



CRAZY ABOUT MOTORBIKES



GAS GAS, A YOUNG GIRONA-BASED FIRM, HAS MANAGED TO PLACE ITS MOTORBIKES AT THE FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETS. WITH A SMALL BUT HIGHLY QUALIFIED SET-UP, THEY NOT ONLY COMPETE WITH THE SECTOR'S LARGE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES, BUT HAVE MANAGED TO BEAT THEM IN TRIAL AND ENDURO, TWO EVENTS REQUIRING A HIGH LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY.

JOSEP MARIA PIBERNAT HEAD OF PURCHASES AND PRODUCTION, GAS GAS. SPANISH AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ENDURO TEAM OFFICIAL

When a businessman, through his own efforts and with the help of his entire team, manages to sell his product everywhere and gradually increase his workforce, then he has truly fulfilled his objective. GAS GAS has

achieved this aim, because it has been growing constantly over the last few years and, especially, because it's a young motorbike firm, with less than ten years behind it, and is already a leader in trial and cross-country bikes in general.

Trial racing is a highly specialized sport in which there are constant developments and improvements. So much so that almost every year a new prototype is presented which is initially used in competitions and which is auto-



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JORDI TARRÉS, WORLD CHAMPION TRIAL RIDER

matically sold to our sporting clientele. The firm's commercial policy is tightly linked to the competition world, since trial racing is above all a sport; but it can also be a hobby, which is what allows commercial growth. All of this has made for a very aggressive policy as regards sport, something which can be seen in the fact that today's top names ride machines built by GAS GAS.

The most ambitious move was the one made at the end of 1992, when an agreement was signed with Jordi Tarrés for the 1993 world championship. The stakes were high. As well as being that season's runner-up, Tarrés was considered the best trial rider in history. Good results had been achieved with the riders signed up before then, but no important titles. Jordi Tarrés lived up to expectations and rode brilliantly everywhere. GAS GAS won the world title for individuals and teams—their first real taste of success.

The work in the two fields of competition bikes and trade bikes showed the need to keep the sporting activity separate from the purely commercial activity.

The sport side of the business requires extraordinary attention and dedication and it's therefore more practical to maintain a separate small department devoted specifically to racing and working on the constant improvements that then have to be introduced into the factory's trade bikes. Accordingly, as well as the factory at Fornells de la Selva, where there is the design and research department, the production line and the warehouse and offices, in Torelló (Barcelona) there is the best trial racing department one could hope for. Directed by Josép Rovira Paxau, the trial bikes it produces are currently the best in the world. Practically all the work on the competition bikes is done in Torelló: the design, the first prototypes, assembly, the first tests and the year-long maintenance. Furthermore, its setting in the heart of the countryside means that riders can test the bikes more easily. The GAS GAS range of trial bikes is very wide, with 50, 125, 160 and 327 cc versions. The largest machines incorporate the latest developments: water-cooling and hydraulic clutch. The whole process has been

carried out in Catalonia and is the result of years of experience and technical advances.

Exactly the same happens with the enduro bikes as with the trial bikes. The enduro racing department in Tossa de Mar (Girona) is directed by Bonny Geebelen, an expert former racing-driver whose dedication led GAS GAS to victory last year in the European Championship in this speciality, as well as comfortably dominating the Spanish championships. The Enducross bikes GAS GAS manufactures are of 50, 80 and 125 cc, and there is also a 250 cc Endutrail. At present work is in progress on several projects such as a four-speed bike and a road-bike.

The secret of the GAS GAS success story could well be the fact that Narcís Casas and Josep M. Pibernat—the firm's partners—both come from the competition world and know exactly what is needed to triumph in the sporting world. This and the wide range of collaborators and drivers of renown makes GAS GAS the team to beat today. All in all, the people at Gas Gas are genuinely crazy about bikes. ■