



ISSUE #43

YAMAHA TÉNÉRÉ 700

TESTED: Proper bang
for buck adventuring

KTM 790 ADVENTURE R

TESTED: The ultimate
middleweight adventure

BETA 2020 ENDUROS

TESTED: It's a full model
revamp for this year



WWW.RUSTSPORTS.COM

@RUSTSPORTS

f /RUSTSPORTS

📷 /RUSTSPORTS



ALL-NEW TE 150i

Light, agile and highly capable! The brand new 2020 TE 150i is primed to take on the toughest terrain thanks to electronic fuel injection technology and a new, dynamic-handling chassis. With smooth, usable power and strong hill-climbing torque, this lively offroad machine combines innovative 2-stroke performance with easy manoeuvrability, for an intuitive ride that lets you find your flow wherever the trail leads.

For more information or to find your local authorised dealer, head to www.husqvarna-motorcycles.com



Contents #43

FEATURES



14

Tested: 2019 KTM 790 Adventure R

KTM's new middleweight isn't just about big dune jumps.

30

Tested: Yamaha Ténéré 700

A second brand new middleweight twin in one issue – and this one is every bit as good as the orange one, only different...



54

Tested: 2020 Beta Enduro

The Italians started with a clean sheet of paper for the 2020 model range, well nearly



114

PanAmScram: Peru

July Behl encounters no bears in Peru – if he had he'd have probably eaten them as well. He's a rolling moto-culinary monster...



SHOEI

READY TO RACE
»www.ktm.com

LET'S TRADE KEYS

WITH A € 1,290 TRADE-IN CONTRIBUTION AND € 1,290 POWERPARTS VOUCHER THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO TRADE KEYS FOR A 1290 SUPER ADVENTURE S OR R

Let's Trade Keys KTM PCP Finance Examples	2019 KTM 1290 Super Adventure S	2019 KTM 1290 Super Adventure R
Cash price	£15,199.00	£15,399.00
Monthly payment	£99.00	£99.00
Term length	36 months	36 months
Deposit	£3,849.00	£3,816.00
Manufacturer contribution	£1,290.00	£1,290.00
Amount of credit	£10,060.00	£10,293.00
Interest charges	£1,322.75	£1,359.75
Optional final payment (GFV)	£7,818.75	£8,088.75
Total amount payable	£16,521.75	£16,758.75
Annual mileage	2,500	2,500
Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile	14.9p per mile
Fixed rate of interest	2.52% p.a	2.52% p.a
Duration of agreement	37 months	37 months
Customer APR	4.9%	4.9%

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL AUTHORISED KTM DEALER.



Terms and conditions apply. PowerParts ordered with the voucher do not include the cost of their fitment. Change will not be given. This offer is available on 2019 1290 SUPER ADVENTURE S and R models until further notice and may be withdrawn or extended at any time, whilst stocks last at a participating, authorised KTM dealerships. "Let's Trade Keys" discount cannot be redeemed in cash. Further information can be obtained from your local KTM dealer. All information with the proviso that mistakes, printing, setting and typing errors may occur.

Finance subject to status. Finance example is applicable at time of print and is subject to change. Deposit shown may be higher than the minimum; a lower deposit will result in increased monthly payments. Terms and conditions apply. At the end of the agreement there are three options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle. (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final payment to own the vehicle; or (iii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle, if the vehicle is returned at the end of the finance agreement. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantees/Indemnities may be required. KTM Finance RH1 ISR.

Please make no attempt to imitate the illustrated riding scenes, always wear protective clothing and observe the applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations! The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

www.kiska.com

Photo: R. Scheid

Contents #43

REGULARS

06

Editorial

We can be heroes friends – even if for just one day...



08

Gallery

There's a world out there, and here are two bikes that would love to take you there



48

Evans above

There are ways to see the world. A private jet turns out not to be one of them



94

Stuff

Warren M. has been burning rubber and fraying fibres in the pursuit of his ultimate enduro...

100

Fitness for vets

Warren M. is dogged about this – fitness is possible (pass the biscuits, will you?)



74 108

Long termers

JB's KTM 1290 Adventure gains muscle, his Honda CRF250RX howls and Warren's Husky FE350 ascends to 'ultimate' status.



Image: Michael Smith

CHECKIN' IN

Mid-season and life is good. The bank balance might not be, but the quality riding offsets that. I've just come back from the Ryedale Rally (Yorkshire, UK) and simply being around nearly 170 kindred spirits – enjoying being in the countryside on our bikes – has done enough to keep the flame that I nurture for the dirt bike alive.

The checks at the Ryedale will for a long time be memorable. There were about six of us – Griffin, Steve, Craig, me, Gavin and Lee, riding over three minutes, so each check we'd regroup and replay the last section, where we'd crossed swords, where we'd come unstuck, maybe where we'd shone. And then, when there was time, even sharing previous experiences on other rides. Riding, talking, sharing. Just glorious. We were coming from different places, Griffin and Steve were riding 990 adventures, Craig and I were on 450/250 enduros and Gavin and Lee on 690/701 big trailies so you kind of took it in turns as to where you'd be quickest on the course, although Lee I suspect was fastest everywhere on his 690 – boy, can he ride. For two days this was our happy little community.

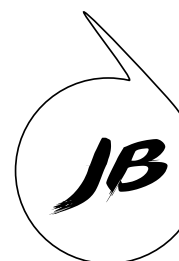
The riding was cool, too. With each mile of the 250-odd that we rode I was understanding the terrain, and the Honda CRF250RX, that little bit better. There's a great joy in coming to a point of comfort with both, where you ride in a zone where so much is subconscious and you find you're playing with the bike, with the trail, delighting in a little hop here, a roost there. Obviously I'm not the quickest, but within my own skillset / parameters I was having a good weekend. So you zip along, refining your timing, your body positioning, your gear changes. It's a fascination.

And at the end of it, there are the replays, the analysis. What could be improved? Nothing to do with the Rally – which scored 100% satisfaction for Craig and myself – but with the bike, with the rider. I'm itching to tear the Honda down in the garage now, to have it sparkling clean again and with a little tune up so it's even better for the next event. I'm not worried about breaking into the top three or anything like that, but the RX can be improved and I can be better in myself, making better times, safely.

This is the joy, the fascination that keeps bringing us back to the parc ferme time and again. Nothing beats a good ride with a side order of cheery camaraderie.

Hope you're enjoying your riding too. And hoping you're liking the read.

Ride safe





TO SEE THE WORLD, THINGS DANGEROUS TO COME...

Stealing from 'The Secret Life of Walter Mitty' there. You know, going through KTM's image library it's near impossible to find a picture of a 790 Adventure R where their riders aren't either pulling a wheelie, doing a skid or launching some massive jump. However, there was this one gem, which embodies how we'd see ourselves (in an ideal world) enjoying this great bike. This is the dream. The rest of it is just wa..., er, nonsense. Yes, nonsense! Anyway, our full test starts page 14.

Image: KTM / Kiska



HAPPY

For many of us there is no Big Tour, no Great Escape. You get yourself a career, a family and a mortgage and you're in it for life. And not all of us can afford a bells and whistles GS. For us I suspect the new Ténéré might just be our saviour. Affordable, versatile and quality. But as importantly, energizing. This bike on a mini-tour – TET, BDR, ACT, whatever – will delight. If this bike could hum a tune, it would hum Pharrel Williams' 'Happy'. A smile every ride.

Image: JB



RUST TRAVELS

A log of what we've been up to this past two months (or so...)



JB'S STORY

This last couple of months (or so...) has been a battle between bikes and boardroom. Bikes come first, so first and foremost it's been about **KTM's 790 Adventure R** and **Yamaha's Ténéré 700** – two bikes that are bringing some much needed colour to the adventure segment. I've loved every second riding both bikes, both are great bikes and have fired up the 'JB planning for 2020' no end.

Boardroom? Well, as ever RUST is working hard behind the scenes to improve our presence and communications – and there's as much time going into this as producing content right now. We have, though, been delayed on our digital

plans as certain technological hurdles have steadfastly refused to be overcome. Over this next quarter we're looking to defeat these once and for all and then with less energies disappearing into the virtual world we'll have more time to

do more riding with everyone in the real world. People, places, bikes, things to do – we still hunger to tell the story of how off-road motorcyclists (particularly of a certain age) experience the world and hopefully enrich it.



WARREN'S STORY

The past two months since **RUST #42** have been a blur. We are about halfway through the build of the two hotels we are developing in London and the project has now reached that crossover stage where construction meets operational planning. The workload has left me with little time for bikes and when you throw in a big transition in family life now that my son finished his A-levels and embarked on 'the' summer holiday we have had a continual stream of teenagers over at the house enjoying the sun and cold beer around the pool. In between the fun we've been sorting Uni residences and packing bags, alongside preparing for major renovations happening at home now that the summer is coming to a close. To top that off I've been in and out of hospital trying to find the cause of intermittent abdominal pain – all with no luck so far. Good news is the

scans are all clear and the doc reckons its muscular so over the next 12 weeks it's a twice a week visit to the osteopath for manipulation to see if that helps.

But! In the meantime I've taken delivery of my **2020 KTM 350EXC-F** – sweet! I also decided to buy a trials bike to improve my skills – you have to learn to go slow to go fast apparently. On the advice of both **Martin Craven** and **Wayne Braybrook** (top UK trials riders who have become world-class extreme enduro riders) I chose a **2019 Beta 250 two-stroke** which I bought from a top bloke in Oxfordshire. Woody is the real deal, I arrived to look at the bike and instead of a quick exchange and out the door with the bike, I spent a good hour or two with Woody in his shed drinking tea and shooting the shit. His place is littered with ongoing projects, trials bikes, enduro bikes, some classics and even a Harley. Woody is an ex road racer that loves off-road too and is obviously a proficient mechanic. It was just one of those shared moments with a man that loves bikes as much as I do. It was a treat, cheers Woody, I have a feeling that we will see each other again.



* JB has been pulling his hair out waiting for my copy and photos... and yes, it's my fault that **RUST #43** is being published late, apologies to all. 🙏

KTM 790 ADVENTURE R

10 reasons why it's the best adventure bike to come to the market in 2019

Wow, what a bike! Not because it can rip through deserts at berserk speeds, but because of everything else that it does. Two weeks riding motorways, back roads and green lanes has shown this bike is super-versatile.

Words: Jon Bentman **Images:** JB, Too Fast Media, KTM

I'm torn. There's this story that I could tell you about just how fantastically dynamic the 790 Adventure R is. How it makes you a better rider, flatters you, and allows you to ride like the dirt biking hero you always dreamt you'd be. But I think you know that one already.

I think instead the bigger story is just how docile, how loveable, how so-damn-easy the 790 Adventure R is to get along with. It is the ultimate quiet-tour machine, ideal for the newbie rider – A2 licence possibly dispensed with – ready to step up to a real adventure bike and make first tentative steps into off-road touring. For it is that utterly amenable bike as much as it is the angry, potent dune-jumping desert racer that it's so often depicted to be. And this quiet story is, I'm sure, the one that needs to be told.

Anyway, in the interests of maintaining your attention, I'll tell the story right now in little chunks, times-10, easily digestible, as these things must be in this world of diminishing attention spans. So without further ado...





IT'S EARLY DAYS, BUT I'VE BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE RESPONSE OF THE NEW OWNERS, ALMOST TO A MAN/WOMAN THEY'RE DELIGHTED WITH THEIR PURCHASE AND SAYING 'YES, BUY!'



1 *A Parallel Twin*

Let's just think about this. The 790 is not a vee-twin, it's a parallel twin, just like BMW's F 800/850 GS. And that's important because elementary comprehension of engine technology tells us that most probably a parallel twin is going to be a fair bit cheaper to develop and build – and maintain – than a vee-twin. There's just the one cylinder head, the one paired cylinder block, one cam chain, two camshafts – that has to be more economic to produce than all the duplication a vee-twin requires. The parallel layout doesn't create issues with front wheel travel either (as an L-twin can) and altogether it's a more compact unit and so better mass centralized – and easier to design the rest of the bike around.

Vee-twins are lovely things but they're not without their complexities and costs – and sadly there have been stories of adventure riders on KTM's big advs falling victim to some horrendous mechanical maladies while venturing into the wild world. Yep, breakdowns are great ice breakers – adventure riders say this is typically when their adventure truly starts – but expensive engine rebuilds can equally end a trip. So a nice parallel twin with tried and tested tech and generous service intervals (9000 miles / 15,000km for the 790) – you want that in a RTW adventure bike.

That KTM has managed to eek 95hp from their 799cc unit with the long-distance service schedule is a fair feat of engineering (note the 790 Duke is tuned to 105hp). It's cool that they've also setup the crank at 285° so as to create the same feel as their 75° vee-twins.

All told there's a lot of sense in making the 790 a parallel twin.



2 Pannier Tanks

Finding a place for the fuel on a motorcycle is never straightforward and while generally most opt for placing it above the engine, in front of the rider, over the years we've seen all manner of alternative solutions applied. BMW resorted to under seat tanks on the F800GS. On their latest F850GS they've reverted to placing the tank back above the engine, maybe to bring the seat height down, only the problem there is when you brim a 23-litre tank you end up with a lot of weight very high – which makes it heavy to steer. Honda's Africa Twin Adventure Sports has the same issue – ride the AS together with the standard AT and the standard bike with the smaller tank is noticeably easier to operate.

With the 790 Adventure R, the pannier tanks offer a decent 20 litres, but by placing much of that low down in front of the rider's feet, they substantially lower the bike's centre of gravity and that makes the effort in steering the bike that much less. And it makes the bike less stressful to push around, too, as the weight is concentrated lower and nearer to the line between the two wheel axles

– which for newer or smaller riders is a great help.

We might worry that we'll hole those tanks in a crash, but I can't see KTM having not addressed that matter, making them super crash proof, and anyway in all probability a crash that'll put a hole in one of the fuel panniers is likely to have done a whole lot worse to you – a holed tank will be the least of your worries. You know, let's not think about that!

3 It's nippy

Sure this R model is all about going off-road, probably at speed. But that hasn't come at the expense of day-to-day highway practicality and joy in use. First impressions riding the 790 Adventure R on the road was just how nippy it is (having just stepped off the 1290 Adventure R).

We could do some math there: the 1290 makes 158hp and weighs 217kg (claimed, dry) whereas the 790 makes 95hp and weighs 189kg. So the 1290 has a power to weight ratio equating to 0.728hp per kilo, while the 790's is 0.503. Hmm, you'd think the 1290 would stomp the 790 then. Only I suspect the computer on the 1290 seriously holds back on those 160-odd horses

– it knows unfettered access will land you in a whole heap of trouble. In all probability much of the time the 1290 is only dishing out circa 100-120hp. And this means in general riding

the 790 is able to pace itself much closer to the 1290's performance than you'd think.

But it's not wild, just nicely peppy. And with a ride position that feels not unlike a motocrosser, where you feel like you sit on the bike, not in, it's almost a playful experience. And – I'm sure I'll be saying this a hundred times over – it feels controllable. Placed on the motorway and directed toward Chez JB the 790 cruised at the same speeds as the 1290. 80-85mph is easily sustainable, the wee screen does a good job of deflecting windblast and the engine isn't straining or buzzing doing that. It's a happy speed for the 790.

Ooh, and the gearbox – I liked that too. Light and quick shifting – that is after I had disabled the Quickshifter+. Boy, that's one thing I didn't like. Maybe it's cool for road racers, but for idling along it's too eager. If you so much as inadvertently stroke it with your toe it cuts the ignition, so you get this sudden jerking action. I tried to educate my toes to either be faster moving or more sensitive, but the toes refused, gear changes with Quickshifter+ remained an uncoordinated series of lurches and lunges. Electronic aid disabled, everything smoothed out.





4 Smooth Operator

Talking of smooth, a real surprise was just how relaxing the 790 Adventure R was riding around on slower B roads, and into the wee lanes. You can ride this bike slow like you might ride say a Royal Enfield Himalayan and it'll potter along just sweet-as, it does not get choked up or petulant. I spent a long day on back roads (with green lanes in between) and the 790 was civil the whole way. Civil and utterly relaxing, it's not a caged tiger, instead pure pussycat – and that is important. World travel is not about rush. Nor should be a week's adventure motorcycling holiday, it's about taking it all in, appreciating the natural world, gently and confidently navigating through the backcountry. KTM's hired 'professional riders' might enjoy leaping hundreds of feet off Saharan dunes but they're missing out on the bigger story. Fortunately the 790 Adventure R is with us on this one, slow is just fine.



