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than just
an
adventure

Welcome to the December issue of *cycletorque*

Summer's here

Welcome to the December issue of Cycle Torque, chock-full of Christmas cheer, awesome bikes and great reading during the summer heat.

We've got nearly all tastes covered with tests of adventure bikes, road bikes, enduro machines and more throughout this issue.

The Christmas Buyers' Guide features heaps of products - gotta be something there for you - so use social media to let your loved ones know what you want. FaceBook, Twitter and email is built right into the App, so don't be afraid to use them.

Also use social media to get involved in our Reevu Helmets promotion and you could win one of the innovative lids with a in-built-mirror.

The other big news for iPad readers is the iPad Mini - we've thoroughly tested one with the Cycle Torque App and it works fine, although I'd still recommend the larger iPad as the best way to experience Cycle Torque - but that's probably because I like the videos and pictures as big as possible.

If you are having a break during the summer I hope it's a good one with some riding involved. When you're not on the bike though, maybe check out the latest and greatest range of books Cycle Torque sells and our new website, which should be up and running by the time you read this.

www.cycletorque.com.au

- Nigel Paterson
Publisher

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PRESS TO RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER

RIDDEN



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FEATURES

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NEWS TORQUE

CYCLE TORQUE DECEMBER 2012 - 5

Casey's corner

TWO-time MotoGP world champion, Casey Stoner, has had turn three of the Phillip Island circuit named after him.

The naming of 'Stoner Corner' was announced by Andrew Fox of circuit owners, the Linfox Property Group. It's in recognition of Stoner's amazing career, and especially so seeing he's won every MotoGP race at Phillip Island since 2007.

His mastery of Phillip Island no matter the machine – his first four scalps were on the Ducati, 2011 and 2012's aboard his Repsol Honda - has a lot to do with pure "balls" says Stoner.

"It is not time on the track – everybody I race against has had as many laps, if not more, than me at the island," says Stoner.

"The only thing I can explain is that because the track is quite slippery and with such high corner speeds, being fast there has a lot to do with balls – how much you want to hang it out.

"It's a place that really gets the adrenaline flowing and I think most riders will say they love this track."

After the naming of the corner Stoner went on to win the race then finish third at the final round of the year and retire.

Stoner joins an illustrious group of riders to have a part of the Victorian circuit named after them, Wayne Gardner with Gardner Straight and Mick Doohan with turn one's Doohan Corner.

Stoner was given free rein by [track owners] the Fox family and the Phillip Island management to choose what part of the circuit would have his imprint – and without hesitation he nominated Turn Three, a fast downhill left-hander which MotoGP riders hit at over 250km/h. And the turn's a constant reminder of Stoner's sublime talent as he 'hangs' the rear tyre out lap after lap.

"Turn three is probably my favourite one in the world. I am almost flat out in fifth gear through there and that is pretty damn fast and it really gets your blood flowing that's for sure," said Stoner.

"It always gives me a great rush going through there so to have a corner named after me at Phillip Island is something quite special. It is a great



privilege.

"The Island was designed 60 years ago before computers. It follows the flow of the countryside. It is a classic track and beyond anything else we race on. The high speed corners get your heart racing and there are a lot of corners you can slide through."

Stoner has completed many laps of the 4.4km Phillip Island circuit in testing and race weekends over the last decade, but one particular journey through turn three stands out for him: a no holds barred qualifying lap in 2011.

"With new tyres and loads of grip I went into turn three and shut off for the least amount time I ever have and then got straight back on the throttle," said Stoner.

"The data on my Repsol Honda RC213V showed I was at 262km/h and the slowest point of the corner was 258km/h. It was bloody quick. I was completely sideways and I had my front wheel halfway across the kerb.

"I got it as good as I ever have, and that was my most memorable moment through there."

– Darryl Flack

Catavolt at Daytona

CATAVOLT made TTXGP history this year as the first Australian team to compete at world level in the TTXGP World Final 2012 in Daytona. The weekend was held at probably one of the most challenging circuits for electric bikes in the world and caused many a team to think twice before agreeing to the challenge. However, for this team, the adventure was too good to turn down.

After winning the Australian title for Electric Motorcycle Racing at the eFXC | TTXGP the CATAVOLT electric motorcycle team faced a significant logistical challenge to get their electric motorcycle from Newcastle to New York where the bike was fitted with a new battery pack in time for the racing at Daytona.

The Catavolt team faced significant technical challenges. Due to the restrictions on the TTX75 class having a maximum of 7.5kW the Enertrac hub motor was required to be ultra efficient to be able to complete five laps at almost full speed over the 5km Daytona Speedway circuit. This meant that it was necessary to have the motor liquid cooled. This proved to be a significant technical challenge as liquid cooling a hub motor of this kind has never been done before on a motorcycle.

Catavolt rider Jason Morris rider managed to sustain speeds of over 170km/h on the banked Speedway Circuit, overtaking many petrol powered bikes in the process leading to bike being pushed into the higher speed class for practice.

In the GP class the Brammo and Munch teams saw speeds in excess of 270km/h on the circuit, which is an amazing leap for this electric motorcycle technology. These machines have twice the battery capacity of the Catavolt bike. For the future, Jon Eggenhuizen said "It would be fantastic to be able to secure the necessary funding to get a Catavolt machine to compete in the GP class but for the moment our main priority is bringing the Catavolt name to the streets of Australia in the guise of a production electric motorcycle." ■



No CRT by 2014 - Casey are you listening?

MCN is reporting that Claiming Rule Team (CRT) motorcycles could be off the MotoGP grid by 2014, with both Honda and Yamaha tipped to boost numbers with the sale of bikes and the leasing of engines respectively. Yamaha race director Lin Jarvis has confirmed the factory is considering leasing four M1 engine/electronics packages, while Honda has reaffirmed its plans to sell production versions of the RC213V for around \$1.2m.

Jarvis said that while Yamaha is serious about investigating the M1-engine lease option, it would need to know Dorna's plans for CRT's future before committing to the deal.

"We have been studying internally what we might do, and the biggest thing is leasing an engine and electronics package to teams and chassis suppliers," Jarvis told MCN's Matthew Birt. "If we decided now, we could probably do it for 2014 but we need to know what the regulations are."

Dorna introduced the controversial CRT rule in 2012 to boost flagging MotoGP grids following the departure of Kawasaki and Suzuki. But the production-based machines have proved significantly slower than the MotoGP prototypes, and have been openly criticised by CRT rider Colin Edwards and Casey Stoner. Outside of the coterie of MotoGP acolytes, it is hard to identify an independent observer who thinks that CRT has been good for MotoGP.

Indeed, the introduction of CRT bikes was a key reason why Stoner announced his shock retirement at the French GP earlier in the year. When asked by Network Ten's Mick Doohan at the 2012 Australian Grand Prix if he would consider a return to MotoGP, Stoner left the door open if the CRT bikes got the boot.



"Personally, we'll see which direction [the MotoGP] championship goes first, that's been thing that disappoints me the most," V8-bound Stoner said. "There's every chance I could come back, but it all depends on which direction the championship takes. If it whets my appetite there's every chance, but at this point no way."

- Darryl Flack

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Lane filtering trial

THE NSW Government will allow motorcyclists to filter through stationary vehicles at CBD intersections to test if the practice improves traffic flow.

Roads Minister Duncan Gay said the unique trial developed by Transport for NSW will start on 1 February 2013 and involve three months of data gathering by the Centre for Road Safety.

"The project will include using video to monitor lane filtering behaviour at intersections and also detect whether traffic movement improves in a selected northern CBD area," Mr Gay said.

"Lane filtering is currently against the law however there will be an exemption for motorcyclists in this part of the CBD which will permit them to filter through traffic when vehicles are stopped at traffic lights," he said.

"The NSW Police CBD Motorcycle Response Team, recently funded by Transport for NSW, will also be policing the intersections to ensure road rules are still being adhered to.

Mr Gay said the initiative comes after motorcycle groups campaigned for changes to laws around filtering for some time and in response to the consultation on the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan.

"The practice exists in other countries such as the United Kingdom however we need to ensure there is strong evidence it works before we can make any changes to road rules.

The lane filtering will be confined to an area bound by Sussex Street, Market Street, St James Road, Macquarie Street, Alfred Street and Hickson Road.

Rules for motorcyclists

Lane filtering means motorcyclists can only move between stationary vehicles at intersections.

Specific conditions will include taking extra care when filtering near buses, no filtering on the left in the kerbside left lane or dedicated turning lanes, and riders must stop at the intersection stop-line.

Lane filtering has to stay within a lane, it is not overtaking.

Lane splitting will not be allowed – this involves motorcyclists weaving through moving traffic instead of stationary traffic. ■

How much?



PAUL Feeney Group/Husqvarna Motorcycles has announced the all new TR 650 range pricing, and the prices are ultra competitive.

The 650 range will consist of the TR 650 Terra as the more off road/adventure touring oriented option, while the TR 650 Strada offers a more road oriented experience.

A MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price) point of \$8,995.00* for the Terra and \$9,695.00* for the ABS equipped Strada, should see these models experience high demand given the high specification on offer.

Check them out at the Melbourne Motorcycle Expo on November 23-25, after this edition goes to press.

For additional info see www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au ■

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NEWS TORQUE

CYCLE TORQUE DECEMBER 2012 - 11

Bell helmets are back

WHILE most older motorcycle enthusiasts would recognise the name Bell, it's safe to say many of the younger generation of riders might not have a clue who Bell is.

That's all about to change because Bell is making a resurgence into the Australian market, with Monza Imports behind the drive into bike shops Down Under.

Back in the day Bell was the brand to be seen in, but according to Bell they dropped the ball somewhat years ago and heavily invested in the bicycle helmet scene, which saw its motorcycle market share drop to essentially nothing in Australia. Many big names wore Bell helmets. Do the names Evel Knievel, Barry Sheene, Bob Hannah, Richard Petty, Kenny Roberts and Steve McQueen ring a bell?

And why would you buy a Bell over the internet now they are back in Australia? "We have priced the helmets the same or very close to what you would pay for them in America," said Monza Imports boss John Chiodo.

Don't think the helmets are for old guys though, as the latest range offers something for everyone, from graphic laden MX helmets, to top of the line carbon race helmets, cruiser lids, and stylish old school open face models. And Bell is intent on keeping the line-up fresh.

The old helmets were great, but the new ones are very high quality indeed. It's worth checking them out at your local bike shop. ■



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New Husqvarna dealer in Newcastle



LONG time Newcastle motorcycle identity Graeme Boyd has taken on the Husqvarna franchise.

Boyd has long been known for his Suzuki dealership, but has also sold a number of European brands over the years, like Aprilia and Moto Guzzi. But selling Husqvarna machines is something Boyd is really looking forward to.

"I have been a fan of Husqvarna for many years, since I was a young guy in fact. In 1974 my first race bike was a Suzuki TM125, but my second was a Husqvarna CR125. I was in the Belmont District MCC and the Australian Husqvarna importer John Harris was situated in Belmont. Lots of guys rode Huskys in those days in that area.

"After Hans Applegren took over importing the brand I promoted a supermoto event at Oran Park in 1993. I was able to help bring out Roger De Coster to ride for Hans, and Mat Mladin too. At that time Mat rode for Cagiva, who owned Husqvarna.

"I feel it's gone full circle for me and Husqvarna, and I've known Paul Feeney (head of Husqvarna importer PFG) for years. Now BMW owns Husqvarna the quality is there, and with PFG the backup is there too."

Check out Husqvarna's new range at 90 Lambton Road, Broadmeadow or call them on 02 4952 1577. ■

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Forward in time



THERE is much excitement in the historic, and renowned motorcycling destination of Wollombi, as Timetravellers has finally won its two year wrangle with Cessnock City Council.

Timetravellers Motorcycle Tours & Events are now able to open the gift shop from Wednesday to Sunday with a wide variety of motorcycle gear available, with the shop also doubling as the booking office for its Royal Enfield tours.

Gift Certificates for the all inclusive guided motorcycle tours are a great idea for Christmas, and group tours are a wonderful way to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or just about anything.

Tours run year round, starting at \$200 for a half day, through to overnight stays at Jenolan Caves with two full days riding, and can also be tailored to suit. Royal Enfields can handle dirt as well as tar, look great and suit all levels of rider experience. When visiting the shop you can see the bikes and meet some of the experienced tour guides before booking your tour.

Cycle Torque has previously participated in one of Timetravellers' tours and can vouch for their enjoyment factor.

For more information visit www.timetravellers.com.au or phone 0408 995 152. ■

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Don't hold the phone

HOLDING a mobile phone, whilst driving, is now an offence under NSW law effective from 1 November, 2012. While a vehicle is moving or stationary (but not parked), a driver may only use a mobile phone to make or receive a call or use the audio playing function: If the mobile phone is secured in a fixed mounting; or If not in a mounting, use of the mobile phone must not require a driver to touch or manipulate the phone in any way.

All other functions including texting, video messaging, online chatting, reading preview messages and emailing are prohibited. The new laws make it clear that a driver in a moving or stationary vehicle (unless parked) must not hold a phone in his or her hand other than to pass the phone to a passenger. The penalty for contravening the new law is three demerit points (4 in a school zone) and \$298 (\$397 in a school zone).

Learner and Provisional P1 drivers are not allowed to use any function of a phone (including hands-free) while driving.

In a recent report in the Courier Mail, Queensland police officers have reported mobile phones in crashed cars ringing with family members of road trauma victims on the line, calling back after being cut off when the accidents happened.

State Government figures show mobile phone calls, texting and other distractions were responsible for more than a third of the 270 fatal car accidents in Queensland in 2011-2012. ■



NEW GENERATION CHARGING FOR SMALLER BATTERIES

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The XS 0.8 is CTEK's smallest 12 V charger. It offers state of the art technology and is perfect for charging smaller 12 V batteries that can be found in motorcycles, jet skis, ATVs and lawnmowers.

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Wish you'd secured your motorcycle?

THE National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) has launched a new online resource to help motorcycle riders understand and mitigate the risk of becoming a victim of theft.

Protectyourbike.com.au was launched on Sunday 28 October as part of Sutherland Shire Council's motorcycle safety event, Breakfast Torque. The event brought together volunteer, charitable, private and government organisations to promote safety within the motorcycling community and was attended by over 1,000 motorcycle riders and enthusiasts. Over 8,000 motorcycles were stolen in Australia in 2011/12 and they now make up over a quarter of all vehicles stolen not recovered.

The NMVTRC's Executive Director, Ray Carroll, explained that while it may come as a surprise around 60 per cent of motorcycles stolen are taken from the home and will most likely never be recovered.

"The recreational nature of motorcycle riding means that bikes are most often at home when the owner is not. Therefore riders need to take extra precautions to ensure their motorcycles are properly secured in garages or behind locked gates at home," Mr Carroll said. ■

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The all-new, most-powerful-in-class, Ninja 300 packs the style and personality of a litre-class superbike into a learner-legal package that is amazingly easy to ride. It is THE perfect entry-level bike, delivering incredible fuel economy, class-leading safety features and a low seat height for added confidence. Buy it because it's practical. Own it because it's awesome.

Kawasaki

TV AD

RECENTLY released is an ad available in TV ready form or radio, that counters the prevailing 'blame the rider' line used so widely by road safety agencies that fails to acknowledge the shared responsibility of road safety.

The ad is the product of a collaboration between Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, the Australian Riders' Division of Motorcycling Australia and the Victorian Motorcycle Council.

Watch it at www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5rT10DzzC8

AGGRESSIVE PARTICIPATION

FREQUENT drivers are invited to take part in a study to help understand why people lose their cool behind the wheel.

PhD researcher Lauren Shaw, from the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety - Qld (CARRS-Q) at QUT, needs 150 participants for a study that will examine aggressive driving.

"The project is trying to understand why everyday people get angry when they drive," Ms Shaw said.

"Aggressive driving can increase the likelihood of being involved in a crash. Surveys show up to 80 to 90 per cent of drivers report being a victim of aggressive driving."

Drivers must be 18 years of age or older, hold a current drivers licence and drive at least once every 48 hours to take part.

Participants will receive a \$25 Coles/Myer gift voucher after completing the study. Those who complete a follow-up interview will receive an additional \$10 voucher.

For more information, please contact the principal researcher, Lauren Shaw on l1.shaw@qut.edu.au.

LEARNER DOLLARS

HONDA is offering great deals on a range of LAMS approved motorcycles, and scooters.

Between now and December 31, 2012 receive \$300 HondaDollars when you purchase the PCX125 or \$200 HondaDollars when you purchase the Dio or Today50 scooter.

If a LAMS machine is what you are after you get \$500 HondaDollars when you purchase the CB400/ABS or

\$350 HondaDollars when you purchase the VT400.

Honda's stash of HondaDollars are only available until December 31, 2012. See your Honda Dealer for more information.

MOTO FINALIST

THE Queensland Moto Park at Wyaralong has been nominated for two awards at the 2012 Queensland Outdoor Recreation Awards. QORF established the Awards in 2002 to recognise the size and diversity of the outdoor sector and to highlight the importance of outdoor recreation to the lifestyle of Queenslanders. QORF CEO Dr Donna Little says, "The Awards are an opportunity to celebrate the achievements, innovation and professionalism in outdoor recreation. They provide the chance for hard working individuals, inspired leaders and innovators to receive the recognition they deserve".

There are eight categories, and Moto Park is in the running for the Queensland Government Encouraging Participation in Outdoor Recreation Award, and the Brisbane City Council Outstanding Achievement (Organisation) Award.

The riding park hosts all types of off road disciplines, Supercross, Freestyle MX, Enduro, trail, trials, and kids. Call them on 07 5463 5015 or visit the website at www.qldmotopark.com.au.

DIRTWISE

SHANE Watts and the DirtWise Riding Schools have just released Volume 3 and 4 of the DirtWise In-Depth Instructional DVD series. These latest two videos complete the series

"I am so stoked with how awesome both of these Instructional DVDs turned out. We have been able to provide the highest level of instruction and demonstration for all situations relating to wheelies, logs, rocks, and water crossings (Volume 3) and also for hills, ravines, switchbacks, and off-camber trails (Volume 4). We filmed at some totally epic riding locations that really complement the learning experience and will have everyone wanting to get out on the trails and go roosting!"

Check out the trailers for these DirtWise DVDs at www.shanewatts.com.





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KARUAH RIVER RALLY

HEAD to the Frying Pan Creek campsite off Frying Pan Road, Chichester State Forest on the weekend of February 8-10, 2013 for the KRR.

The rally site is about 30 km north of Dungog via the Monkerai and Main Creek Roads between Dungog and Stroud, or the Wangat Trig Road past the Chichester Dam turnoff. Directions will be signposted from both these roads (each involves 14km of dirt), and a map can be checked at the Bank Hotel, Dungog.

The rally is for motorcyclists only; cars are not permitted unless by prior arrangement. Cost of \$25 covers badge and breakfast voucher.

BBQ sandwiches and soft drinks for sale on Saturday afternoon - all other supplies available in Dungog. A number of rally awards (including best BMW) and raffle prizes presented on Saturday evening, and the site has male and female toilets.

Contact Rob Lovett on 0417 267 425 (leave a message) or email rob@gaslightbooks.com.au. See also the BMWTC NSW Website. Note for all e-mails, please put Karuah in subject line.

ADVENTUROUS FILMING

AFTER the rip-roaring success of the inaugural Australian Adventure Travel Film Festival in 2012, the second is shaping up to be even bigger!

Hosted once again by Brit adventurers, film-maker Austin Vince and travel author Lois Pryce, The Adventure Travel Film Festival will be returning Down Under from February 15-17 2013 in Bright, Victoria. Showcasing the best adventure travel films and talent from Australia and overseas, the event is guaranteed to appeal to adventurers, armchair travellers and dreamers alike. The festival will be brimming with inspirational talks, workshops and social events featuring celebrated local and international adventurers, covering everything from trekking, motorcycling and 4x4-ing to kayaking, climbing, cycling, long-distance horse-riding and much more.

Find out the latest on Facebook, Twitter, or the website: www.adventuretravelfilmfestival.com.

BEARS WINNER

THE lucky winner of the MV Agusta 990R Brutale, raffled by the BEARS Australia MCRC, Trooper Lu's Garage, and MV Agusta Imports, is Duncan Brown. Duncan's name was drawn out at the Phillip Island MotoGP round on Sunday October 28.

He wasn't the only winner though, lots more raffle prizes, including leathers, helmets, gloves etc were won by various people.

MAXI SYM

SYM is expanding its maxi range with the launch of the MaxSYM400i expected by the end of the year.

The largest in SYM Australia's range, this new maxi scoota is a great option for those riders looking to upgrade to a bigger scooter.

The MaxSYM400i has an SYM 399c fuel injected, liquid cooled engine, with 34ps. Big wheels, ABS, hand brake, twin radial mounted 4-piston calipers ensure it both handles and stops very well.

At \$7,990 + ORC it's a cost effective machine too.

VALUE VICTORY

VICTORY Motorcycles has launched across its national dealer network the "Victory Factory Bonus", with huge factory bonuses now available across the range.

Selected models will also have the additional offering of a Retail Value Pack which includes genuine Victory accessories and apparel.

Additionally Victory are offering the "Weekend Escape Test Ride" program which allows customers the opportunity to take a Victory for an overnight test ride and Victory supplies the customer with a full tank of fuel and a night's accommodation at any Best Western Hotel in Australia.

