



LOVE THEM or hate them, reality TV programs are the new wave of media entertainment. Production companies love them because they're cheap to produce and usually feature average punters who, when a camera is pointed at them, will say or do something they normally

never would, or they simply crash and burn.

For those who regularly read my column (besides my mum and Clubby, who only reads it to head off any impending legal action that might be threatened by V-Strom owners), you will know I come from the Sutherland shire on the south side of Sydney. So when a reality TV program called 'The Shire' was announced, all hell broke loose south of the Georges River and there was talk of defensive lines being set up reminiscent of the Cronulla riots. Now, I'm not a big fan of American-style reality programs filled with dysfunctional wannabes whose lives spill from one social conflict to the next, however I found myself asking the question, 'What reality program would I actually watch on TV?'

It's obvious that the adventure travel genre is out because if you look at the precedents set by the likes of Long Way Round, Long Way Down and the whole Motorbikin' series, as much as we love them, they don't have components of the current reality TV formula. So with that in mind I thought I'd come up with some concepts that would fit with current reality TV producers' twisted lines of thinking. Check these out ...

- **The Biggest Equipment Loser:** I believe this one would be Poppun's favourite. The concept sees a bunch of adventure riders take their overweight and over-equipped adventure bikes and try to reduce their dry weight. The mental torment of actually having to remove accessories is sure to prove too much for all the contestants.

- **Adventure Bike Idol:** This is basically a show about who looks good, has all the cool adventure clothing and trick fully-farked bikes, so it has nothing to do with riding talent whatsoever. The show fails when motorcycle journalists dominant the competition.

- **Australia's Next Top Tyre Changer:** Under the watchful eye of Dr Phil, contestants have to change tyres in the shortest possible time using various tools. Even though they employ exotic locations and different bikes, the show is boring after the first 60 seconds.

- **Master Adventure Chef:** Who can prepare the best meal after carrying the ingredients across hundreds of kilometres of difficult terrain, which leaves them with just ground-up remains to work with? Nearly everybody is eliminated in the first round for using freeze-dry food and beer, which is the staple diet of the travelling adventure rider.

- **Undercover Publisher:** Cameras go behind the scenes of motorcycle magazines to see what really goes on behind all the free bikes, long lunches and cutting and pasting of editorials lifted straight off the Web.

- **Adventure Mythbusters:** This is where the TRAIL ZONE team go online and find heroic tales and advice on Web forums and blow the stories out of the water. The program proves very successful, dispelling much of the waffle that is published on Web forums.

I had a few more sure-fire winners, including 'So You Think You Can Ride' but I'm sure you get the picture. - Lance Turnley



EARLY EXPLORERS: Triumph is the latest player in the litre-plus adventure bike class with it's new 1200 Explorer.

TRIUMPH EXPLORER LAUNCH

THE RECENT Australian Motorcycle Expo at the Gold Coast saw the local unveiling of Triumph's new Tiger 1200 Explorer adventure bike. Local reaction to the triple-cylinder British machine appeared to positive overall, signalling continuing interest in the litre-plus multi-cylinder adventure bike category, where longtime

market leader BMW is now coming under fire from Yamaha, Aprilia and now Triumph.

Triumph Australia will be staging the national launch of the well-specced Explorer 1200 in May in central Australia, so look out for a full test-ride report on the bike in our next issue.

LIQUID-COOLED BMW 1250 GS?

THERE'S been talk of a new BMW R 1300 GS for a few months but now 'official' spy photos are circulating on the Web of a new BMW R 1250 GS for 2013. The new BMW is claimed to be liquid-cooled with radiators behind air shrouds at the front of the bike. With the new Triumph Explorer and Yamaha XT1200Z Super Ténéré, things are certainly hotting up at the big adventure bike end of the market. So rest assured BMW will be looking to raise the bar with its next new Boxer powerplant. Stay tuned!



TENERE PROJECTS ON THE GO

THE Ténéré Tragics circle is close-knit and there's always an opportunity to swap parts with fellow Tragics on all-important bike builds. As someone with more than a few Ténéré projects on the go right now, I know this all too well.

So far I've scored some original 1983 tank decals and seat cover and most recently a spare XTZ750 guard from a big bloke named Moose. To secure the Super Tenere bits from Moose, I had to source a headlight lens for his XTZ750

project. A quick call to another Tragic, Paul in WA, and I had the headlight lens that Moose needed.

Meeting Moose gave me the opportunity to check out his Super Ténéré build, which he is converting into a Dakar replica complete with WR-F front forks. Er, um, I don't know how he got the name Moose but, yes, I am standing up in this photo.



Now, while other associates of mine seem to get all the good classic adventure bikes (you know who you are W!), I haven't been so lucky with keeping my resto costs to a minimum, as I recently discovered.

To make sure my 3AJ engine got the best possible attention, I put it in the hands of Simon Thomas of The Bikesmith at Blacktown. Simon worked as a Yamaha Australia technician for many years and knows classic Yamahas inside

and out. Unfortunately the former owner of my 3AJ engine allowed moisture to get in and as a result the 600cc powerplant will have to be stripped and rebuilt. The good news is that the engine will be brand new after all that and will last another 20 years. At least I know my machine is in good hands at the The Bikesmith!

