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WILL WE RIDE GREEN?



The environment, it's certainly a big issue. You can't escape it in any news broadcast. Then there's the UN Climate Change Conference coming up in Glasgow in November and there's been no end of discussion and political posturing leading up to that. And have you noticed how all the new car – even van – adverts on TV these days are about electric or at least hybrid vehicles – the car industry doing its best to look green. And as we've found out in this issue through our man Chris Evans, even the Dakar Rally car/truck entries are now officially moving toward 'ultra-low emission standards'.

It kind of makes you wonder where we stand in the middle of all this. Where is motorcycling, and particularly off-road and adventure motorcycling positioning itself? In part that positioning is going to be led by the manufacturers. At the recent Fantic enduro launch we spent some time around the dinner table discussing the motivations for Yamaha partnering with Fantic, including selling off their Minarelli engine production facility. It was suggested that this is all part of Yamaha repositioning, retrenching back to Japan to develop a new future – an electric-powered one. I'm not saying this is what Yamaha is doing, but when this was suggested no one said 'baloney!'

I've also recently been talking to one of our RUST supporters, Touratech, about their adventure activities. They mentioned in passing that they carbon offset their annual Travel Event in the Black Forest – yes, they partner with a reforestation organisation so that x-number are trees are planted for the x-number of motorcyclists who attend their event.

How long before the rest of us need to embrace environmental measures remains to be seen. For my part, when I see my long term Ténéré returning 70mpg I think, well there's something positive. Similarly, when the recent CRF250L test bike was returning close to 90mpg, this in my books was a good thing. Frugal use of a resource – and less fuel burnt equals less emissions. But is that enough?

Off-road riders have a close relationship with the environment, we're out in the countryside most weekends and while some of us are just out there for the thrill of the ride I think a good proportion also connect with and care for the natural world. And I can't help but think that through this connection maybe we can build on that, that there's some way we can and probably in the near future will contribute to environmental care.

It's not something we're racing to embrace, but I can't help but think the day is fast approaching...
Ride safe.



JB

FAREWELL FUJIGAS

Heck, if a rider ever was a RUST embodiment – getting old but still on it – then Takahisa Fujinami (aka Fujigas) is it. At 41, and after a staggering 26 seasons, he's only just packing it in with World Trials (or TrialGP as it's now known). He started in the world championship at 16, won his first round at 17 and won the championship in 2004. Between Dougie Lampkin and Toni Bou he's had the toughest in team-mates you can imagine, but as a wingman he was remarkably strong, taking 168 podiums including 34 wins and sticking in the top-five for 20 seasons – and winning, still, at the ItalianGP earlier this year. The guy is a legend.

Image (and stats!): HRC





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RUST PEOPLE

THIS MONTH

RUSTAFARIANS

Some quality riding has helped bring summer to a cheery close at RUST, only with three out of four of us considering diets and fitness regimes. Not July, though – no, the man's on a major league culinary mission



JB: SAYING NO TO FAST

#JB318



Thanks to Fantic and Rieju I've ridden two bike launches this month. Just as well, as given the levels of administration going on in my work and family life there's been precious little time to ride.

Getting back into Europe after nearly two years isolation was wonderful.

The Italians have such a love of life; they work hard, play hard and eat well. And they have this flair for auto-moto design and engineering. Yeah, the new Yamaha-based Fantics are great machines. But boy am I out of practice with riding. I have some ('some') underlying skills, but I have to beat my way to them through a crust of increasing age and decrepitude. So, I started the launch badly, with big arm pump and needing plenty of rests, but it was reassuring to find that by the end of the day I could ride smoothly and confidently for full laps. I just need to do it more.

A week later, Rieju reminded me of just how correct the original GasGas enduro bike is with their rebadged and updated MR models. It's an old(er) design, for sure, but nothing significant has changed dynamically in enduro for years now so a torquey 300cc two-stroke riding on quality suspension is still a weapon of considerable capability. Not something I could say about myself. And riding in Wales over streaming wet rock reminded me of the last time I did exactly that – when I snapped my ACL... So, I got by, grovelling up and down some steep slippery hillside, but it wasn't pretty.

Meanwhile, at last, most of the accessory parts have arrived for the T7, so there's some great workshop time coming, and then hopefully I can apply some of my newly awakened skills to guiding the Ténéré through some country tracks before the British weather craps-out completely.



CRAIG: HEY, RACING!

#CK275



This month I broke my 2021 racing duck by jumping into a spot last minute. My local club, Lincolnshire Enduro Club, fielded a solid gaggle of riders into this year's Dusk to Dawn enduro, and despite a rather wonky knee (not even a story, just too much fun on a Sunday, sore knee on Monday kind of deal) I agreed to stand in for a race-shy half of a two-man team. Meaning I was getting to ride half of the two-man 12 hour. All good fun.

As it happens, I'd not managed to get to a D2D previously, and I've fancied it for a while. Mate, Neil Hawker bagged a win at the last outing (which was 2019) in the only worthy category – 24 hour solo. This year he returned on a pair of unlikely KTMs – the very same 1290R JB scuffed up a bit during

his tenure, and an 890R! Once again, riding against competition on proper enduro bikes, he retained his crown. Legend.

My own ride was a steady affair, the knee is a little wonkier than I'm trying to admit to, but we put in a decent effort and my PB was my last lap, which given my poor prep and lack of mousses was completed with a totally flat front tyre. Apologies to those I passed only to wobble around tight corners – then to clear off again. Like a radio-controlled car though, the faster corners were fine as at pace the front tyre inflates itself... A great analogy for my race season and my immediate look ahead – a bit flat, but with the right approach you can still put a decent turn in. Brilliant. Here's to some more. I'd like to write a full feature on the event going forward, so I'll be back next year for a proper go.



JULY: CHOP CHOP (AND MORE CHOP CHOP)...

#JB297



The sun's shining, the beaches are beautiful, the churrasqueira (BBQ) is fired up, the sardines and the meats taste great.... clearly, I'm not in the UK. Bom dia! From Lisbon, Portugal.

I've been in Lisbon for the last few weeks on work and some family business. I rode to Portugal last year on my GS and toured the length of the country and it was great – so I'm not new to the country but certainly relatively new to Lisbon, as I only spent a few days on my last visit.

