

Mission accomplished in Argentina

The BMW G 450 X success story continues, with a great debut for the sports enduro in the Summer Enduro Gesell Le Touquet in Argentina. This demanding and exhausting race – which saw about 1,000 riders compete in front of more than 70,000 fans – was an important event for BMW Motorrad Argentina.



The first Summer Enduro took place in 1992 and ever since then the race has grown in significance and prestige as manufacturers have increased the number of competitors, which has attracted record-busting crowds. The Enduro Gesell Le Touquet course includes dunes up to 40 meters high in the town of Villa Gesell and the circuit runs for approximately 10 km, with a long straight that stretches along the beach.

Competing for the first time with an 'official' team, the three riders – one of whom was Joel Smets – proved the true competitiveness of BMW's four-stroke sport enduro. Out of the 249 riders that made it to the end, Joel Smets finished in fourth place after an excellent ride, and was only three seconds behind securing a podium spot. The five-times world motocross champion has been a key figure in the development of the BMW G 450 X, having tested the bike extensively and shared his expertise as a world-class rider as part of the ongoing development process. Smets was naturally delighted with his result in South America.

"I'm very happy with my trip to Argentina and the final result was very positive, taking into account that we competed with our enduro bike against motocross bikes that have certain advantages," said Smets after the race. "This shows that the new BMW G 450 X is an excellent motorcycle, and to finish in fourth place was really special. I would love to come back next year and participate in this race again, as I had a great time and a fantastic reception from the fans. I also want to thank to all the staff from BMW Motorrad Argentina – they made me feel really welcome during my stay in this beautiful country."

Smets' team mate Franco Caimi also put in a great performance at this prestigious event. The 2006 Latin American Enduro Champion (who is also the youngest rider ever to win a gold medal in a 'Six Days' enduro) had a great ride. After falling during the first lap when another participant hit him, the young rider from Mendoza clawed his way back into the race and eventually finished in a remarkable 11th place.



The third member of the team was Andrés Memi, who is a BMW instructor at the new Enduro Park Argentina, as well as a competitor on a G 450 X in the 2009 Dakar Rally that took place in Argentina and Chile. He completed the official BMW Motorrad team line-up for this race and finished in a respectable 117th position overall and 20th in his category, out of over 70 competitors.

Although the BMW G 450 X is designed and developed for enduro-type terrains and not for motocross, such was the importance of this Latin American event that the BMW Motorrad Argentina division had no hesitations in betting on its new product and on its enduro team to take part in this unique race. The excellent performances and results achieved justify this decision, according to Martín Fritsches, manager of Argentina's BMW Motorrad division, who was delighted at the reaction to this first official participation.

"For BMW Motorrad Argentina, this has been an excellent weekend for lots of reasons," he said. "Not only were we delighted with the results of the race, where finishing in fourth and 11th place with enduro bikes was a total success – especially as these were the first two enduro motorcycles in a field of motocross bikes that made it – but also because this was the first time ever that an official team competed in Argentina.

"Furthermore, our participation attracted a considerable number of customers who could park their bikes in a dedicated area right by the team trucks. They then had the chance to follow the event from a VIP tent on the dunes, which gave a great view of the action. The presence of Joel was fantastic and highlighted the increasing importance of this event on the racing calendar."

Thousands of fans visited two big promotional and hospitality marquees that BMW Motorrad erected for the event, from where race fans could watch the action as well as obtain all the latest news and information from the German manufacturer.