OFF-ROAD EXPLORER

IMBTC REUNION

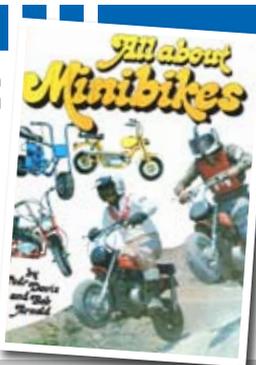
I ACTUALLY enjoy school reunions because it's a great opportunity to remind yourself why you didn't keep in touch with your old school friends.

However, minibike club reunions are a different matter altogether and on June 2, 2012, the Illawarra Mini Bike Training Club will have its 40 Year Reunion at the Liverpool Catholic Club.

I've remained friends with a few former IMBTC mates and it's only now I realise that the skills I learned then have served me well for many

years, especially when wrestling awkward big adventure bikes through difficult terrain.

If you're a former member of the Illawarra Mini Bike Training Club, you can find more details on the reunion and the club via its Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/imbtc - C U there!



CORRECTION: FENDA EXTENDA

LAST issue we goofed badly and detailed an incorrect price for the Fenda Extenda that's available from MotorradGarage.com.au. The correct price is actually \$44 so get online and check out the wide range of bikes the Fenda Extenda will fit. Apologies for any confusion caused.

▶ PRODUCT CHECKS: GOOD GEAR & GADGETS FOR THE ADVENTURE RIDER



▲ SAFARI TANKS KLR650 32 LITRE TANK

Aussie brand Safari Tanks has created a new long-range fuel tank for Kawasaki's popular KLR650. We saw the tank in development when we toured the Safari Tanks factory back in July last year. This new 32 litre Safari Tank replaces the KLR's standard 22 litre steel unit. While increasing capacity by ten litres, the Safari Tank uses the area normally taken up by the radiator shrouds to carry the extra fuel load and therefore isn't really any more bulky than the standard set-up. The tank gives the KLR650 a whopping range of 500 to 550km, which is plenty in anyone's language. The tank is available in black or translucent/clear and includes a mounting kit and fuel cap with breather hose

Retail price: \$650 **Contact:** Safari Tanks (03) 5729 5556

Web: www.safaritanks.com.au

▶ INTERPHONE F4

We've been testing the Interphone F4 with our new Strike Genius GPS. It features bike-to-bike intercom with a range of up to 500m and receives GPS instructions, mobile phones and wireless hi-fi stereo music, making long transport sections rather more bearable. The Interphone F4 Stereo pack includes both a universal boom microphone and a specific comfort microphone for full-face helmets. The F4 is very easy to use and the GPS instructions, while not perfectly clear, are easy to understand. Further features include full duplex communications, stereo speakers with automatic 'speed noise' compensation and it can pair to two mobile phones during any given session. It also has a claimed ten hours of talk time and 700 hour stand-by time but the battery is not removable. How clearly you can hear depends very much on the quality of your helmet. The helmet I use is about the industry average and I'm able to hear the GPS at highway speeds: so far, so good and worth the investment.

Retail price: The Interphone F4 on its own is \$209; the Interphone F4 Twin Head-set bundle is \$379; the bundle with the Genius GPS and Interphone F4 is \$679

Contact: Interphone 1300 792 044 **Web:** www.strike.com.au



▶ EARMOULD

It's well documented that motorcycle riding can damage your hearing just as badly as industrial noise. To help save your hearing, there are a few options available, ranging from disposable foam ear plugs, to do-it-yourself tailored ear plugs, to custom-made ear plugs. Made from a medical-grade, hypo-allergenic silicone, these ear plugs offer the ultimate in comfort because they are custom-shaped to each person's ears. This eliminates the amount of discomfort usually faced with common expanding foam ear plugs and they remain flexible and soft throughout their life-time. Earmould ear plugs are made using a syringe by a qualified provider and the plugs are virtually non-shrinkable and can be used in a variety of noise or water-related activities. They come in a special carry satchel and even if you just get the basic ear plugs, they can be easily upgraded to stereo headphones for your iPod or GPS unit. In fact, while eliminating wind noise I was still able to hear instructions from a Strike GPS through an Interphone F4 head-set. Earmould have fitting specialists all over Australia, so just check their web site for your local provider.

Retail price: \$70 (basic earplugs) **Contact:** Earmould Australia **Web:** www.earmould.com.au



▼ ADVENTUREMOTO.COM.AU V-STROM RACKS

Luggage racks are an essential piece of equipment for long distance adventure bike riders and the good news for owners of Suzuki's popular DL650 V-Strom is that AdventureMoto.com.au now offers racks for their machine. Designed specifically to suit Wolfman Expedition Dry saddle bags or Teton saddle bags, these racks offer easy mounting and strong construction to survive the most aggressive of conditions. They are shaped to work well, with the Wolfman proprietary oval-shape design with four attachment points ensuring secure mounting of your soft luggage. The kit also includes a rear cross brace for extra strength and increased load capacity. On top of this, these racks can double as utility racks to carry fuel or water



containers. They are made of welded chrome-moly steel with slotted bolt holes for simple, painless installation. High-grade nuts and bolts for mounting are supplied with the complete kit and it's all available online via the AdventureMoto.com.au online store.

Retail price: \$395 **Contact:** AdventureMoto.com.au 1300 46 66 86 **Web:** www.adventuremoto.com.au