

Winter Riding RUST's pick of cold climate clothing

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RUST

Issue #22

Sherco 300 SEF-R

Is the King of EnduroGP clubman friendly?

Exclusive

Mountain Magic

RUST rides the Royal Enfield Himalayan

Adventure Upskill

Our RTW prospect Andy Dukes gets some last-minute tips



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Main image: JB Inset: Royal Enfield





SEASON'S OPEN...?!

BY JON BENTMAN
PHOTO: JB

I LIKE THE idea of a winter off-season, of having some downtime, to recover energies and to plan ahead. The new year, the new riding season, yeah, that should be rolling out about April time I feel, giving plenty of time for contemplation. *

For that reason I've always had sympathies for the AMA Supercross racers, who have to respond to an early-January alarm call. There's precious little rest time in an American pro racer's year. They barely get Christmas tidied away and they're plunged into a 17-week programme of races, trailering from stadium to stadium, right across America. The European-based motocross world championships are barely even getting started by the time the Americans have settled their first champions of the year.

Only this year it seems here at RUST we're emulating the American model. No sooner have I returned from the agreeably warm and relaxed outback of Australia than we're pitching into a Welsh winter enduro boot camp, trying to make out what's hot in Sherco's 2017s, while at the same time trying to figure how to deal with ice-laced rocks...

And having done that (see page 6), literally in just a matter of hours after having written this editorial – always the last job in each issue – I've got to hop on a plane and head to Portugal to compete in the first R3 Rally Raid of the season. Seems the rally bug has bit deep here at RUST. Heck, Warren M's already there, setting up our workshop and sorting navigation towers for the RUST long termers, the Husky TE300 and Yamaha WR250F (remember them?). Actually I'm looking forward to getting back on the WR, I've missed it.



And this first rally is just the start of what's going to be a busy riding year here at RUST. Although I could probably have said the same last year – but y'know: best laid plans, and all that.

Anyway, do I have a point to make here? Barely; a small one maybe. And that's simply: don't wait for the season! Get cracking and get out there now, why not? The sooner you start the sooner you'll catch your stride. And then the enjoyment really comes in thick and fast. If you've already started, then forgive me, us journos can be a sanctimonious lot, forgetting everyone else is already on the case, typically way ahead of us. But if you're not started, then us crusty old RUST riders are up and running, you'd better get to it quick!

Any which way, I hope you enjoy the issue, I think we've struck a balance: enduro, rally, adventure and even a first test on Royal Enfield's Himalayan. Now there's diversity for you! Happy reading.

*Note: I didn't mention a word about winter fitness and training regimes there, certainly not that most dreaded of all training disciplines: gym.



RUST Giveaway

Subscription Offer

A second chance to

WIN

Scott Hustle MX
enduro goggles

As said recently, it's been high time we had some competitions and giveaways, as our way of sharing.

You want these!

Everyone needs a pair of decent goggles. Editor JB has spent a lot of time wearing Scott's Hustle enduro goggles and he loves them. The slim frame allows for great airflow around the face, while the optical clarity of the Truview lens – always clear thanks to the ACS air controls system – makes watching the trail and picking a good line that much easier. Ideal for enduro, especially woods riding.

Here's how!

All you need to do to go into the draw for this sensational prize is to go to our website www.rustsports.com input your email for a download of the latest magazine and press submit. It's as simple as that. We'll make a draw (*from all our subscribers*) for the winner on February 14th, 2017.

Plus...

There's an added bonus – once you've hit that submit button you'll get automatic email alerts of future issues. Rest assured your email will not be used for marketing purposes or sold onto third parties. However, we will, through 2017, be developing a RUST membership package with a view to creating partnerships with the dirt bike industry whereby we'll be able to offer some great offers and discounts on the products to our subscribers.

SCOTT

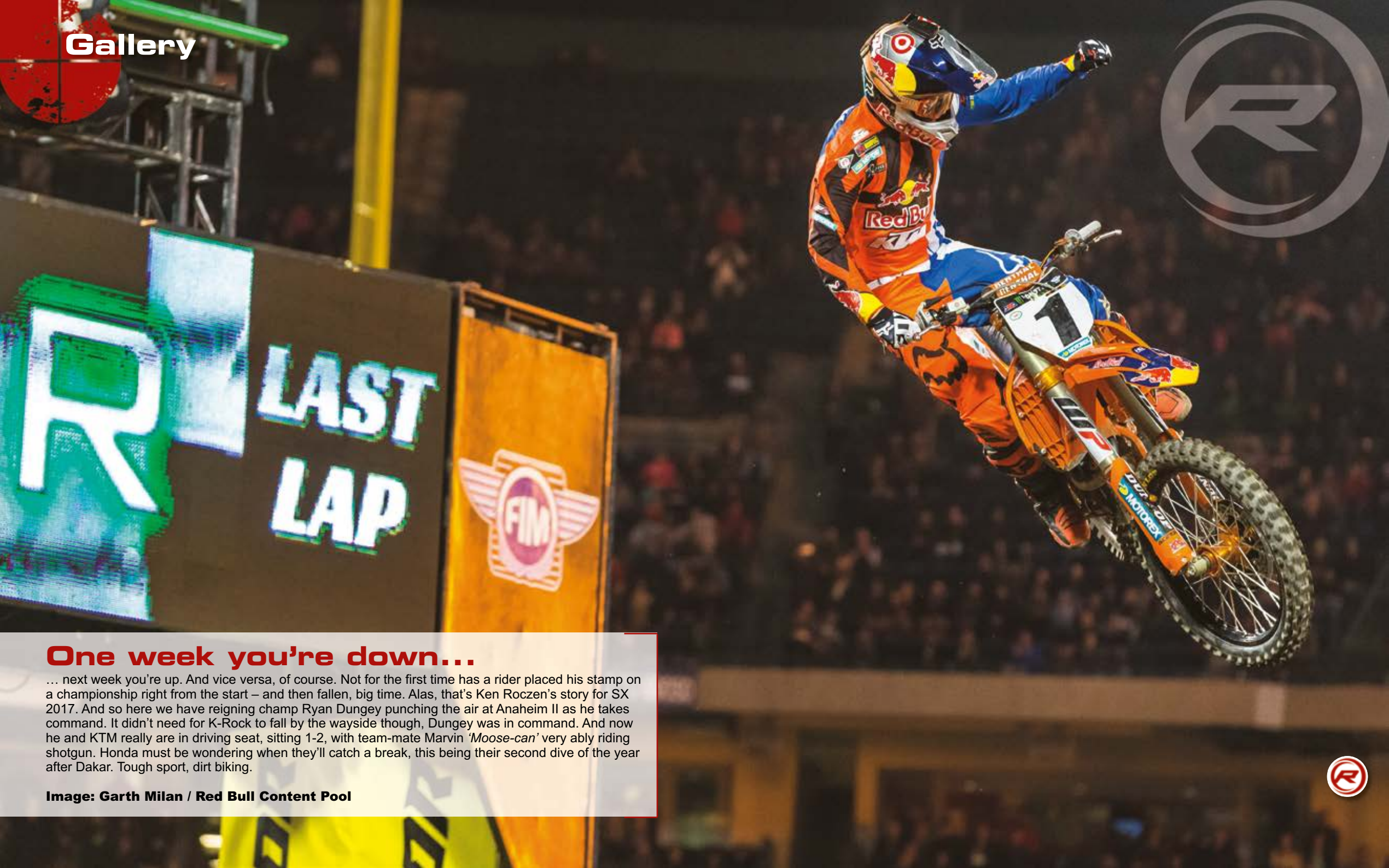


WINNER! Winner of the Scott Hustle MX goggles from RUST Magazine Issue 21 is Andrew Heale from the North-East. Well done Andrew, we'll be in touch to arrange delivery of your goggles!

