

# RUST

ISSUE #31



## ELECTRIC ORANGE

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE 2018 KTM FREERIDE E-XC

★ TOM SAGAR'S ISDE EXPERIENCE & HUSQVARNA FE450 REVIEW ★

★ RALLY RAID PRODUCTS REVISITED ★

★ ENDUROGP GOES TO HAWKSTONE PARK ★

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# Scrambled MESSAGES

**E** ICMA (the annual Milan Motorcycle Show) begins, for the press, on Tuesday 7 September, but as I write this editorial on the 6th, already one manufacturer, Ducati, has jumped the gun – getting in ahead of the rush with its new model announcements.

And what's to like? The new 1100cc Scrambler for one. Here at RUST we've just been out testing the 803cc Desert Sled Scrambler (*test report to follow*), a bike we've very much enjoyed. While of course a very complex motorcycle, as Euro regulations and restrictions require, it maintains a sense of simplicity so far as the rider is concerned. No fairings, no overt gizmos, just press button and go. And as the 1100, here, offers more of the same, we like that idea.

Meanwhile, the Adventure market has for a while been running up a potentially blind alley. The bikes have been getting more technical, more sporty, ferociously so, and the marketing teams, forgetting what adventure travel is all about, have taken to running the bikes around motocross circuits, with professional motocross riders, to demonstrate their prowess. Why, when we all know Adventure isn't about clearing tabletops...?

One thing these latest 'scramblers' offer – by way of contrast – is a naked honesty, of sorts. It's bikes the way we remember them (*and remember, back in the 1960s trail/enduro bikes, even scramblers, were direct derivatives of the road bikes of the time*). And so while they may not be as adept off-road as the latest adventure bikes, they'll work well enough for the sake of adventuring. Our mate July Behl has shown exactly that much in having just ridden his BMW R nineT Scrambler end to end across the Americas, soft bags and all.

We're excited to see a new range of 700-900cc adventure bikes coming for 2018, but let's hope the manufacturers remember the intended purpose of the bikes. But hey, if they don't we know the bikes we'll be riding...

JB







## ORANGE, GREEN & GOLD

KTM will be grateful to Spaniard Josep Garcia for the 20 year old brought to an end a lean period for the orange team in the enduro world championships. Garcia's Enduro2 title is the first since Antoine Meo's E2 crown in 2015. Great shot here showing the majesty of the Saxony forestry and keen support from the locals.

**Image:** KTM / Future 7 Media



## ME-O MY-O

Talking of Antoine Meo – our French megastar made his comeback to competition in October (*after a long layoff due to injury*), racing to an impressive fourth at the Oilybia Rallye Du Moroc. It was some trial though, rains brought flooding and expected traverses across dry river beds became voyages of despair. This looks bad but Meo was one of the lucky ones. Teammate Sam Sunderland, fighting for the rally world championship, drowned-out his KTM for an incredibly frustrating DNF.

**Image:** Kin Marcin / Red Bull Content Pool

GALLERY



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Is the new Sherco 300 SEF-R clubman friendly? RUST gets and exclusive ride on the Royal Enfield Himalayan, Andy Dukes gets some last-minute RTW tips, and we pick our fave clothing to keep us warm in winter...



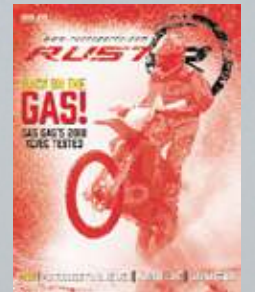
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**ISSUE #30**

2017 ISDE Report from Brive la Gaillard in France, riding extreme with Jonny and Taddy, the 1986 Circuit de Pyrenees revisited and a column from our resident francophile, Chris Evans...

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# SIX DAYS TO GLORY

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RUST's new test rider Tom Sagar rode this year's ISDE on a near-stock Husqvarna FE450, in a club team. A quality club team, mind – finishing on the podium! Here's how they did it...

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**T**HE 2017 SEASON has been a very strange one, with me not doing any racing (*for the first time in over a decade*), just riding for fun at practice tracks. And certainly the last thing on my mind at the beginning of the year was to ride the ISDE. I've ridden the ISDE nine times up to this year, and every time I've been lucky enough to be riding for Team GB. But there has always been talk, with a couple of friends, as to how good it would be to do a Six Days as a club team. So with this year's event being held in one of the most passionate enduro countries in the world – France – and me for once being a free agent, as it were, well, it would have been rude not to.

The club team category caters to a three-rider team representing anything from a motorcycle club to a small country. The club team I would ride for was Team Wales (*a small country!*), which has in fact had great success in years previous but never made the podium. So the 2017 team would consist myself with Jamie Lewis and Jason Thomas.

Not to be conceited, but this would be a very strong team as we've all been riding international enduro for years. Jamie made the switch from motocross to enduro in 2011 and had always been in the mix at the top end of British enduro since then and (*subsequent to the ISDE*) has this year won the E2 class in the European championship. Jason rode British championship in the early 2000s before moving to America where he's been a leading rider in the ever-popular GNCC championship (*including an XC2 championship win*). With this kind of talent on board we had to set the target high – to finish on the podium.







## 8(00) mile

With an 800-mile trip from home to Brive, we drove down through the UK, crossed the English Channel (*aka La Manche*) and carried on down through France. We arrived in Brive (*in Southern France*) late Sunday night a week before the event start. On the Monday morning we started looking for the special tests that would need walking prior to the event. Walking the tests is essential as the all tests would be timed from the word go (*no sighting runs*) and so without walking them you would be riding them blind. There were 10 tests to walk and on average they were around 5km long, which done twice meant we'd walked nearly 100km before the event even started. We would always try and leave early from the hotel to try and beat the heat as most days the temps were in the 30s. In between walking the tests, the week leading up to the start is also the time to test the bikes at the designated test track to make sure they are 100% before they're put into the parc ferme, where the bikes stay overnight throughout the event. The bikes were of course not to be worked on in the parc ferme.





**Day One: A lie-in!**

Finally the first day arrived and with late numbers we could enjoy the first lie-in since we'd arrived! Word in the paddock was that the first two days would be the hardest – and they weren't wrong. With the heat almost reaching 40 degrees this would take its toll on the riders. The tests had looked really nice, flowing in the trees, but by the time we arrived at the first test nearly 500 riders had already passed through and with no rain for a long time the ground had turned into dust ruts. This would make passing slower riders on the first day really tough and quite dangerous.

The first test saw me with a problem, losing my rear brake due to the heat and the amount of use the rear brake was getting. But it was lucky that I only lost the brake three-quarters of the way round, so that my time wasn't too bad. Unfortunately I wasn't able to fix the brake until after the next test where again I lost the brake three-quarters of the way through the test. When I reached the service area, word had got through and the pit crew and my outrider (*my father, Paul*) had all the tools ready for me to fix the brake as fast as possible. With people crowded around me, pushing sandwiches and drink straws in my mouth, I bled the brake. I changed the fluid and luckily this fixed the problem. In case you didn't know – the rider is the only person who can touch the bike throughout the event.