The beauty of Lisbon is that everywhere is within 15 minutes and the Honda Forza 350 is a brilliant way to get around. Pros of the Forza – keyless, helmet storage under seat, electronic windshield, presence on the road, comfortable seat, enough power to cart both the rider and pillion around the steep ascents of Lisbon and inbuilt

usb-c charging port. Cons of the Forza – the roads in Lisbon give any suspension a good test and I'm not sure if I'm comparing it to the GS, but the suspension could be plusher and whilst the power delivery is great, the brakes aren't particular confidence inspiring. Not many cons but these do surface each time I ride it – which is every day here.

The last couple of motorcycle sidecar trips in the UK were camping weekends in the New Forest and the Malle Mile at Grimsthorpe Castle. Both were stunning and I think we as family now have properly gotten acquainted with sidecar travel and there's definitely more trips planned for the near future. The GS is having a good ol' rest in the garage – yep, sometimes work takes over and you have to bow down to it, sometimes you can take six months out and ride the Americas ;-). Either way I'm happy chappy.



WARREN: TURNING BACK THE CLOCK

#WM151

Wins this month: 2.



1. I finished rebuilding my 2017 Husky FE350 into a 2022-new-bike-eater. Wooo!

2. I'm almost done with my 2020 KTM 350 EXC-F rebuild – man, this is going to be one trick machine.

The aim has been to make it behave more like a two-stroke so I've added a custom multi map ECU and a Hinson slipper clutch to ease the engine braking while upgrading the brakes (as a result) – and I've thrown in a few other trick bits which I'll get into in the next issue.

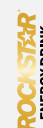
In other news: I'm hankering after a two-stroke MX bike. I've been doing loads of suspension testing and that's included frequent trips to the motocross track – something I've not done in years. And

I'm loving it. It's where my bike career started – I raced a 1979 Suzuki RM 125 twin shock back in my youth in South Africa (I remember being lapped in my first ever race by both Robbie Herring and Colin Dugmore in an epic end of season championship battle on their Blue Stratos Kawasakis).

I'm not looking for a new MX bike – I don't need or want one. It can be old thing, like me – okay, perhaps not that old – but as long as it's cheap and it works that's fine. And if it doesn't work, well, two-strokes are cheap and easy to fix, it's what makes me love them more.

Perhaps nostalgia and lost freedoms have me grasping for some of that free-spirited, testosterone-fuelled fun that only comes from a free flying smoker, an antidote to the increasingly negative world we live in right now.

Long live the non-trackable Nokia 6110, paperback books and two-strokes. 🇬🇧



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2022 FANTIC ENDURO

The pandemic got in the way of the debut of Fantic's new racers in 2020, but this year – subject to exhaustive Covid testing and passenger locator regulations – we got to the world launch for the 2022 model year, in Italy. And just as well, these Fantics are pretty special...

Words: JB **Images:** Fantic (Cristiano Morelli & friends)

Fantic are back producing competition bikes! Since the firm's comeback started in 2014 we've seen new trail bikes, new road bikes (the stylish Caballeros), even new e-MTBs, but now it's the turn for the competition segment. And these racers are not going to disappoint – as their results this season in world motocross and enduro prove. ▷



▷ THIS NEW RACING ERA

This latest step is quite something, too. These are not soft market lifestyle machines, we're talking proper hard core racers. And plenty of them, four motocrossers (code XX and XXF) and three enduros (code XE and XEF). Each one is a development of an already top performing Yamaha model. Given an alliance with the Japanese firm, Fantic are taking YZ and WR models as their base and through careful refinement and remodelling are creating their own high-end racers. It's like the KTM/Husky/Gasser common platform engineering, only without the parent group (i.e. Pierer Mobility Group) pulling the strings.

This being RUST we will (for now?!) bypass the 'crossers and concentrate on the enduros. The two XEFs, 250 and 450, and the XE125. Based on the WR-F 250 and 450 enduros and the YZ125 motocrosser, Fantic has worked on the models' engine management (bringing in Athena-GET's expertise) and added specially-developed Arrow



exhaust systems to both fine-tune the performance of each and to cross the hurdle that is Euro 5 homologation (something Yamaha hasn't done with their WRs). So these bikes can be sold as legitimate road legal machines, not just closed-course competition units.

Additionally, Fantic has worked on bringing together top end cycle parts and bodywork so that there's a very real European flavour to these machines. And very impressive they proved to be too, as our ride impressions reveal...

FANTIC XE125

For years enduro riders have taken the YZ125 and with very few modifications (basically just by adding lights and

an 18" rear wheel) raced it very competitively in enduro.

Fantic is now doing the same, only a little more professionally as the motor is subtly retuned and the chassis mods are more thorough to meet homologation regulations. Notably, the cylinder head has a reduced compression ratio and the ignition mapping is adjusted to an enduro specific setting and there's a larger generator that feeds the 12v battery and so powers the lighting circuit. Plus of course they've fitted a custom-made Arrow expansion chamber pipe and silencer. All of this to create better low-end and midrange response and thus traction – what we need for enduro.

**JB WEARS****Helmet:** Bell Moto 9 MIPS F/H**Jersey:** TLD GP Hotrod**Pants:** Answer Synchron Air**Boots:** Alpinestars Tech 7

▷ The chassis is pretty much as Yamaha produce for the YZ, but Fantic say their racing department has further fettled the suspension settings specifically for enduro use. Add to this, the 18" rear rim size and Metzeler Six Days tyres, plus the enduro specific 9-litre tank, seat and lighting.

The YZ125 has been a great bike and in the past, in our TBM days, it regularly roughed up European enduro 125s in our comparison tests. The Fantic is kind of that bike and more – yeah, it was everything we liked about the YZ but made properly enduro-focussed.

One thing we liked about the YZ was the chassis. The geometry is immediately stable yet still quick enough in the steering; for some reason the bike feels longer and taller than the spec's tell us and so doesn't feel cramped even for me at 6'0" tall and the best part of 14 stone (ahem). So it turns well, being a snip over 100-kilos fully fuelled probably helps there, but there's something special in the brew that just makes it feel so predictable – sometimes on the 125s they're so light they can feel kind of nervous. Having fettled super-quality Kayaba

(KYB) suspension probably helps, this is benchmark stuff.

The significant thing here is the way the reworked motor properly complements the chassis. Fantic have brought in Dutch tuner Jan Witteveen – who was the master two-stroke tuner behind the 250cc road race successes Aprilia enjoyed in the 1990s (think: Rossi, Capirossi etc) – and clearly, he knows how to make a flexi-flyer as much as knife-edge super-tuned GP road racer. Somewhere between the cylinder head work, the ignition mapping and the Arrow pipe, Fantic has found a sweet-spot where the Yamaha motor makes plenty of top end zing yet can torque comfortably through its mid-range.

