Yaeger, Tom Wolf and our man Jon Bentman...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrOoVPEKiE
JONNY WALKER INTERVIEW
 JB asks the extreme enduro specialist some pertinent questions about his rivals Graham Jarvis, David Knight and in-race hydration...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQBn2qbfpY
THE TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP
 Read the story behind the ethos of the Trail Riders Fellowship in RUST Magazine Issue 5 available FREE on the website www.rustsports.com



www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8ePyI2E4M
2016 V-STROM 650XT
 Seve Hackett explains the revisions to the Suzuki 650 V-Strom in order to make it more suitable for all-out adventure riding...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=yriJw_FU910
2016 YAMAHA WR450F
 JB tests the new Yamaha WR450F in the hills of Andalusia and finds that it's packing some heat and demands a good deal of respect...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=8I54XQOYoPo
2016 HUSQVARNA 701
 Testing the new Husky 701 Enduro and the 701 Supermoto on the road and on the track...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oHMTpB0RNw
2016 HONDA AFRICA TWIN
 Exclusive first test of the new Honda CRF1000L Africa Twin... Read the story in the RUST Magazine Special Edition at www.rustsports.com



www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLpIT6Z-ACQ
2016 HONDA AFRICA TWIN
 Jon Bentman discusses the finer points of the new Honda CRF1000L Africa Twin with Tom Myers of Touratech USA



www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntK07I63tuA
HONDA CB500X ADVENTURE
 Jon gets an exclusive ride on the Rally Raid Products latest adaptation of the CB500X for the adventure riders out there...



RUST Adventure

2016 Athens Gibraltar Race

Rally to the Rock

A new rally across southern Europe offers great scenery, great trails and a competitive edge to a fortnight's riding – and a real adventure. RUST's mate Mark Kinnard was lucky enough to get an entry in the inaugural (2016) edition and enjoyed the ride of his life...

Words and photos courtesy of Mark Kinnard





THE ATHENS GIBRALTAR Race has 'last great race' written all over it. Some 9000km long, passing through 14 countries in 14 days it stands to become probably the most epic moto rally that you could ride within Europe. It ran for the first time this summer and was most certainly a success – the organisers, Moto Raid Experience (*an Italian firm*), have plenty of experience in the business and so the event rolled almost without a hitch from east to west, delighting the riders with each new day.

It's also not exactly a race, more a competition, for the timed stages are not about beating the clock, but matching the clock. And the entry is modest, with a limit of just 100 – we can see oversubscription



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becoming a major issue. As well, this is an event crafted to suit big adventure bikes as much as 450cc desert racers, so it's for the GS and Super Ténéré owners of this world.

Friend of RUST, Mark Kinnard (*we rode together on the BMW GS Trophy in South Africa in 2010 – JB*) was lucky to get an entry in this year's event. Here's his story:

THIS WAS THE first year for the Athens Gibraltar Race and so I had my worries about how it would be. As the name implies, it started in Athens, Greece a very south-eastern point of Europe and finds its way, via a route across Southern Europe to Gibraltar, the most south westerly point of the continent. It traveled through Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria, Italy, France, Andorra, Spain, Portugal, Spain again and Gibraltar. A distance of 9000km tackled in 14 stages.

As often happens these days, I stumbled across the race being talked about on Facebook, by some of my Italian friends from the GS Trophy. The thing that drew me to the race was that it's a GPS event, so there's no need for £2000+ worth of electric road books, frame mounted fairings and ICOs etc. Just a GPS. It was also clearly geared to the big adventure bikes – although



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a Yamaha WR450F won overall. There were three classes: up to 450cc, 450 to 700cc and over 700cc.