This promotion will end on the 30th November 2012, after the December issue of Cycle Torque is out. Contact your closest Victory dealer for more information by calling 1300 721 360 or by visiting www.victorymotorcycles.com.au



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PIRELLI SUPPORTS PRIVATEERS

PIRELLI will pay entry fees for privateer riders who choose Pirelli tyres for the Superbike, Pro Stock, and Supersport/Superstock 600 classes of the QBE Australian Superbike Championship in 2013, with reduced tyre prices and increased contingency benefits.

Link International, exclusive Australian Importer of Pirelli Motorcycle tyres for Australia, announced the scheme on the back of an open tyre rule for 2013, and the fact the company wants to get behind the Australian series.

"Link International has been a long term supporter of racing at all levels in Australia and this coupled with Pirelli's passion for racing has inspired us to make a real difference to the National Road Racing Championship next year," said Link International's Brenden Stoeckert.

"Our campaign will effectively keep costs to a minimum for teams at a time when budgets are stretched and money is tight and enable the sport to remain healthy well into the future.

"We believe that this form of racing has been instrumental to the success of Australian riders in the international scene and want to make sure that future potential stars are not limited from competing and gaining the experience necessary to take them to the next level."

Competitors will need to buy a minimum number of tyres round by round, to qualify for the Pirelli ASBK Privateer Program. There will also be a maximum amount of tyres per round that can be ordered. Further details and the official Pirelli tyre order form for the ASBK 2013 will be available in late 2012 following finalisation of homologation with Motorcycling Australia and the ASBK. Tyres will be available to order for the ASBK series

from January and February 2013.

The Pirelli ASBK Privateer Program will be exclusive to the ASBK series in 2013.

RIDE 4 KIDS

THE annual KTM Ride 4 Kids charity event raised over \$80,000 in vital funding for Challenge, which is an organisation that provides programs and services to kids with cancer.

An inaugural luncheon was held on Friday, 19 October, before a ride day at Wonthaggi in Victoria on Sunday, 21 October, capped off the event's activities for 2012.

Since the program began in 2002, Ride 4 Kids has raised over \$400,000 through rider entries, auctions of motocross memorabilia and donations across all events. A pair of 2013 KTM 85 SX models were won during the event, supplied by KTM Australia.

One 85 SX was awarded to the Overall Highest Fundraiser, Hayden Smith, who raised a fantastic \$8590. The second 85 SX was won by Lachlan Prowse in a draw for participants who were able to raise in excess of \$300 for Challenge.

"The 2012 Ride 4 Kids kicked off with an inaugural charity luncheon on the Friday afternoon, which was intended to bring the motorcycle community together and reach those who may not ride any longer or be able to attend the actual ride day," explained Ride 4 Kids event founder Matt Manning. "We really wanted to build a platform for 2013, however the attendance and commitment to the event was overwhelming and it was beyond all expectations. ■"



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*Overseas model shown.

CURTAIN BACK TO WSS

KEV Curtain will again take on the world's best Supersport riders when he races at a wildcard at next year's Phillip Island WSBK round on February 24-26 2013.

Curtain will ride a Yamaha R6, prepared by his regular Australian Yamaha Racing Team colleagues. The R6 will be based on his Australian Formula Xtreme championship winning machine but obviously modified a bit more to be on equal terms with the world spec machines.

"The bike is a project funded partly by our sponsors and the savings we have been able to make concentrating on superstock style racing over the last few years. We have been collecting parts and slowly working on this project for the last year, assembling them as an after hours project between normal calendar events," said YRT boss John Redding.

ANDO RETIRES

Australian Supercross stalwart Craig Anderson ended a successful racing career spanning 26 years in the same town that it all started for him.

Anderson raced in the final round of the Terex Australian Supercross Championships at Newcastle Showgrounds on November 17.

Anderson holds 13 National titles and boasts a successful international career that has seen him compete in the German International Supercross Championship (1999, 2000 and 2002) and the coveted AMA Pro Motocross Championships (2003/2004).

He will still be actively involved in the sport though, holding riding schools and coaching clinics.

"Everything started for me in Newcastle and it finished in Newcastle," said Anderson.

"I've been travelling every year since I was 14, so to get my race team up and running I needed to step aside and bring through some younger guys that I coach and get them going.

"I'll still do the vets championship, which is two rounds at the end of every year and keep

practising and riding with the boys having fun.

"It won't be about getting faster and fitter any more, just to have fun.

"I still love riding, but for the competition side of it and trying to do my best, that's pretty well gone now, so it's time to concentrate on my race team and get the results that way."

CHECA BACK FOR DUCATI

WHILE Ducati is still finalising its racing plans for 2013 as we write this, it has confirmed Carlos Checa will again ride for the company in the 2013 World Superbike Championship.

Checa, who won the 2011 championship on a Ducati 1198, is developing the all-new 1199 Panigale for battle. The Panigale has performed extremely well in the World Superstock Championships but is yet to be tested in the Superbike class.

After three years together, the relationship between Ducati and Team Althea Racing has come to an end, it looks as though Checa will ride directly for Ducati in 2013.

A4DE

The 2012 Yamaha WR450F Australian 4 Day Enduro (A4DE) motored to a thrilling close in Warragul recently, with Victorian rider Daniel Milner clinching top honours in front of an appreciative home crowd.

After producing standout performances across four long and muddy days, the Ballard's Yamaha Off-Road rider dug deep one last time to win the E1 Class final moto and seal the Outright victory with a margin of 1 minute 41 seconds.

2011 Outright Champion Toby Price (Motorex KTM Off-Road) delivered a week of gutsy performances to finish second on the Outright standings board, with Italian visitor Alex Salvini (Husqvarna) riding to third.

Full results from the 2012 A4DE are available to download. More information at www.a4de.com

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RUTLEDGE WINS SECOND OZ TITLE

MEGHAN Rutledge has capped off a great year by winning all five motos to clinch her second Australian Women's Motocross Championships held at Albury recently.

"I had an awesome weekend and it all went according to plan," said Rutledge. "My KX250F was fast and reliable as always and it's great to win the title for the second year in a row, thanks to everybody who supports me, especially my mum and dad. 2012 has been such a great year for me so far," she added. "I hope I can get a top ten finish in the Australian Supercross Championship this year and finish the year on a strong note."

SIMMONDS JOINS ANDO

TYE Simmonds will join Craig Anderson's Berry Sweet/Lucas Oil/Yamaha team for the 2013 Australian National Motocross Championship and Australian Supercross Championship aboard a YZ450F.

Simmonds left the JDR KTM team before the start of the 2013 MX Nationals to ride his own Honda CRF450R and has what can only be considered a mediocre season so the move to Anderson's team could see the former championship contender back to the front of the field.

BARCIA WINS 100G

HONDA rider Justin Barcia has been the surprise winner of the second running of the Monster Energy Cup held at Sam Boyd Stadium, Las Vegas and in doing so pocketed a cool \$100,000 for his troubles.

Ryan Villopoto won the opening moto but crashed out of moto two while Ryan Dungey spent the opening two motos battling a bent gear lever and our own Chad Reed was in contention all night but a small crash in moto two put paid to the top spot.

REED JOINS MONSTER ARMY

FOUR time AMA champion Chad Reed has been named as the newest member of the Monster Army leading into the 2013 AMA Supercross Championships.

"To sign a rider of Chad's calibre is an incredible addition to Monster Energy's motocross team," said Bruce Stjernstrom, Vice President of Sports Marketing for Monster Energy. "He is one of the sport's most influential riders whose accomplishments speak for themselves. Along with Ryan Villopoto, Dean Wilson, Jake Weimer, and the entire Pro Circuit Kawasaki team, Chad embodies what Monster Energy is all about, proven winners who pave their own path."

KTM JUNIOR SX RETURNS

THE KTM Junior Supercross Challenge is back after a five-year break with five events (Anaheim 2, Dallas, Atlanta, Indianapolis and Las Vegas) confirmed throughout the 2013 AMA Supercross Season. All rules and online entry forms can be found at www.ktmjrsx.com.

YAMAHA AMA TEAMS ANNOUNCED

YAMAHA Motor Corporation U.S. recently announced its list of professional race teams for the 2013 Supercross and Motocross Season.

Joe Gibbs Racing (JGRMX) has signed former team members Justin Brayton and Josh Grant for the 2013 season while Star Racing is leading the YZ250F charge with Kyle Cunningham, Jeremy Martin and Cooper Webb at the helm and Rock River Powersports will run Yamaha's "Pro Parts" program at all 2013 Supercross and Outdoor National events with emergency parts available at a special price to help keep YZ riders on the track and are hoping to sign several riders to contest major events in 2013.

"We're excited to have some familiar faces as well as some rising talent on our teams for the 2013 season. It's a very capable group of teams and riders and we are looking forward to some exciting racing in the upcoming season" said, Racing Division Manager, Keith McCarty.

TLD SIGNS HOEFT AND MCELDRATH

TROY Lee Designs is proud to announce the multi-year signing of rising stars Justin Hoeft and Shane McElrath to the Troy Lee Designs / Lucas Oil / Honda Amateur Race Team.

"I am excited for this opportunity with the Troy Lee Designs / Lucas Oil / Honda Team," says Hoeft. "I've always liked TLD and am proud to represent them in the amateur class."

Team manager, Tyler Keefe had this to say. "With Jessy (Nelson) already called up to the 250 class, we wanted to bring on a new amateur rider to work with. Justin has tons of raw talent and we are looking forward to working with him and having a successful season in 2013 and beyond."

"Shane caught my eye when I was out at Loretta's looking for an amateur prospect. His corner speed and performance there is what made me want to make this happen," Keefe concluded.

Hoeft and McElrath join Cole Seely, Christian Craig, Jessy Nelson and Tarah Gieger under the Troy Lee Designs / Lucas Oil / Honda tent.

DARCY WARD GETS SWC BERTH

GREAT news for Aussie speedway fans with two-time under 21 World Champion Darcy Ward been given a berth into the 2013 World Speedway Championships while Troy Batchelor has been given a reserves position.

Ward will join Martin Vaculik, Jaroslav Hampel and Tai Woffinden to do battle the likes of automatic qualifiers Chris Holder, Nicki Pedersen, Greg Hancock, Tomasz Gollob, Emil Sayfutdinov, Antonio Lindback, Fredrik Lindgren and Andreas Jonsson.

Krzysztof Kasprzak, Matej Zagar and Niels-Kristian Iversen complete the field after clinching the top three places in the Grand Prix Challenge at Gorican on September 29.

JARVIS WINS RED BULL SEA TO SKY

FLITE-Husaberg's Graham Jarvis once again dominated the Red Bull Sea to Sky in Kemer, Turkey with fellow Brits Jonny Walker and Paul Bolton rounding out the podium.

136 riders from 20 countries gathered for the Olympos Mountain Race and it was Graham Jarvis who managed to pull away from Jonny Walker who had Andreas "Letti" Lettenbichler (GER, Husqvarna), Paul Bolton and Xavi Galindo (ESP, Husaberg) hot on his heels.

With Jarvis and Walker already across the line, Letti was in third place until about one kilometre to go when his chain snapped handing Paul Bolton third place.

DESPRES WINS 2012 RALLYE OF MOROCCO

KTM factory rider and multiple Dakar Rally winner Cyril Despres of France has won the Morocco Rally by almost seven minutes ahead of Spain's Joan Barreda and Chaleco Lopez of Chile.

Despres was wrapped with the win. "I knew I had to go out and make a good ride, I like that kind of pressure," Cyril commented. "You have to concentrate 100% because you know you can lose the race. Now it is great to leave Morocco with the win and to have such a good feeling, also about the bike (KTM 450 Rally) and the team, this is our last ride for 2012 and the next time we meet will be at the Dakar 2013 in January."

SUZUKI SIGN STRIJBOS, DESALLE AND SMETS FOR MX1

KEVIN Strijbos will join Clement Desalle in the Rockstar Energy Suzuki World MX1 team for the 2013 season with five-time World Champion Joel Smets over-seeing the riders development.

"I've had a good year and I feel I still have something to give," said Strijbos. "I've proved that I get on well with the bike and did OK last year when stepping in for Steve. Going back to the team really feels like home. I know the people, the place and the way to work and for sure I hope it will be third time lucky for me!"

Team Owner Sylvain Geboers: "With Clement and Kevin we have two different riders with two different approaches to the championship and, importantly, we all know each other and the best way to work, so I'm happy Kevin is back on board and showed in 2012 that he can still run at the front of a series that has a lot of talent and fast riders."

"With Joel coming back into the frame we have a strong nucleus in place and I am hopeful of a memorable season in 2013." ■



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I'm not over it!

RECENTLY I was accused of being jaded by the motorcycle scene. My chief accusers were my two business partners here at Cycle Torque. And yes, they were pretty much on the money. After seven years of living and breathing motorcycles the spark was beginning to dim.

Then my son Alex and I had a trip to the Isle of Man and the UK (as massive Cycle Torque fans I'm sure you would have already read the stories). I can tell you going for a bike tour with your young bloke is so much fun. Sure, you get a bit worried because he's riding his own bike but the time together is something you cherish.

Part of the deal with doing the Manx GP in 2013 is you need to complete six road racing meetings in the 13 months prior to the event. Since our return we've both competed in a few meetings, mainly classic stuff and some bucket racing, to get our six meetings each. Normally I would be well over it all by this time of the year, putting covers over the race bikes and not wanting to lift them until next year, if at all. Surprisingly though that isn't the case. As I write this there's only two weekends until the final round of the Formula Xtreme Championship at Eastern Creek. Alex is entered on our project Ducati 848 in Pro Twins F2, and I am looking forward to it immensely. I've even enjoyed getting the bike ready for the meeting, replacing the steering head bearings and rubbing down the bodywork for a new paint job. I don't know why but it's like I have a new lease on my motorcycling life.

There's another reason why I can't wait until the last FX round. Broc Parkes has signed to ride an Aprilia RSV4 for the Trinder Brothers and to see him pilot a bike in Australia (apart from his annual rides in the WSS race at Phillip Island) for the first time in many years is something I'm very much looking forward to. I just hope the word gets around to punters before the round so enough people get to see him in action. Broc will apparently be riding in the BSB champs next year so keep a look out for that too. By the time you read this the final FX round will be done and dusted, I just hope you had the chance to see it.

Then yesterday I watched the Phillip Island MotoGP round. As an Aussie I was very proud of what we achieved. For the first time ever we had Australians on the podium in every class. My daughter, wife and I were cheering on Arthur Sissis (you might even say we were screaming at the tele), and to see him get third in Moto3 was just fantastic. Then for Ant West to go one better in Moto2, wow that was cool too. Ant West is a bit of an enigma to me. Almost everyone I speak to who follows bike racing seems to have written him off, and many of them aren't fans of his either, whether it's his sometimes prickly nature or complaining of poor bikes, he just doesn't have the following he probably deserves. Whatever you think of him he rode the wheels off that bike to get second. I loved it.

I said to my lovely young wife prior to the MotoGP race that the only way Casey Stoner was not going to win the race was if he fell off or broke down. To watch him ride that Honda was awe inspiring. I fully appreciate why he wants to retire but Australia will miss his immense riding talent, and sadly I can't see any Australian riders who can replace him anytime soon. I hope Casey enjoys his family and his fishing, he deserves to. He's given us so much to cheer for and celebrate over the years. Good on you mate. I for one will miss watching you. I think for me it's a case of you don't know what you've got until it's gone.

Who to barrack for now? I think Marc Marquez is a future MotoGP champion, and he will be one to watch in 2013 as he attempts to come to grips with his 1000cc MotoGP machine. Will huge crashes dominate his first year, just like they did Jorge Lorenzo's? Hope not just in case he gets seriously injured.

And poor old Dani Pedrosa. It seems as though he's



destined never to win the world's premier road racing title, but this year has probably been his best for a while now. It was a shame to see him crash out of the Phillip Island race, and I would like to see him win a title.

Yes, I've been a bit jaded with motorcycles but I can tell you I'm looking forward to next year's MotoGP series. Has Sissis worked out he's capable of running at the pointy end in Moto3? Will West continue to be a front runner in the dry? Will Marquez respect the big machines enough to keep out of the kitty litter, and will Rossi show us it was the Ducati that was the squeaky wheel in their relationship, not him? Yamaha is banking that it was the Ducati.

Looking forward to next year? I am.

– Chris Pickett

No 'F' Needed

OK, I am REALLY excited! The rumblings have been around for the last couple of years but after several key events this year I am here to tell you that two-stroke motocross machines are coming back and as far as I am concerned not a moment too soon...

Before I go any further I have to say that I love riding the current crop of four-stroke motocross and enduro models. I only just got back from testing the latest 250, 350 and 450 KTM SX-F motocrossers as well as the TE 250 and 310 Husqvarna enduro weapons.

For a life-long enthusiast like me the technology and thought that has gone into these modern four-strokes is as breathtaking as the ride they offer but I am now almost 50 years of age and about to celebrate the 40th anniversary of my first race win way back in 1973 so no matter how much I love the latest four-bangers I can't help it, I have a soft spot for two-stroke motocross machinery as large as Dolly Parton's left boob.

Look, I cut my teeth on two-strokes, I can pull one down to the final nut and bolt and put it all back together, I know how to get a few extra ponies out of one with some home-tuning and even a late model second hand can be bought and run without a huge outlay.

So, what are the specific events that lead me to believe two-strokes are making a comeback? Well, the first one is thanks to Darryll King winning the 2012 New Zealand MX2 Motocross Championship on his Yamaha YZ250. Now that is YZ250, not an 'F' in sight!

That is right, the 43-year-old former GP star took on all of the best 250F racers on the two-stroke and racked up another national championship trophy to his already over-stuffed trophy cabinet. And 'DK' did not get it easy with the Suzuki pairing of Scott Columb and Rhys Carter giving the veteran a hard time throughout the championship but by season's end it was the 'smokin' Yamaha rider that got the nod for the championship.

The second event was at the 2012 Queensland Motocross Championship held at John Hand's phenomenal Gum Valley motocross facility just south of Mackay. I was keeping a casual eye on the proceedings on-line via the Orion timing web site when local legend Mick Hansen text me to say that 15 year old

Joel Dinsdale was doing insane lap times on his Yamaha YZ125, in fact he claimed that Dinsdale was going as fast on his 125 as Todd Waters was on his factory RM-Z450.

Hmm, that doesn't sound right. I know 'Dinny' is fast and he knows Gum Valley better than the pimples on his chin but as fast as Waters? And on a 125? Uh, uh, don't think so bro! I started scouring through the race results and lap times and sure enough, Dinsdale's best lap time over the weekend on his YZ125 was a 1.59.795 while 2.01.038 was the best Waters could do.

Honest, transponders don't lie! Can you imagine the effort it must take to get a 125cc two-stroke around a wide undulating course faster than one of the nation's best on a factory 450? Well, according to eye (ear) witnesses, just the sound of Dinsdale's 'one-dinger' going around the track was enough to make the eyes water.

The third event that got me thinking was when the flying Kiwi Kane Lamont took out the 2012 Motocross Development (MXD) Under 19s Championship on a KTM 250SX (note: No 'F') ahead of a gaggle of rev hungry, valve bouncing four-stroke riders who spent most of the year taking in the unfamiliar smell of freshly burnt Motorex two-stroke oil coming from Lamont's FMF silencer.

Lamont is the first two-stroke rider to have won a senior national championship in the modern era and if I am a betting man there will be a lot more blue smoke around in the MXD and Pro-Lites classes in 2013.

Finally, I ventured up to Cooloolum for the final round of the MX Nationals and like most of the old heads in the crowd I was looking forward to seeing how the all new KTM Two-Stroke National was going to pan out over the weekend and I can tell you it was a sight to see...and hear.

The roar of a full grid of two-strokes from 125cc to 500cc



ripping from the starting gates for four motos over the two days of racing with riders of varying abilities from national and internationally rated racers to your average club wobbler was for my mind an absolute winner. And that race is only going to get bigger.

All of these events and I am sure there have been a heap of others has culminated into an undercurrent of a renewed interest into racing modern two-stroke motocrossers against the four-strokes AND it is becoming more common to include classes specific to the valveless machines in everything from club days to national race meetings.

And as you can imagine, after going to Cooloolum and driving home as hard as a board I have already jumped into the fray and am currently doing up two 125cc motocross machines as well as training my arse off to be fit for my anniversary year of racing in 2013.

And it will be a year that will be highlighted by a few of my moto mates and I turning up to Cooloolum for the final round of the 2013 MX Nationals to compete in the Vets and Two-Stroke National classes...and I'll tell you this for nothing, we won't be there for our good looks or to make up the bloody numbers!

It's On. Braaarrpp!

– Darren Smart

Top Ten of 2012

SEASON 2012 will go down as the Year of the Last Man Standing, with Jorge Lorenzo securing his second MotoGP title thanks to a record-setting year where he didn't finish lower than second on his way to clinching the championship. Max Biaggi made good use of his Aprilia's speed to keep the ethereal elastic band to his chief rivals stretching to breaking point to claim his second WSBK title. Marc Marquez won the Moto2 championship in similar fashion - fast but far from flawless.

Mention must be made of Oz GP commentator Phil Harlum for correctly picking Lorenzo to win this year's MotoGP crown, the only one in Cycle Torque's pre-season poll of 22 experts to do so. All the other respondents nominated Casey Stoner, while Mark Willis chose Dani 'Lucky' Pedrosa.