We found it was entirely possible to be super-lazy and mooch in third gear all the way through the test venue's flat grass test, as you might if you were totally flogged out at the end of an enduro. Similarly, there were three great hill climbs (short, medium and long) which again you could torque your way up in a high gear if you wanted, or blitz with high revs in the traditional 125-racer way. It was impressive just

▷

FANTIC – GROWING FAST

We have to say, the new Fantic Motor S.P.A., as against the old (pre-2014) Fantic Motor, is performing exceptionally well. The new management has delivered on rapid growth in output and sales. Fantic has scored solid hits with their vastly updated trail machines, their stylish Caballero road bikes and sporty e-MTBs. With each step they've made great progress, and when you listen to the business story behind the venture it all makes sense. This last year they've added proper competition models to their output and given their fantastic results on the world stage, these too are adding to the momentum. In short, Fantic is already a major player and if it's not appeared your radar before it should now.

We should add a little meat to the bones of the financial story. Fantic as we know it today started life in 2014 when former management bosses from Aprilia and Husqvarna (the latter when it was BMW owned) came together with a plan to rejuvenate this near 50-year-old motorcycle marque. Fantic is based in the Veneto region, near Venice in Northern

Italy, something of a powerhouse region in Italy for manufacturing, where many of Italy's top component manufacturers are also based, and finance for the regeneration came from a syndicate of the region's top business interests, known as VeNetWork, that work together to stimulate local industry. Led by Mariano Roman (former technical director at Aprilia, Moto Guzzi and Laverda), with managers and designers with excellent proven track records, Fantic have rebuilt their bike range – and cleverly added e-mobility (scooters and cycles) to their arsenal – so successfully that in just five years their staffing levels has risen from 6(!) to 340, while annual turnover has steadily grown from €800,000 in 2014 to €47 million in 2020 – and that latter figure was suppressed by the Coronavirus epidemic. Fantic plan to increase turnover to €150 million this year and to lift this to a staggering €430 million by 2024. Their acquisition in January of Minarelli Motor S.P.A. from Yamaha only adds further to their manufacturing muscle.

how smooth the transition from mid to top end rev was. Certainly, there's a sense of having the best of both (torque and rev).

In all the XE125 kind of reminded me of Beta's RR200, being the little bike that likes to think big, with quite similar power characteristics. It's not often I feel comfortable, as against comedically oversized, on a 125, but I'd genuinely take an XE125 to an enduro this weekend. It's a thoroughly well-developed enduro bike. Easy to ride and easy to maintain.

FANTIC XEF250

I've known and ridden Yamaha's WR250Fs since the very first model in 2001 (the one that was a bit tricky to kickstart) and I've enjoyed every one of them. So, for my money, this is a great place to start for Fantic with their four-stroke racers, and frankly there wasn't a great deal to do, aside from the homologation work, in terms of polishing an already great performer.

But Fantic have nonetheless worked their magic. Most likely this has to do with the fitting of the Arrow exhaust system and the adjustments to the fuelling and ignition mapping that went with it. Just as when you fit an Akrapovic pipe to the WR, so applying the Arrow to the XEF250 has properly smoothed out the fuelling. The XEF, from low rev to its screaming top end offers a smooth but surprisingly powerful rush of power.

And like many a 250F, the XEF works with you, not against you, flattering even the most modest of talents (I'll tip a nod here). In the dusty hard pack of Northern Italy it wasn't possible to see if it had the bottom end slog that say the 250 EXC-F has for dealing with slippery muddy conditions, but the fact the XEF has totally lost that sense of a power step that the WR250F has (specifically when somewhat 'bottled-up' by its standard exhaust) already makes it a better proposition. Yep, a great, almost easy bike to ride fast!

▷ **FANTIC XEF450**

Yamaha's WR450F has always been a powerhouse. I've ridden previous editions on launches across Europe and time and again been utterly humbled by the power, the sheer speed that thing generates... Recently, through diligent work on the engine mapping options available through Yamaha's Power Tuner (in tests at Yamaha Off Road Experience in Wales) I've ridden tamer – or perhaps 'tamed' – versions, that make the big 450 a much more friendly proposition. With this tester's lack of fitness it still wouldn't be the ideal choice as a race bike, but for trail riding – hey, why not?!

With Fantic's XEF450 you certainly get a hint of that. Again, with the benefit of the Arrow pipe and some R&D on the mapping (in conjunction with Athena-GET) Fantic has created a very smooth power curve that makes this mighty machine quite manageable. And as with Yamaha, Fantic has developed a phone app, 'WiGET', which brings pre-set and custom engine mapping options. There was a tight and technical woods section to ride at the test venue, with technical challenges like a step-up mid-turn, ▷



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▷ corners on banks between trees too tight for full lock(!), plus the usual ruts and roots, and in all of this the XEF450 was surprisingly amenable. You could play the low rev pull to full advantage and with a little care it was possible to loft the 450 over plenty of the forest-floor carnage. You applied a little more planning than you might on smaller bikes, but it was certainly doable.

Having said that, like a true Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde, the XEF450 could bite like a rabid Doberman if you let it. On the grass test, on full gas – okay, even half throttle – it's still got eye-watering acceleration, so you'll want to have both decent fitness and textbook body positioning if you're not to get out of shape and falling into the realms of whisky throttle. However, I'll say this, the power is intoxicating, there is a thrill and half in letting fly on this beast that stops us from saying, 'no, it's too much'. The way it launched up the climbs on (nearly) full attack was a full-on adrenaline rush. Maybe, as is often said, too much is never enough, but there's always huge fun in playing with big power. Up to the point where you run out of energy, of course.

So while XEF450 should rightly come with a tag that reads 'for the expert' we wouldn't stop anyone above novice status from buying one, knowing the insane joy that this kind of a bike brings. Equally, it's worth saying again the XEF450 is well developed. The ergos, the components – as with all of the range it's all good, top notch stuff. It's an awesome bike, with awesome power and awesome potential. It just needs an awesome rider...

WINNING

The Fantic management obviously remember that old showroom mantra, 'what wins on Sunday sells on Monday' as they've made a considerable push

into international racing this last season and a bit. And by heck they've made their mark. They kicked off 2021 by winning the Italian MX2 and MX125 championships, they then won the MX125 junior world championship and at the time of writing they were leading the EMX2, EMX125 and EMX2T European championships. Then we move into enduro and at the world championships their XE125 is holding down 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Youth class while Davide Guarneri is 2nd in the E1 class – ah yes, and Guarneri was also part of the victorious Italian team at the ISDE.