## RUST ENDURO



Luckily all three of us finished day one with no problems, just frustration from racing through the dust of other riders. Good news was that this would change from here on as the fastest riders were thereafter seeded as early starts based on the previous day's results. Meaning our hard work on day one meant no more lie-ins, but clearer air.

Later on day one we heard the sad news that one of our UK riders, Mike Alty from the world famous Sheep Skull enduro team, had passed away, proving that the heat and the severity of the event wasn't to be taken lightly.



**Day Two: To plan**

Day Two covered the same 260km of track, with the same tests and the same heat, but knowing what faced us at least made it feel a slightly easier day. Any given opportunity in the day I would take on fluids. An injured British rider, Josh Gotts, made himself busy pouring water down our backs at the service stops – such a relief. After eight hours we reached the finish where we had 15 minutes work time to clean, lubricate, repair or replace anything except those parts painted by the scrutineers – essentially the wheels, frame, and engine. These rules mean tyres have to be changed, not wheels, and only by the rider – so each day that's two tyre changes plus service all in 15 minutes, and after eight hours of riding. It can be very tough.





### Day Three: Broken springs (not strings)

Day Three signifies the mid-point of the event. This day we got to cover new terrain and new tests, but still it was 7½ hours of riding and 250km. The day was much easier, but the heat still hadn't give up. The tests were some of the best I have ever ridden, set on grass fields in the rolling valleys with steep hills and cambered turns. The French love their grass tests, as do us Welsh!

The day for the team was good but there was something not quite right with the forks on my Husky so I told my dad to get the spare forks ready at the final service along with the usual front and rear tyres and air filter. Somehow I managed the fork change and full service in just 11 minutes (*it pays to practice*). After putting the bike in the parc ferme I took the forks apart (*with my good friend Frazer Norrie who was riding in a club team for Scotland*). We found the springs in the inner chamber had broken so we replaced them with some spare internals and put the forks back together ready to go back on the bike in the 10 minute work period allowed before the start in the morning.





**Day Four: Top seven!**

With the newly fixed forks back in the bike it was a short push to the start ramp to wait for my minute to click over before pressing the start button. Day Four was here and another new route with 230km to cover.

Among the new tests was one I had ridden in the world championships nine years ago. This turned out to be the test where I would have my best single result. The test was on a old motocross track, in fact where the final motocross test was held in the ISDE in 2001. With the course going on and off the motocross track and into the trees, I posted a seventh outright against some of the best riders in the world. You can imagine that's a matter of some pride (*'I still got it!'*) but I have to acknowledge with the ground being a little moist from the overnight rain the conditions were totally to my (*Welsh*) liking.

That wouldn't last long, though, as it hadn't rained long or hard enough, so the dust was soon back. Our team was still riding well, though, and were lying third in the club team standings, five minutes back from the leaders.







### Day Five: No mistakes

Day Five, the last of the real enduro days was a repeat of the day four trails and even though it was the shortest day of the event it was the most tricky. The trickiest part was a river section with a super steep bank plus ditches, trees and rocks. With the team in with a good chance of a podium, this was not a time to do something stupid like hole a casing or bend a disc. We all made it through before learning that one of the French team riders in front of us had hurt himself bad enough that he couldn't continue, moving us up to second. But we still had half the day left and with a strong USA team behind us – the riders, Cody Webb, Ty Tremain and Ben Kelly, all very fast – we couldn't let up. At the end of the day we were second, with only the final motocross test to ride.

### Day Six: Hot and hasty

It had arrived, the sixth and final day of what had been quite a tough enduro, which is very common in France. All that was left was eight laps of a motocross track on a flat field with some jumps. All three Team Wales riders were in the C2 race which is for 450cc four-strokes and 250cc two-strokes, and with only a couple of minutes separating us from the Americans, while the Italian team were eight minutes ahead, we had to play it safe and bring it home.





For me, coming from trials, the final motocross is a challenge, but Jamie and Jason have been bought up on motocross, this is their time. As we lined up on the start I decide to pick a gate on the right side of Jamie, ready for the hairpin left at the end of the start straight. The 15-second board came up (*time to get rid of the nerves and get focussed*), then the 5-second board: click up to second gear, give it quarter throttle and watch the gate, watching, watching... BANG! The gate dropped and immediately there were bikes coming from everywhere, all trying to be first to the corner. I had a terrible start but of course Jason and Jamie were up front, loving it; in the end all we had to do was finish. I started to pick my way past people and then the 1-lap board came out. I got into the spirit, and with a few people in front of me the red mist came down and I was after them! Then at last, the final corner and over the final jump, that was it – ISDE 2017 done and our team runners-up in the club class, and on the podium!

Not being in the world team for once you'd think this might have been a holiday joy ride but instead it was one of the hardest Six Days I have done, more because of the heat than the terrain. The satisfaction was there, though, it was great to take our turn together on the podium, the team had achieved its goal with gold medals for all three of us.

It seems 'retirement' suits me well!





# TOM'S ISDE RIDE

2017 Husqvarna FE450

Our Tom took a Husqvarna FE450 to the Six Days in Brive. Here's a little insight into his set-up, and a little feedback on how the bike performed...



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## RUST ENDURO

for me, the power was a bit of a disappointment. I like my 450s to drive nice and strong, almost jump out of corners, only not too much, a little back from the way a motocross 450 can jump out of your hands. Without that big power I found I was riding the bike too hard and began to struggle with the gaps between the gears.

In search of more power, I changed the silencer from stock to a slip-on Akrapovic which made the power delivery a lot stronger and less restricted, but still not quite what I was looking for in the ultimate 450. I could have gone on searching, and tuning, but the gains in doing this are marginal and as – aside from the ISDE – I wasn't competing I didn't go any further. I can make bigger gains elsewhere for less effort (*and less cost*). Last word on the Akrapovic – it's much lighter than the standard silencer, and that's a benefit worth having.

### TC: Yes or no?

The big question was does the traction control button actually work? I tried it on a grass field test first and you do feel a slight difference, the bike doesn't seem to spin as much as what it would on a normal map. Only this turned out to be a feeling only, we couldn't measure a benefit when tested against the clock. Again, for a less experienced rider I can see this working. But at my level, I'm much happier riding with it switched off.

### Why the FE450?

After ten years of racing big 450cc enduro bikes why change a habit? Especially one that works for me, rather than against me. So this year was no different, but as an upside for RUST readers I do have a decade of 450 experience to fall back on, and that's 450s of all kind of colours including red, yellow and blue. So how would the new Husqvarna FE450 compare to the others?

### How (long)?

Fortunately I didn't pick up this Husky just days before the event, as can be the case. This has been a relatively long-term partnership. And so after a good six months with the FE450 there is no doubt in my mind that Husky have made a very competitive and light machine.