1 - The Alien formerly known as Loopy Lorenzo must now be made a Lord following his mature 2012 that netted an emphatic victory for Yamaha over Honda. The back story to Lord Lorenzo's dominance was the early offerings from Bridgestone that led to more chattering at Repsol Honda than a UN gabfest. As both Stoner and Pedrosa struggled, Lorenzo was able to rack up a series of vital wins in the knowledge that Honda would eventually solve the chatter problem. Just when Stoner looked like he had regained confidence at Sachsenring, he went down in a 'win or bin it' attempt to beat team-mate Pedrosa that gave Jorge a decisive championship reprieve. Lorenzo survived a late-season surge from Pedrosa to clinch the title at Phillip Island when Dani threw it away on lap two. Too easy.

2 - Max rode the perennial Biaggi roller-coaster of expected victories, mediocre performances and incredible oopsies that saw him win the closest WSBK championship in the series' 25-year history. Going into the final round at Magny-Cours, Max had a bagful of points in the bank but that all went out the window when he fell unluckily in the slick conditions in race one. Chief protagonist Tom Sykes won the final race, and needed Max to finish sixth or worse to claim Kawasaki's first WSBK title in 19 years. Biaggi nursed his super-quick Aprilia home in fifth to win 358 points to 357.5. He can also thank Marco Melandri for blowing it, and defending champ Carlos Checa for an indifferent season.

3 - Casey Stoner earns third spot on the basis of his mind-numbing speed on the Repsol Honda, rather than his year overall. His incredible victory at Phillip Island to score his sixth successive win in the Australian GP dominating every session will go down in

MotoGP folklore. He also managed to break his duck at Jerez on his chattering Honda and stay in touch with Jorge, but his season came undone firstly in Germany and later at Indy, and was forced to miss three races, virtually handing the title to Lorenzo. Going out on his terms, 2012 will no doubt be a disappointment for Casey, his last year in MotoGP.

4 - Marc Marquez replaces Stoner in the Repsol MotoGP team following an almost preordained victory in Moto2. Fast, aggressive with a tendency to get caught up in the moment, Marquez will need to modify his emotive riding to master a works MotoGP bike. Indeed, MM should heed the words of Valentino Rossi in explaining his adoption of the title of 'Doctor': "When I moved to 500, I understood I needed to be calm, like a surgeon."

5 - Sandro Cortese completely dominated the inaugural Moto3 championship from the madding crowd behind him. The wily German was simply in a class of his own as his less experienced rivals over-rode and over-cooked their way to defeat. Finishing 100 points ahead of second-placed Luis Salom and making it look easy was no mean feat for Sandy C.

6 - Dani Pedrosa did his annual impersonation of Dani Pedrosa - be unbeatable, be unlucky, and be unlikely. Just when Casey appeared snookered by the chattering Honda and his busted ankle, Dani stepped up and asked serious questions of both Stoner's number one status at Repsol Honda and Lorenzo's claim to the world championship. Starting at Indy, Dani went on a Stoner-like tear winning five of the next six GPs that was only spoiled when he was nerfed off at Misano by Hector Barbera. Whoever said Dani just had to go all out at Phillip Island from the get-go, only to fall from the lead on lap two, has never heard the well-worn axiom, 'To finish first, first you must finish.'

7 - Kenan Sofuoglu claimed his third WSS title with a mix of garden variety Supersport argy-bargy and plain ol' bar-room brawling. Infamous for his amazing 250km/h headbutt directed at Fabien



Race winner John McGuinness at Ballaugh during the TT superbike race. Picture Charles McQuillan/Pacemaker.

Foret at Aragon, Kenan's march to the 2012 championship was made difficult not by veterans Foret or Broc Parkes, but WSS newcomer Jules Cluzel and relative newcomer Sam Lowes, with Cluzel rewarded with a Suzuki seat in WSBK.

8 - Tom Sykes almost pulled off the upset of the century after missing out on the WSBK title to Max Biaggi by just half-a-point. If Tearaway Tom had've concentrated on trying to lead each race at the end rather than beginning, he might've jagged a couple more points that would've delivered both he and Kawasaki the most unlikely of victories. Kawasaki was assisted by the decision to allow ride-by-wire throttle control in 2012, but one must wonder how long rules like that in WSBK will last under the new Dorna regime.

9 - Pol Espagaro did a fabulous job of keeping the pressure on Marc Marquez all the way to the wire in Moto2. With Marquez moving up to MotoGP, The Pol Man must start clear favourite in 2013 with Crazy Joe Iannone sure to make it an interesting year yet again in Moto2.

10 - John McGuinness took his tally of TT wins to 19, just seven away from the late Joey Dunlop's record of 26 that will take at least two years to break, if he is to break it at all.

- Darryl Flack

Caveat vendor

THE wife says I'm a cynic because of it, but I usually reckon if something looks too good to be true, it's because it is too good to be true. But I was pleasantly surprised for a moment or two after putting the mighty Bandit up for sale, that it prompted such an immediate avalanche of interest. Within an hour of posting my ad I'd received half a dozen firm offers by text message on the phone: not cautious questions, not tentative enquiries, offers. One bloke even said he was prepared to pay over the odds for the honour of securing my modest, well-used but honest 750cc Japanese motorcycle.

Curious to relate, all six of these enthusiastic lads were marine biologists, mining engineers or seamen, every one of them many hundreds of kilometres from shore; and therefore unable to come and see the bike; all were proposing to buy it as a surprise gift for uncle/nephew/father/grandmother; all had private couriers at their fingertips; all had web-based email accounts; all had overseas phone numbers (Georgia, USA; London; Kenya ...) and so on; and all wanted to pay me via PayPal, and could they have my PayPal email address please, so's they could pay me without delay?

Well, very nice. But still, six of them? All telling the same tale? I rang PayPal, one of whose helpful chappies told me this little stunt was an increasingly popular scam. Apparently the deal is that the sucker goes through with this and gives the scammer the details necessary for PayPal payment, and a second flurry of emails assures the seller that payment has been made. It hasn't, of course, and it isn't in the weeks ahead. But then, just as the sucker is beginning to mutter under his breath, up pops our would-be scammer saying that the money is there to be collected; he just has to pay 'PayPal' a small handling charge or some such to release it - and he comes up with some paperwork to support the assertion, supposedly from 'PayPal'. So this is the hit, such as it is. Just ignore it and it'll go away of its own accord, having caused both irritation and amusement - irritation at having wasted everybody's time, amusement at enabling the chosen

victim to watch a would-be crook's frankly half-baked efforts to swindle. It's pathetic, really it is.

Of course, what's really irritating is that I haven't had one genuine enquiry.

Sometimes you just can't help people. Earlier this year, and much to my surprise, a chum who is spiritually about as far removed from motorcycles as you could imagine fessed up that he'd spent a good few shekels on a shiny new 250cc four-stroke with which he proposed terrorising the citizenry of greater Sydney. I was still digesting this little morsel when, a few weeks later, he popped up again to tell me he'd fallen off while making overzealous take-off, had done the flying W, got scared and sold the bike.

He hadn't finished. A message flashed up on the phone a month or so later. I'm going to buy another bike, he said. Should I get another 250 or start off on something smaller? You're a big lad on the wrinkly side of 30 and able to pull down the occasional reasoned decision, I told him. Have a look at the list of LAMS bike and get something sturdy with a fair amount of lazy power - and capacity. It won't frighten you, will keep you satisfied for a good while and give you the flexibility to go places if you want.

I might have saved my breath for all the good it did. Next thing he surfaces on a minuscule 150 that made him look like an elephant on a roller skate. He tired of it by the end of the week, of course, and up came another message.



I'm thinking of upgrading, he said, and what do I think of (insert name of high-revving four-cylinder 400 here). In reply I extended his vocabulary by a small number of carefully chosen expletives and told him to look at certain 650cc twins of my acquaintance instead.

I'm expecting another message any day now to tell me he's left town and joined the circus. It could hardly make any less sense.

The crew at the car magazine where I while away my Mondays are understandably excited at the prospect of having Nissan and Mercedes join the V8 Supercars party next year. They're watching every move the new boys make, and told me last week that the Nissan is shortly to undergo engine "parity testing" at a "top secret" location. Parity testing? What's this? Isn't it enough to impose limits on swept volume, numbers of cylinders, types of induction, materials etc? What happened to racing improving the breed? Nissan at least appears to be using an engine from one of its road cars, albeit modified. Does anyone know if the same can be said of Holden or Ford?

- Bob Guntrip

More Giveaways

In recent times *Cycle Torque* has given away over 20 Grand's worth of prizes via reader competitions.

I can tell you now we get a real kick out of passing on some quality prizes and great deals to the people who read our magazine.

It amounts to two brand new bikes, heaps of riding gear, event tickets, clothing, books and other products that hopefully bring a lot of value to the winners.

During that time we have used the internet to gather your entries and the system works well. We give away some great products and the companies who partner with us get great exposure thanks to you, our readers.

There is nothing better for us than seeing a regular reader ride away on a brand new bike.

Long ago, before the internet, we had to rely on 'snail mail' to receive entries and I remember a great competition where readers submitted their best motorcycling pics for a chance to win a pair of WileyX sunglasses.

There were some truly awesome images so this summer we are going for a retro revival - but with a modern twist.

The idea is to dig up your best fun motorcycle pics, visit our Facebook page and follow the link. You will be able to upload your entry and the best pic (as judged by our expert panel, of course) wins a Revuu helmet each month.

So get snapping, or if you entered our last photo competition and want to enter the same pics again, that's fine.

Another way to get access to some great motorcycle prizes is to subscribe to our email newsletter. Stay tuned through 2013 for more great competitions because the word around here is our next bike giveaway is already in the works.



- Matt O'Connell

CHAMPIONS CHOOSE SUZUKI



Look deep and you'll see the championship-inspired upgrades Suzuki made to the 2013 RM-Z450 and RM-Z250. From years of experience helping racers around the world reach the top of the podium, Suzuki understands that the power of high-performance engineering is often in the details. New engines. New SHOWA forks. New exhausts. New frames and more. Inside and out, Suzuki RM-Z motorcycles are a sight to behold.



Scan for more details



2013 BMW
F 800 GS/F 700 GS

CYCLE TORQUE
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REPORT

CYCLE TORQUE DECEMBER 2012 28

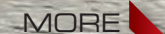


**Two
directional**

**Traction control,
ABS and electronic
suspension defines
the changes to the
F-range of BMW
adventure bikes.**

**Did we mention
there's been a
name change too?**



MORE 

— 2013 BMW —
F 800 GS/F 700 GS

CYCLE TORQUE
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Two directional

In case you were wondering, that's adventure riding. The F 650 GS name has been ditched and it's now called the F 700 GS. Closer inspection reveals the updates are not really about what's been modified to improve the bikes, rather it's about the additions to them.

Exactly why the F 650 GS was called that is a bit hard to fathom, especially when it shared the 800cc parallel twin cylinder engine of the 800 GS. According to BMW insiders, one of the reasons was to ease the minds of newer riders who thought maybe an 800cc machine was a bit big. Possibly it was also to differentiate the two models. The 700 GS still uses the 800cc engine (with slightly less urge up top compared to the 800 GS), and exactly why the name change to 700 is still a bit of a mystery to us, other than to show buyers it's a new model.

The fuel injected and liquid-cooled twin cam engine is unchanged from earlier models, and it has proven to be very reliable.

As with the 650 GS, the 700 GS is marketed as more of a road based machine, with some off-road capabilities, while the 800 GS is more home off the beaten path, but still happy doing road duties. The reality of the matter is both bikes are better than we expect them to be marketed. By that we mean the F 700 GS is a better adventure mount than many people will give it credit, and the F 800 GS a better road bike than people might think.



UPDATES to both the BMW F 800 GS and F 650 GS certainly make them better at what they were already good at.

Defining the two

It's easy to see the differences in the two machines when they are side by side. The styling is very similar but there are subtle differences, with the wheels the biggest give aways the two bikes are different. 21 and 17 inch spoked alloy rims grace the 800 GS, while 19 and 17 inch cast alloy wheels give the 700 GS its road warrior look. In essence the 800 GS looks very much the hard core adventure bike, while the 700 GS has an almost urban/supermoto style. Seeing the bikes look sort of similar, it's hard for us to explain why the 800 GS really is a cool looking bike, and the 700 GS a bit uncool, so to speak.

The big news for 2013 with these two bikes is that ABS equipped twin discs are standard fitment (previous models had a single disc on the front which was prone to fade when used hard), and that ASC (Automatic Stability Control) and ESA (Electronic Suspension Adjustment) are now optional on both F models.

ESA had been on BMW's for a while now and are a popular option, and in fact according to BMW Australia, not many BMWs are bought without. Part of this could well be down

to perceived resale value, but there's no denying most BMWs are fitted with them, and they work. Cycle Torque is a huge fan of both ESA, and when riding a friend's earlier model F 800 GS we couldn't help but think the bike would be better with ASC and ESA, and then voila, out they come with it. There's a very slight hitch though, both the ASC and ESA aren't exactly the same as that fitted to R 1200 GS models. ASC is either on or off, there's no 'sport' type mode, which allows you to rear wheel steer like you can do on the versions fitted to the bigger models, and ESA has manual preload adjustment, only the damping is electronically adjustable on the F models. The damping modes are still the same though, 'Comfort', 'Normal', and 'Sport'. Like the traction control, the ABS can be switched off. We preferred the traction control to be switched off and the ABS left on, but more on that later.

If you are considering purchasing one of these bikes it's important to know that many of the options listed by BMW worldwide are actually standard fitment on Australian models. BMW Australia has its finger on the pulse of what buyers generally want and order its fleet accordingly. That's why the optional 'Comfort package',

which consists of an on-board computer, heated handgrips, and centre stand come standard down under. You could order one without these features but it would mean a special order and a longer wait for one, and why would you want one without them anyway?

Dirt and tar

Our two-day launch consisted of a day on either bike. We first sampled the F 700 GS on a perfect selection of Victorian country roads, with fire trails and dirt roads thrown in for good measure. In this environment the F 700 GS was right in its element. It might have 'only' 75 horsepower but in stretches of road where the corners range from a posted 25-75km/h the horsepower is plenty. The engine likes to rev but feels happier if short shifted, you just have to find the happy medium between both, as the 800cc mill isn't exactly over-endowed with torque. You could get away with letting revs drop right down in top gear but anything under 45-50 km/h in top and the bike would struggle to pull away cleanly in top. This isn't a criticism, just a fact of nature due to the engine design and capacity. Top speed would be around 180-190 km/h but the engine doesn't feel happy when you push it to the upper regions of its rev range, with vibes becoming a little harsh. It will do it of course but that's not what it has been designed to do.

For us the riding position was spot on, and even though the first bike we rode had the 'ultra low' seat option fitted it didn't feel like it. Even with that seat it still felt as though you sat on the bike rather than in it. Rubber footpegs are fitted (the 800 has steel 'pegs with removable rubber inserts) and the handlebars felt a little lower than the 800's too. Other seat options are available which alter the seat height, and we found the standard seat height a good fit for a six-foot rider. It was comfortable too.

41mm non USD forks are fitted and it's important to know these don't have the ESA fitted, it's only for the rear shock. It never felt as though it needed it though, and even though there's no adjustment on the forks we just couldn't fault them.

The forks always felt compliant, and even when pushed

hard in the tight stuff they just 'worked'. That's a big tick for BMW in our opinion. On the dirt roads the forks felt the same, not too hard or too soft. The bike always tracked well, and soaked up potholes and bumps with little complaint. It's not often you get suspension which is equally at home being punted hard on the tar and belted along dirt roads. We are well versed with the abilities of BMW's ESA, and you can adjust them on the fly, quite simply too. You can definitely feel the difference with the damping when you go to a different mode. Generally we selected 'Comfort' for the dirt, 'Normal' for punting along near the speed limit, and 'Sport' when having a play. We like the fact there's only three options, otherwise it gets a bit much trying to work out what's what.

Dual sport tyres are fitted standard and they work very well on the tar, and on the dirt are better than you might think. And the new front twin discs never gave a hint of complaint, even when used hard corner after corner. Day one ended with us very impressed with the F 700 GS.

Day two was a far more dirt oriented ride on the 800 GS. All test bikes were fitted with Continental knobbies, which can be ordered as standard fitment when you buy a new bike. Great on the dirt and even on the tar these tyres worked well, despite the abuse a few of the testers gave them. As you would expect, the 21 inch front wheel and knobby tyres give the bike a 'squirmy' feel on the road compared to the 700 GS, and this was also a trait of the long travel 43mm USD forks on the 800 GS. They are designed to work better off road and aren't as happy when ridden hard on the road, simple as that. Having said that, you would have to be riding very hard for them to throw the towel in and get you into strife.

Once on the dirt the 800 GS really showed its ability. With traction off, ABS on and the ESA set to 'Soft' it was game on. This is one serious adventure bike, and feels almost like a KTM 990 Adventure when you ride it, and that's a big compliment. This isn't due to the engine characteristics, rather the narrowness of the bike, the way you feel perched on top of it, and how the suspension handles offroad. Tail out power slides are child's play,

and with ABS switched off you can brake slide the bike into corners with confidence, than blast out with equal confidence. The 800 GS might have 10 more ponies than the 700 but it's only in the upper regions where it really shows up, and it's more noticeable when you are playing Dakar racer on the fire trails and revving the bike hard.

Outback touring almost demands a decent fuel range and both models gave a range from 300 to almost 400 kilometres, depending on how it is used of course. That's impressive from a 16 litre tank, which is situated below the seat. On average the bikes we rode used around five litres per 100 kilometres, but we weren't trying to conserve fuel. You can expect better economy than that for normal riding.

Once again there's a series of optional seats, which give different heights. Overall the 800 GS is higher than the 700 GS due to the longer travel suspension. On the subject of suspension travel, there is quite a difference between the two. On the F 800 GS you get 230mm of spring travel on the front and 215 on the rear, while the F 700 GS offers 180 front, 170 rear, which is still quite a lot. Once again we believe BMW has got this spot on, the 800 copes very well jumping off erosion banks, and the 700 soaks up our crap roads with ease. Basically both bikes can be ridden very quickly in all sorts of conditions. Both suspension set-ups are a great compromise.

Verdict

We have often thought many BMW R 1200 GS owners would be better suited to the F GS range, in off-road situations they are easier to handle, have more than enough power and could easily handle an around Australia trip. It's only when you are two-up and fully equipped with panniers etc that you might find the F GS range a little underpowered or lacking in room.

BMW has also gone hard with pricing, with the F 700 GS costing a paltry \$12,890 + ORC. That's a dead set bargain, and the F 800 GS is only \$16,690 + ORC. ■

MORE





SPECIFICATIONS:

2013 BMW F 800 GS, (F 700 GS)

- ENGINE TYPE: LIQUID-COOLED PARALLEL TWIN
- CAPACITY: 798CC
- TRANSMISSION: 6-SPEED
- FUEL CAPACITY: 16 LITRES
- FRAME TYPE: TUBULAR STEEL SPACE FRAME
- SEAT HEIGHT: 880MM (820MM)
- WEIGHT WITH FUEL: 214 KG (209 KG)
- FRONT SUSPENSION: USD 45MM (41MM TELESCOPIC)
- REAR SUSPENSION: SINGLE SHOCK, WAD STRUT. (SINGLE SHOCK, CENTRAL SPRING STRUT.)
- BRAKES: DUAL DISC FRONT, SINGLE CALIPER REAR
- TYRES: 90/90-21, 150/70-17 – 110/80-19, 140/80-17
- PRICE (RRP): \$16,690 (\$12,890) +ORC

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Engine is unchanged for 2013.



Accessory sump and engine guards.



Flip-down brake riser for standing up.



Optional handguards.



ABS standard on Australian models.



F 700 GS has rubber footpeg inserts.



New model gets extra front disc.



Options

OPTIONS which come standard on Australian delivered models are ABS, White LED indicators, heated grips, on board computer, centrestand and rear rack.

A \$985 investment gets you the Traction Package, on the 800 GS this consists of ESA and ASC, while on the 700 GS you get both of these options and also RDC – the tyre pressure monitoring system. It's unavailable on the 800 GS simply because of the tubed tyres.

You can buy these options on their own but it's more cost effective to get the whole package.

Selecting the off-road tyre option on the 800 GS is no cost, as is the low seat option.

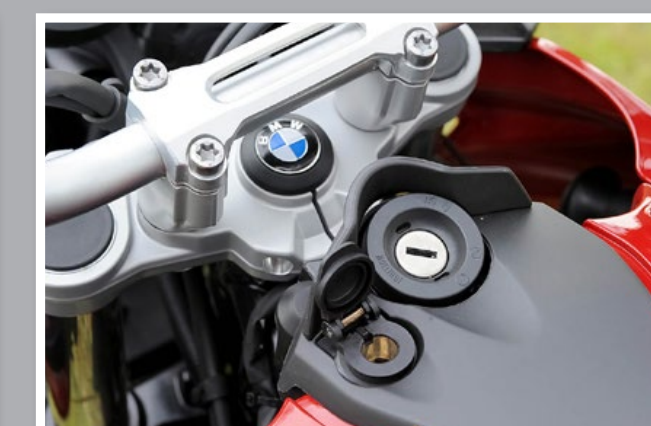
A factory alarm can be fitted for \$505.