Yes, it has to be said Fantic have without a doubt made competitive machines – and have brought in some highly talented young racers, including Brits Harry Edmondson, Jed Etchells and Jane Daniels.

THE USP

So why buy Fantic? That should be clear by now. You're getting all of the quality and performance of the latest Yamaha WR/YZs but with a tasty topping of European enduro tech and know-how – and with full road legality. There's no question these are excellent bikes, well spec'd that work equally well for the amateur and the world championship contender. 🏁



BRINGING EXPERIENCE TOGETHER WITH YOUTH

Fantic CEO Mariano Roman explains Fantic's strategy

"To begin with everyone at Fantic and among our partners brings a huge passion for this project. Then we are bringing experience – just between myself and our marketing director we have over 100 years of experience in the business – together with the energy of youth. We are enabling our young engineers and our young racers, developing strong teams, within the company and within the race teams, so that we grow and we achieve. This way, in such a short time we have achieved this result.

"We also have strength through our investors, VeNetWork brings together 60 entrepreneurs and around 250 companies within this region, so we have smart, open-minded shareholders that give us strength financially. Our excellent relationship with Yamaha is also so valuable, we share a passion and together we help each other grow.

"Of course we have plans for future growth. For the rider-enthusiasts I think they'll be interested in something we are starting in the rally sector. But also we are working on a 300cc two-stroke enduro model, it will have an engine we are developing at Minarelli. We will have this ready for production for the 2023 model year."



HOW GREEN IS THY MOTO?



In working as the Dakar Rally's resident translator (French-English) our man Evans this year inadvertently came upon rallying's biggest challenge – going green. Something it seems the four-wheelers might manage better than the motos...

Words: Chris Evans & **Images:** KTM/Husqvarna Rally Zone



Ever since I started working on rallies waaaay back in 1995 one of my 'oh-Chris-can-do-that' jobs has been to translate the nightly briefing. I remember the first time I climbed up on the stage alongside Cyril Neveu I was pretty nervous. Partly due to being in front of so many people, partly because I was worried about sending all the English-speaking competitors the wrong way. Surprisingly it didn't go too badly. Being from the wrong side of tracks, Neveu was famous for massacring the French language and wasn't the easiest person to understand, especially if the day had gone badly and he decided to berate all his paying customers. I tended not to translate the expletives and generally toned down the insults, as in my experience anglophones expect significantly higher levels of customer service than their French counterparts... but I must have done an OK job because some of the bilingual Frenchies said they preferred to listen to me than Neveu. As one of them put it, 'you manage to translate into English what we don't understand in French'.

As word got out that there was a Rosbif capable of translating Neveu's incomprehensible French into understandable English I was headhunted by Dakar organisers ASO. Basically, they'd sent a freelance PR that worked for them (and as it turned out a whole load of other people) to check out what Neveu / Peltier were up to. NPO were phenomenally successful at the time with bike entries up to 250 while the Dakar was struggling to make 70.

Coming very much from the right side of the tracks (his family had links with De Gaulle) Dakar boss Hubert Auriol was much easier to translate, though he could be equally unpredictable. One evening as we were walking from his motorhome to the briefing he told me to stress the importance of competitors



and assistance staying between the cairns as they crossed the border between Morocco and Mauritania. When I asked why he told me it was because they were passing through a mine field. When I asked him if I should tell them this he replied, 'good god no. We don't want them to panic'.

Earlier I'd mentioned that the translation job was always an after-thought. However, in the early 2000s the Dakar decided to modernise with simultaneous translation set up. They even rang me to ask if I was capable

of doing this. I of course replied 'yes' even though I was not at all sure. My girlfriend at the time was actually a professional translator who'd trained for years to achieve such a feat. She said I'd never be able to manage it. In actual fact, as long as I had all the important numbers written down – 97 in French is 20 x 40 + 10 + 7 and so not easy to translate – I was fine.

Until that is on this year's Dakar when I was asked to translate a press conference unveiling the Dakar Rally's plans to green. OK, it wasn't actually

ABOVE: That'll be fossil fuel you'll be putting in there, is it Matthias? Not hydrogen...



▷

ABOVE: So, we can slot an electric motor in there for sure. And batteries good for, oooh, 30km – sorry, would that be a problem, Sir?

a disaster, but it was tricky and I was definitely was out of my comfort zone and encountering unfamiliar vocabulary. Some of the speakers however were very interesting. Especially the founder of Booking.com who is putting some of his considerable fortune into a hydrogen powered Dakar buggy. His comparison between low emission cars and computers was especially fascinating. Basically, when he started Booking.com they were using floppy disks and computers the size of small houses and while a lot had changed since then the basic binary operating system his computers use remains unchanged. Similarly, he said

nobody yet knows where the power will come from (probably hydrogen or ammonium fuel cells) but low emission vehicles will all use electric motors. What low emission Dakar cars and trucks wouldn't being doing would be relying solely on batteries to get them to the end of the special as they'd be simply too heavy.

And finally, we get to the point I really wanted to make when I started this meandering tale: while all factory car entries will have to be low emissions by 2025 there are no plans for low emission bikes. Overnight the Dakar car and truck categories have been transformed from environmental

pariahs to a sort of eco Eldorado attracting all sorts of rich hi-tech sponsors. Meanwhile their two-wheel cousins remain vehicles only oil companies and purveyors of dodgy energy drinks are willing to be associated with. I have friends who have tested a battery powered rally bike that weighs a ton and has a range of just 60 kilometres and that's on track not in sand dunes! Nobody it seems is keen to try and fit a hydrogen tank to a motorcycle.

All this is bad news for both Dakar bike racers and off-road motorcycle enthusiasts in general. Now I know some of you are very attached to the internal combustion engine but you don't need me to tell you its future is looking very limited. The last time I looked the UK government said they will ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030, which means they will probably disappear from showrooms much earlier. In Finland 8 out of 10 cars sold so far this year were powered by electric motors and this sort of thing has a tendency to go exponential. The buying public might have been initially reluctant to embrace electric cars but all these floods, droughts and forest fires seem to have won them round.