5 Sweet Handling

Needless to say the 790 Adventure R handles as well on the road as it does on the dirt. That's not always a given, especially with a 21" front and knobbly tyres (in this instance Metzeler Karoo 3s). But the Adventure R was so natural sweeping around the lanes I completely forgot about that 21-incher, thinking I was on a 19" hoop, it felt so secure. Equally the suspension felt nicely plush. Nothing bothered us. And besides, with ABS back up you don't have to fear the front wheel lock-up that you'll often get when braking hard with an enduro bike on the road. The suspension is quality too. Beefy enduro-spec 48mm upside down WP forks and PDS (linkless) shock – both are awesome spec. I have to admit whatever settings it came with I rode with, whether on road or dirt, it works on both. The 240mm of travel allows plenty of ground clearance, too, so there was never a thought given to catching the sump. It's gold standard.



6 Watch the Ruts

Not everything is so accomplished. While the 790 Adventure R was awesome on Welsh gravel, when riding Kentish green lanes – all overgrown and rutted out by 4x4s doing their stupid winter runs (allow me my prejudice – honestly, if those guys want to winch themselves through saturated trails then the least they can do is to grade the tracks afterward, ready for the Spring) – sorry, where was I? Ah yes, the 790 Adventure R was little better in these confined conditions than any other big adventure bike. Probably the limit as to what's capable in these conditions stops at say a KTM 690 Enduro, after that anything bigger takes some manhandling.

As it was, the 790 could not deny its bulk – 189kg plus 20 litres of fuel, say 220kg – and on Karoos, not enduro/rally nobbies, it would get carried downwards on any dampish off-cambers, down into the ruts. You could feel the front sliding away. Where it was dry you could, to be fair, ride more dynamically and ride into the banks like they were berms and do some stylish riding, but when things got wet and rutted you were back to standard adv style, being slow and deliberate. So there is a place for the 690 Enduro R – the 790 is great but it can't perform physics-defying miracles.





7

The Modes

I liked the modes, as in rider modes. Standard street mode is just great on the road, works perfectly. Off-road mode is perfect for off-road, you can feel the throttle response soften immediately and for tooling along being respectful to other countryside users it's spot on. Rally mode is for racing, the 790 really growls in this mode – it's not the mode for green laning with nervous hikers on the trail. Traction control can also be dialed up or down, although for gentle country riding and on green lanes I wasn't sliding at all – I'd save the flashy power sliding for somewhere more appropriate. I also quickly got used to KTM's mode-adjusting switch block, finding it quick and easy to navigate through the various computer functions. TFT screens really have opened up the world of electronic aids and made it much easier to know exactly what aids you're riding with.



8

Proper Details

KTM's long history in dirt bikes means they don't forget the details. The front brake and clutch levers are both properly adjustable, for span as well as activation point. The gear lever has the folding tip, the rear brake lever sits just right when you're stood – and these are real dirt bike levers made for the job. The handlebars are dirt bike spec, too. For faster off-road riding they're probably just about in the right place for that semi-crouch semi-standing attack position. But for guys who like to ease along at 15mph down shared-use tracks – they may like to add a set of risers (an easy find in KTM's hard parts listing). Equally the grab rails found off the pillion seat do a good job of doubling-up for strapping down bags and the like. I did however miss the centrestand. Rally race teams use paddock stands, but adventure riders don't as a rule have team of techs to tend to their bikes, we need centrestands! But to end on a high note: we like the ease of access to the battery and air filter (under the seat – 1190 owners will like this having to strip fairings to access theirs).



9

Decent Economy & Range

So, looking at my fuel receipts, the 790 turned in between 60 and 63mpg across its refills, which isn't bad for a bike of its size, approaching that which a BMW F800 does. Mostly I was riding gently so a steady or minimum of 65mpg would have been better, but this bike is still quite the performance machine so this isn't bad. What's good is that economy combined with the 20-litre tank means you've got a range of say 260 miles (430 kilometres) to bone dry, probably even more if you can ride slow – and that's a decent adventure range. So no faffing trying to source and fit a bigger tank!



10 *Adv for one, or one?*

So is the 790 Adventure R the do-it-all adv, the one and only adv you'll ever need? Is it a replacement as much for the 1290 Adventure R as the now to-be-discontinued 1090? And is it so fly as to make the 690 Enduro R redundant? Answer: No, to all of that.

The 690 Enduro R is safe. It's that much lighter, that much of a completely different type of bike, and that good at what it does that the 790 Adventure R is no competitor. The 690 has that enduro bike feel and capability, as the name implies. For technical trails it's the next best thing to a competition enduro bike. The 790 Adventure R is a weapon but the 690 would still whip its ass in the technical stuff.

Is it doing the 1290 Adventure R out of a job? Again, No. In adventure world you still need two-seaters and this is half of what the 1200cc machines are about. The 790 is more the single-seater. Unless your other half is slim, small and incredibly

forgiving you'll get no thanks for taking them on an extended tour on the 790. And loaded down with all the luggage for two – the 790 fast loses its appeal. No, we need big bikes for the big-ass fully-loaded missions.

It is, though, a damn good replacement for the 1090 Adventure R. Which I'm kind of sorry to report as that's the one KTM adv that I really liked, being that much lighter than the 1290 and so nice to ride on-and-off-road. The 1090 will probably now join the 1190 in the realms of great secondhand adv buys, but the fact is the 790 sits so much more centrally placed between the 690 and the 1290, whereas the 1090 was that much closer to the 1290 in every way. With the 790, KTM has a better balance to their adv offerings with clear positioning for each, enduro/trail, adventure/rally and adventure/tour. Albeit each share that same spirit of 'race', being potent packages within their relative segments.

+ WE LIKE

+ **GREAT SUSPENSION:** 48mm forks, PDS rear, 240mm travel and decent damping

+ **EASY HANDLING:** low CofG makes all the difference

+ **CHARACTER:** that engine just works on every level, it talks to you

+ **HAPPINESS:** this bike takes you to your happy place every ride

+ **HARDPARTS:** KTM's huge treasure trove of goodies keeps us dreaming for hours

- WE DON'T LIKE

- **NO CENTRE STAND:** a centre stand makes working on the bike so much easier

- **QUICKSHIFTER+:** may be cool for rally racing, otherwise switch it off

- **PRICE:** it's a global trend, but £12k is what 800s are starting to cost (ouch)



THE MOTOR IS GREAT, WITH A LOVELY FEEL, SPORTY WHEN YOU WANT IT TO BE, GENTLE WHEN YOU'RE FEELING CHILLED

The wrap

The wrap is the KTM 790 Adventure R is every bit as good as the reports and the chatter suggest it is. The motor is great, with a lovely feel, sporty when you want it to be, gentle when you're feeling chilled. The chassis is tops too, those pannier tanks contribute to making it a sweet-easy ride, while the suspension is long-legged and quality through and through. And the tech – I really do hope time bears me out on this – but I like that this is a humble parallel twin not a fancy pants vee-twin.

The buzz has been all about its standout high-speeds off-road performance. The more impressive story is that you can ride the 790 Adventure R in that way, but actually it's equally a great bike for the 'quieter' rider, you could ride around the world on this bike at a gentle potter and just have the best time.

And as well – we all read the online threads – people are asking should I buy this bike, is it as good as they say? Well, it's early days, but I've been impressed by the response of the new owners, almost to a man/woman they're delighted with their purchase and saying 'yes, buy!' You know, you can't go near an adv forum or meeting/gathering without reading or hearing '790 this that or the other' – this bike really has captured adv imaginations. But it's for good reason, it is a great bike. And for KTM's competition, that's one serious issue...



SPECIFICATION

KTM 790 ADVENTURE R

ENGINE: liquid cooled DOHC four-valve twin cylinder four-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 799cc

BORE & STROKE: 88 x 65.7mm

MAX POWER: 70kW (95bhp) @ 8000rpm

MAX TORQUE: 88Nm @ 6600rpm

FUELING: EFI, 46mm throttle body

STARTER: Electric

TRANSMISSION: Six-speed gearbox, wet multi-plate anti-hop slipper clutch

FRAME: steel trellis frame

FRONT SUSPENSION: 48mm USD WP forks, fully adjustable, 240mm travel

REAR SUSPENSION: WP PDS monoshock, fully adjustable, 240mm travel

WHEELS / TYRES: 90/90-21", 150/70-18" – wire spoke wheels

BRAKES: Two front discs 320mm radially-mounted four-piston Brembo calipers, Rear disc 260mm twin piston Brembo caliper; ABS (cornering and off-road)

SEAT HEIGHT: 880mm

WHEELBASE: 1528mm

GROUND CLEARANCE: 263mm

WEIGHT: 189kg (dry)

FUEL CAPACITY: 20 litres

CONTACT: www.ktm.com

PRICE: UK £11,999, US \$13,499, EU €13,399

*Just to clear up those categories: Daily ride, is the ride to work (with the 690 it's an easy ride, but we'd be worried about it being stolen while we're in the office – looks too much like a motocrosser!); Green lanes are a unique British phenomenon, being shared use tracks (walkers, cyclists, horse riders, cars) that date back to the Stone Age (not quite) that are typically rutted to hell, overgrown, slow going (in the south at least); TET Trans European Trails are a mixed bag of off-road routes all over Europe, they vary in terrain and technicality according to the route maker and local geography – typically best for mid-sized trail bikes; BDR/ACT, that's US Backcountry Discovery Routes and European Adventure Country Tracks which are selected very much on being capable of being ridden comfortably by 1200cc adventure bikes; Rally, think Hellas Rally, Gibraltar Rally – the new breed of grand turismo, where it's half race half tour; Grand tour, is either two-up two-week or extended cross continent adventuring. 🏠



JULY'S FIVE-STAR ADV RATING*

While talking the 790 Adventure R through with our mate July Behl (Mr PanAmScram) he came up with a cool idea for visually rating the bike. Take the six main areas of adventure riding and rate its capability in each. It goes like this:

KTM 790 ADVENTURE R

Daily ride:	★★★★
Green lanes:	★★
TET (Trans European Trails):	★★★
BDR/ACT:	★★★★★
Rally:	★★★★
Grand tour:	★★★★

By comparison our assessment of the

KTM 690 ENDURO R

Daily ride:	★★★
Green lanes:	★★★★★
TET (Trans European Trails):	★★★★★
BDR/ACT:	★★★★
Rally:	★★★★★
Grand tour:	★★



and the

KTM 1290 ADVENTURE R:

Daily ride:	★★★
Green lanes:	★★★★★
TET (Trans European Trails):	★★★★★
BDR/ACT:	★★★★
Rally:	★★★★★
Grand tour:	★★



*Classic style doesn't
end with the bike
Check out Bell Helmet's
Classic Collection*

A select range of Bell Helmets is now available through
RUST at **www.bell-motorcycle-helmets.co.uk**



***RUST subscribers get member discounts**



YAMAHA Ténéré 700

10 reasons why it's the best adventure bike to come to the market in 2019*

Both KTM and Yamaha have had adventure riders hopping up and down with excitement, anticipating the arrival of their new middleweights, the 790 Adventure R and Ténéré 700. But of these which, when they arrived, would be the standout machine? Well, now we know...

Words & Images: JB

*and yes, you're seeing double >



Holy cow. Inside a month I've sampled two of the biggest game changers to come to the adventure market in years. The KTM 790 Adventure R is a brilliant bike, I love it, it's a near perfect 10. Then just days after that test I'm introduced to the Yamaha Ténéré 700 – and I'm bowled over again. Can it be better than the KTM? Is that possible?

The answer is – while some folk are comparing the two – there is no comparison. They are very different offerings, and so each in its individual way is outstanding, each is extremely good. But being built to a different ethos and engineering plan means to directly compare them is erroneous, neither is better than the other.

So let's roll through another ten reasons why THIS bike is the best adventure bike to come to the market in 2019...

1 WHAT AN ENGINE!

This is almost awkward. I've praised KTM for making a brilliant motor in the 790 Adventure R. But equally this 'CP2' motor is just incredible. In fact it's got to be one of the most seminal engines to emerge from this new emissions-restricted post-Euro4 era. It's not got the fat 94hp power of the 790, but instead it has the most optimized 70hp motor I think I've ever encountered.

For a start it's just so smooth. There are practically zero vibrations. The transmission doesn't snatch and it slides through its six speeds effortlessly. That's a cable-operated clutch but it's light and so easy. Now pick a speed, from zero to what, 120mph? At all speeds this motor feels amazing. It creeps along at walking speed easy, rides 30mph urban congestion like a scooter, sit it on the motorway and it whooshes up to 85-90mph easy-as and will cruise all day at those speeds, even though it's pulling 6-7000rpm it's magic-carpet smooth. And if you want to wring its neck, boy-oh-boy, it hauls ass, revs like a 600cc supersport. It's seriously quick. In fact I found myself riding everywhere quicker than planned.

And it has character. It's got that cross-plane crank thing going on (as per Yamaha's R1), with a whacky firing order (at 270° and then 450° later) which, try as I might, I'll never be able to explain. But as well as making it feel something like a vee-twin, this was also the firing order that Yamaha apparently used in their XTZ850 Dakar racers back in the 1990s (claiming seven Dakar wins, no less).



2

IT'S HALF AND HALF

It looks like it rides. It's as overgrown as a trail bike can be before becoming a fully-fledged adventure bike. Despite being a twin it's narrowish, and Yamaha has definitely set out to create a slimming visage: the tail narrows, the headlight surround is clear plastic (Perspex?) and that headlight – two pairs of stacked LEDs – is taller than it is wide. The whole look is more trail-come-rally than standard adventure.

So it's a trail bike. But it's not. The motor is too big, too smooth, too versatile for a trail bike. And pushing over 200kg when fuelled, that's too heavy. Jump on a KTM 690 Enduro R and you'll know what a trail bike is. This, the Ténéré 700 is not. Oh, and the big expanse of tank that rises up in front of the rider, you're not getting around that, there's no pulling yourself up behind the headstock for a bar-dragging turn in the bush.

But it's lighter than an average adventure bike, and its minus lots of gubbins that make up a modern adventure bike. There's no computer weighed-down with sensors and a demand list of rider modes, no TFT screen offering a thousand different screen options. It's a bit bare bones – which is no criticism for the simplicity is one of its ace cards, freed from IT overload, you enjoy the bike all the more. But honestly, don't look at that saddle for too long, it'll make your arse bleed. No, it's not an adventure bike either.

It is, instead, its own breed, one of a kind (for now). And while no one has particularly had it in mind that a trail-adventure bike has been needed, with the possible exception of Chris Scott, who's been trying to home build one for years – trying, with admitted limited success – oh, and Rally Raid Products (with the RRP Honda CB500X), apart from them, have we been calling for this? Maybe we have, but Yamaha has for sure created something special and versatile in doing so.



Yamaha Ténéré 700



3

SWEET HANDLING

Okay the 790 Adventure R was nice handling, real nice. But the Yamaha aces it, there's something about the speed and swiftness with which it cuts through the back lanes, through roundabouts, round long sweepers, that just makes you want to do it again and again. It handles on the road like a right little road racer. Even with the longish suspension you can push it. Actually you don't need to speed up to appreciate the handling, even going slow you appreciate how light and effortless it handles. It makes for carefree riding.

Off-road it's good, too. It feels planted and fairly unflustered, there's enough integrity for it to cope with most anything – speed and skill depending – and with that narrow rim 21"/18" wheel combination you can spec as aggressive a knobbly as you need. But as ever, in certain terrain types you're going to need to slow down sooner than say the guy on the KTM 690. But certainly, if you're game, you can run with the hell-raiser on his 790 Adventure R all you fancy.



4

SUSPENSION WORTHY OF THE NAME

Anyone who knows the old Ténéré 660, will know that Yamaha effectively issued that model with a couple of whittled sticks at either end. Long sticks, admittedly, but the understanding was that owners would upgrade those sticks if they felt at all picky about off-road performance. The dimensions were all good, just the lack of springing and damping was a major letdown.

With this new Ténéré 700 that's all changed, Kayaba has come to the party with real grown-ups suspension units. Those are 43mm USD units up front and there's a decent linkage-operated shock on the rear. All fully adjustable with a decent combo of 210/200mm of travel. They feel pretty good, too. I've not had the chance to fully test them in the dirt, but they're not collapsing under the bike's weight alone and the still hold up when near 100kg me is in the saddle. Night and day ahead of the old bike. One day soon we'll do a real off-road test, riding different speeds and terrains just to see for real how well these work.



5

RALLY-LIKE ERGOS

This point is something of an extension on those made above. As the Ténéré doesn't feel like a trail bike or an adventure bike, somewhere in between, it almost stands to reason that the Ténéré 700 feels like a rally model.