Low suspension is also an option for \$250 but to get this you have to do away with ESA, the centre stand, the low seat (no charge) and also the comfort seat (\$190) options.

We'd go the Traction Package and Comfort Seat option on either bike. ■



The grab rail integrates with optional luggage.



Accessory power up front.



Low seat is one of the many seat options.



Both models share the same motor.



F 700 GS has 19-inch cast wheel.

2013 BMW
F 800 GS/F 700 GS

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— 2013 —
HUSQVARNA
TE 250 R, TE 310 R

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**SMALL
BORE
SIBLINGS**



**Husqvarna's TE 250R
and TE 310R prove
you don't need mega
capacity to be fast.**

MORE 

SMALL BORE SIBLINGS

HUSQVARNA'S assimilation into the BMW Group is bearing more fruit for the dirt biking public with the TE 250R and TE 310R models being re-engineered as 'R' models and being given a serious amount of extra power for season 2013.

What's new

Leaving the chassis, brakes and suspension unchanged for the new models Husqvarna has put all its effort into the engine, with the 250 getting an eight percent increase in power and torque while the 310 gains five percent in power and eight percent in torque.

To achieve these increases in power both motors got brand new cylinder heads with new finger followers to actuate the larger steel valves, and then there's the all new piston and revised crankshaft.

Probably more importantly, all of the above is fed by a 42mm Keihin Electronic fuel injection body with a 'battery fail-safe' condenser and a completely new air intake boot to allow the right amount of air to get into the system. The whole motor weighs in at 23kg from top to bottom.

Other changes for 2013 include getting rid of the cold start lever, more compact handlebar switches, new handgrips (glued to the bars), separate hour meter, new chain guide, strengthened radiators, magnetic drain plug, new in-mould graphic and a cool handlebar pad.

Let's not forget that standard features on these bikes are Kayaba front forks and rear shock, Brembo brakes, hydraulic clutch, electric start and for our test we had brand new Pirelli Scorpion tyres on the Excel rims (the Pirellis aren't standard, sorry).

The new models still have the favoured steel frame consisting of round, oval and rectangular tubing but for 2013 the frame is additionally reinforced around the steering head with 25CrMo4 chromoly steel plates.



REPORT BY DARREN SMART :
PHOTOS BY IKAPTURE

RIDING GEAR: M2R
HELMET, JT RACING NYLONS,
ALPINESTARS BOOTS

Let's ride

The track on which we got to test the 2013 TE 250R and 310R was an ideal combination of single trails, open grass tracks coupled with tricky off-cambers with plenty of jumps and undulations.

Having spent most of January and February this year on the 2012 TE 310 I didn't need any time to get the feel of the new 2013 models. I was ripping into it straight away and despite being almost 50 years old now my memory served me well; these new small bore Husqvarnas steer sensationally, they are not top heavy thanks to the light motor, and the suspension/chassis set-up is a very forgiving and confidence inspiring combination.

At 109kg you would expect a light feel and that is what you get, with the 310

having a slightly heavier feel despite coming in at the same weight as the 250. I put this down to the centrifugal forces caused by the larger bore and stroke (82mm x 57.35mm to 79mm x 50.9mm).

Moving around on the new models is slick, with the handlebar, seat and footpeg combination offering a nice feel in both seated and standing positions, while the Kayaba suspension gave me the feedback I needed. At no time did the suspension blow through the stroke when given a hard time.

Thanks to the Brembo brakes, the new Pirelli tyres and the overall confidence I had in this package I was able to dive deeper and deeper into the corners, pull the throttle on early, hit every jump and bump without fear of any unwanted deflection. I more or less ride like an 18-year-old on steroids all day.

The motor

The 250 has copped criticism for being too slow in the past so it wasn't hard to appreciate the extra power and torque of the new motor and the fact that I was able to rev it 'to the moon' without fear of a power drop off made a big difference when I wanted to get from point-to-point as quick as possible.

The throttle response is as you would expect these days from modern engine management systems so keeping the motor bubbling along through the more technical sections of the track was no problem. I did find myself giving the hydraulic clutch a few flicks to build the revs a little quicker when I wanted/needed a bit of extra power to hop over an obstacle.

So with the extra eight percent increase in torque the 250R is now basically like any of the 250cc four-stroke enduro models where you can't expect the motor to offer huge gobs of bottom end. I think that

just gives you the opportunity to pull the throttle on a little earlier to get the motor into the higher rev range quicker.

The very first time I jumped aboard the 310R I could instantly feel the extra ponies on offer and on the very first uphill I could tell I was going to like this package; I mean, this motor is just so responsive, and the much improved bottom end is backed by what seems an endless stream of power as you head towards the redline.

After a few more laps under my belt I was really enjoying the 310R and found all sorts of ways to take advantage of the extra power on hand when trying to go that little bit faster through the trails.

Out on the track there were several undulating mounds coming out of some of the corners. On the 250R all I could do was twist the right wrist to the stopper and slam my way through these bumps but on the 310R I was able to explode off the first bump and jump over one or two of the humps that followed, making for a smoother ride and the ability to get to the next corner faster.

Verdict

With all of that in mind the trail riders out there will get a lot out of the 250. I think Husqvarna has a great package on its hands, and for just \$9,995 plus GST and on-road costs it should be a winner on the sales floor.

And like the 250, whether you want to ride it like it's stolen or just cruise along the trails, the 310 is an absolute pleasure to ride and at \$10,632 plus GST and on-road costs the 310R sits nicely in the market price wise. I reckon it should be on every off-roader's shopping list - it's that good! ■



— 2013 —
HUSQVARNA
TE 250 R, TE 310 R

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2013 HUSQVARNA TE250 (310)

- ENGINE TYPE: LIQUID-COOLED SINGLE
- CAPACITY: 249.5CC (302.44CC)
- TRANSMISSION: 6-SPEED
- FUEL CAPACITY: 8.5 LITRES
- FRAME TYPE: STEEL SINGLE TUBE
- SEAT HEIGHT: 950MM
- DRY WEIGHT: 109 KG (KG)
- FRONT SUSPENSION: USD 48MM KAYABA
- REAR SUSPENSION: KAYABA SINGLE SHOCK
- BRAKES: SINGLE DISC FRONT AND REAR
- TYRES: 90/90-21, 120/90-18
- PRICE (RRP): \$9995 (\$10,632)+ORC

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— 2013 —
HUSQVARNA
TE 250 R, TE 310 R

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1987 World 500cc Motorcycle Champion Wayne Gardner is renowned as much for his technical prowess as he is for his fearless riding. His talent for assessing and critically evaluating a continual array of prototype race components was a major factor in his on-track achievements. Now you can take advantage of his knowledge and testing ability and bypass the time consuming, expensive and often dangerous process of working through a vast range of motorcycle product ranges. Wayne has done all the hard work for you!



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Motard on
STEROIDS

**It has the power,
and now the
electronics to
control it.**



Motard on STEROIDS

APRILIA'S 1200cc Dorsoduro is one of the rare breed of super supermotos. With a stonking V-twin engine and minimalist ergonomics it sure is a lot of fun to ride. But it's also a bike which is easy to live with day to day.

Taming the Tiger

While the new Dorsoduro has more grunt and sharper handling, the most interesting news is the three-way traction control which is standard fitment. The Dorsoduro has always been a 'lively' performer, constantly wanting to be let off the leash to play. You could almost have called it a bit flighty in the past, but then that's also been part of the allure.

Aprilia wanted more grunt from the engine, and used tighter manufacturing techniques and revised fuelling. A five horsepower increase now takes it to 130. Not sure you can feel all of those five ponies, mainly because the previous model went hard anyway, but combined with the 3kg drop in weight you can feel a difference. Much of the weight saving comes from using the wheels from the RSV4.

As said earlier the big news is the traction control. The Dorsoduro already had a ride-by-wire equipped three mode power selection, and now it has a three mode traction control

system as standard. This works in conjunction with the ABS system which is also standard fitment on the new Dorsoduro. Both the power and traction control (ATC) modes are easy to change, but it did take us some time to work out how to turn off the ATC, mainly because we didn't have an owner's manual to read first. When you have the prior information it's easy to use.

For rolling stock Aprilia has used Sachs suspension front and rear. In fact it remains essentially the same as last year's model but with revised settings to cope with the reduced weight. Both the 43mm USD forks and the quirky side mounted Canter Lever shock are full adjustable and in keeping with the street motard style have a decent amount of travel, 160mm and 155mm respectively.

■ TEST BY CHRIS PICKETT
PHOTOS BY NIGEL PATERSON

■ RIDING GEAR: REEVU
HELMET, IXON JACKET,
GLOVES BY FIVE GLOVES.



Brakes are what you would expect from a machine like this, Brembo 4-piston radial calipers and 320mm discs at the angry end and a single 220mm disc and single-piston caliper at the rear.

Sitting in your shed with an empty tank has the Dorsoduro tipping the scales at 212kg which is reasonably light. In action the bike feels lighter, but this could be because of the way it

accelerates. Seat height is 870mm which you might think could make some shorter riders a little uneasy when stopping. But two of our regular testers aren't exactly tall and they both coped fine during a day out on the bike, which included the photoshoot and the inherent numerous u-turns. In other words don't let the seat height number put you off, check one out for yourself.

In action

This bike positively jumps off the line, such is the bottom end grunt of the 1200cc engine. Its power delivery is all about this, not a blistering top speed. That doesn't mean it won't propel you past the 200km/h mark, of course it will go higher than that, but getting to the 200km/h mark is one area where this bike excels.

It steers nicer now too, mainly because of the lighter wheels which give a lower unsprung weight, and which in turn allow the bike to change direction quicker. Wow, through tight corners the Dorsoduro tips in sweetly, and launches out ferociously, if you want it to. Both wheels are 17 inch of course, with the rear wheel six inches wide. Oddly, to us at least, Aprilia list the rear tyre as a 180, when you can easily run a 200 rear tyre on that size rim. Maybe in testing Aprilia found the bike handled and steered better with the smaller rear tyre, and if so we can't really argue because it works.

Now, there is the traction control we mentioned earlier. In each of the three settings it retards the power but each setting dictates how quickly the power comes back on. For example, in Mode One ATC the power is chopped but returned quicker than if you were in Mode Two, and so on.

What's it like? Well, we tried it in each mode and you could definitely tell the difference in each of

them. If you are on a bit of a mission on Sunday morning you will turn it off because it becomes too intrusive but for commuting, regular touring and riding in the wet it really is an added safety feature you shouldn't dismiss as a gimmick, especially considering how much oomph the bike has down low.

The Dorsoduro isn't just about going fast on your favourite loop though. With the longer travel suspension and comfy riding position you would be happy enough riding this bike long distance, with the only fly in the ointment being the seat, and possibly the 'aggressive' feel to the bike as a whole. Even on rough country roads the Dorsoduro is fun to ride, never becoming too much of a handful or kidney destroying in the bumps.

We found the Dorsoduro to be a bit thirsty when ridden with some verve, giving around 9-10 kilometres a litre, which gives a range of around 170 kilometres max before you are pushing. We never let it get to that stage, and as the fuel light seems to come on early at least you get a good warning. Realistically though, if you bank on getting a bit over 150 kilometres from a tank before seriously looking for a petrol station you will be fine.

Verdict

It's hard not to love this bike. Sure it's a bit rambunctious but it's lots of fun and can be used as an everyday proposition. In the past owning an Aprilia was deemed a bit of a gamble, or for those



enthusiasts who were eclectic in their motorcycle desires. Realistically this hasn't been the case for some time now. The bikes are reliable and are more mainstream now. Even bikes like the RSV4 are not uncommon on the road, and racetracks. \$17,990 + ORC isn't silly money for this bike. It goes, stops and handles like a demon, and the build quality is up there too. ■

CYCLE TORQUE TEST
APRILIA DORSODURO



SPECIFICATIONS:

- ENGINE TYPE: LIQUID-COOLED V-TWIN
- CAPACITY: 1197CC
- TRANSMISSION: 6-SPEED
- FUEL CAPACITY: 17 LITRES
- FRAME TYPE: ALLOY
- SEAT HEIGHT: 870MM
- DRY WEIGHT: 212 KG
- FRONT SUSPENSION: USD SACHS
- REAR SUSPENSION: SACHS CANTER LEVER
- BRAKES: BREMBO, DUAL FRONT CALIPERS, SINGLE REAR
- TYRES: 120/70-17, 180/55-17
- PRICE (RRP): \$17,990+ORC

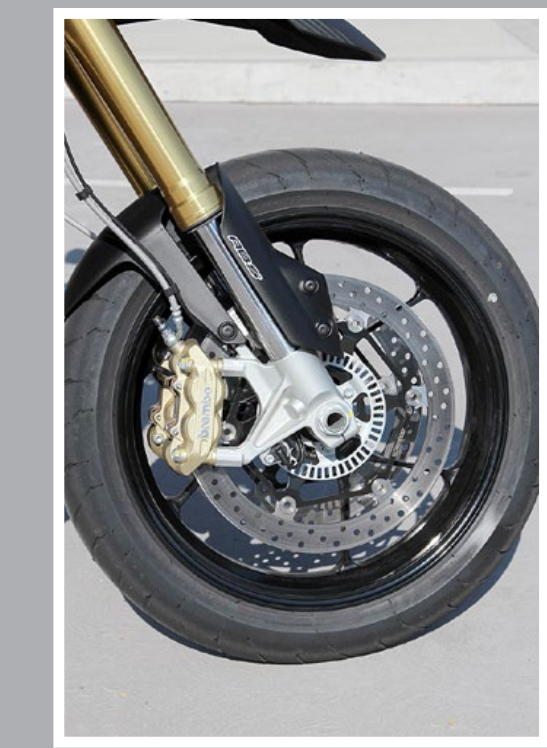
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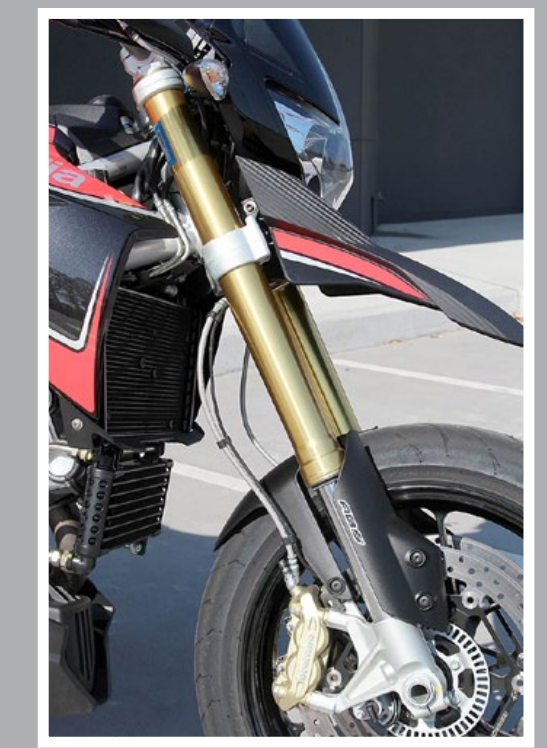
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1200cc V-twin engine has lots of bottom end stomp.



Big brakes with ABS are a good fit for the bike.



Long travel forks handle rough roads well.



Sidemounted Sachs shock is fully adjustable.



Upspec your Dorsoduro with some Arrow mufflers and you will unleash an awesome sound.



Carbon bits are available.

CYCLE TORQUE TEST

TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE R



R
RATED



Yes, it's R rated.
Yes, it's exciting.
Yes, it's addictive.

MORE

TEST BY CHRIS PICKETT
PHOTOS BY NIGEL PATERSON

R
RATED

TRIUMPH'S Speed Triple has excited legions of motorcycle enthusiasts since the very first model back in the mid '90s. Since then the Speed Triple has gotten faster and sleeker. The latest model is the best yet, and the 'R' version that little bit sweeter again.

What's not to like?

For me, the two juiciest features of the Speed Triple R are the engine and the styling. The 1050cc three-cylinder engine is punchy and purposeful, but it's also smooth. You can cruise along or you can crank open the throttle to the stops with gay abandon. The engine is happy doing either, and it has one of the grooviest exhaust notes ever heard.

You might expect the 'R' version to have more power than the standard Speed Triple, but that's not the case. And with 133 horsepower it hardly needs any more. In today's world of 200 HP sportsbikes 133 almost sounds a bit bland but in this case they are 133 strong pit ponies.

Even from the first Speed Triple the styling was spot on. In recent years the look has become a bit eccentric almost but I still like it, and the latest Speed Triple looks horn. The 'R' looks even better because of the extra bling it brings to the table.

Money talks

Of course the 'R' costs more than the cooking Speed Triple. What you get for the money is Öhlins suspension, 43mm NIX30 fully adjustable forks with 120mm of travel, and a TTX36 twin tube monoshock, also fully adjustable, with 130mm of travel. This sort of suspension is usually more at home on racetracks around the world, such is their quality. The NIX forks separate the compression and rebound damping between the legs, and have been specifically set up for the Speed Triple R. No, it's not ridiculously stiff, but more on that later.

You also get a top-line braking package with Brembo monobloc four piston radial calipers, and switchable ABS as an option. Apparently this brake package gives an extra five percent more

stopping power than the standard model. That's hard to quantify by the seat of your pants, but they work amazingly well, as do the standard model's brakes. If you can't ride well enough to really push the brakes or suspension to their limits at least you'll be happy looking at them, such is their bling factor.

According to Triumph's press info the R's gearbox has a few tweaks which reduce friction and make shifting easier. I can say I had no issues with the gearbox, nor did I have any with the standard Speed Triple's gearbox at the track launch some 12 months or so ago. It shifted sweetly every time, so no dramas there.

Then there's the gorgeous forged alloy PVM



RIDING GEAR: CHRIS: SHARK HELMET, BMW JACKET, IXON GLOVES, HORNEE JEANS, DRIRIDER BOOTS. SHAUN: SHOEI HELMET, RST LEATHERS, GLOVES BY FIVE GLOVES, DRIRIDER BOOTS.

wheels which are on the Speed Triple R only. While their styling is very cool, the fact the front wheel is just under a kilogram lighter, and the rear a full one kilogram lighter than standard wheels is more important, especially for would be racers and hard chargers. It's all about unsprung weight and therefore reduced inertia, the lighter wheels allow you to change direction quicker, and give the suspension an easier time. One kilo doesn't sound like much but it certainly makes a very noticeable difference to the way the bike handles.

Because forged wheels are stronger, Triumph designers have been able to thin them down, which is where the weight reduction comes from.

Finally it comes down to something other than pure performance. As the 'R' is a special edition the two paint colours are limited to this model only, so bike enthusiasts in the know will know you are riding a special Speed Triple when they see yours. Phantom Black and Crystal White are your two choices, and the red subframe is also specific to the 'R'. There's other subtle styling differences too, like the carbon fibre tank cover and radiator shrouds.

In the twisties

Riding the bike is easy because the layout is roomy and the controls fall readily to hand and foot. You very much look over the front of the machine, as if you are perched right on top. I loved the wide handlebars too. Even though the riding position is nothing like a sportsbike, it still shouts aggression.

One of my favourite test loops near Chateau Picko involves a combination of good and shitty surfaces. To be honest the 120 kilometre loop is more suited to adventure bikes but I was surprised at how well the 'R' handled the roads, considering

its track-focused suspension. On the odd occasion you could get stuck into a section of sweet corners the bike steered and tracked very nicely indeed. It's got 'only' 133 horsepower you say. Well, you can ride this bike silly fast when you want to, such is the way it handles and gets the power to the ground. And the brakes! Lots of power without too much bite, and superb feel, exactly what you want.

On one ride with some friends I handed the bike over to one of our regular testers who proceeded to show everyone a very clean pair of heels, despite there being some very talented ex-racers in our group. The main reason, he told me later, was the Speed Triple 'R' handled the bumps the best. While everyone was battling to keep their machines (all naked sportsbikes by the way) heading in the right direction because of the bumps, the 'R' disappeared into the distance.

It weighs 212 kilos (two lighter than the standard model) ready to roll, which is par for the course in the genre of machines. Like the others too, it doesn't feel very heavy when you ride it, and the seat height of 825mm makes it suitable for shorter riders to enjoy too.

The 17.5 litre tank should give you a range of close to 260 kilometres if ridden with economy in mind. If not you can expect a range of down to 220 kilometres.

The final word

I love naked bikes, always have done, and the



Speed Triple R is no exception. I had to ask myself the question why I've never actually owned a Speed Triple. Don't know why really, as every one I've ridden over the years has been a pearler.

I feel the \$20,990 + ORC price is good value and I can't imagine an owner ever getting buyer's remorse. ■



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SPECIFICATIONS:

- ENGINE TYPE: LIQUID-COOLED TRIPLE
- CAPACITY: 1050CC
- TRANSMISSION: 6-SPEED
- FUEL CAPACITY: 17.5 LITRES
- FRAME TYPE: ALLOY TWIN SPAR
- SEAT HEIGHT: 825MM
- WET WEIGHT: 212 KG
- FRONT SUSPENSION: USD OHLINS 43MM
- REAR SUSPENSION: OHLINS TTX36
- BRAKES: DUAL BREMBO FRONT CALIPERS, SINGLE NISSIN REAR
- TYRES: 120/70-17, 190/55-17
- PRICE (RRP): \$20,990+ORC

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Mufflers look OK, but Arrow mufflers are also available through Triumph dealers.