As far as off-road motorcycles are concerned, well let's face it, we haven't been getting much love for the general public for a while now. We've been disliked for being noisy and anti-social for decades and shortly we will be able to add being the last vehicles killing off the planet to our list of sins. The immediate solution is electric bikes somewhere between a push bike and a crosser (think Swedish brand Cake) used in short bursts on a closed circuit. But as someone who loves the long distance, in the nature element of enduro bikes I'd be more than happy to chop in my disgusting two-stroke for something green and silent providing it had a bit of range. 🍏



THE ODD COUPLE

RUST (and Beta) turn the clock back for this test. Two enduro capacities that seems – for no good reason – to have lost favour. But why? For as Craig found out, these could be the very bikes that rescue you from lapsing into riding mediocrity...

Words: Craig Keyworth **Images:** JB

It's taken a while to get our travel passes into Lancashire, especially as JB doesn't have a Northern passport, but we persevered and eventually finally got together with Wayne Braybrook at RAW Enduro to test the Betas at his cracking Hapton venue. Hapton is the location of the RAW Ball Breaker Tough Enduro as well as the Rock Oil Enduro Championships and his Beta Experience Days. And for this test we'd chosen the 'oddities', the two 'out there' models from Beta, in terms of capacities, being the RR 200 and RR 390 which don't fit with the now traditional classes of E1, E2 and E3. With the 390 essentially being a 400, the pair are throwbacks to two much-loved capacities of the past. There was a time when 200cc two-strokes and 400cc four-strokes were the rides of choice. ▶





▷ BETA RR 200

I make no bones about it, I'm rubbish at riding two-strokes. I didn't cut my teeth on them like many 'proper' riders, so I just have to treat them like mountain bikes and go at it. The 'little' RR 200 is rather obviously super light and it's also, as you might expect, super nimble – this you could easily ascertain without even throwing a leg over.

BUT... I suspect the RR 200 must be made in a special part of the Beta factory, in isolation to the other bikes – you know, the 'big' stuff. I think they play to the 200 a banging, pre-race play list and have the high-action promo posters dotted around the production line, whilst screening videos of Erzberg, Romaniacs and old school motocross glories. This bike is oblivious to the fact it's a baby two-stroke. In its head, capacity doesn't exist, it has no idea it's meant to be smaller, less powerful than any of the bikes it sees doing promo stunts, or that it should by usual measures be top-end peaky or to run out of power just as it starts to get fun. No, instead it just does its funky strut, like it's a mini-300.

Now that sounds a bit daft, as it is in essence two-thirds of a 300, but the point is that this is the smoothest small capacity bike I've ever ridden, and if you didn't know, you'd suggest it was a well-tweaked old school enduro rider's

250 (y'know those riders that just seem to make everything stick and talk about jetting and the ISDE). I found myself trying to catch it out on some seriously steep climbs – pulling a gear it really shouldn't have been able to lug up such inclines. Yet it climbed them, every time, with very little clutch needed, and I was looking for trouble too. Mind you, it didn't look pretty – as ever I couldn't seem to connect the throttle to rear tyre grip with the ease that top hard enduro riders instinctively have, but that's more me than the bike. I'm only slightly embarrassed that Wayne (JB – please insert career highlights here... CK – no I won't, they're too big and too many; WB is a legend, let the readers Google him for themselves) jumped aboard for the more controlled 'two-stroke doing its thing' poster shots.





▷ Naturally if you drag raced a bigger bike you'd probably be left wanting, and I'm not a massive heavy lump, so that helps, but all said this isn't a bike that you should apply any preconceived capacity prejudices to. I'd happily take this very bike to Romaniacs – where some of the big climbs demand full gas for a good amount of time. In almost all circumstances, it wouldn't be the bike that lets the side down. In any situation there is a sweet



spot of power, weight, torque, as well as rider fitness and ability to utilise it all. The 'little' RR 200 seems to grow that spot into a decent size patch, big enough to have a picnic on whilst you wait for your mates to catch up. Enough top end to punch you into the air, yet a strange ability to find low down torque. At the limit or in fast, open hare & hounds race you'd likely be pushing the bike a bit, assuming you're up there results wise, and that you're fit from riding hard twice a week and a race every weekend.

If you buy one, or even borrow one, make sure to speak in hushed tones about what it should be like, as it really has no idea. Better still take the 200 stickers off and have some fun whipping your mates. Or leave them on and yes, walk the path of the righteous.

THE POINT IS THAT THE RR 200 IS THE SMOOTHEST SMALL CAPACITY BIKE I'VE EVER RIDDEN, AND IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW, YOU'D THINK IT WAS A WELL-TWEAKED OLD SCHOOL ENDURO RIDER'S 250

**BETA RR 390**

It's almost de rigueur NOT to mention other bikes in reviews, the tradition instead is to offer superlatives and discuss the bike on its own merit. Which of course we should, only in this market it's quite likely the buyer of the 390 is already aboard an Austrian. I am; I'm currently hanging on to my FE350, which is much snappier than my FE450 ever was. And on the 350 I find myself often wanting to be up a gear, only without the torque of the 450 to do so – especially in the twister technical sections – and this means cough stalls aplenty. Why is this important here? Because I'm convinced that the design brief for the RR 390 was to solve exactly this. I know

many folk with 250s that think they want 350s, only to find the leap too much. They should really get a 450 and behave themselves on it, ride up a gear from where they are on the 250, but they don't ever believe anyone that tells them this. Or, they should get this RR 390...

The RR 390 is everything the trail rider or steadier mid-pack clubman and below would want. Its silky smoothness instantly endears itself to you. You feel you can ride it all day long. And for the most part I did – making a habit of riding the bike I like, I tried to keep astride the 390, especially with my fitness not being great and wanting to enjoy the 'job' of testing for the day. Yes, the RR 390 was my friend. Strangely though, it does skip along very

**CRAIG WEARS****Helmet:** Shoei VFX-WR**Jersey:** Alpinestars Racer Braap**Pants:** Alpinestars Racer Braap**Boots:** Alpinestars Tech 10

IF I WAS TO DO A THREE-HOUR TOMORROW, I'D TAKE THE RR 390 AND BE FRESH IN THE LAST 30 MINS, WHEREAS IF I'M ON MY OWN FEISTY 350, I'D BE TRYING TO KEEP IT SMOOTH, AND PROBABLY RUN OUT OF ARMS...



nically, it just seems to do so in an effortless waft, rather than a frenetic surge.