You do still sit on this bike, not in (same as the 790 Adventure R), but there's less bulk – everywhere! That neat screen and quasi-nav tower on the front set the tone. The low exhaust run and neat silencer looks fully rally-style too (wait 'til you've fitted an



SPECIFICATION

YAMAHA TÉNÉRÉ 700

ENGINE: liquid cooled DOHC four-valve twin cylinder four-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 689cc

BORE & STROKE: 80 x 68.6mm

MAX POWER: 54kW (70bhp) @ 9000rpm

MAX TORQUE: 68Nm @ 6500rpm

FUELING: EFI

STARTER: Electric

TRANSMISSION: Six-speed gearbox, wet multi-plate clutch

FRAME: double cradle steel tube

FRONT SUSPENSION: 43mm USD Kayaba forks, fully adjustable, 210mm travel

REAR SUSPENSION: Kayaba monoshock, fully adjustable, 200mm travel

WHEELS / TYRES: 90/90-21", 150/70-18" – wire spoke wheels

BRAKES: Two front discs 282mm twin-piston Brembo calipers, Rear disc 245mm single piston Brembo caliper; ABS (with off function!)

SEAT HEIGHT: 880mm

WHEELBASE: 1590mm

GROUND CLEARANCE: 240mm

WEIGHT: 187kg (dry)

FUEL CAPACITY: 16 litres

CONTACT: www.yamaha-motor.com

PRICE: UK £8,699, EU €9,699

Akrapovic). It's not too fat through the mid-section, so your knees and feet aren't too far spread. The seat is slim, really slim, so it feels even more like a rally bike. The only limitation being how far forward you can sit – as said before that's where it falls down as an ultimate dirt bike, with that tank you just can't sit forward, instead you'll be standing and leaning forward – which is again rally style. In all, though, it's a setup that kind of says its ready, wherever you want to go pretty much it'll go (short of Romanians/Erzberg).



8

THERE'S NO EIGHT...?!

You know what – to hell with the ten. Let's stop here and change direction for a while.



7 GENTLE BRAKES

Not sure if this is a sales point, but having just jumped off KTM's 1290 Adventure R, the brakes on the Ténéré 700 were a surprise, for they're on the gentle side. Yamaha says this is intentional, at least in the initial take up, so the brakes aren't grabby, which can lead to a lock-up and fall when off-road – and reading their tech briefing notes you'll see they call these Brembo calipers 'lightweight'. The discs are smaller than average, too, at 282mm diameter. So you get that soft start, but they build well once you start squeezing the lever with conviction.



6

REMOVABLE DOWNTUBES

Well, it's an odd point to bring up, but there are a number – a lot – of adventure bikes running around with marginal under-engine protection. It comes from engines frequently being stressed members, and so the frame tubing only runs over the top of the engine. So when it comes to sump/skid plates there's nothing to fix them to, except the engine... Not always good; having once witnessed a German rider casing his GS on a rock and screaming 'scheisse!' repeatedly as he tried to stem the ensuing oil spillage, now I always go easy on rock steps, log hops and the likes. Yamaha, though, they know this issue and so they've gone the extra mile (and added ounces) by spec'ing two down tubes specifically to carry a decent sump plate. Leave nothing to chance.





THINGS WE DON'T LIKE WITH THE NEW TÉNÉRÉ

Are you ready for this?

8.1 Sidestand only. No centrestand! Ugh – you know where we stand (sorry) on this.

8.2 The seat – aka the Ténéré's instrument of torture. Time from start to excruciating pain: 30 minutes. Maybe longer, maybe not excruciating pain, just moderate discomfort. But one way or another this is not an all-day comfort saddle. For a travel-related bike this is one major misfire.

8.3 It's tall. As was the Ténéré 660. It's not massively tall (880mm), but small people need not apply.

8.4 Bug deflectors. I think Yamaha call them hand guards, but looking at the thin metal plate brackets connecting the deflectors to the mirror stalks these are not going to perform well in a fall.

8.5 Filament bulb indicators. What is this, 1976? LED should be industry standard.



SHORTCOMINGS YAMAHA HAS ALREADY ADDRESSED

Now we could get really pissy about those five 'fails'. But we're not because actually, being proper off-road dudes, Yamaha already know about them and have kit ready to solve the issues.

8.1. Centrestand – yes, Yamaha has a centrestand for the new Ténéré 700, check out their accessories range or 'Explorer Pack' you'll find one in there.



8.2 The seat – curiously Yamaha don't spec a comfort seat in their Explorer Pack but their rally seat in their 'Rally Pack' looks a whole deal deeper (+44mm) – go for that.

8.3 It's tall – yep, but there are height-lowering dog bones (suspension links) and a lower saddle (-35mm) available.

8.4 Bug deflectors – okay, Yamaha doesn't seem to list hand guards, but Barkbusters will see you sorted PDQ.

8.5 Filament bulbs – again check the accessories list, LED 'blinkers/flashers' are ready to plug-and-play.

RALLY VS EXPLORER

That brief look into a few shortcomings – and we're talking 'few' – does lead us

into the duality of roles that Yamaha sees in the Ténéré's life to come. It looks well positioned to slide into either function. You can accessorise it in the hardcore direction and go rally, or add luggage and comfort items to go adventure touring (curiously there is a comfort saddle option for the pillion, but not for the rider). And with 43 listings in their accessories list they're close to matching KTM's hard parts for customer-pleasing bolt-ons. It's kind of clever (by either their engineers or marketers) for they're hitting two market segments at once, with the one bike. And the way we see it, both sets of riders are going to find a lot of happiness.

THE ECONOMICS

Yamaha has been keen to stress the wallet-pampering modesty of the new Ténéré. The CP2 engine has been around a while now in various road bikes (and comes to the Ténéré with not much more than a change of final drive gearing) but in its time it has built a reputation for rock-solid reliability. It's also good on servicing, with oil changes every 6000 miles (10,000km) and valve timing adjustment at 26,000 miles (40,000km).

Fuel consumption is generous. Yamaha claims 23.9km/litre (67mpg) which means with a 16 litre tank a theoretical range of 382km (237 miles). From RUST's fuel receipts we note we achieved almost exactly that – 66mpg – in a mix of off-road and road riding. We refueled when the last bar started to flash on the fuel gauge, but each time still had five litres left in the tank (the Ténéré comes with an odd cheapish fuel cap by the way), so the gauge is a little pessimistic.

THAT PRICE

Whatever country you're living in the price is still the talking point. It's cheap! Given the rampant inflation in adventure bike prices this is very welcome right now.

Of course to make it that cheap you have to expect a few compromises. You can see this in items like the front brake and clutch lever, even the front brake master cylinder – all of which wouldn't look out of place on a 1980s RD road bike. You see it in the footpegs, which while nifty, what with removable rubber inserts, are smallish and visibly budget. There's no computer with a selection of the now regular 'modes', no traction control. There's precious little saddle

YAMAHA TÉNÉRÉ 700

+ WE LIKE

- + **THAT ENGINE:** just stonkingly brilliant
- + **THAT FRAME:** unique to this bike, great to see Yamaha take the effort
- + **THAT VISAGE:** with that headlight and screen the Ténéré has a look of its own
- + **BLUE RIMS:** call us lightweights, but the blue rocks
- + **THE EXHAUST NOTE:** it's like music, sweet-sweet music

- WE DON'T LIKE

- **THAT SEAT:** 8%\$£! Aftermarket take note, there's a job here for you
- **CENTRESTAND:** can we make these standard fitting?
- **SMALL PEGS:** bigger would be nice, especially for off-road riding

JULY'S FIVE-STAR ADV RATING

Applying our mate July Behl's visual rating for adventure bikes. Here's what the Ténéré looks like:

YAMAHA TÉNÉRÉ 700

Daily ride:	★★★★
Green lanes:	★★★
TET (Trans European Trails):	★★★★
BDR/ACT:	★★★★
Rally:	★★★★
Grand tour:	★★★

That's an identical star-count to the KTM 790 Adventure R, only with a different bias on where they score high. So equally good, but different.





(I'm still sore about that, literally). But what there is with this bike is all solid gold. On balance it looks like Yamaha has done something of an IKEA on us, where they give you the last little bit for yourself to complete (in this case the final selection of parts to nuance the bike to what you want).

Looking through Yamaha's accessories we quickly added a £1000 to the list price on bringing the Ténéré up to our desired spec (half rally, half adventure as it goes) but then at least it's almost fully fettled. And we're still talking £2-3000 below the price of an Africa Twin or 790 Adventure R, and there'll be a few add-ons and tune-ups needed for both of those, too, so the price gap is maintained.

We're not talking like for like, though. You see the Yamaha Ténéré 700 is definitely in its own class, with it's own mix of capabilities, and you either desire that or you don't. To ask 'do I want the Ténéré or the Africa Twin or the Adventure R?' that's shouldn't happen unless you're really uneducated as to what you want from adventure motorcycling.



A WINNER

As it stands this is one solid winner from Yamaha, it hits the desired mix for the kind of riding that you'll commonly find here in Europe. In an idea world, with this bike it would be used (by RUST!) for a whole range of purposes: posing through town (it looks super-trick), commuting, green lanes, ATRC rallying, Gibraltar Race type rally-touring, plus TET and ACT. And, if we were Stateside, it would be fine for BDR, too. We're not going to ride more than five minutes two-up though. Yeah, we'd take a Super Ténéré for that ride.

Bottom line: Yamaha, please hear this – we love it!

ONE MORE RIDE

Can the same person write a second opinion? Well, it's me JB again, but it's worth recalling last night's 130-mile ride just for the feedback.

For a start this was a two-up ride, with 13-year-old son Archie on the pillion (about 5'4" and probably 40-50kg). By now knowing how 'marginal' the seat's comfort is, I placed my faithful sheepskin over the saddle. This £25 fix did the job – we got to an hour's riding before needing a comfort break (for me, Archie was surprisingly happy on the pillion).

And the Ténéré 700 was happy-as too, the extra load was not felt either through the engine or suspension – performance unaffected. And we pushed along all the way up to 85mph on the motorway, no issues, the same super-smooth super-accomplished performance. And I love that screen. For me it's perfect, you barely see it as a rider and it tips the airflow over my head better than probably any screen on any bike I've ever experienced – seriously top job.

We took in some green lanes as well. One particular lane was a challenge, being narrow, steeply uphill with a surface of mixed stone and clay – made worse by being in 'moist' condition after overnight rain. We made the first section up to a gate two-up not without some slips sideways, but with the Ténéré pulling well off the bottom, that Pirelli Scorpion Rally tyre might not have so much side grip for off-road, but those blocks certainly cut into the terrain for forward propulsion.

After the gate, seeing how steep the climb was getting, Archie elected to walk the next section. Now being able to stand on the bike, the Ténéré 700 flew up that section at a nice jog, like a regular well-sorted trail bike. But as the climb continued for what looked like another half mile I stopped and Archie gratefully climbed back on. Starting on the greasy slope, from a standstill, loaded, the Ténéré 700 did not balk, nor stall, it just dug

in and climbed up the slope kind of hand over hand at just over tickover. Impressive.

We then went had a break for an action photoshoot, with our mate Harry from Desert Rose Racing doing the riding, and he took as easily to the Ténéré as we did. Like anyone, he assesses the bike on a visual first, particularly noting the apparent high centre of gravity, but once rolling he was instantly comfortable with the dynamics and impressed by the engine. Doing a few jumps and stylish licks you could see the suspension working, it looked to be at the soft end of plush, suiting slow off-road, but after a break for a puncture repair (caused by the most nail-like thorn) we ran out of time to work on suspension settings.

With that puncture fixed (this is where a centre stand would pay – we used a paddock stand in this instance) it was a country roads ride home in the dark. The headlight is good, on dip it offers the most defined letterbox shaped illumination while full beam throws more and slightly scattered light over the top of that, kind of lighting the trees. Combined they allowed a comfortable 50mph ride down unlit country roads – and that's about all you need. I noticed the dip looked to cut too high – dazzling oncoming drivers – so we stopped and I dialed in max-preload on the shock using the easy-as adjuster knob on the shock and with the rear now higher this reset the dip just right and I noticed the bike felt a little better balanced as well.

One nifty thing – the headlight also illuminated the edge of the screen in a kind of purple glow, which is very pretty and just one more little thing that helps make you love this bike even more. However, I wouldn't mind the instrument console being a little less bright (a dimmer would help) for night work.

In all a super-satisfying ride, as every ride on the Ténéré 700 has been. It really is going to be heart wrench handing it back to Yamaha UK... 🇬🇧



CHINA CRISIS



Writing on the run – never easy. So our man in the rally paddock ran late, real late. But all good things are worth waiting for, and Chris's insights to his life within the world rally scene – we love them!

Words: KTM / Rally Zone

My last words to JB as I stepped onto my plane bound for Siberia were, 'yeah don't worry. I'll send you something while I'm away'. Away in this case being the Silk Way Rally, which for the first time in its nine-year history was running a motorcycle class – and an FIM World Championship round to boot.

And if I'd written something during the six days I spent in Irkutsk, capital of Eastern Siberia, while scrutineering was going on, that would have been entirely feasible. Except obviously the race hadn't started yet and there was nothing much to talk about. So I waited until we got going – and then all hell broke loose. Well, for me at least. If I'd taken the trouble to look more closely at the itinerary, I could have probably worked it out. Maybe at some subconscious level I already knew. Talking to the

competitors, riding across Siberia, Mongolia and then into the Chinese Gobi Desert was clearly an amazing experience. For me it was a sleep-deprived blur of planes, buses, planes and the odd helicopter. Brutal as it was relentless. All thought of RUST columns went out the window.

Take the day we travelled from Mongolia to China as an example. The day kicked off at 5am with a bus that went off-road across the steppes for about two hours until we got to a tiny-tiny airport. From there we got into a Mongolian registered M18 ex-Russian army helicopter for an hour and a half ride to a slightly bigger airport where event sponsor Gazprom's 737 was waiting to take us into China. I thought it was best not to ask to see an airworthiness certificate before I got on the chopper, but it is saying something these days when you are actually



relieved to get into a Boeing... Then a very long immigration procedure where, in a little pre-Brexit taster, British nationals living outside the UK (ie me) came under particular scrutiny, "why you no have France work permit if live in France...?" You try explaining to a Chinese border official that actually until Britain officially leaves the EU I don't need one... We all got on another bus, me to chants of 'Brits go home' as I'd delayed the whole convoy...

At five in the evening we finally got to the next bivouac where I was looking forward to some noodles and an early night. Obviously I wouldn't have to write any press releases cos there'd been no racing that day. Silly me. Of course they wanted a press release. In fact they wanted an extended version. A round up of the race so far. I finally got to 'bed', if you can call an inflatable mattress in a very hot tent a bed, at around midnight, with the alarm set for 4am. I thought I'd try and get a hot shower and a spot of breakfast before getting into another 5am bus. Sadly the water was cold and Chinese don't really do breakfast...

**RIDING ACROSS
SIBERIA, MONGOLIA
AND THEN INTO THE
CHINESE GOBI DESERT
WAS CLEARLY AN
AMAZING EXPERIENCE.
FOR ME IT WAS A
SLEEP-DEPRIVED BLUR
OF PLANES, BUSES,
PLANES AND THE ODD
HELICOPTER**





ROAD BOOK ENDURO TOURS IN FRANCE DATES FOR 2019

12/13/14 June	Lozerien Bis
19/20/21 June	Cantal
4/5/6 Sept	Cantal
23/24/25 Oct	Massif du Morvan
6/7/8 Nov	Dordogne
20/21/22 Nov	Normandie



All trips are priced at £560 (payable to ABTA bonded and ATOL protected UK travel agency S&N Pickford). Price includes 3 days riding, 2 nights half-board accommodation, loan of road book and road book reader, support vehicle and driver, an opener and sweeper and a classy T-shirt. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like any further information.

Chris Evans, Sport Adventure
Tel: 0033 662 487190
chris.evans@sport-adventure.com
www.sport-adventure.com

SAM SUNDERLAND COULD HARDLY CONTAIN HIMSELF, SO KEEN WAS HE TO REGALE ME WITH THE AMAZING SIGHTS HE'D SEEN THAT DAY



So, as I was saying, the competitors had a great time. Every time I interviewed Sam Sunderland he could hardly contain himself, so keen was he to regale me with the amazing sights he'd seen that day. And it wasn't just the sightseeing that was rocking his world. All in all he was having an excellent rally.

Only one day did he come in with the 'no speaks', keeping his head down and riding past the journos waiting for him at the bivouac time control. When Sam first appeared on the scene not many could see him staying around for long. Just like another ex-motocrosser, Joan Barreda, he was a bit of a crasher. Unlike the Spaniard however he stopped crashing around 2017 and since then has been doing rather well.