I've been looking for a new challenge; since competing with Team GB in the BMW GS Trophy in South Africa back in 2010 (*and winning!*) I've ridden lots of enduro, beach racing and UK based rallies, but this looked very different. The Athens Gibraltar Race is a similar format to the Paris-Dakar, I think, set up very much true to the original format – the distance, 9000km in 14 days, is very reminiscent of the great rally. Of course that comparison created some anticipation and so as the race grew nearer I kept telling myself, *'it will be much easier than the Dakar, it's in Europe!'*

Despite the name, the event is geared towards anyone who wants an adventure, rather than a race, and you don't need to be super fit or the best enduro rider. In fact it's up to each rider as to how competitive they want to be. Each day you could, if you wanted, follow the assistance route and ride straight to the next bivouac, missing out the off-road. Alternatively you could ride the off-road special stages at a pace you felt comfortable with and take the penalty points for exceeding the target time. So the event has a wide appeal; if you ride a trail, enduro or adventure bike, this event is for you. As always though, there were some pro-teams, some very competitive riders on sponsored supplied bikes, and some very racy privateers.





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A little more detail

I teamed up with a buddy for the race and we took two KTM 1190 Adventure Rs down to Greece in a Sprinter race camper, driven by our crew of two, Mark Bradford and Dave Sayer, who slept in the camper and looked after us and our bikes. We flew down to Athens three days before the start and flew home from Gibraltar the day after the finish. Being there three days before the start was nice, but not required. You could have turned up on the Saturday, signed on and ridden the prologue. Our crew was traveling for four weeks.

You could definitely ride this event on any bike, from a four-stroke enduro to any adventure bike – and have a great time. You just needed to maintain at least 120km/h on the roadwork, otherwise you had very long days. Most days I was away at 07:00 and was back at 15:30/16:00. I stopped only for fuel, each time I stopped for I had an energy bar and gel. Many of my competitors took a more leisurely approach, stopping for coffee, lunch and afternoon tea! Then they wondered why they were late back each day. However, they saw much more of the scenery than I did,



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I just had my head down racing. One regret was that I didn't write a blog; so many of the places we raced through have merged into one. I will not make that mistake again, I will write up each day's events in the evening over a beer.

But what an experience, riding/racing for 14 days through Europe was outstanding. I just cannot imagine doing something like this in the UK, you simply would not be allowed! Even if you followed the route on the road course alone from Athens to Gibraltar you would have a very memorable trip. As it was we have been up and down every mountain range en route, using minor A roads and good B roads and then charging along the off-road timed Special Stages. The special stages were upwards of 100km per day, again typically up and down the Alps or through the desert-like terrain in Spain. The cornfields seem to go on for hundreds and hundreds of miles in Spain, with tracks everywhere.

The days just flew by. An average day would be a sequence something like: 200km road, 50km off-road, 200km road, 50km off-road and 200km road to the finish. It was a perfect mix, when you had completed 200km on the road you were ready and happy to be standing up for off-road stages, and when that was done you were similarly pleased to get back on the road, for a rest.

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All the on-road route was supplied to us in the form of a GPS track to follow, mostly on minor roads. You would then come to a Special Stage (SS) 'Info' waypoint which listed how many waypoints for the SS, the overall distance and time allowed to complete the SS. When you passed the SS1 the clock started. Mostly I had to ride as fast as I dared to meet the overall time set for the SS. If you got to the last waypoint early you could wait about 100m before it and then ride past as close to the allotted time as possible. I found it almost impossible to get the exact time, however some of the Italian riders got zero penalty points nearly every time, funny that!

Marks' race

Day One. The Prologue. It went well, we fitted narrower, desert wheels to the 1190 specially for the prologue and had a great start to the event. Starting on the beach and then around a course set-up on a disused campsite, I finished first in class and third overall.

After that I refitted the standard wheels and continued day after day. I was surprised by the Balkan countries, I had my reservations about travelling





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through Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia but actually really enjoyed them, along with Portugal which I enjoyed the most.

We had torrential rain for three or four days, this made the off-road going very heavy in northern Italy. One special stage followed a river in the bottom of the valley and through miles of tree plantations. I ended up overtaking the organisers' '00 track opening rider' (he said they should abandon the stage as it was too dangerous). I told him it was just mud, not quicksand, and I was going to ride it. As I was at the front and completed the special stage all the other riders had to ride it too! I ended up being over my time by 21 minutes but everyone else was really late (+90 minutes) and a Ducati (which I was battling against in class) had to be rescued mid-stage, finishing the stage on the back of the pickup. For me, it was all to the good for the day's ride took me to first in class and third overall again, as on Day One.