If I am correct about my design brief thoughts, somebody should get a pat on the back, as if there was one bike in the garage that needed to do all things, green lane, hare & hounds, riding holiday, this would be it. Yet there is this disconnect in the market between the wants of the fast racers, who frankly will be quick on anything, and the needs of the vast majority of riders – and this RR 390 seems to be the answer to that. I can, on a good day with a fair wind, hustle a bike along, but you've only to look at the size of sportsman classes in start line ups on a given Sunday to realise that the market is mostly at the 'fun' end. I'll hand-on-heart admit that lockdown layoffs have meant my FE350 feels like a handful, but ordinarily this is no bother. But if I was to do a three-hour tomorrow, I'll take the RR 390 and be fresh in the last 30 mins to get it out of shape a bit, whereas if I'm on my own bike, I'll be trying to keep it smooth, and probably run out of arms.





▷ THAT TRIALS DNA

One thing I noticed with both bikes – I could still feel their trials DNA. I dare say they may well lose some of this over the coming years and tweaks, but for now, you can feel it in their bones. Again, we shouldn't compare (but we will...), I can relate to the feel of the Betas to the 'new era' Sherco's circa 2015. Those bikes were leaps and bounds ahead of their predecessors, but without losing the fine, slow precision loved by trials and more technical riders. They were also light, with a lot of flex, and had steep head angles – actually an offset fork axle drilling – so they would turn in and out amazingly, but at the cost of speed stability. I had one and loved it, and although it was outpaced by pretty much everything it was a fabulous handling bike and would take scalps when it got tough or tight.

The same is true of the current Betas, but I think to a lesser extent. And they're

certainly not slow. So overall I like Beta's positioning, their feel, and I'd like to see Beta remain a bit less 'MX'. I'd say Beta has slotted in between KTM's and Sherco's dynamics quite nicely. And to some extent this is a significant positive, as you'll feel right at home if you're jumping ship from either camp.

BRACE BRACE BRACE

Oh, until you touch the brake that is. I should have mentioned this earlier, yeah, the Nissins will remind you how soft an action Brembos and Magura have! It took me a few hours to redial into the hardest hitting brakes on the market. Again, not a bad thing, but definitely noteworthy as I bobbed and seesawed down some steep hills with the front wheel locked and the forks working hard!



This brings us to another differing approach by Beta - the standard Beta RRs have Sachs ZF forks and shock. Having played a lot with suspension this season, I was pretty impressed with this out of the box. Sachs have a LOT of experience in the big and adventure bike markets, so aren't new to the game. It'd be easy to dismiss them, indeed the Racing model does, where it opts for a set of Kayaba forks, albeit with an upgraded ZF rear shock, but honestly, the Sachs is a capable bit of kit. Time will tell how the tuners and aftermarket will treat/embrace it. I guess this is the bolder move.

FLORENTINE FIRE ENGINES

A quick straw poll of folk I personally know who've jumped onto a Beta, and a look at the fast/top riders on them, and the link to trials is clear there, too, with a good gaggle of extreme or ex-trials big names (including Wayne of course) onboard, so that trials DNA is apparently a tangible metric. And we can't ignore the move by Jonny Walker to Beta, but I'm not sure at his level he's buying his own bikes (no, most definitely not). We are sure though that he would not ride something he didn't feel he could win on. Balancing that trials nuance we shouldn't overlook the 12 world championships Steve Holcombe and Brad Freeman have netted between them since 2016 – yeah, these Betas are

bona fide racers, too. Meanwhile, nearly all the club level racers we see are on the RR models, and Wayne's own 250 is both that and quite trick (I didn't ride this as we decided it wasn't in keeping with our test, being a bit blinged up, but also, I think having not quite dusted my boots off and having wobbled round on the other two, Wayne decided I wasn't worthy of it).

So, will we see the fire engine red streak continue through the race paddocks and start lines over the coming years? I'd like to think so, there has been a huge amount of work done on the entire range and there really is a bike to suit everyone, which we should applaud Beta for, as they've clearly put the hours in development in both engines and chassis. I've mentioned before there currently seems to exist an appetite for change and to this trend Beta seem to have presented quite the varied feast – just what the lockdown bellies ordered. 🍷



2021 BETA RR 200 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

THE 2022 BETA UPDATES

Beta gave their range quite an update for 2022, with new diaphragm clutches and upgrades to the suspension and engine mapping, plus a new cylinder (larger bore) on the RR 300.

For more details see our news article online at <https://rustsports.com/2022-beta-enduros-revealed/>

ENGINE: liquid cooled single cylinder two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 190cc
BORE & STROKE: 62 x 63mm
FUELING: Keihin PWK 36
STARTER: Electric
TRANSMISSION: Six-speed gearbox, oil lubricated clutch
FRAME: Molybdenum steel with double cradle
FRONT SUSPENSION: Sach ZF 48mm USD fork, 295mm travel
REAR SUSPENSION: Sachs ZF monoshock, progressive linkage, 290mm travel
WHEELS: 21x1.6, 18 x 2.15
BRAKES: 260mm wave disc, Nissin twin-piston calipers, rear disc: 240mm wave disc single-piston caliper
SEAT HEIGHT: 930mm
WHEELBASE: 1477mm
GROUND CLEARANCE: 325mm
WEIGHT: 97kg (dry)
FUEL CAPACITY: 9.5 litres
CONTACT: www.beta-uk.com
PRICE: UK £7395



2022 BETA RR 390 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE: liquid cooled DOHC four-valve single cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 385.6cc
BORE & STROKE: 88 x 63.4mm
FUELING: Elldor EFI with double injector
STARTER: Electric
TRANSMISSION: Six-speed gearbox, oil lubricated clutch
FRAME: Molybdenum steel with double cradle
FRONT SUSPENSION: Sach ZF 48mm USD fork, 295mm travel
REAR SUSPENSION: Sachs ZF monoshock, progressive linkage, 290mm travel
WHEELS: 21x1.6, 18 x 2.15
BRAKES: 260mm wave disc, Nissin twin-piston calipers, rear disc: 240mm wave disc single-piston caliper
SEAT HEIGHT: 940mm
WHEELBASE: 1490mm
GROUND CLEARANCE: 320mm
WEIGHT: 107.0kg (dry)
FUEL CAPACITY: 9.0 litres
CONTACT: www.beta-uk.com
PRICE: UK £7995





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ON TEST Fox Bomber Light Gloves

In this seeming obsession of producing 'skin-tight' riding gear, in the name of performance, it's great to find a sensible, well-constructed and protective piece of gear. I love these gloves so much I buy a pair or three every time they're on sale – no matter the colour. For me, they're hands-down (sic) the best off-road glove on the market.

