

Success in South Africa for G 450 X

The weekend of 7-8 February saw a BMW team make a successful debut with the G 450 X sport enduro at the prestigious Castrol Winterberg Enduro in South Africa. Racing in the colours of Regent Racing, local off-road star Jade Gutzeit finished on the podium on his G 450 X at this tough and testing event.



The Castrol Winterberg Enduro has developed into one of the most exhilarating enduro racing events on the South African motorsport calendar. It starts and finishes in the small Eastern Cape town of Hankey, and runs through the spectacular Winterhoek mountains that characterise the Gamtoos Valley near Port Elizabeth.

This year's Castrol Winterberg Enduro was also the first round of the 2009 South African National Enduro Championship, so it attracted a considerable entry list that included most of the top names in the sport who made their way to the Eastern Cape for this season opener that is renowned as the best event of the year.

The big news at this event of course was BMW Motorrad's participation for the first time in the South African enduro championship, with local off-road stars Jade Gutzeit and Gray Dick having made the switch to BMW and the G 450 X for the 2009 season. And it was Gutzeit, a former two-times winner of the Castrol Winterberg Enduro, who gave the BMW G 450 X its first podium finish in a national race in South Africa when he finished third overall (he was also third in the Open Class).

His team-mate, Gray Dick, was seventh overall (fourth in the Open Class) after both riders made it to the finish of the enduro, despite the extremely dry and hot conditions, as well as the tight and very dusty route, which contributed to making the 2008 Winterberg event extremely challenging for all the riders.

"Both Gray and I experienced a trouble-free event and all things considered, we had an excellent first outing," said Gutzeit after the race. "The preparation of the bike finished

only the day before this event and we did not have time to test it properly, but it survived the Winterberg Enduro and we are now looking forward to the first national off-road race on the BMW – the Ermelo Toyota 400 – at the end of the month.”



As the current national enduro championship Open Class champion, Gutzeit will compete in both the national enduro and national off-road championships on the BMW G 450 X alongside Gray Dick. Although these events will not be new to the two experienced racers, it will be a first for the new G 450 X in South Africa, which is a huge bonus for all BMW fans in the Republic.

"The bike has already proved itself in Europe, and we wanted to see what Jade and Gray could achieve on it here in South Africa," said BMW Motorrad South Africa General Manager, Lachlan Harris. "Despite the toughest conditions imaginable – the Eastern Cape is currently experiencing its worst drought with temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius – both riders and both bikes came through in good shape. We'll be hoping for more of the same throughout the season."

The 2009 Castrol Winterberg Enduro was won by Altus de Wet with Darryl Curtis second overall.