Granted on the Silk Way he didn't have Toby Price or Matthias Walkner to contend with, but nevertheless

looked composed and focused on the job in hand, building a comfortable 20 or so minute lead going into the Gobi, enough to hold off his main challengers Kevin Benavides (Honda) and Adrien Van Beveren (Yamaha) who in their determination to challenge for the top spot handed second overall to the very unassuming Andrew Short (Husqvarna) who is absolutely nothing like what you might imagine an American ex-supercross star to be.

I can't help feeling that the last stage of the 2019 Silk Way was a microcosm of the other factory teams' block when it comes to challenging KTM / Husqvarna's rally stranglehold. They are just in too much of a hurry. Honda has been in a rush to win the Dakar ever since they arrived. Rather than take their time and let their riders and management settle down they keep changing bikes and team members to the point where it looks like everybody

is on short-fused ejector seat.

A few months ago, just like an ex-moto-crosser who'd crashed too much, my own rally-raid career looked pretty much over. My bank manager wasn't thrilled but I was in two minds about it all. There's no denying they're interesting events to work on – but the older I get the less I can stand the appalling living conditions.

No air-conditioned motorhomes for me. But it looks like I'm just going to have to man up. Take a man pill, cos in October I'm back on press release duties on the Rallye du Maroc before toddling off to Saudi Arabia in January as Motorcycle Competitors' Relations. I doubt the hours will be less, or the living conditions better on the Competitors' Relations gig, but at least I won't spend the whole time chained to a laptop. Just don't expect any columns from me while the race is actually being run... 🇸🇦



BETA'S BIG LEAP

2020 was always going to be a big year for enduro, what with KTM fully revising their range. So chances were – Husky aside – the rest of the enduro paddock were going to fall behind, having already felt the heat since the TPi revolution. Beta, though, they're a sharp operator and these savvy Italians have counterpunched with a full model revision of their own for this year. And boy, they're good...

Words: JB **Images:** Marco Campelli, Cristiano Morelli

Ready to Race. Yes, we know that one, it's been drilled into us for years now. Kudos to Beta though, they've not lowered themselves to come up with a similar – but different – maxim. And they've not stressed themselves trying to follow KTM's lead, either. No, Beta are strong enough, brilliant enough, to walk their own path, do their own thing – and win. Ready? They were born ready.

Point being, 'race' doesn't feature in their triple bill of USPs. Instead Beta are keen to accentuate the friendly nature of their motorcycles; ease of use is their

number one facet. Second point: Beta's investment in technology. They're not afraid to embrace change, their bikes are moving forward too – and they're using this tech to the good in every way, keen to point out the advances have made ownership (and maintenance) a more pleasurable experience. And finally, having noted how much dirt bike prices have inflated over these last 12 months, Beta are pricing their bikes 'competitively' – that is to say at a significant undercut on Austrian equivalents. Cheaper, but none the poorer for quality.



Of course a manufacturer can say all these things, they are just words. But Beta has the sales record to show buyers are backing them, by buying more Betas. Having built 11,602 units in 2014, they're production has nearly doubled since then, in 2018 they made 21,214 units. You might think they're at maximum capacity, especially given they're doing all this with just 170 staff, but as their head of R&D, Stefano Fantigini, pointed out, they're still only working to the single eight-hour shift a day.

And while Beta will probably have to live with that 'they're a trials brand' quip for a while longer, fact is trials bikes are just 11% of their output now, while enduro is their biggest segment at 52% of production. And they're not home market dependent either, 81% of Betas are now exported. They're quite the success story.



GOING FORWARDS: SHARPER, SLIMMER

While Beta have improved year on year there was no doubt they've needed a revamp. The bikes worked crazy-good, have been winning world championships, but they've needed an edgier look and an update on tech to keep winning in the showrooms. And going by the 2019 range, the suspension particularly needed to be improved. It's no good having the most competitively priced motorcycles in the paddock if owners are then having to spend their savings on suspension upgrades as a matter of course.

But the 2020s aren't just an aesthetic makeover, nor simply a suspension upgrade. These 2020s are an all-new exercise. New frames, new motors, new bodywork. How they've done all this over an eight-bike range with an R&D team of less than 30 is some miracle, albeit, as Fantigini explained, it has been a three-year operation.





WE LIKE

- + Thoroughly modernized machines
- + Great motors throughout the range
- + No stone left unturned update
- + Michelins as standard

WE DON'T LIKE

- no, we like everything

IF WE WERE PICKY

- Okay, a little more attention to suspension settings
- It's time for in-mould graphics, stick-on stuff is so 2015

So they named their goals: new styling, new ergos; better handling, more precision; simplification on assembly/maintenance and improved power delivery. Breaking that down here's the new:

NEW FRAMES

So we have new frames for all models with an increase in torsional stiffness of 15%, with new details like microcast footrest brackets and shock mounting points, an engine position more rearward (mass centralized) and a longer swingarm. The cooling system is now integrated into the frame tubes (just like KTM) and the bottom rails of the frame are now 20mm narrower, so your feet/boots sit even closer to the centre of the bike. Then, like Husqvarna, the subframes have transitioned from aluminium into 'technopolimer' (flash plastic), so we have a one-piece air filter box and sub-frame with integrated mounting points for the various electrics. This air box is now better sealed with waterproofed joints, while any water that does enter has an instant drain, and the air filter is now easier to

remove/mount. Everything there is now 'no tools': one button releases the seat (for access to the battery – a small li-ion type) while the air box cover has two bull-nose retainers that pull open for easy removal to access the no-tool removable air filter. Yeah, KTM has been doing this for a long while, but it's good to see it elsewhere (Japanese manufacturers take note!).

PLUSHER SUSPENSION

Beta's suspension was my particular bugbear at the 2019 model launch. Ridden at this very same venue (Hell's Gate, near Pisa in Northern Italy) – a terrain that's festooned with rocks – the '19 suspension initially felt harsh, to the point it was tearing my palms. Backing off the adjusters softened it considerably, making it more comfortable, but maybe at the expense of being too soft for experts to crack a fast time. That was my interpretation, others might have theirs,



THE 2020 BETAS AREN'T JUST AN AESTHETIC MAKEOVER, NOR SIMPLY A SUSPENSION UPGRADE - THESE ARE AN ALL-NEW GROUND-UP EXERCISE





and dependent on where you ride that suspension might be awesome or awful.

So for 2020 we have new units, still from ZF by Sachs. The forks now feature a shorter oil cartridge and an optimised air chamber for better absorption of big impacts, while the settings have all been tweaked to allow for the new frames. The shock has a new top-out system, longer shock bumper and new valving to suit the frame.

NEW ENGINES (IN THE FOUR-STROKES)

Meanwhile in the engine department, the four-stroke engine units have been made a significant 20mm shorter by way of stacking various shafts. Just as Yamaha introduced as long ago as 1998 (in their R1 road bike), by stacking the gearbox shafts upwards the motor becomes significantly shorter, bringing the reciprocating masses closer



The 2020 four-stroke Beta engine, see how the transmission has been stacked and shortened

WE EITHER NEED TO BE MORE HONEST AS TO WHAT WE NEED, OR BE MORE OPEN MINDED ABOUT WHAT BRAND WE RIDE

together. This allows the centre of gravity to move backward closer to the rider's feet, while you also get a longer swingarm, which is advantageous for handling and grip. Those new engines are lighter too, by 1kg.

Meanwhile, by decluttering the engine bay, by way of rerouting the water circuit through the frame, there's better airflow through the radiators with better exhaust flow as it were (no pipes and gubbings slowing down the airflow out the rear of the radiators) and this combined with a new water pump on the four-strokes mean they run on average 10°C cooler – and everyone knows a cooler engine is a more powerful engine. The gearboxes have seen some work too, with improved clutches (smoother, better modulation) while the gearbox is also revised with shorter and lighter gears and a new gearshift mechanism.

BIG TANKS

Meanwhile, long distance riders will be happy to hear that the fuel tanks (translucent) are now each 9.5-litres (the four-strokes just a smidge less as the fuel pumps sit within the tank). Add leaner mapping on the four-strokes and they'll go further than ever before each refuel.



SMOOTHER TWO-STROKES

Big news in the two-stroke camp is the addition of the counter-balancer to the 250 and 300cc two-strokes, which smoothes out the power delivery and reduces engine vibrations significantly. Now Beta had actually built-in the capability of fitting a counter balancer into their two-strokes in 2013, but between being cautious of the weight penalty and their need to better understand what they were doing (very honest of them to say so) they left the balance shaft out. Now having invested in better tech they've been able to measure better the vibrations and so optimize the balance shaft to suit. And to boot, say Beta, the balance shaft has increased crank inertia a little

so, much-like a flywheel weight, this has improved rideability. The RR250 also gains a new cylinder head which creates more torque at less revs.

There's loads more tech besides but we'll deal with that as we work our way through the models.

RIDE IMPRESSIONS

A quick word on the suspension. We have to start with the suspension, after all it's the beginning and end of dirt bike set-up. And this year's is very different to the 2019 kit, being much plusher, smoother – only to the point of being maybe a mite soft. It felt great from the off, you get good easy movement and at slower speeds (let's call it clubman speed) it's a smooth





▷ feel, it's not beating you up the way the 2019 kit was. Go faster – and this happens as you start to familiarize yourself with the bike and terrain – and you start noticing that it's soft as much as it is plush. For faster riders, arguably too soft. Good news is that there are preload adjusters on the forks and all the damping adjusters on the forks are no-tool (you'll need flat screwdriver and spanners for the shock), so you can wind in more preload and firm up the damping.

Working on both the RR200 two-stroke and RR350 four-stroke, firming up both ends helped find a better setting for faster riding with the front feeling less like it was dropping into the hollows, while still retaining that important plushness and good turn characteristics. On the rutted-out grass test the front end felt much better placing itself nicely into those corner ruts. That's good for a clubman like me,



essential for experts who'll be pushing that front hard.

Firming up the suspension on the two-strokes also made a big difference to their attitude and feel. They stood taller and handled more like KTMs (no bad thing) and also more like their four-stroke siblings, whereas on softer settings they rode like old-school two-strokes, feeling low and long.

In all, the suspension felt like a big improvement. We had one fast kid in our group who complained long and loud that the suspension was too damn soft (yeah, he was an Australian – but he was indeed fast, and a nice guy I should add). But from a clubman perspective (which is probably 95% of sales) softer and plusher is a better start point. Experts will always be revalving their suspension anyway; they want personalized settings as a matter of course. But for us slow pokes, these stock settings will suit us better and

once we've dialed in the preload and damping to suit our heft and local terrain, chances are this suspension will do us just fine. Still not quite Kayaba great – and the KYB on the latest Yamahas and Gas Gas have been excellent – but there's no need to get sniffy.

SO, ON TO THE BIKES.

RR125

Some specific updates here: the standard 2020 RR125 now gets the 'Factory' model engine spec from 2019, with a new cylinder with modified exhaust port, a new exhaust flange, new exhaust valve system (and 'boosters') with different timing to improve power delivery and a new expansion chamber. Beta say this engine now generates more low rev torque and more top end (a win-win) for a bike that's easier to ride.



2020 BETA ENDURO SPECIFICATIONS

No, we're not doing specifications eight times, editorial time is too precious. Besides, for everything you need to know it's easy, go to: <https://www.betamotor.com>

■ Technopolimer subframe with new air box which has facilitated more precise engine mapping

■ Plush suspension from ZF by Sachs

■ More protective chain guide (small details matter)

■ 9.5/9.1-litre fuel tank

■ Even the headlight and number board has been slimmed

■ New frames with 15% more torsional stiffness

■ New water pump for increased flow, average temp now 10° cooler

■ New four-stroke engines are shorter, swingarm longer

■ Quality Michelin tyres





Now their RR125 was already an easy-to-ride 125, for 2020 it's easier still. Of course it's no easy task getting a 125 to lug a near-100kg middle-aged man, but the RR125 did it well. The standout being that added low-rev torque which meant when Mr Slow-Wit was in a gear too high (almost everywhere) the wee RR125 still pulled – not big time, but it at least pulled rather than falling over on itself, which 125s typically can. Now a keen teenager will be riding this bike in the powerband the whole time and it'll fly, but the important news here is that for someone coming up – say from riding a 125/150/230cc four-stroke – this RR125 is a good next bike, it's not experts only. For smaller people, not just kids, this is a good thing – and it gives them a bike with scope to really bring on their riding. And save for the electric start (it would barely need it) it has all the whistles and bells of the bigger bikes.

RR200

Jeez, I liked this bike. Anyone who rode say a Gas Gas EC200 all those years ago will recall when a 200cc two-stroke enduro could be a torquey, easy going thing. This RR200 is very much like that. Beta didn't have any specific updates mentioned, although it would seem all the two-strokes got revised crankshafts with new inertia values (and improved



lubrication) so maybe it's that which is enhancing the torqueyness (is that a word?). It's a mini-me to the RR300, in a fashion, and definitely a neat clubman bike, and so light and rideable it does make the slower clubman rider question whether a 250 four-stroke is the right choice after all. An easy bike to boss, and not one to go feral on you if you accidentally throw in some whiskey throttle.

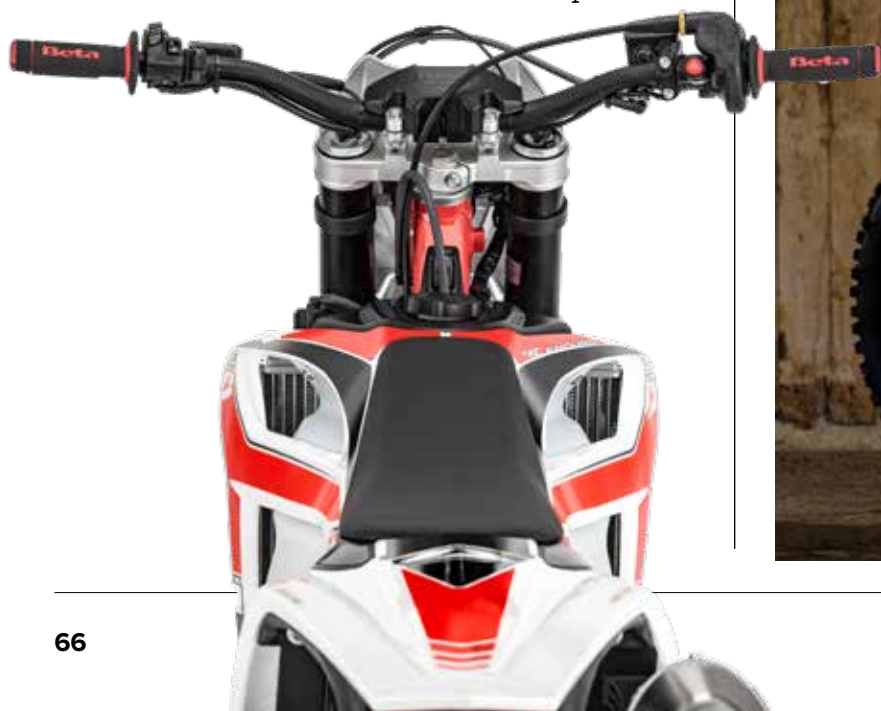
RR250

Beta like their bikes to be easy to use and this really is illustrated with the RR250. Like the RR125 and RR200 it's found some extra low-rev torque which is making it so much nicer when you're not charging. Sometimes the 250s have a little too much snap for a clubman but not this one, it rode more like the 200 only with that option of more speed should you want it. Like all the Betas there is the neatest of no-nonsense engine map switch on the

frame just behind the headstock and if the standard map is too exciting you can dial it down by switching to the rain (traction) map. That's one good switch by the way – out of harms' way with sun and rain cloud icons and a light to indicate which you're in – properly fool proof. And if you can't tame the RR250 with that switch then the exhaust valve is tunable too, via an allen-head screw which you wind in and out for fiercer or softer delivery – and there's a fair range of adjustment there.

RR300

I forgot – the balance shaft, yes, it works very nicely. I recall a ride on the RR300 a couple of years ago and while I marveled in the ridiculous traction that bike found, it felt pretty, er, simple? It vibrated and made a fair bit of noise. I couldn't argue with its performance but it was a kind of bare bones experience after riding a TPi. The new counter-balancer really takes that edge off,



civilizes the two-strokes (along with the oil injection – no premixing). Again, in previous years I've found the chassis set-up with Betas a bit unusual and on something as potent as the RR300 that can be an issue. But now, especially with the suspension dialed in for faster riding, the feeling for the bike is much more modern and confidence inspiring, for the amateur rider particularly. That world champion chap Steve Holcombe flies on his RR300, and riding this bike you can see why. For a 300 it's relatively easy to ride, yet still flies and there isn't a cliff it can't climb.