Terms & conditions: It's a worldwide competition, so even if you're in Australia or Antarctica do send in your entry, we'll dispatch the goggles no matter where! We should set a closing date – essentially you've got to have submitted your email by 12:00GMT on February 14, 2017. As usual in these matters, no correspondence will be entered into! Please note RUST Magazine cannot be held responsible for goods in transit, or any import duties/taxes payable in the winners home country. Many countries will not charge duties if the item is a competition prize, but some may do. There is no cash alternative available.

Note: To know more about Scott goggles go to www.scott-sports.com





One week you're down...

... next week you're up. And vice versa, of course. Not for the first time has a rider placed his stamp on a championship right from the start – and then fallen, big time. Alas, that's Ken Roczen's story for SX 2017. And so here we have reigning champ Ryan Dungey punching the air at Anaheim II as he takes command. It didn't need for K-Rock to fall by the wayside though, Dungey was in command. And now he and KTM really are in driving seat, sitting 1-2, with team-mate Marvin 'Moose-can' very ably riding shotgun. Honda must be wondering when they'll catch a break, this being their second dive of the year after Dakar. Tough sport, dirt biking.

Image: Garth Milan / Red Bull Content Pool



The Hunger

RUST has just returned from a winter enduro training camp at Yamaha Off-Road Experience in Wales, UK.

Jeez, it was freezing, with snow and ice everywhere (*we spun the old editorial Renault on black ice just getting there*). It's the kind of weather that tests your dedication. And you know, it's one thing to see pro riders push through their winter training regime (*hey, they're paid to do it*), but quite another when you see amateurs doing the same. Here's one of those amateurs really putting some effort into the job.

He wasn't the only one, in the fast group the guys really were pushing their limits. Guys like this you have to admire. And come the summer, with all this training and bike time, they're going to be the ones to beat!

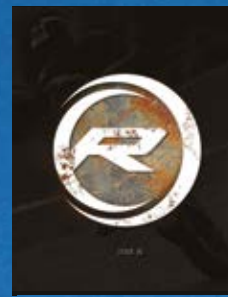
Photo: JB



Back Issues

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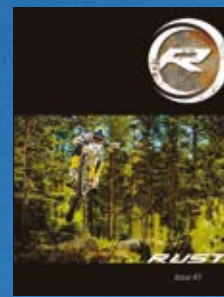
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ISSUE #1
Introduction to RUST Magazine. 2015 KTM 250EXC vs 2015 Yamaha WR250F shootout. Trail test of the Chinese made WK400 Trail and columns from Chris Evans, David Knight and Gary Freeman...



ISSUE #2
The 2016 Beta and KTM model ranges tested. Warren visits the 2016 Motocross of Nations. Pitgirl rounds up the 2015 EWC Season, plus columns from Si Melber and Rick Kemp...



ISSUE #3
THE 2016 Husqvarna model launch. The KTM 250XC-F tested. The Suzuki V-Strom 650 and Pitgirl's analysis of the 2015 EWC Season. Columns from Chris Evans, Gary Freeman and Si Melber...



ISSUE #4
Race test of 2015 250EXC and 2015 Husqvarna TE350 on the Grappe de Cyrano. Testing the Honda CB500X Adventure. Pitgirl on beating the off-season blues and columns from JB and Gary Freeman...



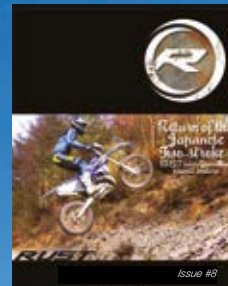
ISSUE #5
JB's Instant Factory Set-Up – Suspension for the amateur rider. TRF main-men Mario Costa Sa and Greg Villalobos interviewed, plus columns from Rick Kemp and Si Melber...



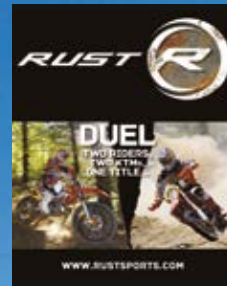
ISSUE #6
JB's first editorial. Interview with Jonny Walker. Dispatches – The TRF answers back. Profile of Patsy Quick, boss of Desert Rose Racing. RUST long-termers Pt1. Tested – Products for the Honda CRF250L. Gary Freeman column



ISSUE #7
Interview with David Knight OBE. What happened to the KTM 690 Adventure? Dispatches – In praise of the Honda CRF250L. The Michelin Anakee Wild adventure tyre. Chris Evans...



ISSUE #8
Yamaha's 'new' WR250 tested, the Royal Enfield Himalayan adventure bike, Iron Men – 3000 miles off-road on Harleys! The Adventure Motorcycling Handbook – 7th Edition.



ISSUE #9
Duel – Two riders, two KTMs, one title, Ivan Cervantes and Matt Phillips battle it out. The Yamaha IT490, 40 years on. Tested – Kit reviewed by Josh Snowden...



ISSUE #10
700KM on a KTM450EXC. Looking for Mexico with Thomas Wielecki. Tested – Warren and JB on the latest kit, plus a column by Chris Evans...



ISSUE #11
2017 KTM model range tested. EnduroGP the new face of World Enduro by Pitgirl. Gary Freeman with more MX insight...



ISSUE #12
Heritage – The BMW R nineT tested. Dispatches – Too light, too fast, too good looking? Travelling across the Alentejo region of Portugal on a KTM 450EXC...



ISSUE #13
SWM returns! 10 reasons why you should buy a SuperTénéré. RUST do the Welsh – Part 1. Scott Prospect goggles, Chris Evans column and the first part of the Honda TLR project...



ISSUE #14
Yamaha WR450F finally tamed. SWM RS650R ridden and rated. RUST do the Welsh – Part 2. Knighter column - finally. July Behl adventure column. Alpinestars SX-1 knee guards...



ISSUE #15
2016 EnduroGP Round-Up, RUST did the Welsh! Finally... 2000km on the Road of Bones, Honda TLR 250 Project – Part 2, Gallery and Dispatches...



ISSUE #16
BMW R nineT Scrambler, Touratech's Adventure Country Tracks, Tom Sagar Profile, plus new models from Honda, KTM and Suzuki plus Galleries...



ISSUE #17
2016 ISDE from Spain, two new superlight trail-enduros from Fantic. Chris Evans In praise of the new CCM GP450 adventure bike plus products from Pirelli and Polisport...



ISSUE #18
2016 EICMAshow from Milan, all the new models previewed, the Athens/Gibraltar Rally. A brief history of Acerbis and first report from Andy Dukes as he prepares for his RTW trip in 2017...



ISSUE #19
2017 Dakar race preview, the Wieleckis continue their search for America, Andy Dukes searches for the 'Perfect RTW Bike' and JB finds more nasty surprises on the Project TLR...



ISSUE #20
Part 2 of the 2017 Dakar preview, Part two of the Wieleckis US Odyssey, Andy Dukes is going solo RTW, Poole MCs Andy Sutton offers sage advice and Chris Evans is Dakar bound...



