

**CYCLE TORQUE TEST:
GEOFF BALLARD'S
A4DE WINNING WR250F**



**FRESH FROM WINNING ITS
CLASS IN THE AUSTRALIAN
FOUR DAY ENDURO,
CYCLE TORQUE GRABBED
THE CHANCE TO TEST
ONE OF THE TITLE-
WINNING BIKES...**

TEST BY MILES DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH MUIR

geoff's WINNER



IT SURPRISED no one that Geoff Ballard won his class in the A4DE. But it should. He's 45 and is racing guys 10 years younger than him (35-45 class).

One of the reasons Geoff won is a great bike, a 270cc bored-out WR250F. The other reasons are experience, fitness and attitude, but we didn't want to ride those. We wanted to ride his bike, and we thank Geoff for letting us straight after the A4DE - we didn't even wash it first.

I only needed to rotate the bars forward slightly and adjust the front brake lever (GB uses a weird finger combination to brake, which means the lever comes in a long way) to feel at home on the title-winning machine. The power is awesome; it's so easy to control the delivery it feels like cheating. The motor doesn't need to be revved like a 250 when you are riding for fun, but when you want to put in some hot laps it loves to scream. Instant throttle response comes courtesy of the modifications and extensive jetting testing.

As a taller rider I loved the high seat, and the suspension worked well, even though I'm ten kilos heavier than Geoff. The 270-kitted WR seemed to float up anything you pointed it at. It was one of those bikes

that always made you feel like you were in the zone.

The Motor

It might seem a shame to tear a brand new motor apart to up the bore, but it's sometimes necessary. Geoff sent the barrel to Electrosil (See ad page 39), the cylinder repair and big bore kit specialists. Modern coated bores can't simply be enlarged - a new coating has to be applied - and Electrosil are experts at this.

"Once the bike was back together I experimented with jetting and cams", said GB. After many variations he opted for stock cams and near standard jetting. This gave the best grunt down low, perfect for pulling up slick technical climbs without sacrificing too much top end power.

For quick jetting changes GB relocates the voltage regulator onto the other side of the bike. This allows the carburetor to be rotated easily to gain better access.

A bullet proof WR Staintune system is fitted with a noise restrictor to keep the decibels in check. A Vortex ignition is used, with ten different curves and some extra over rev. GB uses option four as his torque setting.

The intake manifold is modified with a Power Now insert which splits the venturi

to reduce intake turbulence. With a more direct flow of fuel the motor has improved throttle response. A stock air filter is fitted with the addition of some Filter Skins (mesh filter covers that can be removed separately to keep the filter clean without having to replace it as frequently). Motorex oil products are used front to back.

The Chassis

Yamaha's WR250 is a sweet handling machine which doesn't need drastic changes. A smaller YZ tank makes the WR slimmer, and a SDG unit replaces the stock seat. SDG make seats with high and standard foams (and low in some models) as well as soft and firm. GB wanted a tall seat but there were none available so he squeezed a tall CRF foam into the seat which made it a lot higher.

Up close it's not too pretty, but he loves the way it pushes him forward for improved leverage in corners. To get the bars right he fitted a Universal top clamp/bar mounts and bars. An Arc brake lever offers a buttery smooth action, flips backwards to avoid breaking in the event of a stack and a wide range of adjustment. GB claims he never needs to use the hot start on the new WRs, so he takes it off, cable and all. A WER steering damper is standard for all of Geoff's bikes and this one was no exception.

Fastway F3 pegs are fitted - they are probably the

widest pegs I have seen. The replacable screws can be adjusted in height and provide excellent grip.

Enduro riders always have tricks for quick tyre changes. GB has quick pull axle pullers and Zip Ty quick adjust blocks. Another common mod is to fit a CR style front brake line (which does not loop under the axle) and cut a hole in the standard axle guard for easy axle nut access. GB has fitted a CR style braided Goodridge line, and braking pads with standard rotors.

Geoff uses standard suspension settings - not surprising given that he is one of the team that advised Yamaha on the bike's development. Teknik Motorsport take care of servicing.

Metzeler MC5 tyres provide the grip and moose tubes avoid the chance of flattening. GB uses stock gearing on the rear with the 13-tooth on the front from the standard parts kit. A brake snake protects the rear brake lever from being bent backwards and a Fastway case saver replaces the standard countershaft sprocket guard/cover. Bark Buster Ergo hand guards are fitted with the new triple clamp mounts to avoid being rotated on the bar in a crash. Geoff doesn't use an alloy bash guard but cable ties rubber material to the lower right hand side water hoses to resist damage.

Other little changes are the

folding mirror and a little bicycle horn as race rules require.

The standard horn, radiator overflow and tail light were removed to reduce weight. The headlight assembly mounts were removed and the shroud zip tied directly to the fork legs. The glass headlight was replaced with a lighter poly carbonate item.

The Verdict.

Geoff Ballard's WR270 might be the perfect compromise between the WR250 and WR450F. You can ride the 270 all day, you don't need to overuse the clutch and gearbox, and you don't end up flapping off the back as you may on the more brutal 450.

Most riders will go faster riding a 250 than a 450, but having the extra power of Ballard's machine makes for a very rewarding ride.

Stock, Yamaha's WR enduro machines are potent forces. Modified to suit an individual they are race-winning weapons which also happen to be awesome trail bikes.

It's unlikely all of Ballard's modifications would suit everyone, but many of GB's mods make a lot of sense. Most of the parts used on the team bike can be purchased from Ballards Off Road. For more information contact (02) 4731 1210 or visit www.ballards.cc.

MODIFICATIONS

Electrosil 270 kit - Bore	\$88
Cooling	\$440
Wiesco Piston (2mm oversize)	\$277
Gasket Kit o/s	\$48.50
Vortex ignition 10 curves	\$549
Power Now, aftermarket intake manifold insert	\$199
Staintune exhaust - muffler header	\$545
Ballards carbon header heat shield	\$250
Filter skins	\$32.95
Universal top clamp	\$239
Bar mounts	\$99
Bars	\$179
ARC brake lever	\$119
Modified extra high SDG seat	\$169
Fastway F3 extra wide pegs	\$159
WER steering damper	\$599
Zip tie axle adjusters, quick axle pull	\$169
Front brake modification (CR style Goodridge line)	\$129
Metzler MCS tyres	TBA
Mousse Tubes - set approx	\$500
Brake snake	\$9.95
Bark Buster Ergo hand guards with triple clamp mounts	\$155
Fastway case saver	\$59.95
Bicycle horn fitted	
Yamaha YZ 7.5 litre tank	
Braking brake pads	
Motorex oil products	
Radiator overflow removed	
Stock tail light extension removed	