When I first rode the bike I was surprised how good it was considering it was straight from the crate. The first thing I noticed was the weight (*a claimed 108.8kg dry*), it was noticeably lighter than any 450 I've ridden before. Second difference was the power delivery was so smooth, more like a 400 than some of the barking 450cc race hounds I've known (*and therefore great for clubmen riders*). Only being a championship rider,







### Suspension makeover

The one thing that top racers consistently talk about and want to change the most is suspension. And in my opinion it is the first thing anyone should do after a purchase, new or old. Having the correct valving and spring rates can transform a bike from pig to magic carpet.

The stock Husq suspension features the new WP Xplor 48 fork and a WP linkage shock. The Xplor fork is not the worst fork I have ever ridden with, and it certainly doesn't feel as bad as the 4CS fork that I have tried in other bikes, and for a stock set-up I'm of the opinion it's pretty good. And it responds well to adjustment, too. When I first got the bike I found the front would sag (*front was too low*), but there was an instant no-tools remedy given the Xplor forks come with preload adjusters situated on the top of the fork that can be adjusted with your fingers. I put the preload on full (*compressing the springs to lift the front*) and this changed the feel of the bike completely, allowing me to push much harder without the risk of losing the front end due to washing out.

Note that without the fork being preloaded the excess sag had meant the forks rode in the in the hard mid-part of the stroke, so making for a hard choppy feel, whereas by adding the preload (*and lifting the front end*) the forks worked in the earlier, softer part of the stroke, which made the forks more supple and more responsive in the corners. I would like to try a set of Xplor forks revalved to see how good they can be.



## TOM'S ISDE RIDE

However my experimentation with the Xplor ended there as I've been using a set of expert-spec WP Cone Valves, which have been valved and sprung to my weight and ability. I have been using these forks for a number of years now (*on KTM's and Sherco's*) and with the big 450s they seem to work exactly how I want them. The feel is plush in the first part of the stroke, for the small obstacles, roots and stones, and thereafter gradually get firmer.

When you push up and down on the Cone Valve forks they feel very hard, almost like motocross suspension – and so does my shock, which is firm with a lot of rebound damping (*slow*). The main reason for that setting is that when I hit obstacles hard the bike does not get unsettled, while fine tuning the rebound helps with the small stuff.

The shock is standard, only fitted with a bladder kit instead of the original piston. The advantage of the bladder kit is that it gives you a smoother, less harsh ride with less chance of it fading when hot (*say when riding a rough sand track where the shock is working super-hard*).

### **Tyred out**

With good suspension you must have a good tyre to go with it. I have been riding on Michelin for some time now and have found a lot of confidence in their tyres, with my preferred choice being the Comp 6 front and Comp 3 rear. I find these tyres have worked well in all types of terrain and in this year's



Six Days they preformed really well and they didn't wear too bad either. That said I still took the precaution of fitting new tyres on each night (*so that's six fronts, six rears*).

### **Oil's well**

With around 30 hours of riding in a Six Days the oil in the bike can get pretty black. So usually this would be changed halfway through the week – as long as there weren't bigger issues to sort with the bike as the bike working is priority. Oil filters are new for the start of the event and are not changed during the event.

### **Clean air**

The one filter that does need changing a lot is the air filter, which was the most changed part on the bike during the event; at every check if possible. With the dust being as bad as it was, preparing the filters was critical, making sure they were properly oiled all over. Some riders did run filter skins to try and save them; but I had a lot of filters at my disposal so kept putting in new ones.



## TOM'S ISDE RIDE

### Clutch upgrade?

One big change I made was removing the original Magura clutch (lever and slave cylinder) replacing it with Brembo. With having a small problem with the slave cylinder at home, while training, I decided to run the full Brembo system which I knew worked well (*from the three years when I rode KTM*). This gave me the confidence it would last the week.

### The right bike?

Would I take the Husqvarna FE450 to another Six Days? Absolutely, no question. The bike was so reliable; it started no problem every morning and was easy to work on. I took the bike fully prepared to France, ready to race, and when I got home I changed the oil and filter and went straight out training again, and not just the once. It's a great bike. For an expert, hungry for power, yes it could deliver more. But most owners are not success-hungry experts, for 98% of riders the power is just right. The bike ran faultlessly, as it is now I don't want or need to change a thing. Which is more than I can say for the rider. Yeah, if there were one thing I would change for another Six Days, it would have to be the preparation of the rider!



## RUST ENDURO







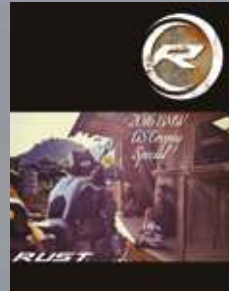
**HONDA CRF1000L AFRICA TWIN SPECIAL EDITION**  
RUST gets the exclusive world's first test of the new Honda CRF1000L Africa Twin!



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



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



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



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



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



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



**TOURATECH BMW R1200GS RAMBLER**  
First full test of Touratech's 200kg, 125hp Enduro R1200 GS Rambler in the Azores!



**RUST TOURATECH AUSTRALIA SPECIAL**  
JB embarks on an adventure into The Outback and returns humbled by the experience...



**RUST 2017 EnduroGP**  
RUST guide to the upcoming EnduroGP season... New rules, new riders, new classes, new everything!



**RUST 2018 KTM LAUNCH SPECIAL**  
RUST rides the revolutionary new fuel-injected two-strokes from KTM... at the Erzberg!



**RUST 2018 BETA LAUNCH SPECIAL**  
JB rides and rates the latest hot models from the 2018 Beta model range...



**RUST 2017 TREFLE LOZERIEN SPECIAL**  
RUST Magazine did the Trefle Lozerien and here's the proof!

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KTM are not done with the electric motorcycle, there are plans afoot. Meanwhile, after four years, their Freeride E has gone second generation for 2018. Now more powerful and longer lasting, it's to be known as the Freeride E-XC...

**By Jon Bentman**



# BATTERIES *Not* INCLUDED



# 2018 KTM FREERIDE E-XC

RUST TRAIL

**K**TM HAVE TWEAKED the Freeride E. Long story short, the motor is now 12.5% more powerful, while the powerpack holds 50% more capacity; enough for 1.5 hours riding say KTM. And it's had a name change: Freeride E-XC.

That's it.

## Okay, there's more

Not much more, so we'll be brief. The motor for a start, it's a brushless electric thing, with water-cooling to the cases. KTM have tweaked it slightly, so max power has jumped from 16kWh to 18kWh (equivalent to 24.5hp). And the battery pack has been uprated too, in the existing Freeride E we had a 2.6kWh pack, the new one is rated at 3.9kWh (it uses 360 Sony lithium ion cells). That's a boost in capacity of 50% say KTM, taking ride time up to 1.5 hours. Additionally in economy mode there's an energy recuperation feature that draws back energy when coasting or braking. Not a whole heap, but in certain circumstances it could allow up to two hours of use.