Consequently, as in Dakar, I started the next day on the front row. And I ended up throwing it all away on one of the mountain special stages when I split my front TKC 80 – and broke my pump. I rode with that flat for four or five kilometres until I came across the organisers 00 track opening rider (again!), stuck on a rock climb. He gestured that I should keep going and not to stop as it was very difficult to get going (the



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day before I was reprimanded for overtaking him). Cautiously I went past him and parked at the top of the hill and went back on foot to push. He had been there stuck for 90 minutes. I returned to my stricken bike at the top of the hill only to be beckoned back down the hill again by the next rider, stuck on a BMW 1200 GSA. I rode this up the hill and the rider, Robbie, was on his way again. All this was going on in the timed special stage!

My efforts were rewarded, though. The 00 opening rider offered me his pump and with a tube from a Roman photographer I was able to set about mending my puncture. In the end I put three tubeless bungs in the split sidewall and continued to finish the special stage, losing over 90 minutes in penalties. Of course, this put me right back down the running order, to ninth.

Over the course of the remaining days I clawed my way back to third in class and fifth

ADVENTURE TRAIL RIDING

With Mark Kinnard

I have been looking for a way of combining my love of bikes, racing & making a living. In 2014 I launched Adventure Trail Riding www.adventuretrailriding.co.uk but limited it to taking likeminded trail riders on one trip a month all around the UK and the Isle of Man (*as I have a day job!*). However, the demand has been high so in 2017 we intend doing two two-day trips (*in the week*) and two two-day (*weekend*) trips a month. As well we have become partners in the 2017 Gibraltar Race – Black Sea to Gibraltar.





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overall. With the last day's special stages being cancelled, as we had no medical cover with us, I could not overtake the Ducati rider for runner-up and finished just 34 minutes behind. I was happy with my result, it was great just to complete the event. My team mate, David Emsley, finished 11th in class and 14th overall. We both had massive smiles on our faces as we crossed the airfield into Gibraltar.

Fancy a go?

As I mentioned earlier, if you trail ride you would LOVE this event. Any age, any ability, this is for you. You can ride this event at the same pace that you trail ride and have the best holiday and adventure, you'll meet some outstanding people and see some of the finest scenery and mountain passes on- and off-road anywhere in the world. Some people spend the same money on a holiday and lay on the beach or go on a cruise, if that's not for you, try this!



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I can't wait for next year and will be at the start line this time on my KTM 690 Enduro, as I'd like to have a crack at winning. But I'm also setting up an organised group, intending to take up to 30 riders from the UK to the start line. Through my adventure trail riding company we are offering an entry that includes shipping the bikes from the UK to the Black Sea start and return from the finish in Gibraltar to the UK, with assistance and support via Memo Tours throughout the race. Included in the price will be the entry fee, food package and accommodation. If you are interested in this trip I can be contacted at mark@adventuretrailriding.co.uk or 07720 886 066. Of course you can enter directly via www.gibraltarrace.com ►



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GIBRALTAR RACE PREPARATIONS

With a KTM 1190 Adventure R

I used my KTM 1190 Adventure R for this event. Here are the mods made specifically for this event:

*New rims spoked onto my spare wheels using thin motocross rims so that I could use desert mousses & desert tyres on these wheels for the prologue.

- On my original rims I used Conti TKC 80s (*in all I used three rears & one front plus one front & rear, desert tyres, on the thin rims*).

- I changed the paper air filters for oiled foam filters with oiled foam pre-filters in the snorkels.

- The bike had a good service by DC Butler before we left, with four new plugs, fresh oil, new chain & sprockets and front & rear brake pads.

- The great thing about these adventure bikes is they have a 6000mile service interval.

Next time I think I will use my KTM 690 Enduro R. It's in desert trim, the kit was supplied by Rally Raid Products www.rally-raidproducts.co.uk and a lot of the preparation has been carried out by Martin at Torque Racing www.torqueracing.net and Royston and my good friend (*and Isle of Man TT winner/lap record holder*) Keith Townsend at DC Butler Motorcycles www.dcbutler.co.uk. I know it's a little early to be preparing my bike for the next Gibraltar Race but I have changed the rear shock for a Tractive 300mm Rally shock, the front forks to EXC open cartridge forks, both are 50mm longer than standard. I am 6'0" and I'm on absolute tiptoe with that set-up. I also intend changing the rims to SM Pro as they are much tougher than the Excel rims.

