

Real riders on real world bikes

Motorcycle advertising campaigns are usually pretty impressive, appealing as they do to our emotional natures and evoking endless possibilities of escapism, new horizons and eternal youth.

For a manufacturer such as BMW Motorrad, having a sought-after product such as the legendary GS range is great for business, but continuous marketing and promotion is necessary in the light of the current economic climate, as well as ever increasing numbers of cheaper imitations of course. Many people say that the best form of advertising is 'word of mouth' endorsement, and this has certainly been the case in BMW Motorrad USA's latest print advertising campaign that shows genuine BMW owners in inspiring scenarios.

THE DIRT WASHES OFF BUT THE THRILL IS FOREVER.

Going through that creek bed I was thinking we were kidding me

It's the only real thing in a minute

I had an amazing time getting my butt - kicked on this bike. I can wait to do it again!

Spartanburg Six Test: International GS Trophy

It's an unforgettable feeling. Those first rides on that first bike. You never felt more alive. Rekindle that feeling on an R 1200 GS. It will take you anywhere and everywhere. Over asphalt, dirt roads, mountain streams, and even the steep, mud-strewn ravines of South Carolina, where we torture-tested the candidates for the 2008 GS Trophy. Ask any owner why the R 1200 GS has been called the "best bike in the world". If you can't find her, try looking in the middle of nowhere.

Your adventure begins at www.XPLORGS.com. Superbly equipped at \$16,300.

UNSTOPPABLE

Standard package includes ABS brake, heated grips and bag mounts. MSRP does not include destination charges. Final price is set by dealer. © 2005. BMW Motorrad USA, a division of BMW of North America, LLC. The BMW name and logo are registered trademarks. Photography: James Pratt, BMW Owner: Brienne Thomson

BMW Motorrad USA
R 1200 GS

Motorcycles since 1903

One of the featured riders is Brienne Thomson, who made it through to the last six during the American team selection process for the inaugural International GS Trophy event in Tunisia. The "twenty-something" dirt bike fan teaches English to international college students at San Diego State University. She currently owns a G 650 Xchallenge but is willing to ride anything – including the big R 1200 GS that she rode for the selection trials at Spartanburg in South Carolina. The picture, which is currently featuring in top US bike magazines such as *Cycle World* and *Rider*, was taken after a day of gruelling tests and challenges, and conveys a definite sense of realism, showing rider and bike in a truly authentic setting.

"This picture was taken just after our 'Spartanburg Six' team rode, pushed, pulled and carried several R 1200 GS bikes down and through a wet creek bed, over logs and in-between trees, and then – since we apparently weren't destroyed enough – all the way back again! I wasn't just exhausted in the picture – I was beat," said Brienne. "Also, as an Xchallenge rider, my technical experience on the bigger GS models was limited, to

say the least. So when I found out that we'd be riding the R 1200 GS for the Spartanburg Six judgment instead of the F 800 GS, I took it as a weightier challenge ... literally!"

Despite the physical exhaustion and having a swollen back from picking up the big GS again and again, Brienne thinks it was all worth the pain and that she would definitely go through the experience another time. Adventure is in her blood though, as is shown by her love of the 'great outdoors', counting running, mountain biking, road bike riding, skydiving, scuba diving, hiking, camping and even triathlon among her many hobbies. Brienne learnt to ride motorcycles after finishing college and within 18 months had started road racing. She started riding dirt bikes in order to improve her overall riding skills, but fell in love with it, owning a variety of smaller-capacity off-road machines before deciding on BMW's big single-cylinder G 650 Xchallenge.



"My Xchallenge has taken me through the deserts and mountains of California and to the RawHyde Ranch – BMW's outstanding dual-sport training center in Castaic, California. I love the bike's lightweight and supple 'dirtbike-esque' handling, especially compared to the larger more street oriented models. It has the motor to get up anything and the capabilities to easily handle tight, technical trails."

According to Brienne, featuring in one of the official BMW Motorrad USA print ads and seeing her image in bike magazines nationally is just "an unanticipated by-product of enjoying life" and she is looking forwards to hearing from old friends or riders who discover the advertisement while reading this month's bike magazines. Also featuring in the series adverts are American GS Trophy team members Jason Adams and

Jimmy Lewis, and there are currently plans to extend this campaign to cover the F 800 GS as well as the exciting, powerful new line of K Series bikes.



Unofficially though, many American BMW riders have been inspired by this 'real riders' ad campaign – so much so that one of them even created his own advertisement. BMW Motorrad USA liked this concept so much that they decided to make a 'real riders'

template available for other BMW owners to insert a picture of themselves on their bike, add a title of their choice and then show it the world! The response to this facility has been fantastic, according to Shahram Shiva.

“We have had both male and female riders respond, via our BMWXplor.com website and most of the entries are on GS bikes, as you’d imagine. I think this is a concept that could take off internationally though, as BMW riders have a very special bond with their motorcycles and they would be eager to create their own ads if the opportunity is provided – and especially if there is a good online venue for these ads to be displayed.”



Shahram believes that BMW riders are naturally more adventurous than other riders and that the latest advertising campaign reflects the Unstoppable nature of typical owners, who want to ride further and faster than other riders – and to more exciting places.

“I think, in the US at least, motorcyclists come to BMW because they want to experience more than just riding their bikes to a bike night, or a weekend gathering. So, typically, a BMW rider would be more interested in the world and more seriously into riding their bikes. They buy BMWs to actually use, rather than pose or just go fast for a few miles on a Sunday morning. It’s the brand for serious riders.”