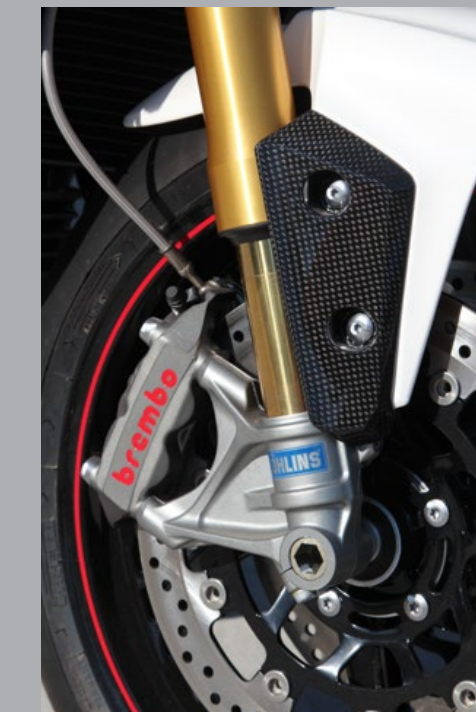
Like the swingarm, the twin headlights have long been a styling cue of the Speed Triple.



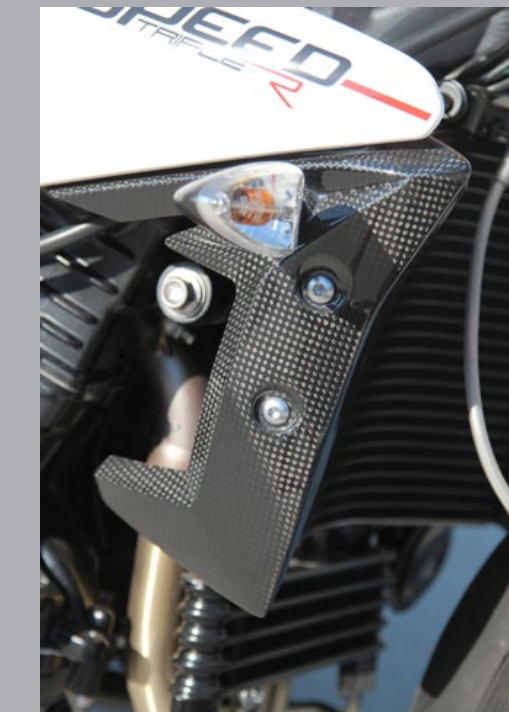
Forged alloy wheels are lighter than the standard model.



Öhlins shock comes standard on the 'R'



Öhlins suspension and Brembo brakes help differentiate the 'R' from the standard Speed Triple.



As do the carbon fibre pieces.

CYCLE TORQUE TEST
TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLER

GALLERY



Christmas Buyers Guide

Xmas Cheer

HI TO all our regular readers, and our not so regular ones too. It's that time of year where most of us get to have a well earned break, us included, from our normal working lives. If you are independently wealthy and don't need to work please disregard what I've just said.

2012 has been very busy for us here at Cycle Torque, and 2013 looks to be no different. I've just actually wondered where this year has gone, to be honest it's been a blur at times.

Two big things on the horizon for next year is our off-road trip to Cambodia in February, where we team up with Vietnam Motorbike Tours, yes the same company which took us and many of our readers to Vietnam in February this year. This time it's Cycle Torque publisher Nigel, Matt (our long suffering web guru), and irregular Cycle Torque contributor Penny, of Carnage Touring fame who will fly the flag for Cycle Torque. With Penny holding the keyboard it should be a very funny trip to say the least. The ensuing story should be a hoot.

Some of the Vietnam tour participants are planning on taking the tour to Cambodia, so that should say something about how good a time they had in Vietnam. It's not too late to come with us. Yes, I know that's a shameless plug. Check out www.cycletorque.com.au/cambodia.

Then in August Alex and I will be racing at the Isle Of Man in the Manx GP, and we are already heavily in the planning stage for that. There's a crazy amount of work in just getting to the IOM, and we have some big plans so keep your eyes open for upcoming stories.

The monthly deadlines just keep rolling in, and getting the mag out would be very difficult if it wasn't for our accounts lady Bec, who keeps us laughing hard every day, and Dennis, our ad man. Dennis is sort of a cross between a rocker and a surfer, and is a loyal long term member of Cycle Torque.

Nigel and I are also backed up by our regular contributors, including our columnists, Bob Guntrip, Darren Smart, and Darryl Flack. All three are very professional, well maybe not Smarty, and I certainly enjoy their ramblings each month.

And last but by no means least is our long suffering Graphic Artist Dee. We might write the words and take many of the pics but there's no way it would look anywhere near as good without Dee putting it all together. Dee has been with us since the early days and I can't imagine working without her.

On behalf of all our staff I wish you all a very happy and safe festive season. If it wasn't for you, our readers, we wouldn't be in business. Cycle Torque might be free but the fact you people go to motorcycle dealerships and pick up Cycle Torque is the reason our advertisers keep buying ads.

– Chris Pickett

Book Review

Circus Life by Don Cox

EPIC. That only begins to describe Don Cox's self-published tome, Circus Life, his third book on Australian road racers.

Epic in its ambition, execution and historical import, Circus Life is 479 pages and 300 images that capture quite brilliantly the incredible experiences of 40 Australian riders - including the Hintons, Jack Ahearn, Bob Brown, and world champions Keith Campbell and Tom Phillis - who were all part of the Continental Circus in the 1950s. These were men whose motivation to uproot from distant Australia and take on the world's best is borne out of something that is uniquely Australian - having a go. And it is that quintessential Aussie spirit for competition and adventure, in this case across post-World War II Europe, which Cox presents in a narrative that is extremely detailed yet highly entertaining. This maybe a large coffee table book but its real weight is in its extraordinary exploration of the travails and success of each of the subjects, which includes several New Zealanders.

The foreword of the book is written by 1969 world 250cc champion Kel Carruthers, who is a link between the classic and modern eras of GP racing. He was inspired by this generation of Aussie riders to make his own way to the Continental Circus in 1966, parlaying his successful racing career into the blueprint of a crew/chief rider relationship with Kenny Roberts that everyone has been copying ever since.

No aspect of the '50s Circus is left out. For example, Cox's descriptions of the Aussie riders' converted Austin vans that served as combined motorhome/bike transporter/mobile workshop are as exhaustive as the intricate workings of a Manx Norton. How each rider conceived and built their own vehicle is covered in forensic detail for no other purpose than to convey how canny and imaginative these Aussie trailblazers were in adapting to their new environment. Continental riders had the convenience of commuting to and from races. The Aussies didn't, so their vans became casa mobile/servizio centrale.

Negotiating start money (Jack Ahearn dangling a Swiss promoter out of a window to get paid), attracting sponsorship and selling parts were the usual ways that a privateer could make enough money to keep their vans chugging along and race bikes roaring. The goal of course was to keep racing long enough to prove yourself worthy of a works ride. Some of them died trying; others not long after getting there. And when tragedy did strike, racing colleagues, with whom they might've shared a beer with the night before, would have to make arrangements; recover the bike, gather belongings back in England, deal with the respective authorities and attendant paperwork to repatriate the body back to Australia if there was enough money.

The pleasing aspect about these wonderful and sometimes sad tales is that

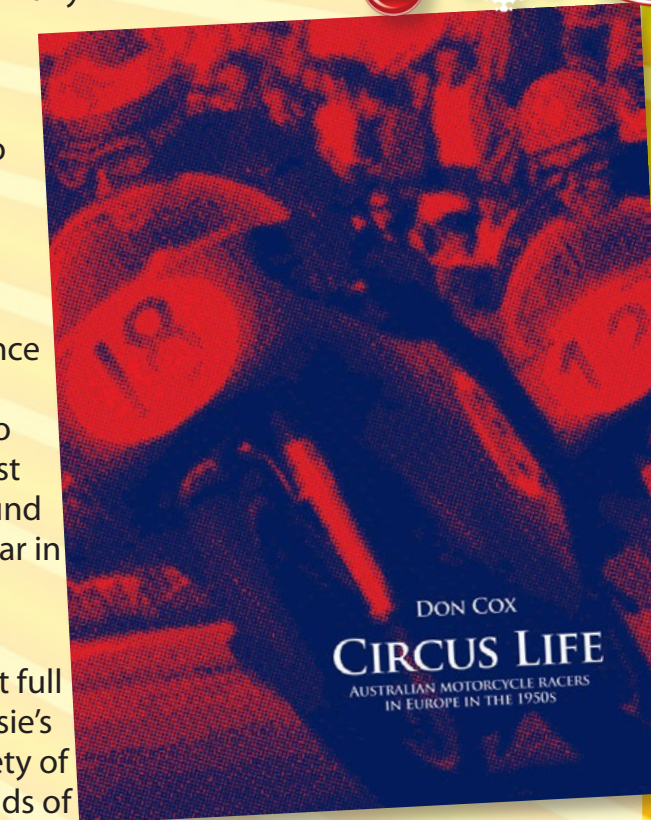
Cox has procured extended quotes from many of the surviving riders, including Geoff Duke, garnered over the three-and-a-half decades he has been a motorcycle journalist, and skilfully distilled them into the chapters of the main players. Some of the stories wouldn't be out of place in Harold Robbins novel. To wit, a dashing young Australian works Moto Guzzi rider Ken Kavanagh having a long-term dalliance with an Italian Countess, to 20-year-old Melbourne seamstress Jean Foster, who worked in a clothes shop in London's West End before finding herself travelling around the Continent and swinging from a sidecar in European Grands Prix.

The number of images that Cox corralled superbly captures the zeitgeist of the first full decade of grand prix racing, and the Aussie's part in it. In addition to a wonderful variety of rare race shots from the era, there are loads of high-quality photos from private collections that magnificently depict paddock life, and the journeys through spectacular mountain passes to the often scary visitations to the Eastern Bloc, where Keith Campbell considered smuggling two Czech fans back to the West. There are also races programs, letters, diary excerpts, race licences and parts receipts that all add to the vivid pictorial flavour of the book.

To fully understand the historical and gut-level reasons why Australia has enjoyed so much success in world championship motorcycle competition, Circus Life implicitly delivers the answers. Even if you are not a race fan, or even a devotee of this classic era of grand prix racing, it is essential reading for any bike fan.

As Cox has said of the stars of his book, "They might seem unremarkable now sitting in their suburban loungerooms or in their workshops. But then hear them talk of breath-crushing bumpy straights, narrow tree-lined country roads, treacherously slippery village streets, and the epic journeys between meetings. Hear them remember. These men and women are inspiring!"

Circus Life is published by Plimsoll Street Publishing, and signed copies are available through Cycle Torque for \$99. ■



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3 Yamaha Racing Gloves
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4 Yamaha Racing Gear Bag
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5 Yamaha Racing Flat Peak Cap (Children's)
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 Sizes: XS - 3X
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EXTREME FRONTIERS: CANADA is Charley Boorman's brand-new adventure/travel book. Travelling mainly on his much-loved bike, Charley will explore the world's second largest country - home to some of the most stunning and challenging terrain known to man.

3 How to Ride Off-Road Motorcycles – \$39.99

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5 Race Tech's – \$49.99

Based on Thede's world-famous Race Tech Suspension Seminars, this step-by-step guide shows anyone how to make a bike handle like a pro's.

6 Jorge Lorenzo – \$19.95

Jorge Lorenzo really came of age in 2010 when he took the MotoGP season by storm and became the runaway World Champion, winning nine of the season's 18 races, finishing on the podium 16 times and accumulating the biggest points score ever achieved in the championship. And he finally toppled team-mate Valentino Rossi's domination. Here, then, is the third edition of Lorenzo's quirky, insightful and highly readable autobiography, updated to cover the 2010 season in full.

7 Lost on Earth – \$29.99

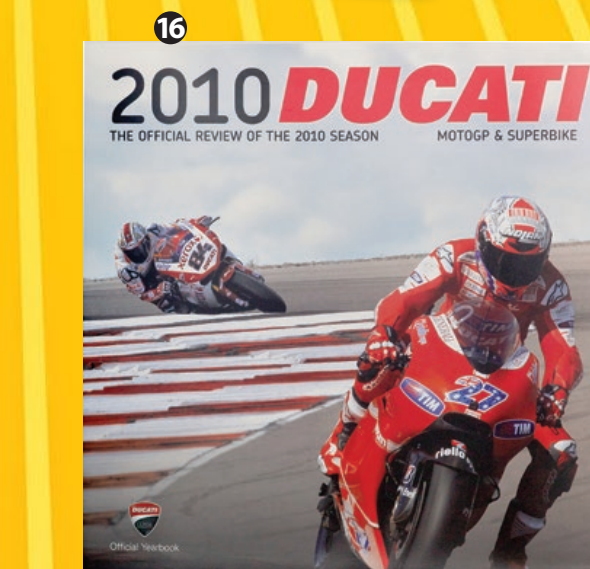
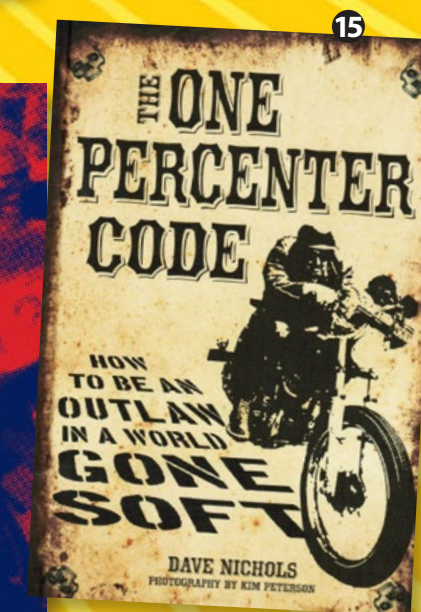
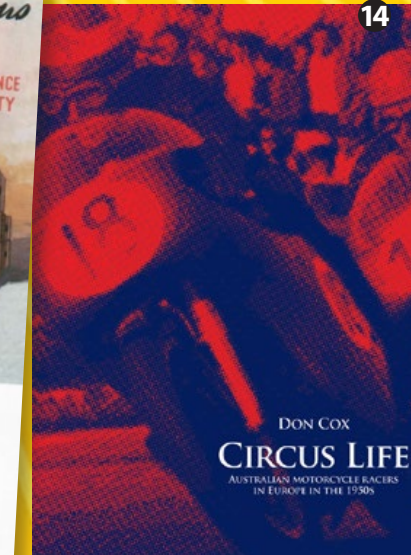
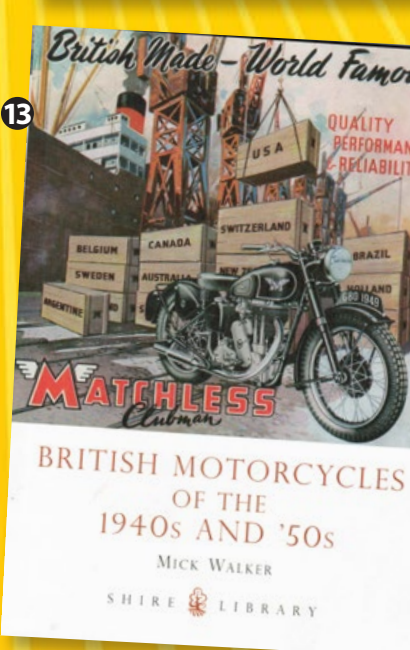
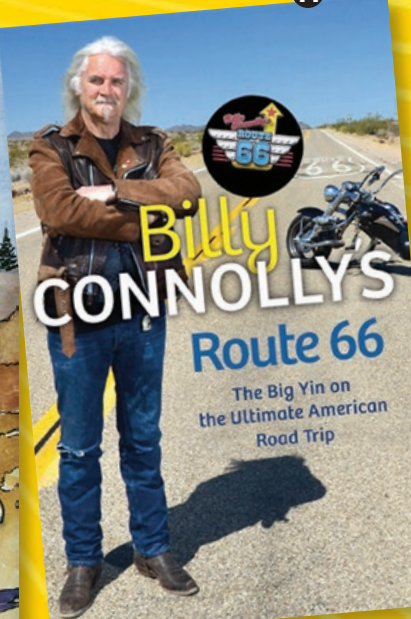
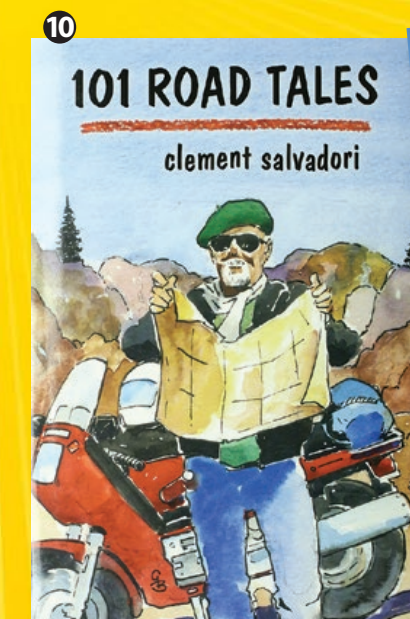
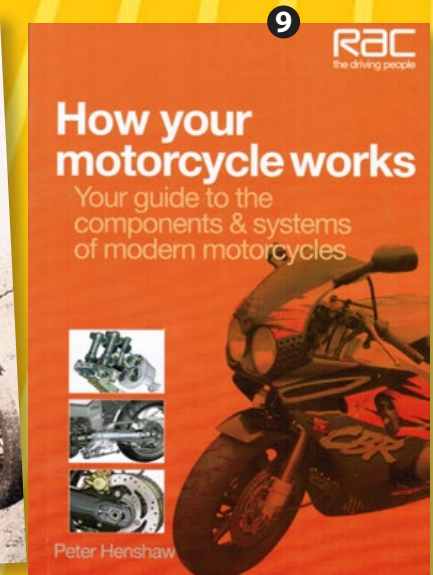
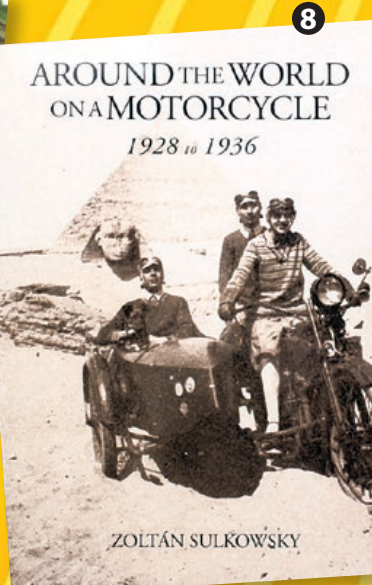
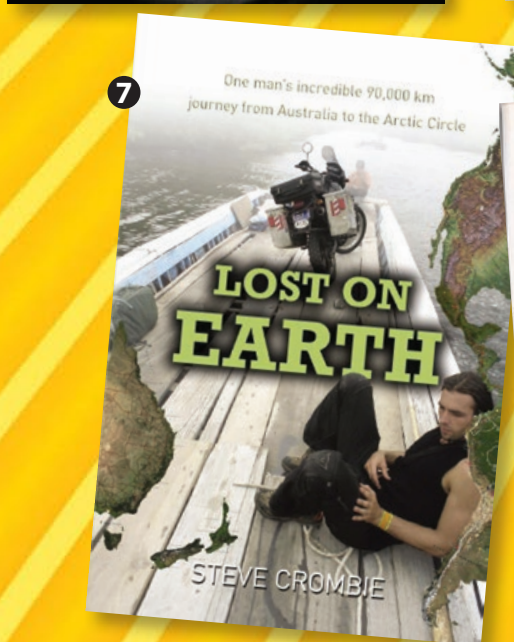
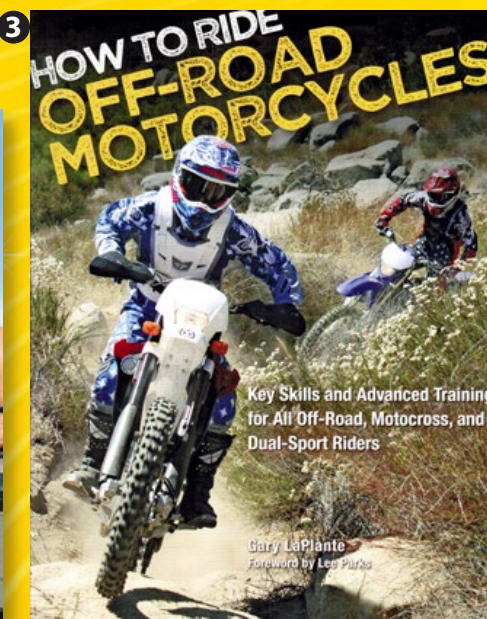
"The only way I am coming home is by bike or by box," Steve Crombie writes when he first hits the road, travelling 90,000kms from Australia to the Arctic Circle via South America. It takes him two years. He suffers from dehydration, starvation and disease. He rebuilds his motorcycle four times. Along the way Steve not only tests his limits but meets the world head on - waking up behind iron bars in Tierra Del Fuego.

8 Around the World on a Motorcycle – \$65.00

The year was 1928 when two young Hungarians decided to travel around the world on a motorcycle. Like Robert Fulton, whose circumnavigation of the globe is chronicled in his 1937 book One Man Caravan, Sulkowsky thought his was the first around-the-world journey on a motorcycle. Sulkowsky's account of his travels, originally published in Hungary in 1937, has recently been translated into English and published with the original photos.