With this I think I could give the Yamaha 450 Rallies a run for their money. This year I couldn't keep with the two front runners on their 450s (*on the 1190*) off-road. With all the work that has been done on the 690 I should be able to hit the big whoops as fast and hard as I would on my KTM 250EXC, in some cases faster as the 690 will hit 100mph on or off-road!

Rally to the Rock



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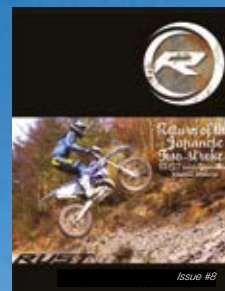
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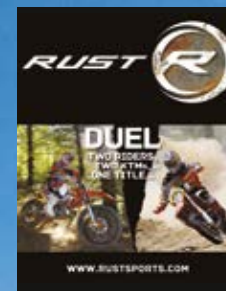
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The Big Easy?

We've all dreamed of quitting our jobs and riding around the world but for many of us it remains an elusive dream, continually dashed by mortgage payments, pension planning and the prospect of exorbitant college funds for the kids. Andy Dukes decided to push all that to one side for a couple of years, hit the road and worry about it when he returns.

As he prepares for the longest journey of his life, RUST has decided to follow his progress to see if an armchair traveller can become a true overlander...



ILL-PREPARED IS A phrase that springs to mind. I remember a feature I wrote for Bike magazine back in 1997 when a young Simon Pavey was preparing to enter his first Dakar Rally. He was pictured in a rather scary pair of underpants, looking a tad overweight and slightly confused. The caption read something like *'Simon's our rider – and so far he's got no bike, no riding gear, no mechanics, and from the look of him, he's not been training very hard either'*. Well, that's exactly how I feel right now.

Coincidentally, as it stands I've got no bike either. Or riding gear and camping equipment, come to that. There's no turning back though. I've handed in my notice at work and told too many people in the pub what an incredible journey I'm about to embark upon (*my words not theirs*). I've sipped my pint, looked friends in the eye and genuinely said things like, "it's not a question of how can I afford to do it, it's more a question of how can I afford not to..." Twat.

If you want the truth, I'm nervous as hell. On a good day (*and in front of my kids*) I laugh in the face of danger, even if it's only perceived danger. How hard can it be to ride around the world? You just pack up the bike, point it in an easterly direction and keep going. Buy now, pay later, live a life less ordinary and then dine out on the memories



The Big Easy?

THE RIDE

The plan is to start with a shakedown test towards the end of January 2017 by riding across to North Africa and competing in the Marrakesh Marathon. After that, I'll return home, discard all the non-essentials and set off again, heading across the North Sea to Holland, through Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Iran, UAE, India, Nepal and into the Kingdom of Bhutan for the Thunder Dragon marathon in May.

Then I'll ride on through Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and island hop my way across Indonesia, before negotiating a passage to Australia, where I'll ride from Darwin to the heart of the country to compete in the Outback Marathon at the end of July. I'll see as much of this amazing country as I can before shipping across to South America.

I'll unpack the bike in Santiago or Buenos Aires depending on whether I'm competing in marathons in Argentina or Ecuador. Either way, I'll ride north through Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and cross into the USA, where the New York City Marathon awaits. After that, there's Europe and Antarctica to sort, but that's work in progress right now.





RUST Adventure



The Big Easy?



– and clichés – when you return?
So, here's the loose plan. I love riding bikes and enjoy running marathons, so I'm going to try and combine these two passions by riding around the world and competing in seven marathons on seven continents. No records, no heroics, it just breaks the journey up into manageable chunks that makes it seem somehow less daunting to me. I'm a nervous rider and a fairly average runner, but this trip is about endurance, not speed, and I'm comfortable with that.
My intention is to start this journey solo, because I believe that's the best way to engage with strangers and have those chance encounters that almost certainly wouldn't happen if travelling with mates. My hope is that once I've started rolling, I'll rarely ride alone, but with lots of new and interesting people, from all over the world.