Having ridden and raced bikes now for over 45 years these are for my money (literally) the best gloves ever made for enduro, MX and XC. They're my preferred gloves for adventure and rallying too (except for long adventure rides in the winter). You can ride with these babies for hours without blisters.

The gloves are so comfortable – no bulky seams or bunching at the palm – just beautifully constructed with individual pockets of shaped D3O armour sewn in over the knuckles in such a way that your knuckle sits snugly beneath them – you barely notice the armour – until it counts! The D3O padding hardens instantly on impact but stays flexible until then – and I

have these gloves to thank for protecting my hands over the past few years on some nasty offs. Anyone that's had a broken hand or hand injuries in general knows how long they take to heal so these are a godsend over the minimal designs of most gloves on the market.

There's no bulk or them pulling uncomfortably tight over the hand when you tighten your fist, and the palm has a single layer of clarino for feel on the bars combined with stretch mesh between the fingers for airflow. The inner side of the fingers has Fox's TruFeel technology which is basically a load of direct injected internal TPR knobbies at your fingertips. The dexterity you have with these gloves is exceptional.

I just won't wear anything else – as a magazine we get loads of gear to test but I don't care which gear I'm riding in, I always use my own Fox Bomber Light gloves. **WM FOX RACING**

Contact: foxracing.co.uk

RRP: £45.00 (typical sale price £25.99)



The Ténéré awaits. Not a transformation, but a little accessorising ready to go on travels. JB points out this is his garage, not a workshop, it doubles as a utility room, drying room for sailing kit, store for family toys and dog cleaning area. Man cave it is not.



YAMAHA

TÉNÉRÉ 700

PART ONE

Here we go – step one, making the 'cockpit' fit the rider

Words & Images: JB

I'll make this clear now, so we're all on the same page – this 'build' (and I hesitate to call it that) is all about enhancing the Ténéré's touring capability. Of course, that's adventure-touring, we'll be going off-road, but essentially we're not looking to soup the T7 up into some maxi-rally racer. You see, we're going back to the roots of adventure which is travelling the road/track less travelled. Not seeing if we can launch 250kg from this end to the other of an MX tabletop jump.

Now we had planned on doing some roadbook rallies – which are not speed events, incidentally – but life gets complicated when you're dealing with the estate of your deceased father so at least two of these have now passed me by while land agents, valuers, solicitors and accountants vie for attention. But fear not, we're on the cusp of a super adventure that'll see the Ténéré doing exactly what it's intended for. So best get on with the prep...

**THE BUILD**

D'oh, I said it again. This is not a build, just a matter of adding aftermarket parts that will help the Ténéré work even better over the travel missions we have in store for it. The add-ons I'm categorising like this: ergonomics, protection, travel. In this issue I'll look at the ergos, next issue the protection parts and so on. I'm sure tyres and suspension will crop up at some stage, too. To be fair, with Pirelli Scorpion Rally tyres already fitted as standard we're doing okay, there's no need to immediately swap these out. I did a month's ride across the Aussie Outback with bikes on these tyres and they were excellent. Admittedly Aussie's red sand and Wales's black mud have nothing in common, but generally when it comes to adventure bikes mud is in any case best avoided whatever the tyre.

THE ERGOS

A few years back I created a feature on personalising an enduro bike to fit the rider – just using things like the correct spring weights in the suspension, putting the handlebars in the best position, choosing the correct seat etc. The effect was far greater than I'd imagined, it transformed the ride and since then I've paid a lot more attention to how the bike fits the rider.

So before adding lots of other parts I figured my best first step was making the Ténéré fit me better. For this I changed three things.

**HIGH SEAT**

I'm 6'0" tall, or was, with age I think I've lost half an inch off that. However, with a 33" inseam I find the standard seat creates too much knee bend to be comfortable for me for long distances. My answer to this was very simple, Yamaha offer an accessory tall 'rally' seat option which adds a significant 35mm to the seat height. It's not cheap, though (RRP £317.95), so you'd think twice before buying.

Also, bear this in mind: having already jacked up the rear end with extra preload (to allow for this 100kg rider in all his gear) that extra 35mm puts me on tiptoes at a standstill. For once, I'm getting to find out how it is for shorter people riding big adventure bikes and yes, when it comes to stopping at traffic lights, or anywhere, I'm carefully considering which foot to put down so I don't teeter over.

The upside is I now have the optimum seat-to-foot peg distance which is way more comfortable, less tiring, and it's easier to transition from sitting to standing when off-road. As well the rally seat seems to be about an inch wider where I sit so there's plenty of support. Given two six-hour rides (one in perpetual rain) I can now report the seat works a treat, I can just about go a whole tankful (2.5 hours) in relative



comfort, with just a few fidgets toward the end each time. If I add my old sheepskin it's even more cushy. And even after the six hours when I get off the bike I'm not crippled and I suffer no leg cramps. And despite being sat that much higher the screen still works just fine, my head is not getting blown off. Yeah, for me the seat is a gamechanger!

YZ/WR FOOTPEGS

I fear coming off as a bit of a prima donna here, but I like decent foot pegs. Mostly standard units are good enough, but the Ténéré's just don't quite do it for me off-road. Often, I'm riding in a smooth-sole mx boot – as against proper adventure boots with a commando sole – so I find I need grippier pegs so my feet don't slip off. A recent trip to the Yamaha Off Road Experience in Wales revealed a great option – the standard Yamaha YZ/WR footpegs slip straight in – which is a mod they've done with their school Ténérés.





▷ Now I've ridden with longer rally footpegs in the past and they work great but too often I found myself snagging them with my pant leg when trying to put a foot down, sometimes with near disastrous consequences. So I was happy to go with these regular MX pegs. Dimensionally they're almost identical to the standard pegs, but the 'teeth' are just a little bit pointier and there's that all important third row of teeth across the middle for added grip. The return spring is also beefier and properly snaps the peg back into position if they get flipped up in a rut.

And I'll mention this now, because the likelihood is this mod is the only one I'm making that will actually save, not add, weight. Yeah, standard peg (without rubber insert) is 290 grams, YZ peg is 232 grams, so for the two that's 104 grams saved. Which I'll put in the credit column against the debit of tens of kilos that are going to come along very soon!

TOURATECH FOLDING, ADJUSTABLE BRAKE/CLUTCH LEVER SET

I recall adding some Zeta adjustable levers to a Honda CRF250L project we ran at TBM back in 2014 – they were excellent and really improved the feel. I was quite surprised. This came to mind on my first rides with the Ténéré. The standard levers are fine but I found the clutch lever was a longer reach than I'd like and both being fairly basic sort they would not survive a fall.