9 How your motorcycle works – \$19.99

The modern motorcycle is a fascinating and complex piece of machinery, easily as complex and diverse as the modern car. With clear, jargon-free text, and detailed cutaway illustrations, this book explains exactly how the modern bike works.



10 101 Road Tales – \$44.95

A collection of entertaining columns first published in the USA's Rider magazine, Clement Salvadori's tales have been entertaining American riders since 1988. Now, 101 of those engaging Road Tales have been brought together in one book, cleverly illustrated by his long-time friend Gary Brown.

Don't expect a detailed travel guide to places near and far, but rather a guide to the enjoyment of travelling, especially by motorcycle. These tales are spun by an observant and experienced traveller who can make a quick ride on the back roads near his home just as entertaining as a trip across the country.

11 Billy Connolly's Route 66 – \$35.00

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12 MotoGP Season Review 2011 – \$59.50

Now firmly established in its eighth year of publication, this is a must-have Christmas purchase for every fan of motorcycle racing. Edited by TV commentator Julian Ryder, this book includes expert contributions on the technical side from Neil Spalding and stunning photography by Andrew Northcott. All 18 races of the season are covered in detail, the supporting categories are also included, and clearly presented statistics provide a comprehensive reference source for the future.

13 British Motorcycles of the 1940s and 50s – \$14.99

After VE Day in 1945 the British population returned enthusiastically to the road. But the cost and availability of both vehicles and fuel led to the post-war scene being dominated by motorcycles, most of them ex-military machines, eagerly snapped up for everyday use in an age when a family car remained just a dream for many. The British industry, meanwhile, was exported to 'export or die', and until well into the 1950s the majority of new British bikes were sold abroad.

14 Don Cox Circus Life - Signed – \$99.00

Welcome to the gypsy world of the Continental Circus private entrants - warts and all - with the joys, camaraderie, heartache, laughs and low acts. It was a time when rider usually had to be truck driver, mechanic, cook and start-money negotiator as well. And management help? You wish! In the 1950s, it was considered un-Australian to push your own barrow.

15 One Percenter Code – \$29.99

In The One Percenter Code, best-selling Motorbooks author and editor of Easyriders magazine Dave Nichols takes up where he left off in One Percenter: The Legend of The Outlaw Bikers. Nichols takes readers inside the world of outlaw motorcycle clubs and pulls back the secretive curtain on the biker lifestyle. He explores the concept of brotherhood, ultimately arriving at a new definition of family and community in the process. Being a member of a one percenter motorcycle club requires extreme discipline; in this book, Nichols shows us what that life offers in return.

16 2010 Ducati MotoGP & Superbike – \$59.99

Through words and images we can relive the most exciting moments of the year, the 2007 World Champion Casey Stoner and Noriuki Haga and Michel Fabrizio in the Superbike championship. This emotional year is presented in a collectors edition which symbolises all the prestige of a marque that has written and continues to write some of the most exciting chapters in the history of world motorcycle racing.

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2 Be a star with Elstar

THE Elstar 125cc Star quad is not just for the kids under 16 years of age. It is built with a large size frame and 8 inch big wheels, comfortable size for mum and dad to ride too. It is 50% larger than most of the 125cc kids quads in the market. The engine is a genuine Loncin, with a growing reputation as a proven powerplant. It has three speeds with reverse. Gear shifter is a V-rocker style to make it easier to change. Headlight, double drum brake at front and disc brake at rear provides safe riding. Metal bottom frame gives strong protection against all terrain surfaces. Elstars ships Australia wide.

Price: \$1349

Available from: Check the website for your nearest dealer.

More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

3 Plug me in

BIKES and Bits importers have an interesting range of plugs and ports so that you've always got something to plug your communications gear or GPS, or phone or whatever. The USB and DC12v/24v point fit standard 7/8 handlebars and have a 1.5m cable. They're water resistant and easy to install with just two wires to the battery. A neat little gift idea.

Price: Twin USB \$35, socket \$39.95.

Available from: Good bike shops

More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

4 Like a jet

FITTING aftermarket pipes and air filters do affect the tuning of your motorcycle, and the best way to get the most out of your mods is to fit a tuning device which interacts with your bike's brain. The Electronic Jet Kit is one of those devices, but it's one you can play with yourself rather than leave it all to your local dyno tuner. We have one fitted to our Husqvarna TE 310, and also to our Ducati 848 race bike. Look out for a full review on this product in an upcoming issue. Available for most fuel injected motorcycles.

Price: \$249 for single cylinders, \$299 for multi cylinder machines.

Available from: Good motorcycle shops

More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more



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Christmas Buyers Guide



HONDA
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Available online and in participating Honda Dealerships nationally, this new range of T-shirts from Honda is sure to appeal to a whole new wearer of the Wing.

Made from 100% cotton the men's t-shirts such as the 'Coat of Arms Tee', the 'Wing Tee' and the 'Wing Silhouette Tee' feature new colour schemes and interesting configurations of the Honda Wing. For the ladies a foil printed 'Zest Tee' made from a cotton blend is available in a sultry grey colour.

- 1 Honda Wing T-Shirts**
Part No. L08TS202WB (Black), L08TS202WR (Red), L08TS202WW (White). Available in sizes S - 3XL. **RRP \$37**
- 2 Honda Coat of Arms T-Shirts**
Part No. L08TS111MX (Black), L08TS112MX (White), L08TS113MX (Blue). Available in sizes S - 3XL. **RRP \$35**
- 3 Honda Silhouette Wing T-Shirt**
Part No. L08TS110MX. Available in sizes S - 3XL. **RRP \$35**
- 4 Honda Ladies Zest T-Shirt**
Part No. L08TS114MX. Available in sizes 8 - 18. **RRP \$35**

Honda's new range of headwear has arrived just in time for Summer. Boasting all new designs, these caps are sure to be a hit with Honda fans of all ages.

- 5 Honda Wing Black Flat Snapback Cap**
Part No. L08CP602B. **RRP \$25**
- 6 Honda Wing Grey Flat Fitted Cap**
Part No. L08CP601G. **RRP \$25**
- 7 Honda Racing Black Snapback Cap**
Part No. L08CP031HR. **RRP \$20**
- 8 Honda Wing Kids Black Flat Snapback Cap**
Part No. L08CP700B. **RRP \$20**

- 9 1961 Isle of Man TT Championship T-Shirt**
Part No. L08TS064HC. In the third year of its TT challenge program, Honda was able to lift the championship trophy on the Isle of Man thanks to some fantastic riding from Mike Hailwood that enabled him to take out victories in the 125cc and 250cc classes. Honda went on to take the first five places in both the 125cc and 250cc classes! To celebrate the 1961 Isle of Man TT Championship, Honda are proud to unveil this commemorative T-Shirt as the newest addition to the Honda Heritage Collection. Available in sizes S - 3XL. **RRP \$35**

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<p>\$265 FOX KTM 360 COMBO</p>	<p>\$249 FOX 180/180 HC COMBOS YOUTH FROM \$189</p>	<p>\$165 FOX 180/180 HC COMBOS YOUTH FROM \$145</p>	<p>FROM \$249 THOR CORE COMBOS</p>	<p>FROM \$149 THOR PHASE COMBOS THOR QUADRANT HELMETS</p>	<p>\$90 NEW KTM GRAPHIC KITS</p>	<p>\$35 KTM-Berg 2 Stroke Power Valve Adjuster</p>	<p>\$40 KTM Lower Shock Bearing Kit</p>	<p>\$180 Carbon Fibre Pipe Guard</p>	<p>\$45 KTM Grab Handle</p>	<p>\$45 KTM Grab Handle</p>								
MORE FOX, THOR & SCOTT GEAR AVAILABLE IN STORE AND ONLINE										<p>\$110 KTM-Berg Bash Plates</p>	<p>\$599 KTM GPR 4 Steering Damper Kit</p>	<p>\$25 WP Fork Micro Bleeders</p>	<p>\$50 Case Saver/Clutch Slave Cylinder Guard</p>	<p>\$45 KTM Grab Handle</p>	<p>\$120 Radiator Braces</p>	<p>Buy any 3 EE products and get 15% off</p>		
<p>\$195 FOX HELMETS V1 V2 V3 V4</p>	<p>\$139 KTM BALANCE BIKE</p>	<p>\$40 KTM RACE CHAIRS KIDS</p>	<p>\$69 KTM/OGIO BUMBAG</p>	<p>\$30 KTM CLOCK</p>	<p>\$10 KTM MUGS</p>	<p>\$15 KTM DUMMY 2 PACK</p>	<p>\$19 KTM BABY BOTTLE</p>	<p>\$120 Complete Debris Deflectors</p>	<p>\$65 Moto Roost Deflectors</p>	<p>\$120 Ultra Disc Guard w/ Carrier</p>	<p>Buy any 3 EE products and get 15% off</p>							
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<p>\$149 ONE IND YOUTH ATOM HELMET</p>	<p>\$299 CLUB II - SMALL ONLY</p>	<p>\$399 CLUB III</p>	<p>\$599 GPX PRO</p>	<p>02 4737 9566</p>		<p>Like us on Facebook</p>	<p>See ya soon at Sutto's...</p>	<p>www.suttosmc.com.au</p>	<p>141 Blaikie Road, Jamisontown NSW 2750</p>	<p>Store hours Mon - Fri 8:30 - 5:30 Sat 8:30 - 2:00</p>								

Christmas Buyers Guide

**CYCLE TORQUE PROJECT
BIKE: ATOMIK MOTOX70**
TEST & PHOTOS BY NIGEL PATERSON



Cheap FUN



Santa's delivering these...

ATOMIK'S 70cc four-stroke kid's bike is the ideal machine for youngsters, especially if the family's on a tight budget. At just \$649, the bike would make an ideal first motorcycle for many youngsters starting out their riding from about the age of eight – physically the bike might be too tall for younger riders (Atomik has smaller bikes for the little 'uns). Using a tried-and-true design and having the bikes built in China has allowed Australian company Atomik to sell some of the cheapest bikes you'll find anywhere – but they aren't fly-by-night backyarders, Atomik is now bringing in thousands of machines each year, from the tiny kids' machines to adult-sized trials and farm machines, ATVs of all sizes and now side-by-side recreational vehicles. The specifications make the bike sound quite trick by kids' bike standards: wave discs at both ends, electric start, anodised alloy parts, 4-speed, CNC rear shock, pod airfilter... there's a lot to like. For a non-motorcycling parent, they might be hard-pressed to tell

the difference between one of these and the vastly more expensive Japanese and European kids' bikes – and learners would find it even tougher. My son Damien, who ride the bike in the pictures, thought it was great. He loved the electric start – he struggles to start his kick-only 110 – thought it went quicker than his 110 (but Dad thinks that might be simply because it has four gears instead of the 110's three-speed 'box) and thought it handled better, too (but Dad thinks that's because it has new tyres). Those with more experience around dirt bikes will notice some of the reasons the Atomik is cheaper than machines from the better-known brands. The engine design dates back eons, the forks are conventional, the shock adjustable only for ride-height. These things matter for competition use, but for the market this bike is aimed at – forget the MotoX name, this is not a competition bike – the price is more important. Atomik also has a range of competition bikes and

while prices are higher, so are capabilities and specifications. Atomik has dealers around the country, basically a handful in each state. If you don't have a dealer nearby, you can order directly from Atomik's website, which is great, but I think more importantly you can order spares, performance parts and accessories directly too, and the parts are cheap – a complete engine is just \$330, while consumables and commonly damaged parts like brake pads and levers are just \$15. You can get a complete plastic kit and sticker kit for \$90 – what a great way to dress up an older machine when it's getting passed on to a younger sibling. The Elephant in the Room regarding Chinese bikes is reliability: will they stand up to the rigours of child abuse? We're not sure, which is why this is the first article in a series, for this is a project bike, not just a quick ride or test. We certainly had no problems on day one except to discover Damien had grown out of basically all his riding gear – boots, pants, jersey – a growth spurt or two in the last few months has meant his beautiful Shift Nylons are now looking a little baggy on his little brother. So Santa might be bringing Damien some new riding gear. I reckon Santa might be delivering a few Atomik machines around the country this Christmas too, and that should put some smiles on little people's faces. ■



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1 Ixon Copper Rock Jacket

Classical roadster leather mens jacket, sober and modern, very comfortable thanks to thick and supple leather. With removable winter lining, zipped vents and stretch panels under the sleeves allow for an ultimate feel and comfort. Features include Straight collar, Snap on collar, cuffs, and bottom. Zipped cuffs, external zipped pockets and 2 internal pockets. Sizes SM-5XL, Colour Black. **RRP: \$389.95**

2 Ixon Crystal Rock Jacket

Classical roadster leather ladies jacket, sober and modern, very comfortable thanks to thick and supple leather. With removable winter lining, zipped vents and stretch panels under the sleeves allow for an ultimate feel and comfort. Features include Straight collar, Snap on collar, cuffs, and bottom. Zipped cuffs, external zipped pockets and 2 internal pockets. Sizes XS-3XL, Colour Black. **RRP: \$389.95**

3 Ixon Tungsten Jacket

The Ixon Tungsten jacket carries a unique, roadster/retro look, waterproof and vented, with a removable warm liner for a ride in any season. Note the quality removable winter lining, for a neat look even on the inside. Functional features such as skinpeach neckroll for comfort, snap closures, zipped pockets and snap adjusters at the waist and cuffs are all found in the Tungsten. For those that are looking to match your gear, the Tungsten is designed to match the ladies Iris Jacket and also the kids Xenon and Lotus jackets. Sizes XS-4XL, Colours Black, Coffee. **RRP \$229.95**

4 Ixon Sismic Sport Jacket

The latest generation of Ixon 3 in 1 jackets, first seen in Australia with the Ixon Summer jacket, the Sismic Sport carries all the features you expect from a modern brand with a growing heritage of rider safety without compromise. Pockets inside and out, waist and cuff adjustments, reflective piping for increased visibility, CE protectors in shoulder and elbows, comfort neckroll, Ripplan reinforcing in impact areas, mesh panels front and rear and of course, Ixon's Drymesh waterproof and breathable removable liner and separate removable winter liner. Sizes SM-8XL. Colours Black/White, Black/Gray, Black/White/Gray, Black/White/Red. **RRP \$299.95**

5 Ixon Taiga Air Jacket

A 3 in 1 all year jacket, the Taiga Air is a truly versatile jacket. Ixon's new oversize 3D mesh panels front, rear and on the arms, removable waterproof and breathable

liner along with separate removable winter liner combine to allow comfort no matter what the conditions. The unique length (shorter in the front) allows all the benefits of a long parka style jacket, while remaining comfortable versatile on the bike. A vast array of adjusters and pockets, reflective piping, flex panels, reinforcements and CE protectors all combine to create a safe and highly usable piece of riding equipment. Sizes: SM-5XL. Colours: Black or Blue/Grey. **RRP \$329.95**

6 Ixon RS Pro HP Glove

Tested and used by MotoGP racers, the RS Pro HP is Ixon's latest generation in racing gloves providing comfort, safety and security of the highest level. Featuring cowhide, goat and kangaroo leather, secure closure system, kevlar lining & thread as well as Ixon's exclusive vented knuckle protector on the back of the hand just to name a few, the RS Pro HP's features go on and on to create a proven CE certified glove of the highest order! Sizes: XS-4XL. Colours: Black/White, Blue/Red/White/Black, Black/White/Red, White/Black/Printed Yellow. **RRP: \$269.95**

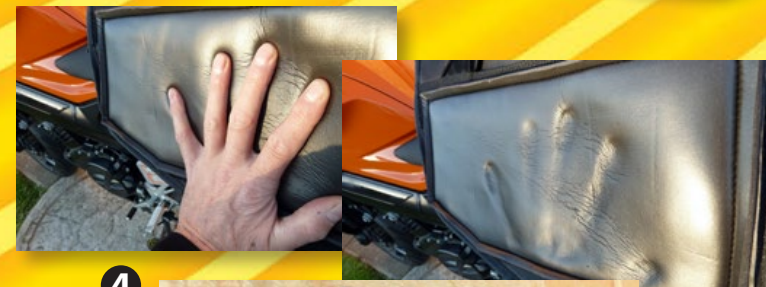
7 Ixon RS Print HP VX Glove

Evolution of our famous RS Print HP, this VX version keeps the same features with a sublimation treatment on backhand declined in 4 colour ways: sober style, retro, vintage. Features include Perforated goat leather and stretch textile, Short cuff with tightening strap, Exclusive vented knuckle protection on backhand, Leather reinforcement on palm, Slider on external side of palm. Pisiform reinforcement, Curved fingers with flex, Incorporated ventilations on index, major and annular CE approved. Sizes SM-4XL. Colours Black, Black/White, Black/Red, Vintage. **RRP \$89.95**

8 Ixon Typhon Race

Ixon's Typhon Race, with open 3D mesh, brings a new style to sports textile jackets. PU shoulder protectors, CE armour combine with high endurance textiles to create a secure jacket. The open 3D mesh, and removable winter, waterproof and breathable liner also work together to bring versatility no matter where you ride, or what season. Features include External PU shoulder protectors, Removable winter liner (warm, waterproof & breathable), 3D mesh front, rear and on the arms for full ventilation. Comfort collar with neoprene, Multiple adjustments at waist, biceps and cuffs, Zipped pockets. Sizes SM-4XL. Colours: Black/White, Black/White/Red. **RRP \$259.95**

Christmas Buyers Guide



1 Straight as an Arrow

GOT an Aprilia SR Max 300 scooter? If you do you should grab a full Arrow exhaust for it from your Aprilia dealer. The Arrow exhaust will give your Max 300 a styling, and performance edge over the competition. If you don't own a Max 300 scooter you probably will want one just so you can buy this exhaust.

Price: \$649
Available from: Aprilia dealers nationwide
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

2 Crossrunner tank covers

BAGSTER has released a new custom tank cover to suit the new Honda VFR800X Crossrunner. Made specifically for this model the fit and colour is perfectly matched for the bike providing not only full tank protection but also allows fitment of the optional Bagster tank bag. Made in Europe to a very high high quality standard. Top value!

Price: \$249
Available from: Good bike shops and accessory dealers.
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

3 Handy bike cover

MOTOCENTRIC offers not only motorcycle luggage and apparel, including rainwear, but also a full line of motorcycle covers. Whether you garage your ride, or park outside, there is a MotoCentric motorcycle cover for you. There are heavy duty PVC motorcycle covers, water resistant motorcycle covers and waterproof motorcycle covers. All MotoCentric motorcycle covers come with a lifetime warranty. For the very best in motorcycle covers, look for MotoCentric motorcycle covers.

Price: From \$84.95 (waterproof)
Available from: Tomcat Distribution (02) 4305 2200
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

4 Pannierz will do the job

TESTED on road bikes and dirt bikes the Traveller Pannierz are designed to fit any bike with side covers/panels or fenders. They are backed with a special, adjustable, sticky, memory foam pad to reduce scuffing on bodywork. Simple, throw-over, roll top panniers made from super heavy duty Aussie canvas and secured by the unique Andy Strapz tensioning system. They feature a slash cut bottom to accommodate high-rise pipes. Very tough and made in good of Oz.

Price: \$285
Available from: Andy Strapz (03) 9770 2207
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

5 Sitting pretty

THE Hebe ExGel seat cover is a handy little product to use on anything from dirt squirters to big tourers. It's handy because it packs away easily and the universal application lets you fit it to almost any bike with its fully adjustable velcro straps and vinyl waterproof cover. The soft gel seat has a very plush feel and will keep your backside comfortable for hours in the saddle.

Price: \$59.95. **Available from: Good bike shops**
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

6 Lock it, don't lose it

A VERY handy bit of kit which is small and compact enough to fit in your pocket, jacket or on a belt loop. Designed to lock your helmet to any make of bike using the handlebar or frame as an anchor point. Simple to operate carabiner style now fits over 38mm (or 1.5") bar. The latest model is rubber coated and has a four-digit security code which you can set yourself. Great value, great gift.

Price: \$25
Available from: All good bike shops or online www.helmetlok.com (02) 6689 5703
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RS125 :: Genuine Lifan 125cc
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 :: Classic Blade
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AES110 Dinosaur :: 110cc fully automatic
 :: Safety government control
\$649



AES125 Katar :: 125cc 3 speed with reverse
 :: Medium size kids quad
 :: 7" wheels
\$849



GX250 :: Zongshen OHC 250cc
 :: Full size 21"/18"
 :: Linkage set up
\$1699



AES150 Camel :: 150cc GY6 Full auto with reverse
 :: 8" wide wheel base
 :: Adult size strong frame
\$1599



EAE250 Tank :: 250cc 5 speed manual with reverse
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 :: Farm machine with tow bar fitted
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Christmas Buyers Guide



7 Something in the Air

MOTODRY'S new Air System men's jacket is just the thing for summer riding with its summer mesh/textile construction. It has CE armour, YKK zips and a removable waterproof, breathable liner. Black XS-6XL, black/white XS-4XL, black/red XS-4XL and black/grey XS-4XL.

Price: \$179.95
Available from: Good bike shops
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

8 Triumph Tees

SHOW your loyalty by wearing one of the new Spring/Summer range of Triumph T-shirts. Lots of groovy designs to choose from, to suit ladies and gents.