There will be no book. It's been overdone already and besides, this is personal to me. What I think is more interesting for readers of RUST is the detail of what happens before you go: the preparation; choosing the bike and equipment; admitting a complete lack of confidence and a real fear of gravel rash. And deciding to do something about it: adventure maintenance; working out a route; dealing with documentation and vital paperwork such as visas, carnet, insurance, medicals; saying goodbye to family and friends; making a will; having second thoughts and asking for your old job back...

In a nutshell, I'm hoping to bust the myth of how difficult long-distance adventure travel is and prove that anyone can do it, even someone lacking in riding ability, mechanical skills and deep pockets, like me. I'm resourceful, but that's as far as it goes. If readers can learn from all my mistakes and be inspired to attempt their own adventure as a result, then it'll all have been worthwhile.



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RUST Adventure

THE RIDER

Andy Dukes has spent the last 10 years of his life creating travel stories for BMW Motorrad's international communication channels. From the comfort of his office, he's written about some of the most amazing globetrotting adventures ever undertaken on boxer twins, but there comes a time to stop writing, and start doing.

"It seemed increasingly wrong of me to keep publishing all these adventure stories and then not have the courage to have one myself," says Andy, 46. *"I've got so much*

information in my head, all that's missing is the riding experience and technical skills. What could possibly go wrong?"

Andy has the blessing of his wife for this trip, as long as it's only *"this trip"*. His folks are looking after his dog and he believes that he'll be able to answer most of his kids' GCSE and A-level queries via regular Skype and FaceTime chats. In a rash moment of eco-madness last year, he swapped his central and water heating over to bio-mass, to be fuelled by some woodland he'd purchased (*in another rash moment*). He's promised his wife he'll cut, split and stack at least 12 months' supply of logs before he leaves.



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EQUIPMENT GUIDE

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RUST Heritage

Octane Booster

Acerbis is an amazing company, far more prolific than we might imagine, making furniture and soccer apparel as well as the bike parts and rider-kit we know them for. Never idle, now they're venturing into the neo-scrambler scene...

Words: Rick Kemp
Images: Acerbis



Acerbis Ottano collection



WHEN RUST GOT the invitation to visit Acerbis at its Italian HQ for a preview of its latest clothing collection, we were promised something different – and they weren't wrong. Two things you have to remember when visiting this part of the world: one, company founder Franco Acerbis is a god, and two, the Bergamo region where Acerbis is based is the enduro capital of Italy, if not the world.

Though Franco at 70 is officially retired, he is still very much in evidence around the office. However, the firm remains family run with the next generation of Acerbis's, in the form of son Guido (CEO) and daughter Michela (*head of marketing and communications*), making their mark in all areas of the company's global interests. The launch of the Ottano (*Octane*) clothing range is seen as a natural progression of the massive Acerbis off-road heritage and its influence on apparel design. Just as hard plastic body armour evolved into a softer, more technical form of protection, so Acerbis has commissioned a cross-over clothing range that fits with the new wave of popular motorcycles. Described by the company as Urban Off-road and Light Enduro, this is clothing for the riders of Street Scramblers and Brat Bikes, Bike Shed devotees as well





as Urban Adventurers and Dual Sport enthusiasts (*yeah, you know what we mean*). This was evidenced by the machines at our disposal, all from the BMW range, that included F800 GS, R 1200 GS and R nineT Scrambler models.

Now, getting to ride motorcycles at a clothing launch doesn't usually happen but Acerbis is different. All its corporate vehicles feature the company logo with the strap line '*soul and passion*'. So instead of having a product presentation in the showroom at the offices at Albino, we were going to ride to the unveiling of the Ottano range at a restaurant. Where else? We were in Italy, after all. As someone said at dinner the previous evening, "*in Italy we eat slowly and ride fast*".

DIVERSITY

After a briefing on Acerbis's other not inconsiderable interests, such as shin pads, football strips (*the amateur football league market is huge*) and OEM petrol tank and plastics manufacture, we got the global picture. Acerbis exports to 45 countries with production facilities in Italy and the Czech Republic and logistics operations in Italy, the UK and the USA. The next market for Acerbis will be Asia.