ISSUE #21
Exclusive first ride of Touratech's BMW R1200GS Rambler!!! 3 Plucky Brits tackle the Red Bull Sea to Sky, Warren M. takes on his first road book rally, and we test 100% goggles and the 6D ATR-1 helmet...



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Suddenly Sherco

For years, in enduro, Sherco has been a nearly brand. Brilliant, but a bit *'peripheral'*. Then in 2016 Aussie Matt Phillips delivered them centre stage by winning the outright enduro world championship (*'EnduroGP'*) on their 300 SEF-R. And suddenly we're all *'yeah, I'll have what he's having...'*

Words & photos: Jon Bentman



2017 Sherco 300 SEF-R © 

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HECK, BUT THE Sherco 300SEF-R is one handsome bike. Gotta love the restraint in the solid blue bodywork with just the gentlest of flouro-yellow highlights. You've got to love the sleek lines, too. Nothing pokes out (*of place*), every aspect looks like its been considered over and over by the designers. There again, this is now the seventh year for this model so the design has been considered and consolidated over and over. And far from Old Father Time pulling the 300 SEF-R down, the little blue racer has only got better and better. Better enough to make outright world champion. It doesn't get much better than that.

I first tested the 300 SEF-R back in 2013, just after they'd '*long-stroked*' the engine (*changing the bore and stroke from 84x52.2mm to 84x54.8mm*) and swapped to proper keyless ignition. I didn't know that much about the 300's history at that point, except for the understanding it had debuted in 2010, but that bike impressed nonetheless.

It was a Factory edition with WP (*rather than Sachs*) suspension, so it had a pretty top shelf spec; and boy could it scream, it sounded like an F1 racecar when you chased the 13,500rpm redline. Went like the wind, but would dive between the trees like a jackrabbit. I loved it.



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These days even the 300 SEF-R base model gets the WP suspension as OEM, and it needs to, to stay competitive such is the quality in standard machines now. And actually this 2017 looks remarkably close to that 2013 Factory example, for not so much has changed apart from a few styling licks. Although, to be fair, not much needed changing in any case. Of course there have been updates, you're just hard pressed to see them.

Apparently the plastics are a new formula, being dual-compound with in-mould graphics, and if we're fair, yeah they look sharper. And while the frame



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looks as it always has, it has apparently been strengthened, as has the monoshock linkage by way of improved bearings and a switch up to 14mm diameter pins. The translucent fuel tank has grown for this year, from 8.2 to 9.7 litres, which we won't complain about. While inside the gearbox the transmission has been strengthened while the oil circulation has been improved, for an extended service life. The seat looks to be a different shape, too, something of a banana, dipping in the middle, not the level benches we've typically favoured in recent seasons.



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So not much to mention, but plenty to report. This is how it shaped up:

ENGINE

There's no kickstart (*never has been*) so it's reassuring that the Sherco starts so well on the button. And despite riding in freezing temperatures the battery didn't suffer despite lots of stopping and starting over the two days of riding. Likewise there's no drag on the (*hydraulic*) clutch, which works seamlessly too. This was a near-new bike with just a few hours on the hour meter so we did find the gearbox a little reluctant to shift up at times, needing a firm boot to engage the next gear, but at least that six-speed box has a ratio for every occasion. It can seem a little short-geared – reaching sixth gear real fast if you short shift – but that is until you realise you're typically riding on no more than half throttle. That rev ceiling is a long way up.

The engine response is, as before, quite linear. There's no discernable bottom end punch and the transitions from there to the mid to the top-end feels step-less. That's fine, but in the wet and slippery Welsh going I'd have to say a bit of extra punch off the bottom might have helped, particularly as going for the full-rev F1 experience didn't feel entirely comfortable in the slippery



conditions. Again that kind of power is great for dry grass tests, mid-summer, but it's not entirely right for winter extreme. But then this is a fighting-300cc four-stroke, what would you expect?

We were testing the Sherco against a 2016 Yamaha WR250F and you could feel the extra push of the 300, especially in the mid-range (*where the WR felt a bit weak, by comparison*), but it's still a stretched out delivery, lacking the punch of bigger bikes. Actually it's great for clubman riders as there are no surprises and you've plenty of time and leeway on what power you want to dial in, you have some leeway on gear choice too as it will pull low revs and chug, if not exactly with stomp. But, for sure, championship level riders will be riding this bike fully-pinned at all times if they're to make the times they need.

HANDLING

This is a small bike, it feels smaller than the WR250F even. It's just so slim, and it feels short front-to-back, even though the wheel-base is almost identical to the latest KTMs. It's light too, just 102kg, and it's been that weight for many years –whereas KTM have only just started to replicate that level of minimalism in their four-strokes this year. So, being small and light, it's very easy to boss. As well the geometry seems still to be biased toward quick steering (*although word is there was a subtle geometry change for*

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2017 – probably favouring a little more stability), so it's very easy to fling around in the woods. On higher-speed going it felt fine. The geometry is probably spot-on. But we did find an issue or two...

SUSPENSION

Ah yes, the handling was great but the suspension – not so much. In fact it felt just fine initially, with our reservations being restricted to taking it easy over the wet slippery rocks we encountered, where the grip just didn't feel entirely secure. That was our assessment until we rode the WR250F over the same trail. Here the Yamaha was nowhere near as nervous feeling, tracking over the rocks neatly and comfortably, and certainly you felt confident in riding that same terrain faster on the Yamaha.

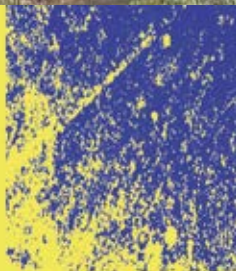
SHERCO 300 SEF-R

What works

Slim, light, small
Rev hound of a motor
Easy to ride
Easy on the eye

What doesn't

Rear suspension needs a good fettle
A flatter seat please



Click on the link to ride with JB on the Sherco 300 SEF-R
www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL7_ebar560

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Here it was handy to have a few second opinions to fall back on; and being in the company of three riders with at least 15 British championships between them we had some fairly reliable feedback. As well, we were able to swap between the Sherco, the Yamaha and a Sherco 450SEF-R to help us identify just where the 300SEF-R was not quite right. Of course you can never be certain about these things, but two days riding is much more than you'll get at a launch test and three top riders to discuss it over with is one hell of a luxury, too.

So, at first we were all set to blame the forks. Probably lacking enough damping in the first third of the stroke, we thought, which meant the forks might be falling through into the mid-stroke and riding on the firmer damping settings, hence getting a harsher ride in the rocks. But then riding the 300SEF-R over flattish flowing terrain the forks proved just fine, there the Sherco was spot-on.

Instead the judgement came down to the shock. The rear, it seems, rides a touch high and the damping settings seemed to keep the rear high, either due to having too much compression damping or not enough rebound damping – and so the rear was pushing the front. On the 450SEF-R, the rear setup had already been modified, to run lower, and that made that bike so much more secure and planted.





Now, maybe you could dial all this out by reducing the sag, or by twiddling with the damping adjusters (*given the luxury of time*), but certainly there's room for improvement here on the stock setup. When a 'school bike' (the WR250F) with 200 hours on it and with standard suspension (*albeit decent Kayaba kit*) outperforms a new machine, there's some work to be done. Not much, but with fine tuning it could be better, maybe even sublime.