RR350

On to the four-strokes. Now these really are all new. Engine capacities haven't changed but those crankcases have and the frame etc is all changed. So they kind of feel pretty much like they did before, but at the same time better.

On the RR350 it feels like something else has changed, too. I liked this bike before, but only so much as it was a rev-hound and you would ride it more like a 250F than a 350/450F. This year something's different – one of the techs hinted something along the lines of a change of ratios, although he being Italian with limited English (and me vice versa) we were struggling to understand each other. Whatever, the feeling is it holds its gears longer, and third gear especially seemed longer and the engine torquier, so you weren't screaming the engine and shifting frantically – it's shifted much closer to the laid-back character of the RR390. But not too close, it still feels like a race bike.

The new handling dynamic is a tough one to evaluate without having the 2019s to hand for comparison (if only...). However, the handling was good and I noticed that I was starting to appreciate I was steering more with my feet – weighting the pegs – than with handlebars and body position. It could be the power of the tech talk

was creating autosuggestion but it felt like the weight was indeed mass-centralised, and with the narrower frame you felt you have a real feel for the bike through those pegs (which incidentally have a neatly chamfered leading edge so as to not snag in ruts).

All up the 2020 RR350 felt like a big step-up on the 2019 model. A potent but manageable weapon for the clubman.

RR390

I still think 'trail bike' when I ride an RR390. It just has that all-day ride feel to it. It makes good power but it doesn't come in with a rush, just comfortably builds. Albeit, like any bike, you can rag it. But as a trail bike, occasional race bike, it's a great ride. You don't notice the upgrades on this model so much because you're not inclined to ride it to the edge, so it feels not unlike the 2019 model, but even so, nice, and with that



plush suspension trail riding was never so comfortable!

RR430

Damn, but the Beta techs are good. Enduro 450s can be real brutes – big power with a big hit. In the RR430 you get the significant power upgrade over the RR350/390s but not so much of the hit in the guts. You go faster, you feel racier, you appreciate the agility of the chassis, everything is top notch but it doesn't intimidate. Oh yes, and where on the lighter models sometimes you'd get deflected by particularly stubborn rocks, the RR430 was mean enough, heavy enough, to boss its way everywhere, and would stick like a bloodhound to its line. Again this is

helpful. For the clubman rider who's too big and heavy for a 250F, or even for a 350F, but too timid for a full-race 450 – here's the perfect companion – lard ass just found his fast.

RR480

Around the tight technical and worn out Hell's Gate test track (without the hellish climbs that make this venue the winter extreme race of notoriety) the 480 was too much bike. You could still circulate very nicely on it, but stretching its legs wasn't really feasible. But again, as before with this model, it's a 500-lite. Great for wide-open spaces, but with that 5-10% less bite than the biggest axes, so it's easier for the happy amateur.

**ANYTHING ELSE?**

Yep. I love the new look. Not because it looks sharp, snappy and bang up to date. Although that's a win. But because the new look comes with a great set of ergos. That seat-tank is so flat you can move forward and back to your heart's content. The handlebars, the controls, the levers – everything is the right shape for 2020, no throwbacks, no oddities. One thoroughly modern bike.

The brakes, they're good too. Nissins, front and rear, they've got good feel and plenty of strength. Those gearboxes – proper six-speed units, evenly spread and with a decent near-overdrive top gear for road work. Exactly right for enduro and trail. Michelin tyres as standard – far superior to the Maxxis you'll get with an orange machine. Thank you Beta. And those big fuel tanks? Well, props to Beta because somehow they've managed to get the 9.5 litres into a slim unobtrusive tank that still leaves plenty of space around the engine – so on the two-strokes you can get to the spark plug without removing the tank. We have to love Beta's real-world thinking, too: when they designed those tanks, when they removed the radiator hoses, they were looking at cooling efficiency of the radiators bearing in mind the average speed for an enduro bike is 28km/h – these things have to work in the woods, it's nothing like road bike design.

**THE VERDICT**

I'm handing it to Beta, they're gold standard (for bronze money...). They stand to pick up lots of two-stroke sales (which are already 65% of their enduro output). Not everyone likes KTM's TPI it seems – you get a real split on opinions on that, love-hate – and the Betas look set to run carburetors for years to come so for the fuel injection haters this is an easy homecoming. Yet the Betas have their own sophistication. The oil injection works, you barely saw a puff of blue smoke from them. The counter-balancers now smooth both the vibes and the power. The adjustment on the exhaust valves is so simple and effective – dial in the response you want, slow rev or fast rev. And each two-stroke has an easily identifiable – and attractive – character, 125, 200, 250, 300, the time-honoured capacities. It's all good.

The four-strokes are where Beta would like to pick up more market share. And they deserve it, these are great bikes that really suit the majority of the off-road world's riders. We either need to be more honest as to what we need, or be more open minded about what brand we ride, but Beta's rider-friendly bias on set-up and tune really does make sense. The new chassis are good too, they turn sharp, they go straight, they're possibly percentage points better handling than the competition now, although you'd need a proper comparative test to establish this. But importantly they feel light, sharp and predictable without ever really being a handful. Perhaps the faster-riding suspension settings we ended the test with should be the true stock settings, leaving even more options on going firmer or softer on the damping, but at least these units are now plush and for so many riders probably just right.

Indeed Beta is going from strength to strength. Never the giant that is KTM, not the struggling minnow that is Gas Gas (great bikes, terrible financials). Beta is quiet, confident, assured, safe and solvent. And this time next year – yeah, they'll be tracking that growth curve ever higher. 🍷



NEW

FASTHOUSE
MOTO
STYLE
2019

NOW AVAILABLE FROM WWW.RUSTSPORTS.COM



HONDA CRF250RX

RUST's Honda CRF250RX has been out and about, putting in some training hours on the trails in Kent before having its neck rung (again) at the Ryedale Rally in Yorkshire. Ear plugs might be a good idea...

Words: JB **Images:** www.saltimages.uk, Michael Smith & JB

Me and the Honda are not quite there. The Honda would probably tell you I'm a little heavier than I should be (90kg) and more timid than I should be, too. Need more attack. While I'll tell you the CRF250RX is great, but we need to check out the suspension and longer gearing would be a help, especially for rally work. But small issues aside (diet, training and workshop time should sort these) we're very happy together.

RYEDALE RALLY

How good was this rally? So good!

Yorkshire in mid-summer is very hard to beat, it's a beautiful county and if you love the gentle nature of English countryside (rolling green fields, woods, centuries-old stone houses, villages, pubs) it's just sublime – and in the sun and comfortable 20°C warmth, we were ahead even before we started riding.

This was apparently the 20th running of the Ryedale Rally and it's fair to say the Yorkshire Enduro Club have got the job well and truly sorted. They know what works, what riders will like. So we had fire roads for those flat-in-top adrenaline buzz runs, we had miles of sinuous single

LONG TERM

PART THREE

WHAT WE DID...

Since the last issue there's been an online update (check out our Blogs at rustsports.com), in which detailed a training day with ActionTrax in Kent – more to get JB dialed in than the bike. And now we've competed in the All Terrain Rally Championship (ATRC) again, at the Ryedale Rally in Yorkshire.

track weaving through the forests running on a bed of pine needles that were just perfect – stuff you could ride to a rhythm, with handily placed roots and banks to kick you straight if your steering lock wasn't going to be enough for that one tricky turn. There was even a short section or two of sand, nice sand at that, bermed-stuff you could lean into, feet up and get onto the gas early. The section times were sufficient so that if you ran a decent pace you'd have time





- ▷ for a wee chat, feed and a refuel before your minute, but not so long you got cold or bored. And the two tests were long enough that you'd be quietly admonishing yourself for not taking fitness more seriously, but not so long you suffered a coronary. Yeah, about eight-nine minutes each.

I had mate Craig Keyworth along to share my minute (we were the second pair away – so clean air almost all day). As you'll know from reading these pages, Craig's lining up for the 2020 Dakar Rally so bike time is very important to him right now. And on his current rally bike – a modded Husky FE450 – he runs plenty fast enough. So at the start of every check it was a case of 'You get going Craig, I'll follow along'. It would seem this was Craig's first ATRC and he was impressed, it gave him good terrain and plenty of hours in the saddle – great training for his big race. And for both of us, as well as the other 167 riders, it was simply a highly enjoyable course, with a perfect blend of challenging sections then rest sections to get your heart rate back down.

MORE FASTER

So on the CRF250RX I was having a lovely ride (it would be hard not to, in the conditions). As before, at the Brechfa, I found the gearing just too short, even in the trees. It feels like it's geared for supercross, not motocross (the RX has the same ratios as the R motocrosser). I found a guy with a CRF450RX and he had a similar problem but has, if my recollection is right, gone up a tooth on the countershaft and dropped one or two on the rear. I think I'll look to do likewise. Given I'm often running third and even fourth gear in the woods I think the CRF will take the higher gearing without the risk of losing the use of the bottom ratios for real tight stuff. That's quite the opposite scenario to the usual KTM one where you look to fit a smaller countershaft sprocket



HONDA CRF250RX

straight away.

The suspension I'd put back to stock settings (after having tried backing off the compression and rebound in the rooty woods at Ightham) and this worked well at Ryedale. The CRF felt to have the right ride height and good balance for everything, it handles sweetly and I could charge the woods single track, but I was still feeling the shocks through the handlebars as we hit roots and rocks.

A quick ride on Craig's FE450 – equipped with Dr Shox fettled suspension – was the perfect comparison. The Dr Shox WPs were soaking up the rocks and roots without any negative energy transfer back to the rider, but still offered bags of feel and so was seriously confidence boosting. You could run at stuff faster and harder and suffer no consequences. I think the general performance of the Honda's Showas is about right, but I could do with the energy saving, confidence-inspiring plushness that Craig's enjoying.

NOT FAST ENOUGH

Okay, that's the bike sorted. The rider is the real issue here. Let's look at the numbers. Finished 55th from 169 starters, 19th in class. And because if you look hard enough you can usually find something positive to hang your hat on – hey, I was first 250cc four-stroke! That beats my usual fallback of saying I was the first rider with the



name Jonathan Bentman (I'll be in trouble the day another JB turns up).

The results are based on the special test times and here I can see both days I started slow and finished fast(er). On each day I was about 30 seconds quicker on the last run through the test than on the first – that's quite a lot on an eight-minute test. That's not stamina, that's just been dog slow on the first run. I can put fear into the equation there, too. I really detest crashing (the pain) so will only push when I feel safe. Also I don't practice enough (like almost never), so it takes me most of the day to improve my feel and technique. And I guess, really, I'm just chicken.

Yet I do care about my results, I can see I can get better if I apply myself more. I could pick up a few places if I could just do my fast times from the start. And if I practiced, maybe I could gain some more. Can't see me ever being a winner ▷



▷ though – the gap to the top ten is just light-years. But weighing against this: well, I'm at the bottom end of being fit for my age, I'm a little overweight but not too much, I don't suffer much in the way of aches and pains (left knee is a bit wobbly after stretching the ligaments in a rut in an enduro, and the right foot can be a bit stiff where I broke all the metatarsals when I landed a WR250F on it) but generally I get along fine. I don't need to be throwing my body down a stump-strewn track, or go bouncing off some trees – I like the idea of a mobile old age! So I'm at a kind of stalemate with myself, reluctantly accepting this is me.

A PLAN

Nonetheless I need a plan. Now I make lots of plans, so don't expect me to follow through on this. But here's the thinking. My life on the CRF can be improved. I can change the gearing, the time will come for a new chain and sprockets soon enough anyway. So for about £100, that's one job sorted. And I could get the suspension revalved. Old friend Chris Hockey (www.drshox.co.uk) offers to revalve/tune forks for £130 and shocks for £120 – with maybe a few small extras as you never know exactly what might be needed. Bear in mind that cost includes a full service and overhaul, that's bloody good value for probably biggest gains you'll find short of improving your fitness. I'll have more ride comfort – so less fatigue – and will be able to go faster more safely. On an £7850 bike, that's seriously good value for money, and the bike deserves it. I should do it.

In the meantime, like now, it's time for a big strip clean in the garage, gotta have the CRF all sparkling again, ready for the Beacons ATRC perhaps...



OH YES...

One last thing. Yes, I punctured at the Ryedale. I got carried away for a short while there, chasing Lee Green on his KTM 690 Enduro R – he finished third outright! Racing into a rock field, before I knew it, I'd pinch-flatted the front tube. So I rode the last hour of day one on a flat, which held good given the integrity of the Metzeler Six Days (hard compound) tyre and rim lock. I fixed the tyre back at the paddock with the odd borrowed tool (thanks Tim and Dave) – and backed off a fair deal on day two anytime I saw rocks.

Should I swap to mousses? If I really want better results then yes. But the expense holds me back as does my sense of waste (I mean how much of the world's resources should we be throwing at this?), plus there's the bind of fitting. Yeah, even given the hassle of the flat, part of me still feels that enduro would be safer if we learned to ride tubes again, it would be cheaper too, and maybe we'd be kinder to the land. Some days I just know I'm a fossil. You know I'm resisting electric cars/bikes too, just can't see batteries as being the answer. Hydrogen, that's the future I think... ▷

HONDA CRF250RX





RYEDALE RALLY

Many thanks to Robert Wilson and the guys at Yorkshire Enduro Club for the invite to compete in their round of the ATRC championship (see www.rallymoto.co.uk).

The venue was excellent, a lovely tree-lined paddock / camping field. Great food (an excellent complimentary evening meal on the Saturday for all riders). The forests we rode were stunning – taking me back to riding the pine forests in New Zealand with a kind of perfect-traction sand/loam base. For riding in the UK it doesn't get much better (Welsh Two Days aside). Excellent course, perfectly marked, precision time keeping, friendly marshals and brilliant company (Griffin, Steve, Gavin and Lee – thanks for great company at the checks). Put it on your diary for 2020 and maybe stay on with the family for a few days holiday.

WHAT IS AN ATRC RALLY?

For those unfamiliar with ATRC rallies, the format is something like this...

▷ **TWO DAYS**

Yes, two days. Longer first day, probably about 150 miles, shorter second, around 100 miles (so you can head for home at a reasonable hour – not because you're flogged-out, no). Typical lap length is about 50 miles, maybe shorter (the course marked by arrows as per enduro). The lap is typically a mix of road (so you need to be road legal), fire road (gravel) and single track through forest, the time to complete each lap is usually fairly generous, and even then if you're late there is no time penalty, although drop more than 30 minutes behind schedule and you'll be 'promoted to spectator status' (© Stefan Boschoff). Because big bikes also compete the course isn't as taxing as a normal enduro but a novice will find one or two challenges a lap.

SPECIAL TEST

The results are then based on the special tests which are timed to a hundredth of a second, the test being typically around five miles or say eight minutes long. First lap is a sighting lap, subsequent goes at the specials are all timed.

BIKE BIKES, SMALL BIKES

ATRC grew out of a desire to compete off-road on big trail bikes. There was a time when many a big GS might take part. Only the big bikes numbers have dwindled over time – probably as the riders have aged and sought an easier life on enduro bikes, and the bikes have become more expensive. But the big 'uns still turn up and at Ryedale we had a mix of KTM 950/990/1090 Adventures and a new Africa Twin or two (well



done those men). A better match for the terrain these days are the KTM 690s and Husky 710s, which are fast on gravel and manageable on the single track – and many of these turn up with full rally kits. Otherwise the bulk of the entry is made up of enduro machines, two-stroke and four-stroke and all capacities. ATRC is almost a gentleman's enduro – for the rider who can't face the grueling, frenetic multi-lap experience that is modern enduro.

RYEDALE'S SPIRIT OF THE RALLY AWARD

The Yorkshire Enduro Club have a special 'Spirit of the Rally' award for the rider(s) who brought something special to the event. This year it was awarded to a group of riders who rode their bikes from London for the event (250 miles). There were five of them – James Gillett (Honda XR650L), Ollie and Lois Jobst (both KTM 690 Adventure R), Hector Coombs (Honda XR400) and Ben Brown (Suzuki DRZ400). Self contained, they camped under bivouac sheets, pegs into the grass guy ropes to the hedge, and were roughing it generally. The rally was in fact their precursor to a week following the Northern TET through Northumberland, the Lake District and down to Wales! 🇬🇧



HUSQVARNA

FE350

LONG TERM

PART FIVE

The whole Husky FE350 exercise has been about Warren's search for the perfect setup – check out previous instalments in RUST 42, 41, 37 and 39. Now, in this final report on the bike, he's as good as found it. A factory ride almost...

Words & Images: Warren M.

The approach to this build was to create an enhanced European enduro machine, as close to a factory machine as a privateer might need (or want) and on budget that was not super silly.