There are effectively 'three speeds': 'Economy' allows for speeds up to 50km/h, there's 'enduro' which gives access to up to 16kWh of power, while 'cross' puts all 18kWh on tap. Recharge takes 110 minutes, while a charge to 80% takes 75 minutes. If you get caught out with a low battery, the output automatically switches to 'limp home' mode when 10% battery charge is left.

## Chassis updates

The chassis has received a few similarly modest tweaks. The steering head is now longer and combined with a new triple clamp offers more stability. The forks are now 43mm WP Xplor type and the new WP shock shaves 430grams off the weight of the bike. Meanwhile, the tyres are now Maxxis Trialmaxx.

The bodywork has been given the odd minor tweak and new colourways. There's an ignition key now mounted on the right side of the head-





## 2018 KTM FREERIDE E-XC

lamp unit and the handlebars are a touch broader than before. All up the Freeride E-XC weighs in at 111kg (*which tells you how heavy batteries are, still*).

### All charged up?

Are we? Not exactly. KTM confirmed they've sold just 3000 Freeride E's since the launch in 2014, which isn't exactly mammoth sales and probably doesn't get near to repaying the €10m so far invested in the e-programme. But then electric is likely to be a long path and you have to start somewhere.

Will the Freeride E-XC change our view on e-bikes? Given the incremental improvements over the E, it would seem unlikely. And here at RUST we're still confused as to what happens to all these lithium ion batteries at their end of life. They're fairly toxic, just throwing them into another hole in the ground isn't going to cut it. It would be nice to see a detailed end of life strategy for these things, otherwise we're still wondering just how green these e-mobility vehicles really are...



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All said and done, we can see the progress. A whole 50% more battery life is no bad thing and is a fair hop-up given just four years of development (*what can we expect in another four?*). All in all good news. Although we think the increased frugality of KTM's two-strokes is just as merit-worthy.

Yeah, progress. But why no test ride, we wonder...?

## AN ELECTRIC FUTURE?

**K**TM PUT ON a plush launch for this model. There was no riding involved (*hmmm...*) but a whole pile of bling was thrown at the assembled journo's given that we were in Mr. Red Bull's Hanger-7 aircraft museum at Salzburg Airport.

KTM were being direct yet indirect. The presence of KTM's big three, Stefan Pierer, Hubert Trunkenpolz and designer Gerald Kiska, created the impression something big was about to be announced. But a world-shaking statement never came. They said, *'it is clear that the electric motorcycle will form part of the future of the motorcycle industry'*. But notice they said, *'part'*.

Then the chiefs mentioned the notion of e-mobility within an urban context. Stefan Pierer, CEO: *"We know that e-mobility will change the landscape of travel in the future, and our vision is very clear. Looking ahead to 2025 we expect to have a wider range of models available with a focus in the commuting arena."* Only then they'd mention the next development in e-bikes would be no more than an alternative to the 50SX junior motocrosser – not exactly an answer to urban congestion... There came mention of e-scooters and e-bicycles, only the latter was curiously illustrated by an image of a Husqvarna-branded electric mountainbike. Fair to say the journo's left confused.

Maybe we can make our own assumptions. Perhaps KTM aren't certain that electric really is the future, so they're playing tentative, hedging their bets. Or perhaps the bigger story is just too big, too sensitive to be revealed just yet...?







## RUST

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[www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbeuWgzWcyQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbeuWgzWcyQ)

### TRAVIS PASTRANA BACKFLIPS BETWEEN TWO THAMES BARGES

Watch Travis backflip over the 75ft gap between two Thames barges to publicise the Nitro Circus and makes it look easy...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hXljiHH9K58](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hXljiHH9K58)

### ACTION FROM THE MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS 2017

Some of the action from the 2017 Motocross des Nations from Matterly Basin in Hampshire...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj-5xW\\_-x-l](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj-5xW_-x-l)

### RUST TESTER TOM SAGAR RIDES THE 2018 HUSQVARNA TEis

Multiple European and British enduro champion Tom Sagar tests the Husqvarna TE250i and TE300i for RUST Magazine in British Columbia, Canada...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXtl8s3xA98](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXtl8s3xA98)

### JB RIDES THE LATEST 2018 MODELS FROM BETA

JB finds the latest Betas to be lighter, more powerful and easier to use. Which must makes them better. Shouldn't it? Read the feature to find out...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6KdM5w8GWO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6KdM5w8GWO)

### 2018 KTM 250/300 EXC TPI FUEL-INJECTED TWO STROKES

Jochi Sauer KTM of-road product development manager explains the story behind the development of these revolutionary two-strokes...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v6loSJl4jM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v6loSJl4jM)

### 2018 KTM 250/300 EXC TPI FUEL-INJECTED TWO STROKES

Ride along with JB on the latest KTM TPI machines and hear his verdict on these Euro Stage 4 compliant motorcycles...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8516kr\\_og58](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8516kr_og58)

### NEW FOR 2018 GAS GAS EC300 RIDDEN AND RATED IN GIRONA

JB rides the latest offering from the recently resurrected Gas Gas company with new frame and suspension and many more upgrades...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEjSqECe6sA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEjSqECe6sA)

### FIRST RIDE OF THE BRAND NEW FANTIC 250 CASA

JB takes a spin aboard the new 250 Casa from Fantic and speaks to Dean Clements the UK Fantic importer about future plans and other new models...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL7\\_ebar560](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL7_ebar560)

### WE GET TO RIDE THE 2017 SHERCO 300 SEF-R

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



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=xH0E2Ra1TL4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xH0E2Ra1TL4)

### 2016 WELSH TWO-DAY ENDURO THE MOVIE

RUST rode the Welsh and lived to tell the tale... just. The trials and the tribulations all here, in glorious colour. Enjoy...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_EGuentg3s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_EGuentg3s)

### 2017 HUSQVARNA LAUNCH

The 2017 Husqvarna enduro bikes, ridden and rated by RUST's Jon Bentman... Check out the 2017 Husqvarna Special Edition at [rustsports.com](http://rustsports.com).



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwK49cZ4yys](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwK49cZ4yys)

### 2017 BETA LAUNCH

The 2017 Beta enduro bikes, ridden and rated by RUST's Jon Bentman... Check out the full review in the 2017 Beta Special Edition at [rustsports.com](http://rustsports.com).



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOK02x9reL0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOK02x9reL0)

### 2017 KTM LAUNCH

Warren Malschinger and Josh Snowden go to Portugal to ride the extensively redesigned 2017 KTM enduro range...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQBn2qbfopY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQBn2qbfopY)

### THE TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Read the story behind the ethos of the Trail Riders Fellowship in RUST Magazine Issue 5 available FREE on the website [www.rustsports.com](http://www.rustsports.com)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_L8ePyl2E4M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_L8ePyl2E4M)

### 2016 V-STROM 650XT

Seve Hackett explains the revisions to the Suzuki 650 V-Strom in order to make it more suitable for all-out adventure riding...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=yriJw\\_FU910](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yriJw_FU910)

### 2016 YAMAHA WR450F

JB tests the new Yamaha WR450F in the hills of Andalusia and finds that it's packing some heat and demands a good deal of respect...