ERGOS

The bars felt too low, but then I'm probably too tall, being 6'0" – all bars feel too low to me! I should probably have chosen the forward bar mount to make more space for myself, but again, it's about inding the time. The seat felt low, too. That banana shape – dipping in the middle – might make getting your feet down easier, but the downside of that is there's a greater distance to transition from

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standing to seated. A taller, flatter seat would be our pick there.

But those reservations aside, it's all good. Footpegs are good, brake and gear levers spot on. Same around the handlebars. There's simplicity there; no key, just a start button and a neat thumb switch beneath that to swap from the standard power delivery to a traction mode. A simple switch for lights on or off, too. Neat handguards. And an easy-to-read speedo/computer unit.

OTHER STUFF

There's not much reason to mention the brakes these days. Both Nissin and, in this case, Brembo have the job nailed – and on this lightweight they're not stressed.

The exhaust note is both tuneful and suitably suppressed, more of a howl than a bark. No complaints.

There's a decent sidestand by the way. It folds very neatly away and sits the bike in a comfortable repose. Well designed.

Those who rider longer races will appreciate the bigger fuel tank – certainly there's no downside to it, the bike's still super-slim. While the plastics seem very high quality. In all, the bike has a super high quality fit and finish. It looks every inch the precision instrument it is.



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CONCLUSION

The Sherco 300 SEF-R remains an awesome bike, just as it was in 2013 when I first tested it. It is a little bit of enduro clubman heaven. Clearly it's a bit of world championship heaven too, although Matt Phillips must have thrashed the wee 304cc motor mercilessly throughout the season to take the title. Just as on a 250cc four-stroke, you can't be lazy if you want to make the speed.

It is almost perfect. Only our reservations over the setup of the shock, and that smallest desire for just a little more low-to-

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mid hit, stops us marking it so. No question, we'd love to know how Matt Phillips had his set-up...

What's really neat about the Sherco 300 SEF-R, though, is that it feels so right. The size is right and the performance is right; you gel with the bike very quickly, you know what to expect from the bike and what's expected of you. It is also very close to a 250cc four-stroke experience, whereas say KTM's 350EXC-F is very much midway between the 250s and the 450s. Riding the 350EXC-F isn't so natural in that sense, thrash it like a 250 and it's almost too fast, try and use the torque like on a 450 and it's not quick enough. You've got to get your head around it. But this Sherco 300 motor, much like the SWM 300RR (*and the Husky TE310R of old*), you instinctively get. Rev it and it goes, rev it hard and it flies. There's something so very right in that.

What's new for 2017

Bigger fuel tank, from 8.5 to 9.7 litres

New dual compound plastics, plus in-mould graphics

Improved gearbox
(*more durable by +20%*)

Frame strengthened

Linkage improved with new bearings and pins



RUST Enduro



SPECIFICATION 2017 SHERCO 300 SEF-R

Engine: Liquid-cooled, electric start, four-stroke single

Displacement: 303.68cc

Bore & stroke: 84 x 54.8mm

Transmission: Six speed

Frame: Semi-perimeter chro-mo steel

Front susp: WP 48mm open chamber USD forks

Rear susp: WP shock with linkage

Front brake: 260mm disc, Brembo twin-piston caliper

Seat height: 950mm

Fuel capacity: 9.7 l

Weight: 102kg

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HORIZON
ADVENTURES

RIDE THE

R3
ROADBOOK
RALLY RAID

SERIES

2017

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03 - 05 Feb: Santiago do Cacém

28 Apr - 01 May: Fafe

15 - 17 Sep: Mação

10 - 12 Nov: Faro

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C. Pack with rental bike***

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* Includes: Lunch pack; light support.

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*** Includes: same as previous + KTM 450 EXC 2016

Note: Please email or phone for the full details on each of the packages.

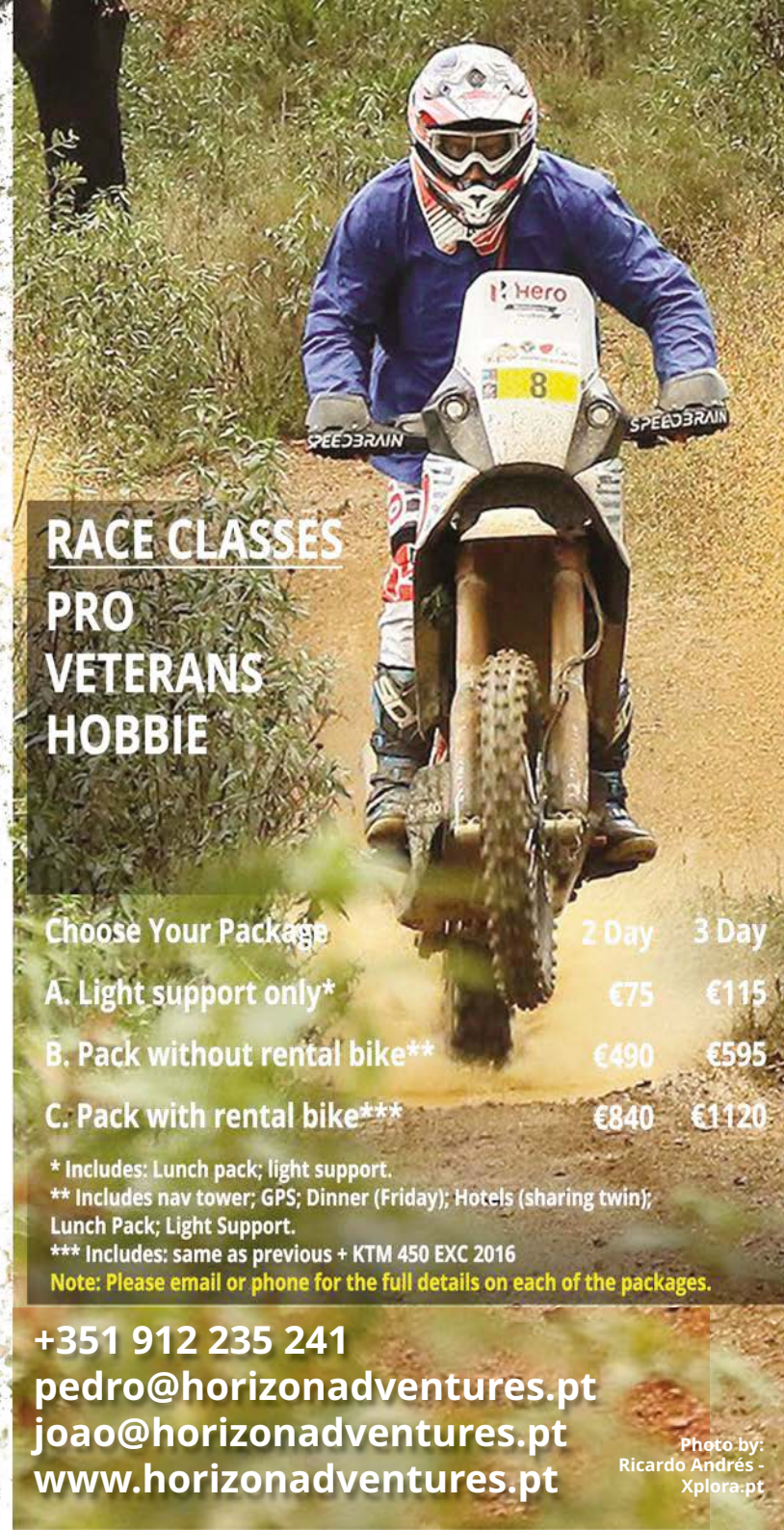
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www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL7_ebar560

WE GET TO RIDE THE 2017 SHERCO 300 SEF-R

Join JB for a ride on board the Sherco 300 SEF-R to find out if the EnduroGP winning model is actually clubman friendly or a bit of a handful...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Sy-azHjAKM

THE FINAL ROUND OF THE 2016 R3 RALLY RAID CHAMPIONSHIP

Our intrepid reporter Warren M. tackles the last round of the R3 championship in Portugal, and finds the Algarve a little moister than usual...