The FE350 now has about 80 hours on the meter, a little over 3000km on the clock and is now three years old. The bike still looks trick and I would have no problem riding and racing this bike for a good while yet. So it's with a little sadness that I will leave this bike prepped but parked, ready to go on display. I have decided to keep the bike rather than selling it. Although I had a fair few injuries that kept me off the bike for the first year of owning it, the past two years I have developed a growing fondness for the Husky. I think I've spent at least an equal number of hours with it in the workshop as I have riding it. I'm pretty sure that the bike will come off display from time to time. I just like riding it too much (JB – and anytime I'm in Portugal I'm claiming it!).

But, ahem, it's time to look forward to a brand-new project with the new RUST 2020 KTM 350EXC-F, so this is the last story for the faithful Husky.

THE WARREN WAY

I would like to share with you the way I approach setting up my enduro bikes. I have developed a formula over the years that I try and follow religiously and given that I have been aboard either a Husky or KTM it has made my life easier to establish a pattern of what needs doing. This has been as result of many hours of trial and error.

I'll begin with the things I like and dislike and go from there.

**HUSKY FE 350 OEM LIKES AND DISLIKES****My top stock FE likes:**

Lower compression and heavier flywheel combined with a shorter stroke and bigger bore – all which combine to make the power delivery very tractable.

The height of the bike and open ergonomics make the cockpit roomy.

My top stock FE350 weaknesses:

The WP forks; I feel like its Groundhog Day – I keep repeating myself every year, the WP forks are the biggest let-down on the bike. They lack effective damping in the first part of the stroke and progression as the fork moves through the stroke, so much so that they rob you of confidence – they just wander around way too much.

The shock is adequate but given the type of event formats these days while it is adequate in the tight stuff most special tests include an MX track as a test and the shock just can't cope with the big stuff.

THE THEORY

The key to set-up is establishing your base settings first and then understanding what you are trying to achieve. Small steps are crucial to getting things right, especially when you recognise that when you change one item it may well have an effect on something else that you have not considered.

I have a set of key points that I want to achieve with each bike set-up. These include:

GENERAL SETUP

This means that I could ride the bike in any conditions as is but with a few small minor adjustments I can turn the bike into a specialist weapon for very little time or money. Once I have my baseline settings dialled in for my general setup I then think about what changes I would make depending on the terrain and conditions I'll be riding.

There is no magic bullet when it comes setup, it takes time. But I have learned

over the years that if you spend time with your bike at the outset trying to understand it and how it works then it saves loads of time, hassle and money in the long run.

KNOWLEDGE IS MY FIRST APPROACH TO BIKE SETUP

How boring am I? I read the owner's manual. Why? Because the first thing I do when I set up a bike it to break it down. No matter if you've bought a bike second hand or brand new my first tip is to break it down (as far as your knowledge allows).





This will teach you about how the bike works, if/where you have any issues that need attention and you will know the bike is well lubricated.

BREAK IT DOWN TO BUILD IT UP.

Frankly the best way to learn is to start taking off all the plastics, the tank, the wheels, etc. Strip the bike down as far as you are confident in doing. (Having the owner's manual to hand is always recommended). I go so far as to strip the bike to its frame /motor before I rebuild it. New or second hand you cannot guarantee who last worked on your bike and if you have previously broken a new bike down you will know that often you will hardly find any grease and lubrication on the moving parts.

ELECTRICAL

I do a thorough check of the electrical wiring harness and where the factory may have skimmed on electrical tape, connectors or cable routing. I almost always tidy up the harness and improve the cable routing to ensure that there

are no pinch points or friction points that can cause cable damage or connector failure.

The first parts upgrade I make to any bike is to replace the lead battery with a Li-Ion one. This not only saves a tonne of weight but I have found them to be more reliable and long lasting if treated well.

LUBRICATION

Next is to make sure that I grease the main bearings and thread lock bolts where required. Typically, this will include the subframe, swingarm, shock, wheel hubs and spindles and steering head bearings.

COOLING

The next parts upgrade is to the cooling system. My go-to cooling parts include a Trail Tech fan kit which features a programmable fan, it's lightweight and ultra-reliable. This is paired with a Samco Sport silicone hose bypass kit which allows me to dispense with the OEM thermostat. This reduces weight

and improves reliability. I also like to run a Boyesen water pump cover and impeller together with a high-pressure radiator cap (2.1 bar) and Engine Ice coolant.

PLASTICS

I almost always replace the OEM plastics and frame guards with aftermarket plastics from Acerbis or Polisport. This FE350 has been exclusively clothed in Acerbis plastics. Not only does this protect the OEM parts to refit for sale but I like to be able to mix and match the colours with the new plastics. I also like to fit swingarm guards for the same reason. They are a bit trickier to clean but they keep the swingarm looking fresh and help with resale values.

PROTECTION.

I flip-flop on bike protection parts. I use carbon parts for exhaust protection and occasionally use carbon bash / skid plates. The carbon parts are not flexible and can change the feel and handling of the bike. As Alan Stillwell explained,

if you stiffen the frame by adding a stiff sump plate it can often result in a change in feel in the suspension. If you have a bike that has plenty of torsional flex then this may be a good thing but if the chassis is already stiff this may not be the best option and plastic may be a better solution. The FE350 sports a Pro Carbon skid plate and carbon pipe guard.

PIPE

No rocket science here, fitting a titanium pipe (full; or slip-on mufflers) saves weight and adds more grunt. I fitted an FMF Factory 4.1 titanium slip-on muffler paired with the stock header pipe which results in a punchier low end and a significant improvement in pull from mid to top. My pipe protection is from Pro Carbon. Husqvarna not adding a pipe guard / heat shield as standard on the FE350 is a big fat kick in the nuts. I burnt at least two pairs of riding pants on the pipe before my pipe guard arrived.

The pipe routing on the FE350 is my



▷ biggest bugbear although I suspect the real culprit is the subframe design (JB: note that on the 2020 models the header pipe is now two-piece to make fitting so much easier). The standard shock reservoir is piston driven and it sits pretty close to the hot pipe. I changed the reservoir to a bladder system to improve the shock performance by reducing heat and improving the feel of the shock in the first part of the stroke because the bladder has no piston that has to break through the oil and therefore reduces stiction.

The bad news for me was that the cannister now pretty much sits on the pipe which is less than ideal. I had to wrap the cannister in a heavy-duty heat shield. I am going to wrap the exhaust to try further reduce heat transfer.

BRAKES

My chosen brand for brakes is Braking and the FE350 has Braking discs and sintered pads fitted front and rear. The front disc is an oversize 270mm batfly design while the rear brake is a solid 220mm disc.

DRIVETRAIN

I only use Regina Z Link chains. I have not found a chain with comparative performance and longevity that compares to Regina so I tend to stick with what works. I did decide to run the stock chain on the FE350 this time round but after 40 hours and a number of readjustments that were required I binned the chain and fitted my trusty Regina chain and in the equal time thereafter I have not had to make a single adjustment.

I pair my chain with sprockets from Dirt Tricks and, like my chains, I use Dirt Tricks exclusively on all my bikes. There Zirconium sprockets are light and extremely tough. I have run a single front and rear sprocket over two seasons before and could have run them longer if I'd wanted. They are also pretty slick and add some panache to the bike. I chose the Zirconium rear sprockets which are comparable in weight to performance to

aluminium sprockets and lighter than the twin metal designs. Dirt Tricks claim a 50% reduction in friction with the new coating and I can attest to both the longevity and minimal chain wear in comparison to its competitors.

I started off with the gearing at 13:50 and am now running a 13:48 which is perfect for me. If you've never played around with your gearing – try it – you'll be amazed at the change it makes in the engine characteristics and performance. Common sense sort of makes this a forgone conclusion but in my opinion the change is more noticeable than you would initially assume.

ENGINE

I've made no mods to the engine yet save for fitting a Hinson clutch. The Hinson clutch is engineered to much stricter tolerances than the mass-produced OEM clutches. This reduces drag and heat and reduces stiction to such an extent that I found I could run the 350 to a much slower speed before stalling than was possible with the stock clutch. This was the one part that helped improve my riding more than any single other part I fitted.

It's time to replace the piston now and I will more than likely fit a Vertex top end kit. I've even been thinking about Kashima coating the new piston, and polishing the cylinder head and pairing this with a Torque Wing in the throttle body, but that's as far as I need to go. The stock motor works well and I have opened a few strategic holes in the subframe / airbox to allow the motor to breathe more. This did change the motor dynamics somewhat in that it was less docile after the airbox mods and the motor now reacts more sharply and is less docile up top.

HANDLEBARS AND CONTROLS.

I fitted the following bars throughout the test process, Renthal 998s, Twisted Engineering's Flex Bar, Neken bars, and finally I landed on the Pro Taper Fuzion bars. I tried both the Carmichael and SX bends. If I'm running a GPS on trail rides I choose the Carmichael bend, the control area is 210 mm versus the





▷ next longest control area which is on the SX at 180 mm. If not, then I generally choose the SX bend which is higher and flatter than the Carmichael bend which is very low.

I run a Scott's Performance Steering Damper for those big hits and appreciate that this can be adjusted on the fly to suit varying terrain and is a necessity over faster ground. I choose the Sub Mount which raises the bar height and suits my height. An above bar option is available if you prefer a lower bar height.

The Pro Taper Fuzion bars have a dial that allows you to stiffen the bars or unlocked provide up to a claimed 32% more flex.

TYRES AND MOUSSES

I have been using the new Michelin Enduro mediums on the FE350. As a magazine we get to test a good deal of products and I have tried many tyre and mousse combo's over the past few years. I chose to stick with them throughout.

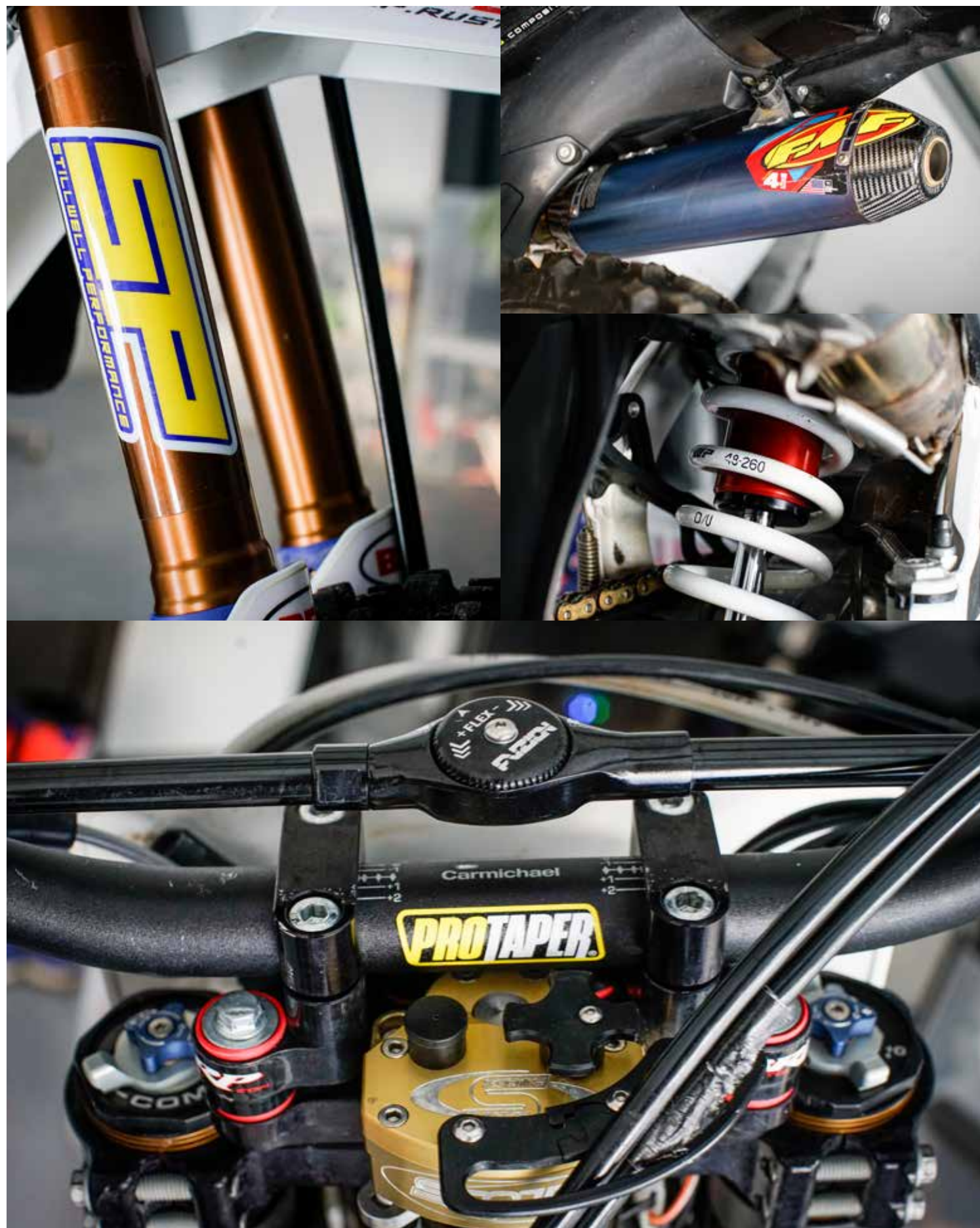
SHOCK

I fitted a Trax shock with a bladder conversion and an X-Trig shock collar to make sag adjustments a cinch. The shock spring was replaced to suit me in full kit (190-200lbs).

FORKS

No surprise here, my WP forks are tuned by Stillwell Performance. I now have two sets of forks for the FE350. The first set has been dialled in for intermediate to hard terrain and the second pair for hard enduro. This makes life a lot easier but I do realise than this makes us seem spoilt and I suppose we are but why own a bike mag if occasionally you can't indulge a little and share the experience!?

I have blown through two sets of fork seals over the two years and have replaced the oil four times. I began running 5-weight but switched to 4-weight after the first fork oil change and I noticed an immediate improvement, especially in the first part of the stroke which felt plusher over the small chattery stuff. The forks springs are a .47 which replace the .45 stock spring.



WHEELS

I ran a set of Haan Hubs paired with Excel rims as my first test set and then switched these out for a set of Talon carbon hub paired with Excel A60 rims.

And to finish the mods... The balance of the mods included replacing the seat with an Acerbis X seat (see RUST #42). The grips are Emig ODI lock on, the radiator nets are from PowerParts and the graphics are supplied by LR designs.

DOES IT ALL WORK?

RACE/RIDE TESTS

There is no comparison between this bike and the stock FE350. Our RUST modified version has noticeably more power low down and pulls through the power curve from mid to top way stronger than the stock bike. The Hinson clutch added a vital component to the slow speed character of the bike and with a meatier power delivery it allowed way more time off the clutch without stalling. While the power has been significantly improved the power is not aggressive, rather it's more useable more of the time. The FE350 finds traction and while it behaves well on flat ground it has the grunt and power to make serious hill climbing way easier than the stock FE as a result of the engine power and suspension gains.

The Stillwell suspension feels stable and the progression and damping makes the forks plush in the first part of the stroke, getting stiffer as the fork moves higher in the stroke soaking up the small and big stuff without compromising either action. The Trax shock by design helps keep the back wheel on the ground longer and the rebound has been slowed to accommodate the stiffer spring. Overall the bike's suspension is impressive and the gains results in the bike feeling well balanced and planted.

In all, I'm very happy with the bike. I'm not going to break down the costs (Mrs M might take fright), but over the three years it doesn't work out to be too huge and the result is a great ride. A great wee bike – and JB better think again if he think he's going to borrow it. Anyway, it's time to clean, lubricate and put the Husky on display. There's a new toy in the workshop. 🛠️



HINSON BILLETPROOF CLUTCH

Contact: www.technical-touch.com www.hinsonracing.com

RRP: US \$519.99 EU €680.50 (Hinson H573 kit for Husky FE350)

Firstly: KTM & Husqvarna versus the rest:

If you have a late model KTM or Husqvarna and are thinking about fitting a Hinson clutch you have a distinct advantage over owners of other makes because there is no need to fit a replacement clutch basket. The Hinson clutch, fibre and pressure plate kits fit the OEM basket. According to Hinson, KTM/HQV clutch baskets' engineering is top notch and they saw no need to manufacture a replacement part. All other makes will require you to remove the primary drive gear (with a grinder) from the OEM baskets first, then attach this to the replacement clutch basket before reinstalling.

THE TECH STUFF

So, what makes a clutch high-performance? The answer is precision. For a clutch to properly disengage, the pressure plate moves between 1 and 1.5mm. It is a very small distance in which 15 fibre and steel clutch plates have to engage and disengage. If the plates are precision engineered with very exact tolerances it means that each one of the plates can spin free of each other thereby creating far less heat, heat being the biggest enemy to clutch performance.