Price: From \$45
Available from: Triumph dealers nationwide
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

9 Ducati swimming in style

Be the envy of your friends when you head to the beach in your Ducati Blackriders. Made from durable polyester material these shorts boast Italian style incorporating the iconic Ducati logo. Designed for comfort, the quick dry feature is essential during the summer season. Available in sizes 50 - 56.

Price: \$80.10
Available from: Your local Ducati dealer
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more

10 Cool as Aero

THE new Motodry Aero gloves feature pre-curved fingers, carbon knuckles and night safety reflectives. The vented gloves are made of soft cowhide leather and mesh construction - so cool for summer! Sizes XS to XXL.

Price: \$44.95
Available from: Good bike shops
More info: www.cycletorque.com.au/more



1 Oset Bikes

OSET electric dirt bikes have been on the market globally since 2006, and have transformed the learning process for young riders completely. Amazingly, riders as young as 2 years 6 months are riding OSETs on two wheels, and even standing up on the pegs. This clearly puts OSET riders YEARS ahead.

There are two sizes available: a 12.5" wheel bike for 2-5 Year olds, and a 16" wheel bike for 5-10 year olds. Very low weight. Low center of gravity. Smooth, linear power. Lots of instant torque. Incredible acceleration. Incredible hill climbing. 'Parental control' speed dial - from 0 mph to maximum. Designed and engineered in the USA. Neighbor friendly. Mother friendly! Throw in the car (even upside down!). Great brakes. Great suspension. Non-intimidating. Very affordable. Very 'tune-able'. Back yard riding! Silence! Power! Full cover chain guard. Long battery life. Easy charging. No Oil. No Gas. No Kickstart. No Hot Exhaust. No Carburetors. No Jetting. No Noise!

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1 MyPlates

WHETHER your bike is all about POW3R or TORQ, you can now get the personalised number plate for the motorcyclist who has everything (or thinks they have!) from myPlates. Just check out www.myplates.com.au - they even have a nifty spot on their website to check on the availability of certain plate options. Yes, that's right you can even buy that special personalised number plate as a gift for the special motorcyclist in your life!

The website has everything you need to know including frequently asked questions, how to order, delivery times etc. What a completely different gift idea for Christmas!

Price: Check website for options
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AUSTRALIAN QUAD MX CHAMPIONSHIPS

CHAMPS DECIDED

Photos Lindsay Knowles Photography



100 RIDERS AT THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS PROVE QUAD RACING IS A GROWING SPORT IN AUSTRALIA.

Ryan Lancaster



THE 2012 Yamaha Australian Quad Motocross Championship played out in Victoria from 13-14 October, with 10 riders collecting crowns at the end of the weekend.

100 riders converged on the Maffra Sale MX track in Newry for the two-day event, which was hosted by the Maffra Sale MX Club and Quad Riders Club of Victoria.

For the Pro Championship riders, who had already completed the first two chapters of their three-round series alongside the Australian Motocross Nationals, the Newry weekend served as the Championship decider.

Ryan Lancaster (Yamaha) took out the round with a standout straight five-moto sweep, but was unable to topple defending Champion and series leader Luke Gaisford (Honda) who claimed the Pro Championship crown with an unbeatable 301 points. Lancaster had to settle for silver on 297, with Daniel Middleton (Kawasaki) pocketing third with 215.

The Quad Intermediate class was wrapped up by Anthony Pearce (Suzuki) who took four of five moto victories to seal 116 points. Liam Glover (Suzuki) and Harrison van Vliet (Can-Am) rounded out the podium with 101 and 99 points respectively.

Simone Gaisford (Honda) took the gold in the Quad Women's class with 112 points, edging out defending Champion Sarah Moore (KTM) by a single point. Gaisford and Moore shared the podium with Melissa Davies (Suzuki) who claimed third with a tally of 96 points.

Clubman honours went to Hayden Bennet (Can-Am) with 120 points, ahead of Ashley McGough and Daniel Saltoggio (Suzuki) who both scored 86 points in a thrilling battle for second and third.

Craig Blackburn (Suzuki) retained his crown in the Veterans 35 to 44 class with an impeccable five from five result across the weekend, beating out Robert



Simone Gaisford



Daniel Middleton



Booth (Honda) on 110 and David Lloyd (Yamaha) on 94.

The Masters 45+ class was taken out by Rick Beer (Suzuki) with a winning score of 116, coming in ahead of rivals David Harris (KTM) on 110 and Pete Middleton (Can-Am) on 109.

Aidan Robinson (Yamaha) picked up the win in the 90cc Limited with a perfect 125 point score. Robinson was followed home by Mikayla Condon on 104 and Emma Lavercombe (Polaris) on 98.

Robinson also cleaned up in the Under 13 class, notching up a winning 111 points ahead of Jack Wilcox (Yamaha) in 104 and James Ogenis (Cobra) on 100.

In the closely fought Under 16 Boys class, Christopher Bosnakis emerged victorious from the five intense motos with a winning 100 points. Second place went to Kellan Robinson (Yamaha) with a final score of 92, while third went to Aston Oliver on 91.

The Under 16 Girls honours went to Kristen Ellis (Yamaha) who outpaced second and third placed riders Rebekah Lloyd (Yamaha) in 110 and Hailey Halsall (Yamaha). ■

Graig Blackburn



Multiple personalities

Dirt, sports and touring. Nothing has fazed our Ducati Multistrada, no matter where it has gone.

DUCATI'S MTS1200 Multistrada S Touring is the fastest, strongest and most versatile machine in the category we describe around the Cycle Torque office as 'Any Road'.

We've had one at Cycle Torque HQ for nearly a year now, and we plan to keep it around for a little longer than usual for our project bikes. We like it that much, we aren't letting it go easily.

There's a growing group of bikes which are capable of taking on almost anything you'd describe as a road - sealed or unsealed - but aren't really full-on Adventure bikes.

Honda's got its new Crossrunner and Crosstourer, Yamaha's got the TDM900, Kawasaki's new Versys 1000 is in the category and Suzuki's V-Strom range is there, too. All capable and versatile, but not 'crashable' enough for us to recommend as Adventure bikes.

What they are, and the Multistrada is really the one to judge the others against in this category, is fast, comfortable and capable.

4-in-1

Ducati promote the Multistrada as four bikes in one, because you can change the settings on the fly through Sport, Touring, Urban and Enduro. Each mode gives a distinct feel to the bike, each makes the bike that bit more versatile.

Enduro and Urban are the tame modes, the computer limiting power output to 100 horses, which is more than enough for blatting through traffic or up a dirt road. In Sport and Touring modes you get the full 150 horsepower, although its delivery in Touring mode is toned down a bit. Sport mode is a wicked place full of instant throttle response, massive wheelies and immense fun.

No other dirt-road capable bike is this much fun up a winding bitumen road.

Changing the modes also changes the suspension settings. Sport mode is the stiffest, as you'd expect, with each mode being tailored for the conditions. You can feel the suspension settings change under your bum as you use the indicator cancel light to switch between modes.

Although the Multistrada S Touring is very powerful and incredibly fast, we also believe it's one of the safest bikes you can buy today. There's ABS and DTC, so the brakes won't lock up and DTC is Ducati's traction control, and with 150HP available spinning up the back tyre isn't possible, it can be easy.

Other aspects which make this bike safer than many others include comfort (which reduces fatigue), long travel suspension (which takes the harshness out of poor roads) and great visibility thanks to the riding position and



the best mirrors ever on a Ducati.

And love it or loath it, the Multistrada, despite the upright riding position and wide handlebars, is still very much a Ducati. After all, the engineers assigned to the project were told to build 'The bike they would want to ride on the road', and these people were Ducatisti, of course. So there was never going to be a dirt-road friendly 21- or even 19-inch front wheel, it was never going to be fitted with a tame engine, it was never going to be anything but a versatile Ducati, complete with blistering performance and superb handling.

There's no getting away from the fact the Multistrada is a big bike though. The seat height is high, the seating fairly roomy, the weight of the machine not insignificant. Once you're rolling though it's very well balanced, and the position of the footpegs good for standing if the terrain gets rough.

The Project

One of the big things we wanted to achieve with our Project Multistrada was to test what it would be like to live with the machine over a decent length of time and distance – so we put it in the hands of Cycle Torque's contributors as well as letting the staff ride it as much as possible.

So adventure bike owner Daniel Ballantyne took it bush and road racer Dave Mason took it thrashing, while CT's Publisher Nigel Paterson rode it to meetings in Sydney and to a rally, while Picko took it to Queensland, a couple of times. It's also been to a couple of Snowy rides. In all we've racked up close to 15,000 kilometres in less than a year, a decent amount of that two-up too. So, it hasn't sat idle in the shed.

Along the way we wore out tyres, had it serviced, added some accessories and wished we had more time to ride it.

Genuine accessories

At the first service Ducati added the optional top box, a voluminous container which added enormously to the standard (on the 'T'-model) capacity of the panniers.

The standard luggage has stood up well to the rigours of a bike magazine. After nearly 15,000km all three boxes still look great and work perfectly most of the time - get dust and grime in the pannier brackets and they get sticky, but are fine.

The first batch of panniers had a single large latch, but Ducati quickly found people overloading them and added front and rear latches as well, eliminating Bulging Pannier Problem.

Maintenance

I wrote about the first service in the December 2011 issue, where I discovered one small issue for home mechanics – the centrestand, when down, actually restricts access to a couple of the bellypan bolts which need to come out to replace the oil filter. Remove the bellypan with the bike on the sidestand first.

Ducati has stretched out the intervals between services for all its bikes these days, and the Multistrada is no more expensive to own than the majority of bikes. Although the factory would like you to take your bike to a Ducati dealer for servicing, the electrical system plugs into the universal diagnostic tools every repairer of high-spec bikes would own, which makes servicing quick and easy. The Desmo valve gear rarely needs checking or adjusting and while the final drive chain and sprockets will need replacing, the standard equipment is high quality and is still looking good after 15,000km.

The last service was conducted by Motohansa at Rydalmere in Sydney (02 9638 4488). Motohansa is better known for its servicing, spares and accessories for BMW motorcycles, but the workshop can handle any make of motorcycle because it has the expertise and the right gear to do not only your handbook servicing, but all repairs too. In our case the Multistrada was there to have Xenon headlight and spot lights fitted. This isn't a five minute job, and will require Motohansa to have the bike for a full day, depending on what bike you have, which dictates how much bodywork needs to come off first. While it was there it was deemed prudent to have the 12,000 kilometre service done. Incidentally this is only an oil and filter change, plus a general going over. The more intensive service, including valve clearances is due every 24,000 kilometres, so dispel any doubts you have over servicing costs or reliability. The modern Testastretta engine is a great engine. Even though all new Ducatis will be bought from a dealership, what happens if you are the second or third owner, or you move to a remote area? In a perfect world you would take your machine to a Ducati dealership, have your bike lovingly serviced by an impeccably attired technician, who has Italian as their second language, and you are served a strong short black while you wait. This of course isn't always the case, and although the Multistrada is a very technologically advanced machine you shouldn't be put off buying one if access to a Ducati dealer isn't a viable option.

The project bike has been back for one warranty claim – the electronic key failed.

The Multistrada was Ducati's first machine to get a proximity sensor key - get close enough to the bike and the steering can be unlocked and the ignition started. Usually I would think this is a pretty cool idea, but given the panniers and top box must be operated using the key, I found the

idea less practical than maybe it could have been (Kawasaki made the same mistake with the GTR1400).

A few months into the project, I got a call from Daniel, who was out and about on the bike and it wouldn't recognise the key was nearby, so he was stuck – until he was walked through the procedure Ducati has for such a situation - basically, you can start the bike without the key if you know its PIN - which is something owners set. As Daniel wasn't the owner, he didn't know what to do...

Ducati simply replaced the key, mapped the new fob to the bike and the problem was solved.

A nice touch in these days where we can't ride our bikes as much as we'd like to is acknowledged by Ducati giving each customer a trickle charger to keep the battery right to go.

Aftermarket accessories

Ducati has many accessories available for the Multistrada, and has left provision for you to fit your own too. There are standard accessory power ports near the seats, perfect for heated vests and audio gear and the standard gear rack. Besides the Xenon lights fitted by Motohansa (low beam lights, and spot lights wired into the high beam circuit, but with its own switch on the handlebars) we have also fitted a set of Barkbusters which took all of about 15 minutes, mainly because they are designed specifically for the Multistrada. The RadGuard radiator and oil cooler mesh guards we fitted are a must we reckon. Attaching the radiator guard was so simple it was almost laughable. In less than two minutes it was on, and that's no exaggeration either. The oil cooler guard was a different story, it requires the removal of the nose cone. It looks time consuming but is relatively easy though, and well within the scope of the home tinkerer.

Not every standard fitment screen suits everyone, so we got a few different Ztechnik Vstream screens from Mototoys (www.mototoys.com.au or 0400 284 840) to try. They are in various sizes, from a shorter tinted screen to the big daddy touring screens. One thing we've worked out over the years is not every screen size or shape suits everyone. It does depend on your height and how adjustable your screen is, if at all, and bigger is not always better. First up we tried the tinted screen (Part No. N20502 – \$209) which in this case is slightly shorter and narrower than the standard screen. It wasn't spectacularly better than the original screen, and of course it suited some of us at Cycle Torque better than others. It's very much a personal thing, but if you get too much buffeting you should try a Ztechnik screen. Fitting is simple, and uses a semi quick release system that simplifies changing screens if you have more than one, which isn't a bad idea if your riding is varied between shorter stints and long distance touring. We still have another two screens to test so keep an eye out for this in an upcoming issue.

The radiator guard alone is \$195, if you buy as a kit including the oil cooler guard it's \$229. If you go to RadGuard's website www.radguard.com.au you might even get it cheaper.

\$125 is what it will cost you for the Barkbuster hand guards, find out more at www.barkbusters.net.

As for the Xenon lights, which work extremely well at not only giving you more depth, but also penetration, the cost is \$99 for single beam headlight inserts, or \$149 for dual beam inserts. Our Multistrada received two H7 inserts to the low beams.

Two high beam spot lights were fitted also, \$145 each. You can opt to go with high/low switchable spotties for \$225 each.

Performance

The combination of high performance, safety, comfort and style makes the Multistrada hard to beat. It really does offer near-Panigale-like levels of engine performance, with awesome comfort from the well-sculptured seat and natural riding position.

Its ability to cope with bad roads, dirt roads and urban decay all while carrying two people and a load of gear makes the Multistrada simply awesome.

The integration of suspension settings, traction control, ABS, fuelling and ignition is Ducati's way of using technology in ways to improve the ride. Having four distinct, practical and very different modes is great for bike set-up.

Even though the 1098 based engine is essentially the same on the sportsbike and the Multistrada, the big Multi gets slightly different camshaft timing and fuelling to make things a bit sweeter at lower revs. In the main it works, but there's no escaping the fact the engine on our bike was happiest at 4,000rpm or over. Early in the bike's life it made the trip north to Desmo HQ at Byron Bay in Northern NSW (02 6685 6316) where our ECU was spruiked up with a Rexxer ACU flash load, cost \$399. The result was a much happier bike when the revs were lower than 4,000, and quite frankly we were impressed with the difference it made. We have ridden some 1098/1198 sportsbikes where the fuelling was a bit cantankerous at low revs, and while the Multistrada was nowhere near as bad, it did benefit from the Rexxer flash load. We would consider this money very well spent.

It was on this trip where we dinged the rim. After hitting a big pothole we noticed the bump in the rim, but the tyre didn't go down. In fact we rode for another 1,000 kilometres or so before we got the rim repaired by a local wheel repairer. The cost was only \$80 but of course the tyre and disc rotors needed removing before the repair, and we then needed to repaint the rim where heat and force had been applied. As the rim is satin black this was easy to do with a rattle can and some wet and dry. It's been fine ever since and you wouldn't know the rim had been repaired unless you knew where to look. It tracks straight too.

What else have we learnt during our ownership? It has fantastic brakes, fuel range ranges from say 250 kilometres to 300 and a bit depending on how hard you ride (yes, it goes like stink and likes to be thrashed), the dash is comprehensive and changing the settings is easy, once you work out how it all works, including the heated handgrips. We like the seat, but some riders don't particularly like the stepped separate rider and pillion set up because it tends to limit how much the rider can move around. That said, it's not a big issue, and it's perfect when you are cracking on. Adjusting the screen on the move is easy, even though it's only manually adjustable.

Our second generation Multistrada is about to be replaced by the third generation, which looks very similar, and is, but has a new suspension set up, oddly named Skyhook. The Sachs suspension is semi-active, so it re-adjusts the damping as you go along. Apparently the name suggests the bike is hanging from the air, such is the suspension's shock absorbing ability.

Will the new model be better than the current one? Probably, and if it is it must be bloody good.

– Paterson & Pickett

Dirt, sports and touring.
 Nothing has fazed our
 Ducati Multistrada,
 no matter where it
 has gone.



Ztechnik V-stream small sports screen.



We did this on the bitumen, thanks to a pothole.



The quick-release screen mounting system.



Barkbusters reinforced the standard handguards.



Spotties added to already-capable night-riding ability.



Texa diagnostic tool in use.



HID driving lights, Xenon brightness.

A Painful Experience feedback

Cycle Torque's Editorial last month was all about Sportsbikes - check it out at www.cycletorque.com.au/ painful

GREAT article - thank you. You are the first person who has had the guts to tell it like it is and is not pandering to the manufacturer for fear of upsetting them. We need more honest journalism like yours. Keep up the good work with the iPad issues.

Saville

HAVING read your article on painful experience, I too agree on the following points. The roads are in such bad shape you might as well have an adventure bike or road trail, much more fun. I say this because I had 10 times more fun on my Suzuki DR-Z400E with road based tyres than my previously owned 2007 Yamaha R1. Why, people ask? Simple, so much more comfortable it's fantastic you can ride all day, bumps - who cares, no speeding tickets because the power is real world rpm not so high up in the rev range like on the R1 and the only satisfaction you get is once it passes 8000rpm mark. I can wring the DR-Z's neck and not get caught speeding because I'm not speeding. Since last September looking for a proper real world sportsbike, I purchased a Kawasaki Ninja 1000ABS. It's brilliant, comfy, good standard equipment and real world torque and I get an adrenaline hit much, much earlier in the rev range.

George Servanis

I AGREE with your recent editorial about sportsbikes. The industry seems to be building higher capacity bikes believing this is what the bike rider wants. Wants and needs are different. I hope the introduction of smaller capacity bikes like the Aprilia you wrote about but also the new [MV Augusta] Brutale 675, Honda's NS700D, the continuation of the FZ6, [Triumph] Speed Triple, GSR750 & 600 will mean the Honda CB400 may come down in price as it is the only thing people need for motorcycling. The major manufacturers need to do some market research and stop this "line extension" attitude. They're producing bikes like the soap and toothpaste manufacturers. To get the ball rolling I believe Harley-Davidson needs to build a 500. Such a bike would cream the market. Good for just around town, happy on longer trips, probably low maintenance and you get that solid brand. By the way, it's nice of Boris Mihailovic to put his stories into a book. I ordered one from you and read it over the 10 days I just spent riding in Tassie. Great book, great roads, great holiday.

John Da Rin

I BELIEVE riders of today's current model sportsbikes are 'soft'. I have an early model carby R1 that I have kept since 2000 and will hold onto as it's a greater road package than today's modern bikes. I've owned and ridden newer bikes and find them hopeless to ride on our country roads, we don't need bikes capable of 160km/h in first gear when riding around on roads that have 25-35km/h corners. I have ridden over 120,000km on this bike as well as raced it against today's modern bikes and it isn't slow by any means. It gets over 300km per tank, runs at least 10 degrees cooler and won't shut itself down when the temps get excessively high. Associates of mine that have these modern day 'super bikes' don't ride in the rain, even though they have ABS, TC and anti-wheelie etc. They constantly complain about sore kidneys if they ride on bumpy roads like the Putty Road and do nothing but moan about how they struggle to get any mileage out of their 175+ HP machines. You may not agree that an R1 is the perfect bike but for my lifestyle and riding habits I can't fault them, I currently have two in the garage with future plans to collect some more. One day I wish to hand them on to my boys so they can experience what dad used to ride around on, they may laugh compared to their modern bikes but at least I can give them a taste of what I have today.

Chris

SO HERE we have a test of the Ducati 1199 Panigale S (October 2012), with offset Öhlins shock, quickshifter, electronic adjustment, an engine that revs like a lunatic and an all-new engine, chassis and suspension to match. "Racing improves the breed they say, and it's hard to argue with that." But despite this, the poor tester expects the suspension to be more compliant than it is, despite being "almost mind-blowingly good" in the "right conditions". Yet the tester doesn't understand "why some manufacturers sell you a race bike with lights and almost expect you to 'dumb it down' for the road." Huh? This is the Panigale S we're talking about - just what did the tester expect? He asks whether it would make more business sense to 'dumb it down' and 'let the racers do their own thing'. Well, no, not if the bike is to be used according to its design brief, in the 'right conditions'. Would the tester criticise a tourer for not having the suspension and ground clearance that would enable it to be ridden to the limit on a race track? And elsewhere, the tester editorialises on 'a painful experience', blaming the manufacturers for the decline in sportsbike sales as 'pure sportsbikes' become

WRITE A LETTER! WIN A GREAT PRIZE

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'increasingly uncomfortable and tiresome to ride'. Could a 'pure sportsbike' be anything else but uncomfortable and tiresome to ride? If it wasn't then I guess that would make it a commuter or a tourer or an all-rounder or something else less pure. And the manufacturers make plenty of those for people who don't want something that is so pure, focussed and one-dimensional. But the most disturbing aspect of this editorial is the implication that these bikes are 'almost dangerous' to ride because they are unsuitable for our roads. Well, that sir, is a complete and utter cop-out, blaming manufacturers for the poor choice made by the consumer. Any bike not used in a manner and environment which suits its design intent is dangerous, whether it is a sportsbike, a tourer or an off-roader. Instead of preaching that manufacturers need to 'rethink what they are doing so that they can sell more bikes' we should be praising them for providing the variety of machines that they do, particularly 'pure sportsbikes' given their relatively small market, while encouraging consumers to make an informed decision about matching the type of bike that they purchase to their riding style and conditions.