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=zLdKBsgq8d4

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=1gL9oTh6LN0

2017 BETA Range Launch

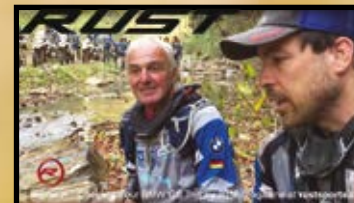
Stephano Fantigini tells us about the continuing development of the Beta range and the secret of their recent success...



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=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=HQBn2qbfp0Y

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...



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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



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HONDA CB500X ADVENTURE

Jon gets an exclusive ride on the Rally Raid Products latest adaptation of the CB500X for the adventure riders out there...

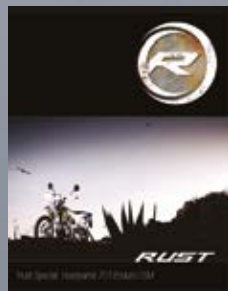
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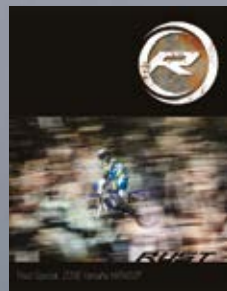
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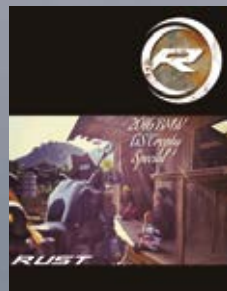
HONDA CRF1000L AFRICA TWIN SPECIAL EDITION
RUST gets the exclusive world's first test of the new Honda CRF100L Africa Twin!



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



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



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RUST joins the GS Trophy riding across Northern Thailand on board the latest BMW R1200GS



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



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



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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A group of motorcyclists are riding through a snowy forest trail. The lead rider is in the foreground, wearing a black jacket and a white helmet, leaning into a turn on a blue and white motorcycle. Several other riders are visible in the background, following the same path. The ground is covered in snow and rocks, and the trees are bare, suggesting a winter setting. The overall scene is dynamic and adventurous.

RUST Products

Cold Killers

Winter shouldn't be a barrier to enjoying a good trail or enduro ride (*unless we're talking deep snow*). Stepping out at the Yamaha Off Road Experience winter enduro camp in a snow-dusted Wales we made sure the chills didn't spoil our fun. Here's how...



WINTER RIDING IS very much about your riding kit. Sure, you might want to 'winterise' your bike – two-strokes might want a re-jet, you might want to protect the airbox intakes if it's seriously wet, silicon spray to protect exposed wiring and in severe climates some guys even fit heated grips. Whatever it takes to go riding. But 90% of winter riding prep is about you – keeping you warm, but not overheating.

Our Sherco test in this issue was conducted in temperatures of around zero (0°C, 32°F); actually that's a tricky temperature where it is easy to get over-excited and overdo the clothing, but certainly one where you want to take care. Fortunately modern fabric technology has advanced a great deal in recent years and so it's possible to create warmth without the bulk that these exercises used to entail.

Here's Editor JB's get-up:

Outer layer

Alpinestars RJ-5

The outer layer is going to have all the muck thrown at it, and it will get mucky, so sartorial elegance isn't the primary function here. As well, this is the first layer to get abraded, ripped or torn if you take a tumble. So you need to think this through.

For the last ten years (*I kid you not*) my outer layer of choice in wet/cold conditions has been the same Alpinestars RJ-5 rain jacket (*and pants, when it gets super-wet*). It's a budget product (*about £50 for the set back when I got mine – these days the jacket costs circa US\$65/£35*) but has proven highly practical, and sturdy.

It's made of heavyweight rip-stop nylon, with a mesh liner, although it's actually very light and is of a smock design (*so no zip*) and also oversize cut. Alpinestars call it water resistant yet mine has stayed waterproof through countless downpours over the years. I like the loose cut as it allows for body armour and several layers. The fact it flaps in the wind allows just enough airflow, too, so that you never get sweaty. Being so cheap it's not going to be such a tragedy if you rip it up in a fall. It's got rudimentary Velcro adjustment everywhere except the hem and there's a pouch pocket on the front (*not waterproof, so seal-up any stuff you might store there*).





The Tech 7s pictured here
in warmer times...



Cold Killers

Working layer

Alpinestars Charger 2014

Alpinestars Tech 7 enduro

Winter is not a time for bringing out your good kit, unless you're riding in a high profile race and you're heavily sponsored, of course. No, the winter ride is why you keep your old kit long after your wife has stopped nagging you to throw the damn rags away.

And so here I am in my 2014 season kit (*no motocrosser would be seen dead in attire this age, but this is trail/enduro, we march to the beat of a different drum*). Actually I'll wear this kit all year round, for it's lasted so well. The Charger range wasn't the top shelf kit in 2014 (*replaced by the Racer range today*) but the clean simple styling appealed and, as I suspected, the colours haven't dated, nor has it overly soiled despite numerous dirty rides.

On my feet I have a trusty pair of Tech 7s, with the enduro sole option. They're yellowing now as white boots do after a year or so. They're a comfortable old boot and a lot of riders like them because they don't have an inner bootie – which makes them fuss-free. Unlike my Tech 8s they're not perforated, so they stay dryer for longer – but they do get wet, sooner or later (*I try to either wheelie over puddles or avoid them at all costs. And river/steam crossings I generally save for the summer!*)



Mid layer **Forcefield Tornado** **Advance** **Shirt & Pants**

Cold Killers

Now we're getting fancy. This Forcefield stuff is new to me, but after just two days wearing and riding I'm impressed. Again, I try not to be too fancy. I like each layer to have a specific function. So the top outer keeps the rain out and takes the hits. This layer keeps the wind out and keeps me warm.

The Tornado Advance does this by combining a layer of windproof Defender fabric, which is also water resistant to 8000mm (*apparently – if I knew what that meant I'd tell you, but nearly waterproof is the gist*), with a second layer called Thermolite which, as you might guess, has thermal qualities. These fabrics are also quick drying, so if you do get wet hopefully you'll not stay sopping wet for too long.

The detailing on this kit is top notch and both fabrics are soft to the touch – always nice. But as well as comfort in that sense, it's the breathability that helps here. It got a bit warm from time to time, when the going got real tricky, and while I could feel the temperature rise under the layers, it never got sweaty, or if it did the layers were wicking the moisture away nicely. None of that saturated cotton T-shirt nonsense here.





Cold Killers

Armour layer Forcefield Pro-Shirt X-V

More new kit for me. Gotta say I've not been a fan of full body armour shirts – they're typically too heavy and too hot. I need the protection (*especially at my age*) but I'd sooner have a cool bod, and a cool head, so have picked simple lightweight plastic scatter guards in the past, with no shoulder or elbow protection – that has worked better for me than a suit of boil-in-the-bag armour.