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oHMTpB0RNw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oHMTpB0RNw)

### 2016 HONDA AFRICA TWIN

Exclusive first test of the new Honda CRF1000L Africa Twin... Read the story in the RUST Magazine Special Edition at [www.rustsports.com](http://www.rustsports.com)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntK07l63tUa](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntK07l63tUa)

### HONDA CB500X ADVENTURE

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



RUST ADVENTURE

# RALLY RAID PRODUCTS

Words & Images: Jon Bentman



## THE LITTLE RALLY-ADVENTURE FIRM THAT'S GROWING FAST...

Back in RUST#4 we tested RRP's cleverly adv-modified Honda CB500X. Since then RRP have sold so many of their CB500X Adventure kits that it's prompted a move to bigger premises. A sure sign the adventure market is still booming...

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# RALLY RAID PRODUCTS



## The story so far

**R**ally Raid Products, based in Northamptonshire in the UK, is still a relative juvenile, having started up only six years ago for the purpose of creating specialist performance parts for KTM 690 Enduros. In the beginning the business evolved directly out of the director's, John Mitchinson, own interest in rally racing, but now it's fast becoming a significant supplier in the adventure market. Here's how RRP has evolved and what it's offering, in Mitchinson's own words...

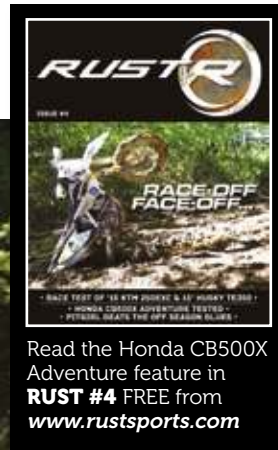
*"When we started I already had an engineering and plastic moulding business so we sort of branched out into making rally parts. Only this had an unexpected knock-on effect of bringing us into the adventure market, mainly with the KTM 690 Enduro because the adventure-riding owners realised the rally kits we were making turned the 690 virtually into the 690 Adventure they had been looking for. That's where the business started."*

*"We've progressed since then, with many more parts for the KTM but also branching out into other models and manufacturers as we've realised that the adventure market is where the volume is. The rally market is good for the testing and the promotion of the parts, but the main bulk of the sales are into the adventure market."*

*"With our recent move we've now got 8500 square feet of manufacturing space which is sectioned up to accommodate plastic moulding, CNC machining and the fabrication shop – it's all under the one roof now. When we started we were working out of 1500sq.ft. over two sites, so now it's much more efficient, all under roof everyone together, it's much easier to keep an eye on things, progressing the work through, and making things flow much easier."*



# RALLY RAID PRODUCTS



Read the Honda CB500X Adventure feature in **RUST #4** FREE from [www.rustsports.com](http://www.rustsports.com)



## How RRP works

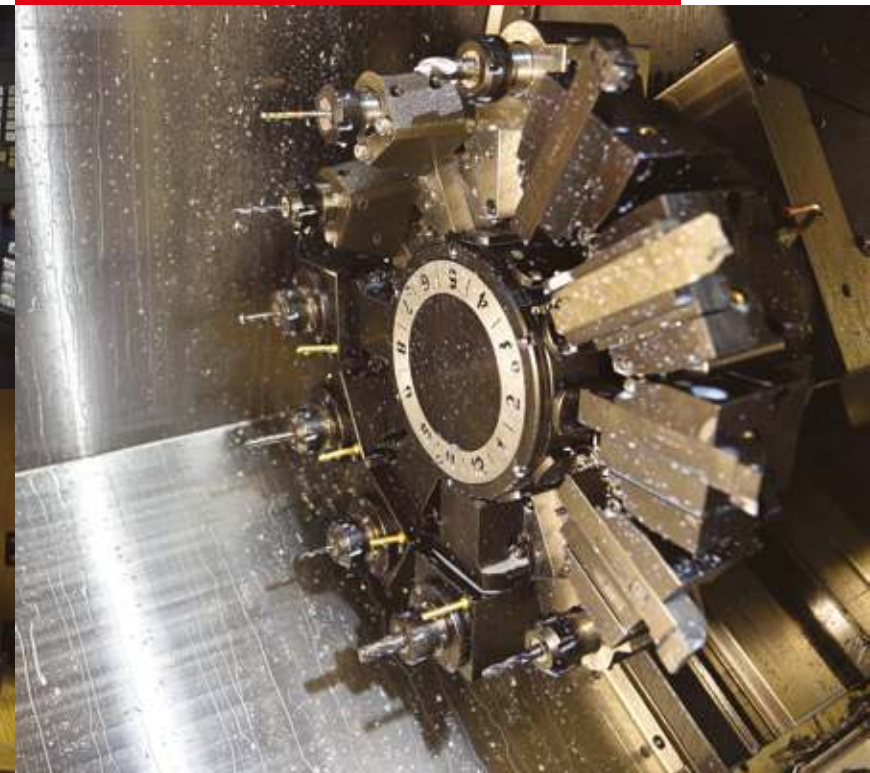
"We do nearly all our own R&D. We design here, develop the parts, prototype them, race them, test them around the world, and manufacture them. But we're not working in isolation, for instance we've got contacts in Australia so when it's winter here they can test our products in their summer there, and we can get a few thousand kilometres on a new product really quick whatever the time of year.

"We don't buy-in many ready finished parts, the only real exception being the shocks, as we're in partnership with Tractive Suspension in the Netherlands, and Scotts steering dampers. And that's it, everything else we endeavor to manufacture here in-house.

"We're also lucky that we are located in the motorsport centre of the UK so we've got a lot of local motorsport suppliers, so we can quickly access stuff like 3D scanning and the kind of tech-stuff you'd kill for. We have that on our doorstep and that also means we have a skilled workforce found locally – some of our staff have worked for F1 teams, so they're highly skilled.

"Our growth has meant that we're now employing more people, we now have eight people working full time, four in manufacturing, the other four split between processing orders and prebuilding the kits as there's a lot of assembly work in the adventure kits."