Stephen

WOW, not sure if I've ever had so much feedback from a test or editorial before, and as you can see there are points of view from both sides of the argument. The reality is, in my mind, that I will most likely never again own a sportsbike for regular road duties. Yes, I have a few sportsbikes but these are either race bikes or just used for ride days. Chris mentions how his early model R1 is a good road machine. I have a friend with a 2004 R1 which is an amazing machine, 170 odd horsepower at the rear wheel with a few tweaks, slightly lowered footpegs, and slightly softer suspension make it a blast to ride in normal conditions. It's no tourer of course, but it is still a very good road burner. Not every bike suits everyone, and while I don't agree with everything Stephen said, I do agree we should applaud the manufacturers for still making such specialised machines, whether or not they sell in numbers Ed.



DESERT SLED

It might be named after a desert in Africa but it's equally at home plying the adventure routes here in Australia

DESERT SLED

OVER the years the Ténéré has been one of Yamaha's bigger capacity off-road adventure machines. The latest variant is very different in style and application than those early models but it is still a motorcycle very capable of taking you just about anywhere in this wide brown land of ours.

On the stand

If you are a bit of a Dakar fan you'll instantly recognise and most likely love the styling on the latest Ténéré, which has been out for a few years now. If not, you will probably think the styling is a bit odd. Personally I find it looks eccentric, which is how it should be.

While the styling is ultra modern, the mechanical package is carrying some age. The 660cc single cylinder engine has been in production for many years, and has been used in quite a wide variety of models, and other brands too. Fuel injection and liquid-cooling ensure it's not some old lumpy single, and the motor feels 'modern'. For whatever reason Yamaha decided not to use its signature 5-valve head on the Ténéré, it's got four valves. 2.9 litres of oil is held in the sump, so there's more chance of keeping the engine lubricated and semi-cool when you are tackling big red. This might be more of an issue on older type air-cooled bikes but it's still a handy thing on modern ones too.

It's an adventure bike so you expect long travel suspension, and although the suspension is basic and adjustable for pre-load only it's pretty capable offroad. There's 210mm of travel up front and 200mm at the rear, so anything short of a motocross jump is hardly likely to faze it. Some owners have complained the suspension is too stiff but we didn't find that during our time with the bike.

It comes with a 21-inch front wheel, and a 17 rear. And with 90/90 and 130/80 tyre sizes you can get some seriously aggressive tyres for the bike.

It's got dual calipers, and on paper you could find the two-piston calipers



■ TEST & PHOTOS BY
CHRIS PICKETT

■ RIDING GEAR: FOX HELMET,
SPYKE JACKET AND PANTS

a bit wanting. In reality though, they are up to the task, and in off-road situations we found the brakes a very good match for the speed and weight of the Ténéré. I'm sure in certain situations the brakes could be found wanting, and then there's the extra weight penalty from having two discs, but really, how often will this be an issue?

On the road and trail

Sure, there's a number of big capacity adventure bikes on the market these days, but not everyone wants the size, power, complexity or price of the flagship take-you-anywhere machines. We've tested the Ténéré a few times over the last five years, and took one fitted with genuine panniers out into the desert last year. Yes, it was good on the dirt but it was also very good on the road, and didn't burn up rear tyres like some of the bigger adventure bikes on tour.

It's comfortable, even over long distances, for most people, and when we

did the Bridle Track from Bathurst to Hill End I bet there were a few riders secretly wishing they were on the lightweight Ténéré when the conditions were tough going.

On that particular trip, four or five different riders had a decent stint on the Ténéré and everyone commented on how surprised they were at the bike's on- and off-road capabilities. I think you could largely put this down to old single cylinder perceptions in this day and age of all singing and dancing multi cylinder adventure machines.

Don't expect excessive vibes either, even at over the 110 km/h speed limit out west the Ténéré handled droning along with the other bigger capacity bikes easily, in fact it goes quite well.

During our test we managed 30 kilometres a litre at one stage, which included some off-road work. With a 23 litre tank you can expect to get at least 450 kilometres before it runs dry.

What works

At 209kg full of fuel it's a lightweight package, and this adds to the Ténéré's nimbleness off road. The screen works well, the engine is a pearler, and the riding position works well both on and off road.

What doesn't work as well

The mufflers are easy to scratch and make it harder to fit aftermarket luggage (you could always go the genuine panniers though), the 865mm



seat height will make it difficult for shorter riders, the sculpted seat makes it hard for taller riders to move around when sitting down.

Verdict

The \$13,999 price tag hasn't been increased since last year, but some punters reckon it's too expensive. The XT1200Z is another six grand extra and I would probably go for that bike if two-up touring is on the agenda. If you intend to do more adventurous off-road riding and mostly by yourself I reckon the 660 Ténéré is a better bet. Don't write it off as just an old single, and don't do the same because of the price. ■



- SPECIFICATIONS:**
- ENGINE TYPE: LIQUID-COOLED SINGLE
 - CAPACITY: 660CC
 - TRANSMISSION: 5-SPEED
 - FUEL CAPACITY: 23 LITRES
 - FRAME TYPE: STEEL TUBE
 - SEAT HEIGHT: 865MM
 - WET WEIGHT: 209 KG
 - FRONT SUSPENSION: TELESCOPIC
 - REAR SUSPENSION: MONOCROSS
 - BRAKES: DUAL DISCS FRONT AND REAR
 - TYRES: 90/90-21, 130/80-17
 - PRICE (RRP): \$13,999+ORC
- WWW.CYCLETORQUE.COM.AU/MORE**

www.cycletorque.com.au/more
www.yamaha-motor.com.au



Handguards are the ticket for bush work.



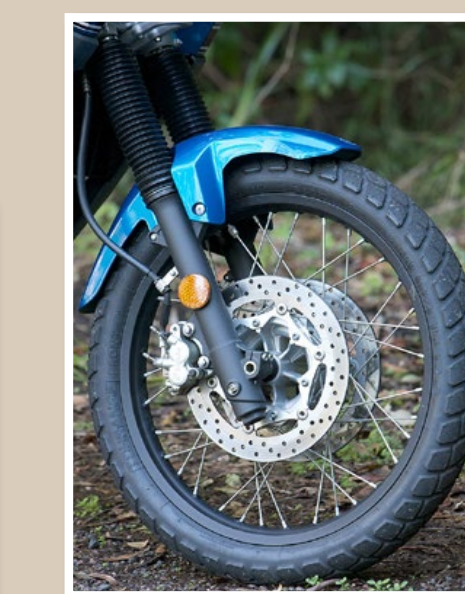
Mufflers look cool but are easily marked.



Need to get the Tenere out of a tight spot?



Bash plate is a must for off road work.



Front end package is basic but well up to the task.



Single cylinder engine is more capable than you might think.



Dash and screen are very 'Dakar' in style, work well and look the part.

Stoner's Swansong



Phillip Island 2012.
The best result ever for
Australia at this iconic
circuit. An Aussie on the
podium in every race.

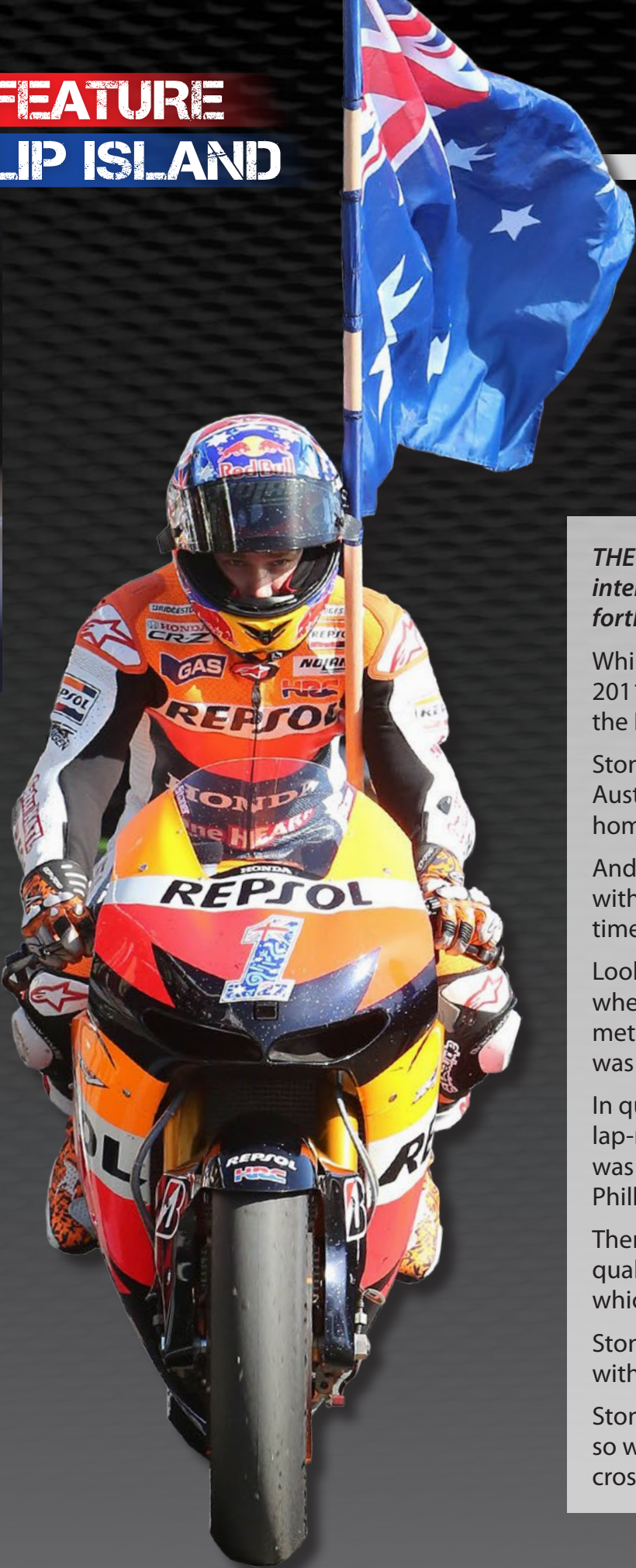


Jack Miller.



Arthur Sissis before qualifying, 2012 AGP.

Stoner's Swansong



THE final Phillip Island Grand Prix for Casey Stoner was always going to be interesting, with anticipation building from the time the Australian announced his forthcoming retirement months earlier.

While Aussies were hoping he'd defend the title he won for the second time in 2011, that wasn't to be due to injury suffered as he tried to remain competitive at the Indianapolis round of the series.

Stoner returned to the MotoGP circus a few weeks and a few races before the Australian round, in time to be very much at the pointy end of the field for his home race.

And while he started the race weekend still in pain and still unable to even walk without a limp, Stoner went out from the start of free practice and set blistering lap times.

Looking through some side-on images I shot during practice I realised Stoner's wheels weren't inline - he was still wheel-spinning - despite being hundreds of metres out of Siberia Corner: a careful analysis of the riders showed no-one else was doing that.

In qualifying Stoner just picked up where he'd left off in practice, setting close to lap-record pace early in the session and putting the other riders on notice that he was fast, very fast, and keen to make it six in a row in the Australian Grand Prix at Phillip Island.

There was a brief heart-stopping moment or two when he crashed early in qualifying at the slow Turn Four, a spectacular low-speed highside - an odd crash which looked worse than it was.

Stoner was back on his second bike within a few minutes, and lowered his lap time within minutes of being back out there.

Stoner seemed able to defy physics as he reeled off numerous 1:29m laps, doing so while other racers weren't getting below 1:30. The slow-motion shots of him crossed-up, the tyres skipping across the bumpy Phillip Island bitumen really

showed off his skills in keeping his machine under control despite riding it on the edge of traction and control at speeds over 330km/h.

There was talk of Stoner getting into a 1:28s, which is amazing. He did a 1:29 during Friday practice on hard tyres and a cool circuit, and Darryl Beattie said Stoner had told him he had more speed in him.

Under 10 minutes of qualifying to go and no-one else was under 1:30.

With eight minutes to go he went faster. His qualifying time of 1:29.623 was a blistering lap time on a circuit due to be resurfaced in December. His Pole position in 2011 was 1:29.975.

Light drizzle with a few minutes to go in qualifying killed the session.

Until Stoner started his Reign as King of Phillip Island, Valentino Rossi was the man to beat. Rossi, at odds with the Ducati, was two seconds slower than Stoner and back in eighth.

The crowds watching all this action were records, too: over 29,000 on the Friday and 40,000 attended Saturday's qualifying, which are both record attendances for their respective days.

Jorge Lorenzo took second spot on the grid and admitted he didn't think he'd win, basically saying "Casey's unbeatable, we hope to be close". This from the 2010 and 2012 title winner.

The race had the result the fans had come for and the title was decided, but it wasn't really a great race - Stoner was too good at the front, taking the lead early and reeling off fast laps to win easily. Lorenzo, more concerned about the title than the race took a very content second spot after the only man who could prevent him from winning the championship, Dani Pedrosa, crashed out early in Turn Four.

The excitement was for third spot, which turned into a tussle eventually won by another crowd favourite, Cal Crutchlow. The Briton is one to watch.

Why have Australians been so dominant at Phillip Island?

Way back in 1989, Wayne Gardner won the first World Championship 500cc Australian Grand Prix, starting a pattern of Australian winners of their home race - Gardner backed it up in 1990 and when the race returned to Phillip Island after a six year absence it was Mick Doohan doing the winning.

Gardner, Doohan and now Stoner have corners named after them, such has been their form over the years.

But I don't believe it's any sort of home ground advantage - if anything, the pressure of the local media and patriotic crowd could lead to mistakes. I think it's more to do with the Australians' ability to control a sliding bike.

All three of the Australian winners - and other winners such as Valentino Rossi - have been comfortable riding a sliding bike. This year I've watched Stoner as he bounced across the bumps of a track in need of resurfacing, but unlike other riders he's able to



ride around the problems and still set blistering times - although his fastest lap was actually set in 2008, which was also when the circuit's fastest lap was set, by Nicky Hayden - who also happens to be a rider happy to have a bike squirming around underneath him.

Phillip Island was designed and built in the 1950s, at a time of low horsepower bikes and cars, a time when flowing bends were built so brakes weren't over-stressed and competitive racing was a matter of slipstreaming and skill, not late braking, point-and-squirt riding.

When the track was rebuilt for the World Championship, the only major change to the track design was to make Turn Four much shorter, so it should be no surprise it's now the slowest corner on the track (there was no run off at the exit of the corner on the old layout).

So Phillip Island's track design is basically the oldest on the calendar - sure, Assen is an older circuit, but it was shortened and heavily modified a few years ago. About the only thing left that's traditional there is the race is on a Saturday.

Stoner praises Phillip Island as a place where the big bikes can really be wound up. It rewards someone who will get on the throttle early, who is willing to make the bike spin up its rear tyre, who has the balls to really use the horsepower available.

It's difficult to predict who the next Australian GP champion will be, but the last decade and a half has belonged to riders who did their time in the small-bore GP classes, graduating through to the premier class rides - Valentino Rossi, Casey Stoner, Jorge Lorenzo and Dani Pedrosa are all examples of this.

Stoner's Swansong



So while many are lamenting no obvious replacement for the retiring Casey Stoner, we shouldn't forget we have two teenagers in Moto3...

On race day at Phillip Island Adelaide native Arthur Sissis would go on to get third, an amazing ride. He began his racing days like his compatriot Casey Stoner, riding speedway and dirt track as a youngster.

"My sister, she taught me how to ride a motorbike when I was little", admits Sissis. "Then I was just riding speedway but I always wanted to race road bikes."

The dirt was his method of honing his skills in preparation for a road racing career that would hit the international stage in 2009 - competing in the prestigious Red Bull Rookies Cup. The family bought a van in Europe and lived in that for seven months or so.

In a show of real commitment, during this time Sissis was also carving a solid reputation on the domestic road racing scene, claiming the South Australian and national 125cc titles in 2008 and the 250cc category in 2009.

In 2010, with more experience under his belt, Sissis raced again in the Rookies Cup, this time finishing an encouraging thirteenth.

However it would be the breakthrough year of 2011 and a runner up finish in the Rookies cup that would earn him his first call up to Grand Prix, riding in the Malaysian Grand Prix. Shortly after that he was confirmed for his first full time ride in Grand Prix, riding in the Moto3 category for the Red Bull KTM team.

During his first stints overseas Sissis says he missed home a lot.

"I've been doing this now for the last four years, and this year has been the longest I think, ten months. But you have to do what you have to do."

As for his results this year, Sissis was surprised at how competitive he was at the beginning of the 2012 season, starting in the unknown category of Moto3.

"At the start of the season I thought, maybe top fifteen. Then when I got that good result in Qatar I thought I could challenge for the top ten in every race. Some races I've been in the top ten and some races I've been close, but it's been pretty hard."

As far as machinery goes, Sissis believes he is on a machine capable of winning - but there are some differences to his rivals.

He explained that while he has the same bike as his teammates, some of them have lighter fairings while his own are heavier, simply because he would not make the minimum weight limit otherwise.

Learning new tracks has been the biggest challenge for Sissis this year. Even though he has raced in Europe for several seasons in the Rookies Cup, he is still visiting tracks for the first time.

"When they [his rivals] are so much faster in the first session and you're a few seconds back it makes it hard trying to catch up. So by qualifying you're starting at the back and then in the race you try to catch up with the front guys and it makes it hard.

Next year Sissis hopes to be challenging for the top five, when the experience gained this year should pay off.

"It's really good to be team-mates with Sandro [Cortese] and Danny [Kent] because they are so experienced. They help me a lot as well. We share data and when I'm on the track they will give me a few laps to learn the track or something, they're really good."

Sissis seems to know where his immediate future is headed.

Joking, but at the same time not joking, he finishes by telling us, "I have another year in this team, I've got one year to learn, and one year to win."

Jack Miller is the other teenager flying the flag for Australia this year in the newly created Moto3 class. His 21st position at Phillip Island wasn't what he would have wanted but believes he's also hampered somewhat by uncompetitive machinery.

The international lifestyle of Grand Prix motorcycle racing is also far removed from Townsville, Queensland, where the 17-year-old grew up on the family cattle property.

His racing career began on dirt track, where he had won his first national long track title by the age of eight.

After switching to road racing at 14 Miller has gone on to hit some remarkable milestones early in his career, the highlight winning the German IDM 125cc Championship in 2011.

"We were lucky enough to win the German Championship", explains Miller. "I also picked up a podium when the bike didn't break down in the Spanish Championship. It was a decent year where I was picked up to do the last five races of last year and then this full year in Moto3."

It hasn't been all smooth sailing for the ambitious Aussie with some up and down results throughout 2012. As with any new class of racing, there has been a settling in period as manufacturers adapt their machinery to a new set of rules. Miller says that throughout the year the Honda machinery he is riding has become less competitive which has actually seen many of his rivals abandon the manufacturer in Moto3.

"I was hoping to finish the championship off in the top ten, but all of the teams that bought Hondas in the first place, they changed chassis. A lot went to FTR - some went to Suter.

Come testing there were thirteen or fourteen Hondas, now there is only one. We are the only ones left on the Honda and the engine is great, but the chassis is just basic, you know, you can't adjust anything on it...so we are really struggling with setup and also development.

Miller explains that it is not only cost that stops him from changing chassis - but also his team boss.

"The team boss didn't really want to change anything. He's happy with it (the Honda)



but he's not the one riding it. It makes it hard for me...this year has been a great learning year but for next year we are really looking at getting onto a competitive bike and trying to do the best that I can do.

"We're getting there slowly and steadily, these last couple of races we have been getting better and better and we are getting quicker in the dry so hopefully we can keep the progression going forward."

Even though he has been living and riding overseas for the last few seasons, Miller says he still finds adapting to life in Europe challenging.

"For the last three years I've lived in three different countries. I lived in Spain, then Holland last year and this year I'm in Italy.

A lot of pigeon English and sign language can get you a long way."

Australians have a solid history of performing well at their home circuit and for Jack Miller, his affection for Phillip Island is as strong as his compatriots.

"For me, it is one of my favourite circuits. I love it, it's got a heap of fast stuff and then a couple of technical little corners, but this year it is incredibly bumpy.

I mean, even from what it was last year it is getting worse and worse but they said it is getting resurfaced for the next GP so that will be good. It's definitely due for a remake!"

As far as the future goes, Miller says he has had offers to move up to Moto2 but another year in Moto3 is most likely.

"I myself would really like to do another year in Moto3. I think Moto2 is a great championship. The guys in there, it's like Moto3, it is so close."

– Nigel Paterson



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