It is important that clutch plates are all extremely flat so that each one can spin free of each other and that there is no resistance against neighbouring plates. Given mass manufacturing and the need to keep bike prices affordable, it stands to reason that OEM clutches are not all engineered with the equivalent materials or precision as those of a specialist clutch manufacturer like Hinson. The OEM tolerances are generally far higher which can result in the plates not spinning free of each other, causing drag and that drag will cause heat, which will normally result in play at the clutch lever first and then progress to the clutch fading or even failing.

At Hinson they pair their precision-engineered steel clutch plates and fibre plates to the same low tolerances. They then add a friction material that helps the clutch engage much more positively. Then comes the springs; stock springs are typically manufactured from inferior material that loses its strength under heat. Hinson springs are made from high temp steel that is resistant to strength loss up to 650°F (no clutch will ever get that hot). This means that the correct clamping pressure can be maintained resulting in consistent performance and superior durability. Add to the above list the Akadized billetproof pressure plate that is machined from billet T-6 aircraft quality aluminium to aerospace tolerances. The result is that rather than flex and wear (under heat) the pressure plate does not flex and stays true. Hinson claim that this improves durability up to five times longer than OEM clutches.

THE RESULTS

Before fitting the Hinson clutch FSC kit to our long term Husky FE350, I put about 40 hours on the stock clutch to make sure that my review was a fair comparison between the two. I now have about 80 hours on the bike so each of the clutch setups was used for





roughly the same amount of time. I decided to uninstall the Hinson clutch after 40 hours to check wear and tear versus that on the OEM components also after 40 hours. Here's what I found...

Stall – what stall? The most immediate difference I found between the Hinson clutch and the stock clutch is that it was way more difficult to stall the bike at low speeds with the clutch engaged. I mean a big difference. I also noticed that when fanning the clutch when exiting corners or through sandy corners the bite point at the lever was soft and precise while the clutch response was instantaneous.

I'm not sure how noticeable the difference would be on a two-stroke but on a four-stroke under engine braking the improved performance of the Hinson clutch is immediately evident. To me it felt that the lack of clutch drag resulted in a feeling that the overall engine braking was reduced significantly. I did not notice any clutch chatter but the best part about the Hinson clutch was that I was able to be off it more often. Rather than pulling or fanning the clutch to prevent the bike stalling I could run the bike into corners under engine braking with the clutch engaged to almost a dead stop before the bike stalled.

I spent time practising this over and over until I found the stall point and then switched to another 350 (an EXC-F) fitted with the stock clutch. Against the measuring tape and the clock, the FE350 fitted with the Hinson clutch outperformed the stock setup 350 every

time. Across the board I found that I was able to select one gear higher than I normally could into turns and tricky sections and the amount of times I stalled the bike when out for a full day's riding was reduced by half or more.

Longevity: OEM: As I mentioned I replaced the OEM clutch after 40 hours. The stock clutch looked to be in good condition save for the rubber dampers which had split and needed to be replaced before fitting the Hinson parts. I replaced the washers and O-rings too. Hinson: After a similar 40 hours I removed the Hinson components for inspection, the clutch looked like it did when I installed it! I found no ridges or seams; the rubber dampers were all still in good condition and the fibre and clutch plates were still perfectly flat. As well, it did not look like I needed to replace the O-rings and washers, but I did anyway before reinstalling the clutch.

CONCLUSION

This could get expensive! I can see me fitting a Hinson clutch to all my bikes from now on. In comparison to spending money on other aftermarket goodies I would rank replacing the stock clutch as my second most important modification – suspension first, then the clutch and then everything else. In fact I'm going to be fitting Hinson's BTL slipper clutch to my 2020 KTM 350 EXC-F to experience what it feels like to ride a four-stroke with reduced engine braking. Look out for the review on that in coming months.

THANKS:

Thanks to Robert McClure at Hinson for the technical assistance and to Diego Classens at Technical Touch, the Hinson distributors in Europe.



FANTIC

NEW FOR 2019 RALLY 500

- Single cylinder 450cc twin cam motor
- Arrow stainless exhaust as standard
- Headlamp guard & number board
- Lightweight aluminium swing arm
- Sump guard & radiator guard
- 2 way adjustable suspension
- Progressive link suspension
- Disengageable ABS
- CNC triple clamps
- Bybre brakes

THE STREET SCRAMBLER

- Choose your power 125, 250 or 500
- Arrow stainless exhaust as standard
- Progressive link suspension
- Disengageable ABS
- CNC triple clamps
- Bybre brakes
- Lowering kits now available
- 125 variants L plate legal



See full model range and find dealers at:

fanticmotoruk.com



MICHELIN ENDURO (MEDIUM) AND MOUSSE

Contact: www.endurotyres.com

Prices by endurotyres.com: tyres: front: £51.96

rear: £67.44 (120) £70.66 (140);

Mousse: M14 (rear) £114.19 M15 (front) £104.69

Launched in 2017 at the ISDE in France, these new Michelin tyres were in development for the over four years and replaced the firm's FIM Comp 3,4 and 6 tyres.

Michelin have simplified their tyre range to simply 'Enduro', with just two options on front compound and a single rear. They claim to also have improved the tyre significantly by switching from using Carbon Black to Silica for the first time in the construction its off-road tyres. Silica apparently works better at low and inconsistent temperatures, and is more durable. The result is that Michelin no longer need to use three nylon plies and can now use two polyester plies instead. This has not only reduced the weight but improved flex in the tyre without sacrificing rigidity.

Michelin claim improved grip and cushioning as a result of work done to the internal structure of the tyre, tread block shape and layout. The simplified tyre range is said to offer greater terrain versatility due to new rubber compounds and the development of specific mousse/tyre compatibility. Durability is improved by circa 15% compared with the previous generation Comp generation.

NEW MOUSSE

The compatibility of the tyre / mousse combo was immediately evident. The M14 mousse is bigger than its

predecessor (by about 30mm) and fits seamlessly into the new Enduro Medium 140 rear. It also means that the new M14s cannot be used with any other brand of tyre and is made specifically for the new Michelin Mediums.

The new M14 does not need to be broken in and are claimed to last far longer than the previous M14s due to the new combination of materials and larger size. They have been working on reducing the 'dead' feel synonymous with mousses and have made improvements to eradicate this with the new mousses. Both the front and rear mousse fitting was simple and it helps to have a mousse that is specifically made for the tyre.

NEED TO KNOW

Tyres: The single option rear Medium is designed as a broad-spectrum tyre for use across all terrain. The two front tyre options are Medium and Hard. The Medium is the preferred compound for most terrain. The Hard option (not compound) is designed deliberately for hard pack riding.

The recommended tyre pressure (if running tubes) is between 13.5 and 15psi. No higher or lower. The tyre will over-flex at lower pressures.

COMBOS TESTED

Rear: 140/80/18 (Medium) with new M14 Mousse
Front: 90/90/21 (Medium) with new M15 Mousse



THE RESULTS

GRIP

These tyres are extremely versatile and performed well over the test terrain which ran the full gambit, from slop to hardpack, finding good grip in almost all conditions. The combination of running the tyres with the mousses worked very well, the mousses are soft out of the box, but not too soft to be little use in intermediate and even hard conditions. It seems that Michelin has found a perfect balance and produced one of the best all-round tyres on the market. The longer I've had riding on them the more I grown to appreciate the characteristics and engineering, but it was the broad spectrum performance of the tyres that leaves a lasting impact.

LIFE

Here is the mileage on the tyres I used:
Total test mileage: 2400km
Tyres used, rear: 2x rear 140/80/18 rear tyres
1x rear M14 Mousse used with both rears
First tyre changed at 1100km
Second tyre changed at 2400km
Mousse replaced
Front: 1x 90/90/21 with M15 mousse
First tyre changed at 1900km
Second tyre still in use

MOUSSE & TYRE FIT

The mousses fit these tyres like a glove, no need to run them in either, and better still they are easier than most mousses to install. Overall a very low frustration rating and they score well in the less mess category.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The mileage speaks for itself but do the tyres and mousses keep working well throughout their life? The answer is a simple yes. They maintain an exceptional level of functional performance. The tyres are well priced and I think based on the results offer excellent value for money. The price of the mousses stings a little, but no one is suffering buyer's remorse once fitted that's for sure. Value for money based on a combination of good performance and longevity.

Continuing Warren's adventure into fitness for the frankly flagging, he's discussing programmes. So let's take an oath: say, starting September 1 we'll all start our regimes to be in better shape for the 2020 season...?

SHORT SHARP SHOCKED

Fitness above 40

FIRST AN OVERVIEW

The song title by Michelle Shocked seemed the most appropriate title for this month's fitness for over 40s column because it aptly describes what I have found to work most effectively in our busy lives.

I'm no natural athlete just a regular Joe who has work hard to try and stay fit for the love of riding, and over the years I've tried so many different approaches to get and stay fit and, a little vainly, to look good too.

LESS IS MORE!

They say hindsight is the most powerful tool in the box and looking back I could have saved countless hours lifting weights, running long-distance and just spending way too many hours in the gym, unfocused, and disillusioned by

my lack of endurance on the bike and my inability to stick with my workout programme after so much effort. I felt like a yo-yo.

As the technology of sport has evolved and the benefits of cross training and functional training have come to the fore it reshaped the way people train as they began to recognise that shorter more intense and focused training resulted in a trimmer, fitter and more flexible body. The big kicker is that shorter more intense 30 - 45-minute workouts will not only improve your training results but it makes longer term training more sustainable.

I think the two hardest things for us all is taking the first step to getting started and then maintaining our fitness programme. Let me reassure you, you don't need to be driving to the gym every day or own load of fancy



I'VE NOTICED THAT IT TAKES AT LEAST 120 DAYS OF CONSISTENT TRAINING FOUR DAYS A WEEK TO ACHIEVE A GOOD BASE LEVEL OF FITNESS

▷ equipment or train for hours at the time to see substantial and tangible benefits. Working out for 1/2 hour four times a week using your own bodyweight, one or two kettle bells and a few other cheap bits and bobs is all you need.

FIRST STEP

Let's talk about making that first step. The majority of people I know that finally take a decision to improve their fitness attack their first session with gusto. This overzealous approach results in exactly what they feared in the first place, being so sore the next day that they can hardly move and rather than finding training motivating it has the opposite effect.

Let me encourage you to take a much slower, precise approach. If you can spend only 10 minutes a day four days a week, doing light exercise for the first week, it will help to begin to reprogramme your mind and your body into your new routine. Your aim for the first three to four weeks is to consistently achieve your four-days-a-week training goal. Start 10 minutes a day for the first week progressing to 15 and then 20 minutes by the end of your first month. The key to this revolutionary style of training is intensity: your intensity, you against yourself.

There's no need to lift heavy weights or join a HIIT class right off the bat. My suggestion is that for the first week to use your bodyweight and focus on your core. At the end of the first week not only will you feel better having accomplished your goal but you will notice an improvement in the way your body feels and will be better prepared to begin a more intense and rigorous regime for your short intense workouts to come.

NOTICEABLE CHANGE

I've noticed for myself that it takes me at least 120 days of consistent training four days a week to achieve a good base level of fitness doing high-intensity workouts to produce a noticeable change – and to increase fitness and endurance on the bike.



WARREN'S PROGRAMME

My three-four-week pre-start programme, starts with 10 minutes and progresses to 20 minutes after the first two weeks.

WARM UP:

Start each session with a five-minute warmup. This is key to get your muscles warm and avoid injury.

Perform each warm up exercise in controlled movements for 30 seconds:

- Shoulder rolls
- Neck Rolls
- Hip Rolls
- Star Jumps
- High Arm no weight squat
- Run on the spot
- Jack-knives

(with all these stretches and exercises you can search them online to find out the how-to)

UPPER BODY – BODY WEIGHT WORKOUT:

Push ups – superset (you should attempt 30 seconds of each push up variation dropping to 15 seconds as you fatigue or AMRAP). Perform each variation for the set time, move to the next variation without rest until you

complete the first set. Then take a minute's rest.

Push up variations:

Decline push up (feet on a bench or bed so they are higher than your head/hands)
Flat Push up
Incline push up (feet on the floor with hand raised on a bench)
Dips.

LOWER BODY – BODY WEIGHT WORKOUT:

Follow the above set with a lower body set comprising the same workout time and rest goals

Variations:

Static lunges – alternating legs
No weight – High arm squats (feet shoulder width apart, hands stretched above your head perform a deep slow squat keeping your arms extended.)
Alternating leg Bulgarian squat
Plank
Side plank (30 seconds both sides)
Dorsal raises
Hip bridge – hold for 30 seconds.



▷

THE BIG KICKER IS THAT SHORTER MORE INTENSE 30 - 45-MINUTE WORKOUTS WILL NOT ONLY IMPROVE YOUR TRAINING RESULTS BUT IT MAKES LONGER TERM TRAINING MORE SUSTAINABLE

That sentence sounds intimidating, and it would be if you throw yourself in at the deep end. So start easy and build gently. No matter if you have been training years or a newbie to this style of training, the key is to understand the principles that you'll need to adopt to empower yourself physically and mentally. Riding and racing dirt bikes requires mental aptitude, flexibility, endurance and strength and at 53, adopting this style of training has enhanced my life and improved my riding.

The training methods you're going to use include;

HIIT: High-Intensity Interval Training

Mobility: A combination of adaptive yoga and Pilates movements improve flexibility

Tabata: A four-minute block of HIIT that requires 20 seconds of maximum effort followed by a 10 second rest

AMRAP: Stands for 'As Many Reps As Possible' done in a given time frame.

NEXT TIME

Did Warren say four months to establish a base level of fitness?! Damn this fitness thing is tough. So if we start September 1, then maybe in the next issue he'll tell us what happens January 1, 2020... Eeeesh.



A DISCLAIMER

Given the nanny states we live in I would like to advise you that you should ignore everything I write or say. You should not watch any of the videos and for your own safety please do not follow any of my comments on nutrition. In fact, please be careful that you don't strain yourself lifting any of the devices you may need to. Seriously... if you are in any doubt about your state of health please consult a health professional, take out insurance and always train with a health and safety officer present. I take no responsibility whatsoever for anything I say or do and for any of you that decide to follow my ramblings you do so at your own risk.



SUBSCRIBE!

OR FACE THE RIDICULE OF YOUR MATES...

...like Scott here

RUST is dedicated to the worship – we'll call it that – of off-road and adventure motorcycling. With a little bit of 'heritage' (street scramblers) mixed in along the way. It responds to the aging demographic but yes, we gotta give the youth a chance too. We work hard to make the magazine entertaining, informative and high quality. We make it digital and free because that's the way publishing has gone, alas. That makes life difficult for us, but that's good news for you.

Yep, you'd be a fool not to take up a subscription that is truly free especially when it takes only seconds to sign up – we ask only for your email. That's it! It's totally free, guaranteed no spam, no junk, no strings – just a friendly email from us whenever you need to be alerted to a new issue.

It's the smallest act of faith and support and it helps secure this magazine's future. So please do it. And why not right now? Hit the link below!

WWW.RUSTSPORTS.COM



Discover the world with Bell's adventure helmets

A select range of Bell Helmets is
now available through RUST at
www.bell-motorcycle-helmets.co.uk



*RUST subscribers get member discounts

SUITED & BOOTED

LONG TERMER
PART TWO

With a big weekend of off-roading scheduled it seemed like a good idea to up-spec our KTM 1290 Adventure R with some bike-saving protection.

Words & Images: JB

I've always said the best crash protection you can have is you – the rider. Build up your skills and ride with your brain engaged and you'll do more to protect your bike (and your body) from damage than all the crash bars (and body armour) on the planet. We've all seen those overloaded adventure bikes with every accessory appended (heck I've ridden more than my fair share of them), and you get to question just what the rider/owner is achieving. Often it's a matter of adding more weight to an already too heavy bike.

None of which is the correct preamble for this update on the KTM 1290 Adventure R – for here I am adding weight to an already heavy bike. But my point (here) is, choose wisely and you can find a happy middle ground where you improve the bike's protection without overly penalizing it with too much mass. And I'm adding this stuff because – woohoo – the KTM and I (and July on a KTM 790 Adventure R) are off to the Adventure Spec Challenge Isle of Man 500. And while I trust course designer Robert Hughes to be very careful in his choice of tracks, ▶



so we shouldn't have any cause for concern, my previous experience of Manx trails is they can be pretty challenging, especially if the weather goes against. So no better time to get protecting.