Instantly, though, this Pro-Shirt X-V is different. It's much, much lighter than the shirts I've tried in the past, while the BeCool base layer fabric is exactly that – both cool and comfortable (*again, soft!*). The armour pads are full-strength CE Level 2 kit, which moulds to your body as your body temp warms the material. As well, the sleeves, while a close fit, don't constrict your arms, so they don't induce arm pump – another factor I've not enjoyed with this kind of product. But I also like that this shirt is pretty discreet, it's not 'grid iron' big and slips easily under the usual mx shirt.

In all, an excellent product. It worked so well over the two days of riding in Wales that I'm a big convert. Can't wait to see how well it works on warmer days.



Cold Killers

*The things I do
for this magazine...*

Base layer **Forcefield Base Layer** **Shirt & Pants**

Call me a wuss, but I had a base layer under a base layer! In this case the Forcefield, er, Base Layer (*does what it says on the tin...*). It's BeCool again, a breathable fabric that keep you cool, fresh even, and with flat seams it's supremely comfortable and, as Forcefield say, 'silky'. As ever, this stuff wins hands-down over a cotton T-shirt and is as important on a winter's day as it is in summer in keeping your body temperature properly regulated, especially in terms of removing the sweat from your skin's surface.

What you can't see **Waterproof socks**

Yeah, I'd have worn these if I'd been able to find them! My choice of sock for this kind of going has been for a while now Army issue Gore-Tex – £10 from a street market! Waterproof and breathable. They're good but their one drawback is once water comes over the top of the boot the sock fills with water as much as the boot does. So, not so handy. In the near future I'm going to follow the herd and go for some Sealskinz, which stay comfortable and thermally efficient wet or dry. Two key words with the Sealskinz – waterproof (*obviously*) and Merino – as in wool lining. Sounds good.

USEFUL CONTACTS:

www.alpinestars.com

www.forcefieldbodyarmour.com

www.sealskinz.com

YOUR KIT?

Got any winter kit solutions you'd like to share with RUST readers?

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DAKAR DAZE

BY CHRIS EVANS,
PHOTOS: SEBASTIAN SOKAL

Our man Chris Evans is back from the Dakar. Before he left he thought it would be his 16th Dakar, but it turns out it's his 20th! Something amiss there – and this from the man who calculates the pro riders' daily fuel allocations...

THEY SAY THAT absence makes the heart grow fonder, but after a year away I'd say it certainly makes it more forgetful. After a year off in 2016 I went back for my 20th edition of the Dakar this January and was reminded all over again just how hard it is. I was secretly hoping that not working for a factory team would reduce the stress levels, in fact it just introduced different ones. For example, when you're in a factory team, all the riders are safely back in the bivouac by four in the afternoon and all tucked up in the motorhomes by nine. In our team, this year, we had riders running in the top 10 and others in the last 10 so that made for very long days. The pressure was less but was spread over a much longer time period.

The weather didn't help either. We started off with 45 degrees of very humid heat that drained you during the day and made getting to sleep no easy matter. You'd get into your tent, lie on your open sleeping bag and repose in a pool of your own sweat. If you opened the tent flap you'd sweat



a little less but the downside was getting eaten alive by some quite large and very hungry insects. I was actually looking forward to going up in altitude where I knew it would be cooler. Until I got there that is. Cos while it was undeniably cooler there wasn't much air about. Up until 3000 / 3500 metres I'm not too bad but after that I'm not feeling my best. This year, rather than do chipmunk impersonations with a wad of coca leaves in each cheek, I went to the doctor before leaving home and invested in some Diamox altitude sickness pills. And they definitely worked – to an extent. This time, instead of feeling weird all of the time above 4000 metres I just felt weird some of the time, so I suppose that's progress of sorts.

The rain didn't help matters. The night in Oruro was particularly bad. We were quite simply flooded out of our tents and I ended up spending a very short night in the back of the Sprinter on top of the generator, which proved slightly less comfortable than you might imagine. Everybody who'd been



there the year before got up for breakfast looking smug in their wellies. I first tried my luck with flip flops, in an attempt not to ruin a perfectly good set of trainers, but they just squelched straight into the mud. So after breaking one of them I went on to ruin a perfectly good pair of trainers.

Not that I would want to give you the impression it was all rain and heat and altitude. There were a couple of great things about my rally. One of them was my team, which used to be called Orlen and is now called both Orlen and Duust (*and no that's not a spelling mistake, or if it is I didn't make it*). Those with long memories and an attention to detail might remember it is where Toby Price made his Dakar debut. It's a sort of informal KTM B team and so is professional without being a full factory pressure cooker. It is based in Poland (*Orlen is the state oil company*) and I really liked their attitude. They cared about their riders, cared about their staff and didn't take themselves too seriously.

If I liked my team, I liked my fellow travellers even better: French youth Benji who some of you might have bumped into on one of my tours and Australian (*via East Anglia*) Mikey Faulkner. Benji is now in charge of customer service for KTM in the Middle East, while Mikey was in the process of retiring from the same job in Australian. So both know their stuff. Obviously I knew Benji well from my tours and five previous Dakars but Mikey turned out to be equally relaxed and good humoured and when you're cooped up in a Sprinter (*surely the last ever made without cruise control*) for up to 12 hours a day, good humour goes an awful long way. Benji already knew I am the world's most nervous passenger but Mikey discovered it with good grace and happily didn't test the limits of our 'spy in the cab' Trippy GPS / Roadbook that monitors our every move. Thanks guys, I only thought I was going to die a couple of times in the whole two weeks.

The other thing I really enjoyed about the rally was the performance of the five British competitors. Obviously Sam Sunderland's win was a cause of great joy. Up until then he hadn't so much as finished a Dakar, so to win it after leading the

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20/21/22 Sept	Pyrenees
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 44 Rue des Gravilliers,
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 Tel: 0033 662 487190
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race for six days, and all the pressure that entails, showed he has developed a very cool head. On coming back to Europe I kept a close eye on the UK media and judging by the lack of column inches they didn't seem very impressed but it is just possible that the perception of the Dakar and off-road motorcycling in general improved a little thanks to his efforts.

I also enjoyed watching (and helping a little) in Lyndon Poskitt's successful attempt to fully exploit the power of social media, while at the same time racing in the unassisted Malle Moto class, in which he finished an incredible second place. You probably have a vague idea of how hard it is to compete




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in the Malle Moto class but to do it at the same time as you are making a film of your exploits and posting daily video clips on your website is an incredible act of time management and sleep deprivation.

The other Brits also kept their chins up. Max Hunt, accompanied by his recently betrothed, seemed very happy racing out of the HK Husqvarna customer team, while further down the leader board Dave Watson and Kurt Burroughs looked equally well catered for in their much smaller self-contained teams. It is a not so popular option these days but the simple formula of one rider, one 4x4 van and two or three people dedicated to assisting you proved extremely effective. Neither Kurt nor Dave's assistance crew members had any previous Dakar experience but all rose superbly to the occasion. Dave and Kurt didn't do too badly either and both looked set for solid finishes until Kurt went out on the third to last stage with a combination of mechanical problems and food poisoning. I'm sure it is of very little consolation to Kurt but a 4 out of 5 finish rate and a class win are excellent averages. I just hope Kurt can either console himself with the knowledge that he clearly showed he had the ability to finish or, failing that, he can put it all together to have another crack at what has to be simultaneously the cruellest and most addictive off-road motorcycle race in the world.