## **So where are the advances coming?**

*"In terms of our processes, 3D printing has really come on over the last few years – like computers at the beginning, where they were doubling in power every year, and halving in price. It's the same with 3D printers, and they've come on to a point where they're printing stuff strong enough to actually put on a bike and ride, albeit slowly. It's really good for checking things like bar and footrest positions, we've even 3D printed folding brake and clutch levers and they are strong enough. It's important to do this because on a motorbike feel is very important and a slight radius or angle change can make a lot of difference ergonomically, when sat or stood up on a bike."*

*"Our other leap forward has come by acquiring a CNC lathe that also mills. That's around a £120,000 investment, so it's very expensive, but it can do the work that three machines would have been doing ten years ago – although conversely you'll need much more skilled employees to run them, because the software is really taxing to learn, a brilliant machine to stand and watch but not so good if you've got to start to learn its operation – there's a lot going on!"*

*"What all of this means is we're not the company we started out as. RRP is not a one-man-band with a welding kit as some might think! We still do one-offs but that's for us as part of our R&D as we are more geared up for batch production."*





## What are RRP's main product lines?

"We started off as die-hard rally racers supplying die-hard rally racers, but that diverged into adventure market with the KTM 690 – that bike opened up our eyes to a whole new market place: adventure. And from there we went more mainstream with the Honda CB500X. We were looking for a volume bike, something we could use our expertise on with the suspension and the CNC machining to improve the bike that was a pretty good bike deep down, it just needed a few tweaks to make it more suitable for adventure. That has since led us into looking into the BMW G 310GS as our next project; a bike for the younger riders, because we know the average age of bike riders is getting older and for us to sustain a business we need to go where the market place is going. The whole business, not just the bike manufacturers but the accessory

manufacturers too, we need young riders and we think the 310 BMWs will lead us there with similar developments to what we have done with the CB500X."

"We've also been working hard with Honda's CRF1000L Africa Twin. The AT is their top of the range adventure bike and it is a very good bike, but it does have a few shortcomings when it comes to hard off-road. We're not going to be making engine guards and luggage racks for the AT because there are plenty of other people who have a head start on us and that's not really what we do. Because of our race background we're looking at performance features that will address the two main shortfalls of the AT – that the wheels aren't up to the strength and the weight of the bike. Plus it doesn't run on tubeless tyres!"





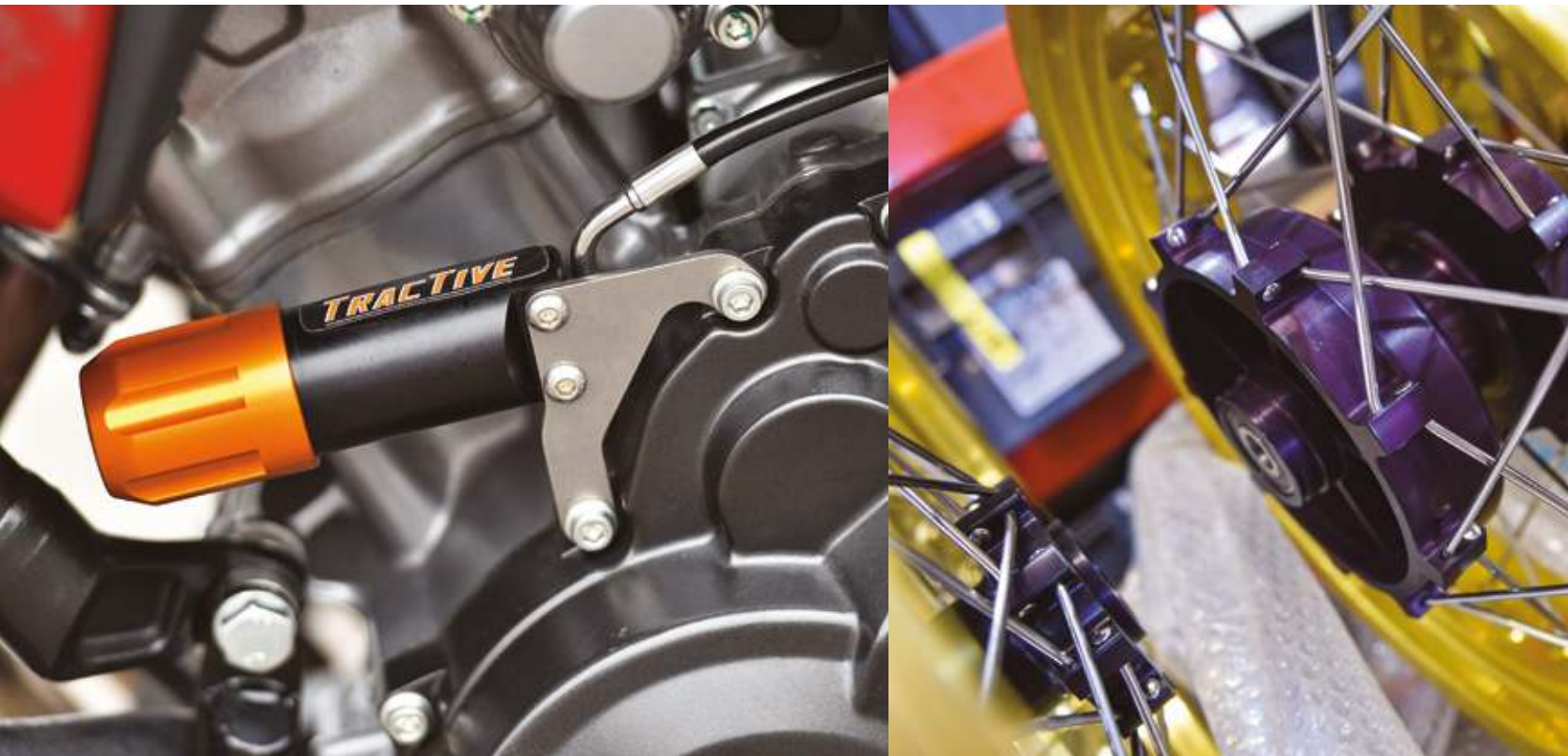
*"For people who are coming to the AT from road bikes, the thought of having to change a tube is completely alien to them. So our thinking is if we are going to make a heavy-duty wheel set then why not make it tubeless as well? Plus we've been working with Tractive, through Touratech, so we've just built an AT using the Touratech suspension which they've tweaked for us lightly. It's extreme suspension with the closed cartridge fork with a little bit extra travel and little bit extra damping because we wanted to race the bike to show people that's our heritage. And now our AT is actually a good fun bike to ride off-road, its dialed in a bit better, and for us it's a shop window. We are never going to sell loads of wheel kits or triple clamps for the AT, but it's the one thing we are good at doing and it focuses people on us as a business, demonstrating our heritage (racing) and our capability – we can take a bike like the AT and turn it into a fairly good off-road bike."*

## **What are the trends in adventure as you see them?**

*"For a start, the adventure market is probably the only expanding part of the motorcycle business, and that's probably a reflection of the fact riders are getting older, sportsbikes are getting faster and harder to ride, and an adventure bike is a more comfortable bike that also opens up a lot more roads, literally, because you can take the bike off-road."*

*"Looking at the market internationally... Americans just love Hondas. KTM have struggled to get into America. They've thrown a lot of money at it and even now Mr. American will go for a Honda as first choice, it's just how they are. The Australians they just love the big singles, the Suzuki DRs, the Yamaha XTs and WRs. Australia is a big country, you need an economical bike to cover the distances, so they tend to go for the big singles, given they're easy to fix (ideal for bush mechanics) and fairly economical. Europeans tend to choose smaller bikes, a bit more nimble,*