Yamaha can supply a set of Gilles folding levers but at £234 the pair of course I balked. However, our friends Touratech make a similar spec'd set for roughly half that (£128.52) – still CNC-machined high grade aluminium and adjustable for span and length and the fold upwards should they contact the ground. They're well finished too, being anodised black. Just a winning combination.

Straightaway I now have the clutch lever where I want it for easy single-finger operation and until I fit the upgraded handguards (and even after that) I'll not have to worry about breakage. 🍷

NEXT TIME

You'll notice I've not fitted bar risers. Curiously I've gone off them a bit. Probably I've listened to too many people mention how they adversely affect steering (moving your weight too far back) and are prone to snapping in a fall. But as with enduro I've become used to riding with a lower bar bend and finding better connection to the front end. We'll see if I change my mind on that.

So next time I'll take you through the protection I'm adding. And if that wasn't weight enough I'm adding a centrestand (most definitely not racing this one, eh?) and I'll explain that move in more detail then.

Ténéré 700



Ténéré 700

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MARGATE

With summer drawing to a close the Malle London guys decided to again celebrate British culture, in the form of seaside and biking, with a keen speed run along the Margate sands. It was kind of racing, but the ultimate race was that against the rising tide... >

Images: JB



1 BEACH BUDDIES

You go storming up a beach for an eighth of a mile, next thing you know, you got a new buddy.

2



FLYING THE FLAG

Jonny Cazzola and Robert Nightingale of Malle London give the rider briefing. Robert: "This is our second year doing the Beach Race. Last time we had 50mph winds and 10-foot waves battering the beach so that was a challenge. This year we've got kinder weather and a lot more riders. It's still a challenge, we have to be up at 4am to start the course laying and even with a 9am first race it's a job to get all the racing done before the tide comes back in and sweeps everything away. We love coming here, the local council love us being here too, Margate has a history of motorcycle fun and games, like the mods and rockers scene in the Sixties, so it's kind of in their blood too. It's about a love of the culture, and a bit of a celebration of British eccentricity!"



3



HELP ME (R)HONDA

The toughest ride of the day was getting onto the beach itself, through the deep sand. You wouldn't think Charlie Hagan's ride would be a good choice for sand, but no, he actually rocked the strip, clip-ons and all...

4



TAT-MAN-DO

The first competition was the eighth mile sprint. Just aim for the gap between the pylons, pin it and try and beat the guy or gal next to you. Surprisingly this can be a lot more complex than you'd think. Old bikes don't like fast gear changes, powerful bikes just dig deep trenches...





5 DT1 →

Marc Kimpton is a serial Malle competitor, the Beach Race being his fourth Malle event, riding his 1969 Yamaha DT1 (pictured here with his mate George Sinclair on a '78 Kawasaki KDX125). "I come for the culture – the bike culture – and the Malle ethos. I try to be not competitive, but you can't help but try, so I was in the final four here in the Lightweights and I got a second in the hill climb at Grimsthorpe Castle – the DT1 goes best when there are corners. And the riding gear? Yeah, if you can't wear the gear and look the part you shouldn't really be at a Malle event, should you?"



6 TEAM ↑

If we had the spare cash we'd be making an offer for Dean Searles' XL600R with P-D tank right now. Anya Colley here was one of many female competitors, all of whom wore the broadest smiles.



← 7 THE RABBLE

Waiting for their turn. The event is for 'inappropriate motorcycles' which was of course broadly interpreted.



8 TRACTION ↑

350cc's and a rigid rear end finds better traction for Stuart Jenkins and his Matchless G3L as he aces Simon Warren's Triumph Metisse off the line

9 CHARIOT →

Alex Elbow and his buddy had their work cut out keeping their YZ490 sidecar on all three wheels. They were gamely leading a race around the pylons when the task proved too much and the chair bucked then forward-rolled throwing the pair pretty heavily to the ground. Alex was driven away with a suspected broken collarbone...



10 WAITING ↑

Steve McQueen said that, eh? 'Racing is life, anything that happens before or after is just waiting.'

11 SMOKIN' JOE ↓

Martin Stacey cut a dash with his speedway bike, or at least we think he did, it was difficult to see through the smokescreen.





14 240HP →

There was no lack of madness and ingenuity among the entry, but Kai Bailey was one who elevated the artform, bringing his turbo'd GSX-R1100-engine'd '77 Kawasaki Z1A for a one-off ride. "I guess the bike, this event, it's a 'you only live once' kind of thing. And yes, 240hp – at 8000rpm running 10psi boost – it's a laugh. I ride this on the road, to the shops, but I got some eBay wheels and tyres to run this event. It's the end of the riding season anyway and I've planned a complete strip and rebuild so I'm not worried about the sand and the salt."



12 TIGER TIGER ↑

Two bikes here that you'd give the most thorough of cleans after the ride. Watching the heavyweights flying on the sand you felt a certain anxiety!

13 FASTER →

Easily one of the fastest machines on the sand was this H-D WLC 45 ridden with commitment by Nick Ashley. The hand gear shift was no handicap and the geometry seemed to suit the sand well. Nick was clearly enjoying himself too.





17

SWIMMERS →

The Margate sea bathing club had a bit of a surprise when they turned up for their early morning dip. The combination of the eclecticism, and sometimes pure fancy dress, made most onlookers smile, if not laugh.



15

SIDEWAYS ↑

Ignore the expression, Simon Lancaster was very comfortable sliding his modded DR600 around the pylons.

16

RACE →

It's an all-Honda battle around the fuel barrel as Dakar rep leads fat-tire flat tracker leads Baja-CRF. Surf lifesavers, sans surf, got a great view of the action.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Check out Malle's products and events at www.mallelondon.com



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Image: Ray Archer / KTM

CIAO TONY

Another farewell to another phenomenal talent: Tony Cairoli is hanging up his boots at the end of this season after an 18-year GP career. With nine world championships and 99 GP victories (177 podiums) he took KTM to the main stage, winning their first MXGP (450) titles and proving their 350 SX-F could beat the 450s. He can't quite be called a GOAT, as Stefan Everts nailed 10 titles and 101 GP wins, a couple of numbers Cairoli chased in earnest, but the 35-year-old Sicilian can hold his head high – he damn near did it and boy did he have some opposition.