So much for the corporate spiel, as dirt bike enthusiasts one of the more interest-

ing aspects about visiting the Acerbis head-quarters is that around every corner there is a classic off-roader, just parked there and seemingly taken for granted by the staff. And one part of the building is exclusively given over to a bit of corporate nostalgia, a physical timeline, which provides inspiration for the people who work there. Fittingly, this was where we were introduced to the great man himself.

FRANCO

Franco scampered through the company history like an enduro special test, beginning with the launch of the first plastic mudguard in 1973 and the company's association with Preston Petty Products in the USA, for which it has recently begun producing parts again. Acerbis bought the tooling and shipped it to Italy when Preston got into difficulties. Franco organised the first Inca Rally in Peru, where he was given carte blanche by the president, so he was able to take in Machu Picchu long before it became a World Heritage Site. He also created the Nevada Rally. Franco realised, as so many manufacturers have done subsequently, that cracking sales in America was key to expanding the business. His efforts coincided with the first major influx of





European dirt bike brands to arrive in the USA – and that country is still Acerbis' biggest market.

The Acerbis handguard has become ubiquitous and has helped establish the brand's reputation for protection. As Franco explained, it was a small step from producing off-road body armour to creating shin pads for footballers and with that protected foot in the door, and Acerbis's ability to produce technical off-road clothing, kitting out top teams wasn't such a big ask. Apparently volleyball and rugby are next on the list.

OVERSUITS AND ALPS

However, back to the task in hand. Members of the press and Acerbis personnel were given riding gear to change into. Acerbis base layers and a soft-armoured, long-sleeved top and long pants were covered with a white cotton oversuit emblazoned with the Ottano logo on the back. This was meant to represent the clean sheet of paper from which the designs sprang (*soul and passion, remember?*).

On the road a dozen riders in white certainly created an effect, if the reaction of pedestrians in the towns and villages we passed through was anything to go by. No doubt part of the plan.

We were riding in the Bergamo Alps, where the highest peak is Pizzo Coca at



more than 3000 metres. It's easy to see why it's referred to as the enduro capital. There are trails and tracks everywhere, particularly the higher you get where it's not financially viable to pave a road to an isolated alpine farm. After getting kitted out, which also included boots, gloves and helmets, we were let loose on the motorcycles. None of that unsightly rush to bag your preferred bike usually associated with press launches. Like the oversuits, there was a bike with your name on it. Mine was an F800 GS, not a bike with which I was familiar but under the circumstances – unfamiliar terrain with everyone on the wrong side of the road – the choice I would have made due to its relative light weight and manoeuvrability.

The route for our ride to the Ottano lunch presentation had been carefully chosen for excitement and spectacle; ear-popping switchback climbs,