## RALLY RAID PRODUCTS

### What they do!

**KTM 690 – Husqvarna 701** – rally-adventure accessories, including long-range tanks and fairing kits

**Honda CB500X** – three levels of performance upgrades, including suspension upgrades, HD off-road spec wire-spoked wheels (19"/17"), crash protection and luggage racks

**Honda CRF1000L Africa Twin** – HD off-road wire-spoke wheel kits in development

**Rally race components** – including road books and navigation mounts

**BMW R1200GS** – RRP is an official Touratech Suspension service centre so can supply, fit and maintain Touratech's range of high-end suspension for BMW GSs

**Enduro components** – RRP also keep a big stock of Scotts Steering Dampers and a variety of accessories for enduro competition bikes

**Contact:** [www.rally-raidproducts.co.uk](http://www.rally-raidproducts.co.uk)

*powerful, maybe a bit more edgy, racy. Most Europeans would quite happily spend more on their suspension than an American customer, it's just a reflection on how the countries' riding conditions are."*

### What's the now for RRP?

*"We are always trying to improve what we're doing. Even the Honda CB500X Adventure kit, we haven't finished developing it. We've just gone through a phase of redesigning the hubs and now that we have a bit of quantity in the sales, we have a sales background, hopefully we can project sales for next year.*

*"So we decided to revisit the hubs and take some more weight out of them and the same with the suspension. We've taken another 100 shocks from Tractive, and we've taken the opportunity to redesign the CB shock so we now fit an hydraulic preload adjuster – that's something which we sell a lot of to the 690/701 guys. It's a really good way to adjust the preload without having to get in there with a wrench.*

*"Meanwhile we've taken delivery of our first BMW G 310GS and we'll be working on a kit similar to that for the CB500X to further extend that bike's off-road capability. So we're continually tweaking things while keeping an eye on the next bike down the line that would suit us."*





## RALLY TO ADVENTURE

### A natural progression

**I** rode my last rally this year, the Baja. We built a special KTM 690 for it, with a wide-ratio gearbox and a tuned engine. We stripped it to the bare minimum, it didn't need a rally tower or fairing because the Baja Rally isn't like the African rallies and I decided I didn't want to run a full fairing. In fact we do a rally-lite kit which is a very similar set-up (it's a basic kit that fits any EXC or enduro). This meant that all that was needed was our fuel tanks to give us the range. We did a lot of work on the engine to get over 70hp at the rear wheel and with a fairly light 690, with very good suspension, it was a real scream to ride. But that's it really as far as rallying goes, I think I'll hang up my boots because I've got so much other riding I want to do.

"Adventure is a natural progression from rally riding – if you can ride 10-12 hours a day on your own and make decisions on your own and repair your bike on your own – as you must in rally – then it stands you in good stead for going on long trips and having to think on your feet a lot of the time.

"The one big downside of the rallies, I felt, was you came away after two weeks in a country just wishing you could have gone a bit slower or had an extra day. Only you can't, it's like wacky races: you're up all night doing your road book, fixing your bike and up again at 4 or 5am to go off, and it really is just racing. And so for me now, it's nice just to kick back and revisit some of the countries, go back to Morocco, go back to Tunisia, just go on a bike, but not racing to revisit some of the good routes at a more relaxing speed and meet again the people you met first time around but on a very fleeting basis."

**John Mitchinson**





# A DAY AT THE RACES

**A**ny day a world championship comes to town is a special day. When the EnduroGP paddock drove into Hawkstone Park in the rural British county of Shropshire, it was very special. A welcome return to the UK for international enduro after nearly ten years absence.

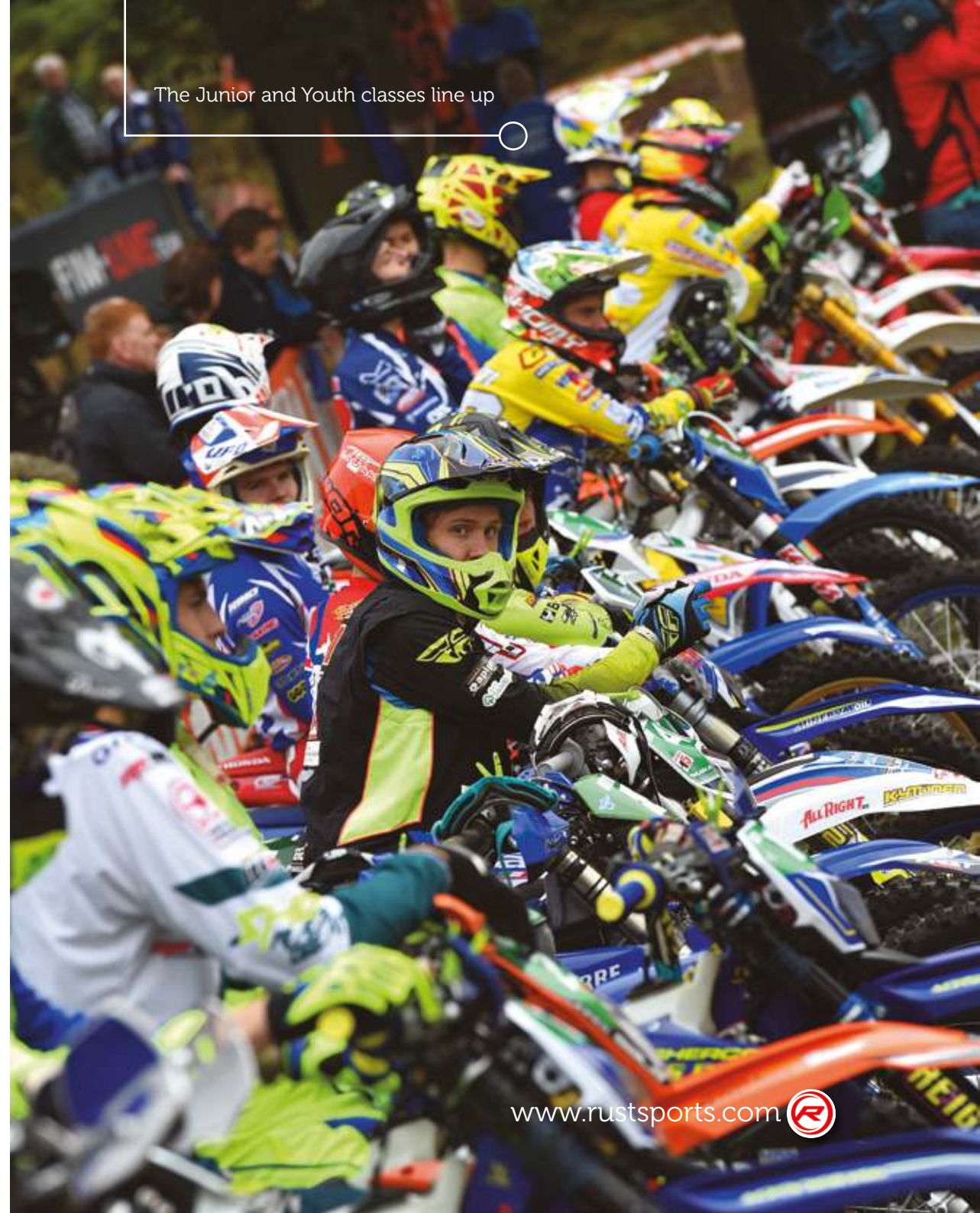
Hawkstone Park is a venue of historical note, motocross (*scrambles*) grand prix came here in the 1950s and 60s, playing to crowds as big as 50,000 and more. Since 1999 it's hosted the opening international motocross of each European off-road calendar. Set against a sandstone hill (*cliff almost*) with a deep, dark loamy sand base under a woodland canopy it is a venue that is both majestic and (*for the riders*) punishing.