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The Western world has been curious about Royal Enfield's all-new Himalayan, a commuter-adventure bike (*featured in RUST 8*) released into India in 2016, to high acclaim. Word is it's due to come to Europe in late 2017. So what's it like? Editor JB's mate Dani has been riding one for months in India – so we asked him. Easy as that!

High On The Himalayan

Words & photos: Daniel Gonzalez Guarinos



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

First lookover of the bike and I was impressed by its appearance – it looks strong. The finishing might not be to Japanese standards, but this is not what this bike is about. It's not a premium product, being priced only slightly above traditional Royal Enfields, it is, even in India, classed as a budget adventure bike. Start the bike – electric, there's no kickstart! – and for all the changes in aesthetic, it still sounds like a Royal Enfield, with a distinct thump to the exhaust note. There's nothing fancy here, rugged simplicity would best describe it.

WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

WHO: Dani Gonzalez Guarinos and wife Marta, from Spain. Dani has been for many years a motorcycle travel guide in India, currently guiding with Aventura en India (www.aventuraenindia.es)

WHAT: Riding a 2016 Royal Enfield Himalayan – not yet available outside India, but due into Europe later in 2017.

WHERE: Dani took time out from his guiding to take his wife on a long tour from Delhi to the Spiti Valley, in the very northern most part of India, high in the Himalayas.

High On The
Himalayan





High On The Himalayan

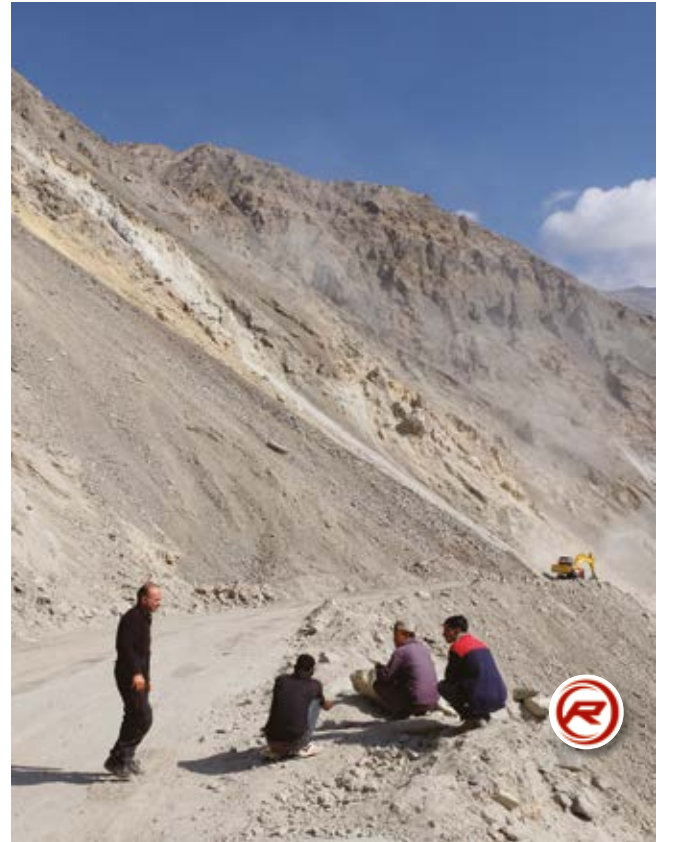
For the ride we were undertaking I had some engine protection bars fitted (*there's an oil cooler that looks like it needs a little looking after*). I also ran with the optional screen – there's plenty of dust, let alone stones and rocks, kicked up by Indian trucks.

I'm not the tallest guy so I was impressed and relieved to find a modest seat height (800mm). After years of riding Bullets I also appreciated the upgrade that is the Himalayan's suspension, which offers 200mm of travel up front and 180mm at the rear – figures that are becoming standard for proper adventure bikes.





High On The Himalayan



RUST Adventure



LOAD IT UP

For our ride into the Himalayan mountains we packed some pretty large saddlebags, plus a big backpack – and of course we were a rider and pillion. Altogether, a payload of around 200kg (say 440lbs). A fair amount for a modest 411cc low-power motor to deal with. I was impressed to find the bike dealt well with the load, remaining stable, while the power remained plenty too, not feeling overly laboured.



High On The Himalayan

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High On The Himalayan



HEAD ON UP

On day one we reached an altitude of 1500 metres. The next day 3400 metres. All on very poor roads. I kept to the Himalayan's favoured engine speed of 3000rpm and it powered along without complaint (*note this is a carb model, not fuel injected*).

At Chitkul, the last Indian village before the Chinese border, I unloaded the bike to go for a 20km solo trail ride. The Himalayan's suspension worked well and I was happy to find a natural standing position (*I used to ride mx/enduro bike off-road in my youth*), so it does off-road quite competently.

We carried on climbing, at Kanzum Pass we reached 4590 metres, and the Himalayan was still pulling the load well, and again





VERDICT

In riding Le Grand Kinnaur & Spiti Tour we put 1000km on the Himalaya. Since then I've ridden 3500km on the Himalayan on all kinds of Indian roads, including highways where the bike cruises at an easy 80-100km/h, with easy overtakes given the engine's torque. The bike has remained reliable throughout. It's a comfortable bike too, we rode some 400km days that took eight to ten hours and we weren't left exhausted, despite the harsh conditions.

The important thing with this bike is not to compare it to other adventure bikes. Dynamically it's a giant leap forward from the Bullet, for which the Indian market will be eternally

High On The Himalayan

grateful. However, its design and ethos reflects the social and economic climate in India, not Europe, so the power is gentle at just 24.5hp (about the same as a Honda CRF250L) and the level of sophistication is purposely limited, so it can be repaired by average Indian workshops, without the need for specialist tools or equipment.

Approached from that standpoint the Himalayan works well. I've only positive comments to say about it, it's a joy to ride, and if I had just the one word to describe my feelings about the bike: delighted!

ROYAL ENFIELD HIMALAYAN

What's to know:

- 411cc air-oil-cooled single cylinder four-stroke
- 24.5hp & 70mpg
- Counter balancer for smoothness
- 6000 mile service intervals
- Steel semi-cradle frame (*designed in conjunction with Harris Performance, UK*)
- Long travel forks (200mm) and monoshock rear (180mm travel)
- 21"/17" wheels
- 220mm ground clearance
- 15-litre tank, good for 280 miles
- 182kg

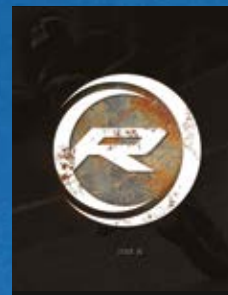
High On The Himalayan



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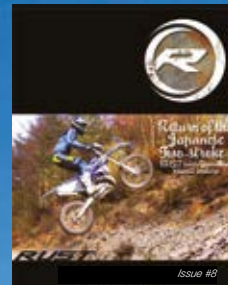
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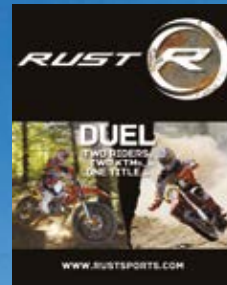
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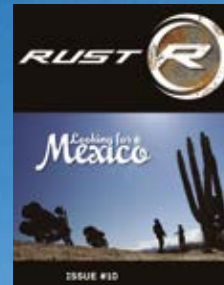
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Ready for the Adventure?