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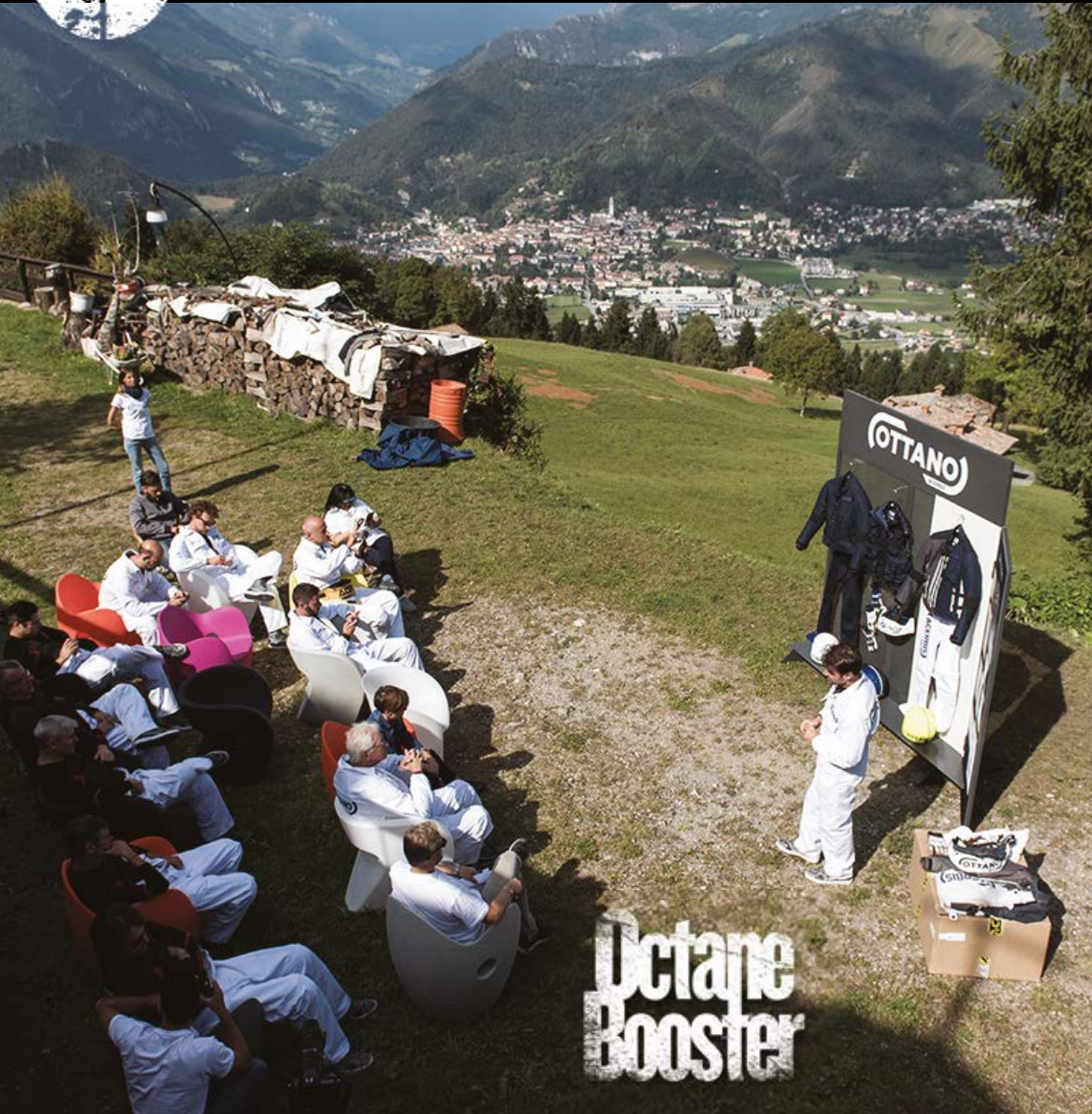


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Armco-clad bends and precipitous outer edges. Don't know about you, but while Armco might act as catch fencing if you're in a car, on a mountain road if you hit it on a bike it's best to have a parachute packed. This was combined with gentle off-roading to suit the Pirelli Scorpion Trail tyres. The unmade road sections were rock and dirt and I soon realised that what had been bugging me about the bike on the road, which I had put down to poor fuelling when trying to get some drive out of tight bends, was in fact the traction control. So that was what the "Mode" button on the right handle bar was for... There was, of course, the obligatory late morning stop for coffee and cakes before pressing on for the summit; it felt a bit like motorcycle mountaineering.

Great riding and great food, after which Ottano was revealed – at an outdoor presentation, no less. The range comprises two jacket-and-pants combos, a gilet, gloves, a waist pack and a jet helmet. Doesn't sound like much but there's a lot to get your head around. For a start, Ottano was designed by a mainstream fashion designer who includes Prada on his CV. He is, however, also in love with motorcycling. All the garments have a Velcro-attached hard-plastic Acerbis logo unique to the Ottano range, a reference to the original Acerbis plastic protection.

INNOVATE... OR DIE?

The Ottano range is an illustration of the need to innovate in order to stay in the game let alone get ahead of it. Acerbis has been a friend of off-road riders for more than 40 years. Whether it was as a supplier of replacement plastic when the original stuff broke after throwing your bike at the scenery for the first time, or it was the name on your first pair of knee protectors, Acerbis quickly established itself as a brand synonymous with safety and quality.