For EnduroGP this was also a time for experimentation as the usual timecard format was temporarily suspended in favour of a day of sprints followed by a second of cross-country racing, both using parts of the famous motocross course as a kind of arena section for spectator focus. Certainly it brought a breath of fresh air to the enduro paddock, provoking new thinking on just what enduro should be, today, in this ever-changing world.

Over the following pages is what it looked like, as the riders brushed aside the ferns and dodged the trees.

By Jon Bentman

The Junior and Youth classes line up







As an ex motocrosser Deny Philippaerts would know Hawkstone Park well, although obviously not the sinuous single track sections through the woods. Nonetheless the Italian scored his best weekend's points haul of the year, lifting himself into the top 10 in EnduroGP.





Thomas Oldrati didn't enjoy such a stellar weekend. Returning to racing with an injury not yet fully healed he had to pull up short. Looked tidy though...



It's an intense moment before the start. You wonder what's going through the riders' minds. Danny McCanney here keeping a sharp eye on the opposition, maybe.







Out the back of the course, no one watching, British wildcard rider Jordan Ridgway was making his debut in the Enduro Youth class. Classic style...





2017 has been Steve Holcombe's year, his speed has matched his confidence. He took a solid win on the first day at Hawkstone Park. He'd have won day two as well, only he was stopped by a failing rear wheel (*though he still grabbed fourth*).



## PICTURE POST



The loamy base under the tree canopy in places resembled a carpet – so soft, smooth and inviting. Only of course the passage of a hundred enduros can soon render that a rutted whooped-out hell exposing nasty roots. For now Deny Philippaerts is enjoying the ride...

## RUST ENDURO

Hawkstone Hill was world famous back in the 1950s and 60s as it was a fair challenge on old Brit Iron. Modern bikes zoom up it. Josep Garcia has it all to himself



www.rustsports.com 



PICTURE POST

RUST ENDURO

Victor Guererro hasn't had the best season in Enduro2. But not for the want of trying...







Matt Phillips knows how to please a crowd. Quite a few of the riders were putting in some big whips over Hawkstone's many jumps – it's the changing face of enduro...



PICTURE POST

RUST ENDURO

Ahh, the scrub comes to enduro too. Italian Rudi Moroni wasn't the best advocate, but he picked a pretty location!







Manuel Monni's kit has the look of an explosion in a paint factory but the twice-Italian E3 champ still has style. And check out the concentration...



Josep Garcia's 1-3 result was just enough to keep Jamie McCanney at bay in Enduro2. Only just though. The championship was to come down to a showdown in Germany.







Christophe Charlier goes for the smooth, vegetated, line. 2017 has been a brilliant year for Charlier uniquely winning both the ISDE and MXoN with Team France – the first ever such double. Chapeau Christophe!





Loic Larrieu, ex motocrosser, has matured into a most excellent enduro rider. The Yamaha WR450F is one potent beast but the Frenchman has it tamed.



PICTURE POST

RUST ENDURO

Bare-armed Gianluca Martini wasn't going to let the heat at Hawstone get to him. The Italian rocked his lone Suzuki good







Danny McCanney's end of season form has been solid. Pushing on here...



PICTURE POST

RUST ENDURO



Steve Holcombe, line perfect as ever...

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PICTURE POST



Nathan Watson rails a berm, practically drags a bar too

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PICTURE POST

## RUST ENDURO

Jamie McCanney on full drift



[www.rustsports.com](http://www.rustsports.com)



## PICTURE POST

Traffic on Test One? Not an issue, this was during practice







Aussie Daniel Sanders has had a difficult year. A consistent finisher, only the podium has eluded him, save for his individual third in the E3 at the ISDE





**Eero Remes**

**Nathan Watson**



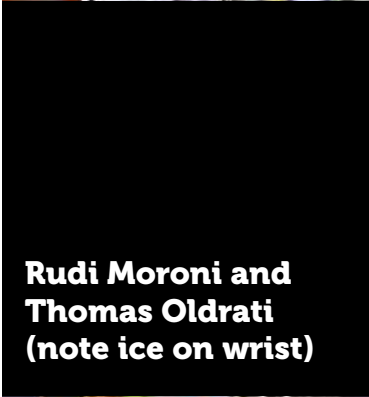
**David Knight**



**Jamie McCanney**



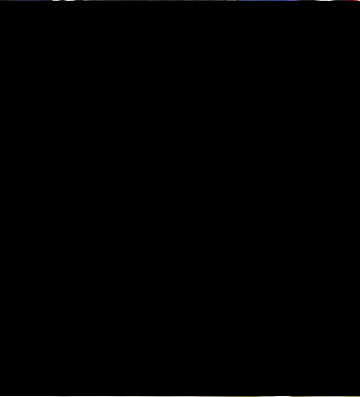
**Matt Phillips**



**Rudi Moroni and  
Thomas Oldrati  
(note ice on wrist)**



**Pascal Raucheneker**



**Christophe  
Charlier**



**Loic Larrieu**



# CONTACT

## RUSTS SPORTS LTD

www.rustsports.com  
Warwick House  
The Grange  
St Peter Port  
Guernsey  
GY1 2PX

**Editor:** Jonathan Bentman  
editor@rustsports.com

**Designer:** Andy Riley

**Industry & Advertising Liaison:**  
Alex Waters  
alex.waters@rustsports.com

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

**Managing Director:** Warren Malschinger

**Contributors:** Warren Malschinger  
(Guernsey), James Barnicoat (UK),  
Pedro Matos (Portugal), July Behl (UK),  
Fabrice Glad (France), Andy Dukes (UK),  
Rick Kemp (UK), David Marvier (France),  
Joao Soares (Portugal)

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He did it. July Behl made it, end-to-end across the Americas on his BMW R nineT Scrambler. Minimum of fuss from the bike meant maximum enjoyment for July. Second part of his story coming soon...

**Image:** JB