THE MARATHON RIDE

RUST is following Andy Dukes as he takes a year-out from work, family, life and everything and sets out on his big ride – a Round The World trip of a lifetime. Andy will be setting off in March 2017 and along the way will look to run six marathons on six continents – running being another of his passions. Check out previous instalments of his story in RUST issues 18, 19 and 20...

Don't be fooled by the title. With just weeks to go before he sets off on the RTW ride of his life, Andy Dukes is definitely not ready. Visas, carnets, vaccinations and budgets are all being slowly and painfully dealt with, but fearing that too much paperwork would make him a dull boy, he traded a day in the office for a day on the saddle and booked an adventure bike training course in the wilds of north Norfolk





RUST Adventure

Ready for the Adventure?

I CAN'T BELIEVE it's taken me until the ripe old age of 47 to discover the joy of heated clothing. It's 5.30am on the coldest morning of the year so far – minus 4 and freezing fog – and I can't stop chuckling inside my helmet. I've finally discovered that there's no need to be cold on a motorcycle. All it took was a five-minute battery hook-up and a simple cable routing, and I'm sitting oh so comfortably plugged in to a Keis heated jacket that will



make all the difference to the winter stages of my trip. I'm also wearing heated gloves, which plug directly into the jacket, as well as heated in-soles, making light work of the three-hour trip to the purpose-built adventure bike training centre in East Anglia where Kevin Hammond is waiting for me.



Ready for the Adventure?

Kevin is well-known in the adventure riding community, having been part of the UK trio that won the International GS Trophy in South Africa in 2010. He's also worked as a senior instructor at the BMW Off Road Skills school in Wales and supported various GlobeBusters expeditions such as the Trans Americas and London to Bangkok long-distance trips, as well as plenty of other adventure tours to destinations such as Patagonia, where his off-road expertise comes in handy. So, if anyone was qualified to set up his own training school, dedicated to preparing people like me for the motorcycle adventure of a lifetime, it's Kevin.

And the beauty is that he can tailor a course to suit your exact needs. With around five weeks to go until D-day, I requested a mix of workshop and rider training and also sent a long list of topics in advance that were keeping me awake at night. Kevin's not a miracle worker, but what he managed to pack into a day was quite remarkable.



PACK-UP?

Fully fuelled with bacon butties and endless cups of tea supplied by his wonderful wife Deb, my first challenge was learning how to pack for the big adventure. Laid out on a small table in the workshop was everything Kevin needs for an expedition of any length. Tools, spares, clothes, maps and more were all laid out in front of me and I thought about all the boxes of gear that were steadily accumulating in my office back home. I am definitely going to have to lose about 50 per cent of what I thought were 'essential items' just in order to fasten my pannier lids...

Suitably enlightened, we moved onto the bike itself – a pristine F 800 GS – and discussed pre-trip preparation, pre-ride checks, servicing overseas, essential spares and consumables, wheel and tyre removal. In his spacious, warm workshop, Kevin has bikes available from all the major manufacturers so whatever your choice of weapon, you can work on something similar – or even take your own bike in there to work on.





RUST Adventure



Ready for the Adventure?

SKILLS TEST

The truth is, I could have stayed in that workshop for a week and just soaked up all the brilliant nuggets of information that were coming my way, but I wanted to ride too, so after a deliciously nutritious hot lunch we headed out to the byways of rural Norfolk to practise a few water crossings, after discussing what to do if your ambition outweighs your talent and you drown your bike. In my case, a 10km detour to find the nearest bridge would probably be the safer option.



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Ready for the
Adventure?



Back at the ranch (Kevin was a farmer until recently) it was time to try out a few obstacles designed to remind you that adding a shed-load of luggage to a 225kg adventure bike is at best, foolhardy. With plenty of land at his disposal and an expert tractor driver to boot (*is there anything this man can't do?*) Kevin has built ramps, recreated tricky bridges, constructed whoops (*probably just for the hell of it*) and even dug out several rows of ruts – in different grades of 'menacing', from narrow and muddy to deep, water-filled ditches capable of swallowing a GS Adventure whole.



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Ready for the
Adventure?





RUST Adventure

Fortunately for me, we lost the light before I lost my bike, so with darkness fast approaching, there was just enough time for a few wobbles in the deep gravel and sand sections carefully prepared for Kevin's amusement and, allegedly, for training purposes. It was his wife Deb, in the end, who pointed out that I'd probably had enough training, given the three hour ride in the dark ahead of me, and that we should probably call it a day.

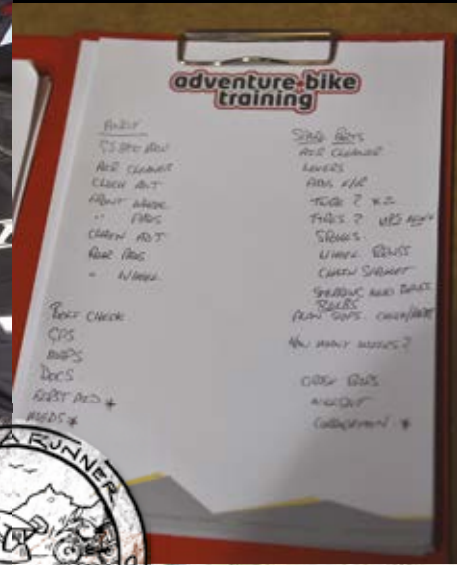
I took in some, but not all of the debrief that followed, distracted as I was by the home-made flapjacks that were vying for my attention, but concluded that I had learnt loads, even though there was still so much I had to discover.

Ready for the Adventure?





RUST Adventure



Adventure Bike Training

Based in the heart of rural Norfolk, Adventure Bike Training covers everything you need to equip yourself with the skills, confidence and experience to tackle your trip of a lifetime, whether that's a UK tour or a global ride. You can have 1-2-1 or group rider training, workshop and maintenance sessions, mapping and GPS navigation courses, and much more. Give Kevin a ring on 01485 529491, tell him what you need and he'll devise a course to suit your requirements. More info at www.adventurebiketraining.co.uk

As I plugged in, warmed up and headed away from their farm, I reflected on a memorable day that would be a useful and really enjoyable experience for any adventure bike owner or anyone in the midst of a mid-life crisis and planning their own RTW ride. On my way back, I met up with a fantastic guy called Barry Smythe who'd contacted me because he'd traded his old F 800 GS for an Africa Twin and had a few spare parts that he no longer needed. Turns out that the cardboard box he put in my pannier contained a spare chain, sprockets, levers, air filter, cables and brake pads – pretty much everything Kevin had told me earlier in the day that I'd need on my travels. What a great adventure riding community this is.





Contact

Remembering so many things: sunny days in Italy, my relative youth (*this image was taken in 2009*), the fun of tackling technical terrain – and just how good KTM 300EXCs have always been (*I think the first one I rode was in 2001*)...

Words: JB Image: Redeye/KTM

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Thanks: All the staff at the Yamaha Off Road Experience in Wales, Tom Sagar for his riding expertise, Daniel Gonzales Guarinos for his Royal Enfield Himalayan test and Kevin Hammond at Adventure Bike Training in Norfolk...

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