So here's what I've selected, all of it from KTM's Power Parts catalogue (yes, I'm a lazy one-stop-shop kind of a guy!), in order of importance:

RADIATOR PROTECTION GRILLE £69.24

Made of laser-cut aluminium that's then powder coated, this is my number one must-have. Radiator protection is I think a priority because even if you never crash (my objective!) you're never-ever safe from some rider (not what I call them on the trail) roosting you, and one wee rock/stone flicked off a spinning knobbly is all it takes to hole a radiator and bring everything to an untimely stop. KTM's OEM guard is pretty good but this item is ultimate peace of mind and weighs very little.

HANDGUARD KIT £86.70

Again, this is worth it even if you don't crash because sometimes you just end up laying a bike over, or it falling off its stand, and a broken lever is a royal pain if like me you never remember to pack spares. With this handguard kit, with the all-important aluminium strengthening bar, nothing short of a super high-speed get-off is going to mangle those levers. And of course you need handguards of some substance just to deal with the gorse and other pricklies that line the tighter tracks, especially in the IoM.

SKID PLATE £244.26

Now for the most part I could avoid this expense because the KTM has decent ground clearance and as a rule I stay away from rocky protruding objects. For 95% of riding it's not really necessary, careful riding is enough. Only again I've seen many a rock step on Manx trails and you only need to roll off





▷ one steep step, not thinking – or muff the little leap-down – and with no under-engine frame rails you’ve got an engine sump and an exhaust that’s going to take a big impact. In 6mm aluminium plate this is heavy duty kit that’s heavy – but it is at least positioned low-down so you don’t feel the weight so much, if at all. And so far I’ve not noticed it reflecting engine noises any more than the standard mini-plate. Result!

CARBON CLUTCH COVER & IGNITION COVER PROTECTION £121.74 + £130.50

I’m getting fussy here, but on the upside at least these items weigh very little. Point being, engine cases, often thin die-cast metal in construction, regularly suffer puncture wounds when a bike is laid over on rocks, even gently. These aren’t quite the awesome Fort Knox covers that I had from R&G for my long term Honda CRF250L some years back, but they’re of help nonetheless. They’re not cheap either. Luxury items to an extent, but they have a purpose.

FOOTPEG SET £139.26

Sometimes I think it’s my age speaking, but I like an oversized footpeg. BMW GSs have notoriously

come with the thinnest daftest pegs and they need a peg change as a matter of course. By comparison, this 1290 has a pretty decent set as standard, but even so a bigger set – and I put these ones in the super-sized ‘rally’ category – can’t go amiss, especially if standing for long hours. And these are a nice size. Not too big I hope, but I’ll let you know on that.

BRIDGESTONE ADVENTURECROSS AX41

As much as the Adventure Spec Challenges are designed to be ridden on ‘road’ tyres, a half decent knob gives more assurity (‘she said’ – can you name that TV reference?) on the trails so rather than push my luck with the cut slicks the 1290 came with I’ve swapped to a set of the new Bridgestone Adventurecross AX41s. I’d give them a 50/50 rating (road/dirt), they’re looking comparable to the likes of Conti TKC80s and Metzeler Karoo 3s.

So far on the road, yes, you can obviously feel there’s a little more movement between bike and road than on the road tyres, but this will be more than compensated when it comes to off-road grip. And as it is with adventure bikes, they always look better with proper off-road tyres!



TO THE ISLE OF MAN

So the KTM has been gently racking up the miles. All road stuff so far, but with the big Manx ride coming that’ll soon change. Its presence isn’t going unnoticed though. Son of JB has twice been caught sitting on it in the garage and Mrs JB has asked questions of a touring nature so clearly it’s firing the imagination here and I’ll have to give in and share the rides. But I’m being selfish for now and yeah, I’m excited about getting back on the Island. 📍

USEFUL CONTACTS:

BRIDGESTONE AX41S:
www.bridgestone.com/products/motorcycle_tires/products/detail/pr154/

RALLY SPEC CHALLENGE:
<https://adventure-spec.com/challenge/>



WELCOME TO PERU CARE FOR SOME CANNABIS?

July eases his way southward
across the Americas. No rush.
And no motor... oh.

Words & Images: July Behl



PANAMSCRAM

THE STORY SO FAR

In 2017 July Behl (Dehli born, Derry raised) realised a long-held dream, riding the length of the Americas – Alaska to Argentina. Although he had a KTM 1190 Adventure in the garage (still has), for this trip he chose a BMW RnineT Scrambler. With five months to make the journey, July was there for the good time; culinary-inquisitive, socially engaged, this was not a journey where you measured miles – more the waistline (growing, not shrinking). You can read up on his story so far in RUST issues 27, 29, 35, 41 and 42. In this update, having successfully crossed the Equator, we find July and companion Aussie Simon struggling with a non-runner of a Triumph Tiger 800...





▷ **W**

e were bugged. Simon's bike wouldn't start. The unnamed Triumph Tiger 800 XC was dead. It'd started getting dark and we were practically in the middle of nowhere. There was no breakdown recovery. We were knackered. Battery dead. Jumper cables wouldn't work – sod's law. Push start – fail. Fuel filter – clean. Starter motor – works. And on, and on and on...

Fuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuck! As our peremptory attitude towards the bike was in vain, and after we'd exhausted all our rather basic troubleshooting skills, we started looking for a proper solution – a motorcycle mechanic!

We were in a decrepit quaint little village called Santa (the irony in the name, as it certainly didn't feel like blimmin' Christmas), which was 450km south of Lima, the capital of Peru and the closest place we'd definitely be able to get the bike sorted. The Triumph, as most of you know, is fuel injected. The two motorcycle mechanics that lived in Santa didn't want to touch anything fuel injected and pointed us south. Carbs 1 Fuel Injection 0, (July & Simon -1).

It wasn't all doom and gloom; there was a silver lining. There always is. At the crime scene there was a wee shack selling cold beverages, cigarettes and pork scratchings AND they were cooking rice and beans, which meant that there was food, and for us that was an epic morale boost. As long as we were fed and watered, we could just about deal with anything – flying zombies, bug-like aliens, Xena the Warrior Princess, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage – you name it. But before I tell



you how we got out of this pickle, let's rewind a wee bit to what happened after we entered Peru.

WELCOME TO PERU - CANNABIS COPPERS

Peru is beautiful country with a varied terrain, from the arid plains of the Pacific coastal region (read: plenty of sand) in the west, to the peaks of the Andes mountains (read: very cold) that vertically extend from the north to the southeast of the country, to the tropical Amazon basin rainforest in the east (read: very wet). In addition, it's home to UNESCO world heritage sites like Machu Pichu and the Lines and Geoglyphs of Nasca and more importantly the nicest rice and beans in S. America – it's blissful.

After the first night in the border town of San Ignacio, we were headed south towards the capital Lima. At our



first pit stop at a roadside shack we were greeted by the police. Here we go again! Fortunately, they too had stopped for breakfast and not to check our papers etc. Just as they were about to leave, they noticed Simon vaping. Now those of you who've seen people vape will know that unlike a cigarette a vape produces an unholy amount of smoke, say similar to a cannabis bong. Ha! So the next thing we know the cops repeatedly started saying cannabis. Getting bummed by the police wasn't on my list of things to do in Peru and I encouraged them to look at Simon's vape to suggest that it was nicotine liquid and not cannabis. Anyhow after a few minutes one copper called me to his jeep and started rustling through a stack of papers. The first thought that crossed my mind was we were going to get heavily fined, and the second thought was that if it





▷ **MY SECOND THOUGHT WAS THAT IF IT DID COME DOWN TO 'TAKING ONE FOR THE TEAM', IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SIMON AS IT WAS HIS SODDING VAPE**



did come down to 'taking one for the team', it would have to be Simon as it was his sodding vape. But no such thing, instead he took out a small bag of cannabis (you read that right) gave it to me and said, wait for it... 'Welcome to Peru!'

B IS FOR BREAKDOWN

Uncertainty is a key ingredient of adventure and I suppose that's one of the elements that makes it extremely exciting. Every day on the PanAmScram was open ended. I hadn't a clue what the day would bring. Everything from food, fuel, accommodation, interactions, vistas was an unknown and I thrived on it. Breaking away from the norm, the schedule, the routine, the rut, was one of the many reasons I embarked on this journey of self-realisation. And 'self-realisation' I did - that I was useless at motorcycle

▷





▷ mechanics. The only nuts I could just about manage were in my pants and fiddling wouldn't have really helped the situation. Just before I'd left for this trip someone said to me, "It's not a proper adventure till you have a bike breakdown and you have to truck your bike." Well, I suppose it was now a proper adventure! Our next mission was to get the sodding Tiger fixed. And Lima, which was 450km away, was beckoning. But how were we going to get there?

Every cloud has a silver lining, and in our case it was the fuel station we broke down at. Trucks of all shapes and sizes were parked there which meant with haggling, luck and persuasion we'd be on our merry way to Lima. After a few hours, we'd finally managed to convince a rather sleepy trucker to take us to Lima – but it wasn't that simple! He wanted \$750 and had no way of loading our bikes on his 40ft long and 7ft high truck.

Haggling comes naturally to me, not because I'm a tight arse but because I grew up in India and it gets embedded in your DNA. Haggling is a good skill to have when travelling in developing countries. I negotiated the price down to \$400. The next hurdle was to get the bikes on the truck, which was a challenge in itself. Long story short, we finally managed to get the bikes onto the lorry with the help of four locals and three pieces of plywood reinforced by bamboo! Sheepshanks all around and the bikes were tied down (or so we thought). The whole operation of getting the bikes up and tied down was jugaad at its finest. Look it up and you'll know what I mean.

PORN, PIES AND A LONG SLEEPLESS NIGHT

That's an unusual combination I agree but stick with me and it'll make sense. Once aboard the truck, Simon and I soon discovered our driver Pablo's



love for porn. There were posters and pictures of scantily clad women all over the cabin. Even his phone screensaver had a woman squatting knickerless, which meant that each time he swiped his finger to receive calls, he'd was virtually getting stinky fingers. I do apologise for all this vulgarity but this is an unvarnished testament - an immersive (pardon the pun) experience for you, the reader.

Simon and I decided to take two-hour shifts of staying up to mitigate the risk of groggy Pablo dozing off and us ending up in an overturned truck. Our spirits were still high but we were knackered physically and at these low points, one craves comfort, home, a cuddle, the familiar. I, of course, could add to that list a cold pint of lager and a steak and ale pie with mash and gravy from Borough Market – I couldn't stop thinking about it. It was a long, cold night and with each bump on the road we checked if the bikes were still on the truck – and there were plenty of potholes and bumps. I still somehow managed to get a kip but Simon didn't and the next time I opened my eyes, it was dawn and we were just about to enter Lima.

LOST IN LIMA

Despite Google Maps and the likes it was evident we were lost in Lima. Being lost on the bikes is still manageable but it's a bit of challenge with a 40ft truck as each roundabout and turn needs to be thought through carefully, especially on extremely narrow roads. Nevertheless, after multiple navigational errors we found ourselves outside the Triumph/KTM dealership – and waited the couple of hours there before they opened.

What took us a couple of hours and extreme ingenuity to load the bikes, took the dealership just a few minutes with a forklift. We'd decided to leave both the bikes at the Triumph/KTM dealership for simplicity, but they



**BLIND AS A BAT WITH BOLIVIANS**

After visiting the UNESCO world heritage site of Nazca Lines we were headed towards Cusco. Now, there are not many hotels between Nazca and Cusco and the ones there are often get booked way in advance. According to Google it was 13-hour ride to cover 655km, taking into account the road conditions, traffic etc.

What it wasn't taking into account was the roadblocks. At one such three-hour roadblock we bumped into the Bolivian GS club with 13 bikes touring Peru. After this big and other small

roadblocks there was no way we were going to get to Cusco, and no night riding was a promise I'd made to myself before I started the trip. Soon it was dark and Simon and I had pulled over for fuel when the GS club showed up again and asked if we wanted to join their motorcycle convoy to Abancay.

They were in the exact same predicament of no accommodation and riding at night. There's strength in numbers and we rode through the mountains at night for a 150km to Abancay. To be fair, this time round I thoroughly enjoyed riding at night and the Bolivian bikers were good fun. Tip here is that even if you don't plan to ride at night invest in the brightest auxiliary lights you can afford as at some point you will definitely need them. Some of these GSs had aux lights that were turning night into day and it was such a confidence booster to be able to see properly.



ONCE ABOARD THE TRUCK, SIMON AND I SOON DISCOVERED OUR DRIVER PABLO'S LOVE FOR PORN

refused to take my BMW! They said, "We cant, as it's against our policy." I wasn't asking them to work on or service it, simply store it, as it was logistically easier for us to have both bikes in the same place. After a lengthy argument, they decided to keep the BMW as well, but I wasn't happy about it.

I soon found the Lima BMW dealership, and this is the difference between KTM/Triumph and BMW in Peru. BMW ordered me a taxi so I could pick up my bike from the KTM dealership and bring it back, then they offered a taxi to our hotel and the next day a taxi back to the dealership – all free! They even sorted out my Unit Garage luggage rack that had broken for the umpteenth time. Meanwhile there was nothing but delays and confusion at the Triumph/KTM dealership. I'm sure this is not the case with every

Triumph and KTM dealership, but everything from the service to the communication was appalling about this dealership. Avoid it if you can.

Anyhow, over the next few days whilst the bikes were being repaired and serviced we went on a culinary tour of Lima and ate our hearts out. We also bumped into Hanspeter, a Swiss biker also riding from Alaska to Argentina who I'd last met in Alaska. He, too, was getting his KTM 1190 SA sorted in Lima and also wasn't happy with the service he'd got from the KTM dealership. We agreed to meet in Cusco and ride together as he was keen on riding company – even if it was us!

In the end it was a faulty battery and a loose starter motor that were the culprits of the Tiger's ails, and as soon as these were resolved we were on our merry way to Nazca.



**CHILLING OUT IN CUSCO**

Now a trek or ride to Machu Pichu isn't exactly 'chilling', in fact it's the contrary from what I'm led to believe. Unlike most travellers and tourists in Cusco I didn't visit Machu Pichu for the simple reason that my mum's always wanted to go there and I promised her that we'd visit together. Instead, I chilled in my basic motorcycle hostel and caught up on my sleep, photography and writing.

On big overlanding trips, every now and then it's quite refreshing to take a break from the bike for a few days, recharge your batteries and then restart the journey. The days would involve long food and photography walks to the food market and hidden parts of town and the evenings were spent in bars. The Norton bar in Cusco is a big attraction for bikers and Simon and I ended up drinking with moto travellers from all over the world on multiple occasions. It was blissful.

HIC! HIC! THE LAST PISCO SOUR IN PERU

Lake Titicaca also known as the 'highest navigable lake in the world' was our last stop in Peru, and it was cold! Our little hotel had multiple duvets on all beds and hot water here was a necessity. After the usual tour of Lake Titicaca we treated ourselves to some Llama steak and plenty of Pisco Sour. I also bought myself a nice thick poncho and some warm headgear as camping in Uyuni this time of the year can be freezing. Puno, our base to explore the Lake, had a big fashion event going on and there was music and celebrations all over the city. The atmosphere was amazing and it revived us for the next chapter on the PanAmScram – Bolivia! 🇧🇴

NEXT TIME

In the next instalment of the PanAmScram there's camping on the salt plains, riding hundreds of kilometres in a dust storm, wrong border crossings, what to do when your bike gets stuck in a big pile of shit, and many such anecdotes. Till then... happy reading and riding!





Contacts

RUST SPORTS LTD

www.rustsports.com

Warwick House

The Grange

St. Peter Port

Guernsey

GY1 2PY

Editor: Jonathan Bentman

editor@rustsports.com

Designer: Rich Page

Managing Director: Warren Malschinger

Contributors: Alan Stillwell (USA), Chris Evans (UK/FR), Pedro Matos (PT), July Behl (UK), Craig Keyworth (UK)

Thanks to - the wonderful bods at KTM UK (again), especially Sarah Dryhurst for the 790 Adventure R test bike and co-ordinating the 1290 service and upgrades (and get well soon to Brad Woodroffe); to Jeff Turner at Yamaha Motor (UK) for getting us the Ténéré test bike so quickly, to Patsy Quick and Harry at Desert Rose Racing for helping with the photo shoot; to Iain Baker at Honda UK for the screaming wonder that is the Honda CRF250RX, to Coral Evans at Salt Images for the CRF photography; to Robert Wilson and the boys at the Yorkshire Enduro Club for an excellent Ryedale Rally; to the guys at Beta in Italy for another excellent launch. And to anyone left off, apologies, all help is always gratefully received! And thank you to you dear reader for supporting us – and for reading this far!

Copyright: RUST Sports Ltd. All rights reserved.

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