It wasn't just us, the consumer, who recognised this. As we've said, Acerbis – apart from its hugely successful own-branded accessories and clothing – has been expanding into other sectors and markets including original equipment manufacture for some impressive names including Aprilia, BMW, Cagiva, Ducati, Honda, KTM, Triumph and Yamaha. It might have started with fuel tanks but now, take BMW for example, virtually all the plastic for its scooter comes from Acerbis, and that's a pretty good endorsement. Acerbis also produces some high-end Italian plastic designer furniture. Despite all this Franco Acerbis can still look wistfully at one of his old handguards. Quite a man, quite a story, quite a firm.



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Octane
Booster

Racing Pants: Designed to reflect the classic enduro era but made in technical materials including Nylon and Cordura with elasticated X-FLEX inserts. Bi-elastic fabric panels are on the back of the legs. Reinforcement is in the shape of Kevlar, Shoeller with vulcanised rubber inside the right knee



and Kevlar on the left knee. The crotch and seat areas are reinforced with abrasion-resistant 1000D Cordura. Available in white with contrast stitching, a bold Acerbis logo features on the right thigh. Sizes match those of the jacket and the retail price is £174.95.



Introducing the Ottano range...

Racing Jacket: This is a slim-fit, short-cut design with shaped sleeves and comes in blue and grey with vertical half panels and one sleeve in each colour. The outer fabric is a mix of cotton, resined Nylon, Polyester and Spandex. Stretch panels are featured on the elbows and there are external pockets for the CE Level 1 and 2 elbow protectors. Shoulders and back also benefit from the same level of protection.

Three full-length front zips, one double-ended closure and two for ventilation, are a signature design element of the Ottano range. The Racing Jacket has two zipped front pockets. Internally there's a mesh lining with button-in, quilted lining in Rip Stop Polyester.

The individual design continues on the back of the jacket, which is covered in military-style MOLLE webbing. Sizes range from S to XXL. Retail price is £364.95.





Octane
Booster



Ottano Jacket: Very similar in design and features to the Racing Jacket but with less aggressive detailing and available only in single-colour blue or grey. Sizes and price are the same as for the Racing Jacket.

Ottano Pants: The matching pants are only available in blue but with no contrast stitching but with the understated Acerbis badge. You probably won't be wearing these with off-road boots but the zipped ankle will accommodate a variety of footwear. Price is the same as for the Racing Pants.





Ottano Gilet/Vest: This consists of two parts. The outer layer is of netting with removable pockets in cotton and Nylon, again with the three front zips and the plastic Acerbis badge on the left breast pocket. Like the jackets, on the back there is the military-style webbing. This goes over a Nylon gilet quilted with a thin layer of thermal padding. The two can be also be worn separately. This garment is priced at £349.95 including VAT.



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Ottano Helmet: This is a traditional open-face helmet with an optional three-stud peak. It features a hypoallergenic comfort liner and double D-ring strap closure. It's certified to ECE 22.05 and comes in three shell sizes covering the range XS-XXL and is available in white, fluo yellow and grey/blue to team with the jackets. All have the Ottano logo graphic and retail at £99.99.

Ottano Waist Pack: Designed to go with the Racing Pants, the Waist Pack comes in white polyester with the Ottano logo. The wide elasticated band and belt with Velcro closing keeps it in place, even when you're standing on the footrests. It has a die-cast zip closure and there is an internal transparent document pocket. This will set you back £33.95.



Ottano Gloves: Two gloves are offered: the standard Ottano Glove and the V.1. The standard glove comes in white and brown and is made in Polyamide and Neoprene with knitted material on the back and Clarino fabric for the palm. It features perforated fabric on the sides of the fingers for ventilation. The V.1 is available in white/blue and white/grey. Polyurethane is added to the mix of materials, though the construction is as the standard glove. In addition, it has a Neoprene cuff with Velcro closing. Both are priced at £33.95 retail.



Contact



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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: Chris Evans (France),
Warren Malschinger (Guernsey),
Georgia Wells (UK), David Knight MBE (IoM),
July Behl (UK), Rick Kemp (UK)

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

Managing Director: Warren Malschinger

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