



Press release
December 02, 2010

BMW Motorrad GS Trophy 2010. Reflections on a great adventure.

Munich. The BMW Motorrad GS Trophy 2010 is over. An extreme test of endurance and ability on a motorcycle: ten teams, 13 nationalities, riding BMW F 800 GS some 2000km (approximately 70% off-road) in seven days, crossing three African nations (South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique), dodging lions and elephants and tackling some of the most beautiful (but challenging) terrain in the world.

The competition started at 08:15 on November 14 (after a day of preparations) and for the next seven days the riders rode 300km days, bivouacked nightly under canvas and along the way completed 12 special challenges that tested their riding skills, their strength, their mental agility and their endurance. The teams also completed three photo assignments, which were posted on Facebook for the public to vote on.

The bikes, riders, teams, even the organisers, were all pushed to their limits – and all rose to the challenge. This press release reflects on some of the experiences from the BMW Motorrad GS Trophy 2010.

British success.

Just how hard-fought the GS Trophy was came as a surprise to all. Even on the final day three teams were still very much in contention, separated by less than a handful of points.

In the end it was Team UK who overcame all. They took the most complete, most studied strategy to the event and while at the finish the margin was only one point it had been their intense level of application to every test that made the difference.

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Reflecting on seven intense days of competition, Team UK's Mark Kinnard explained, "We came into the GS Trophy with it in mind to go for the win. But we had a terrible first day, we finished fifth, and we vowed after that to come back fighting. And we did, we won the next day and went first overall and we stayed there to the end.

"It was very tight going into the last day and I recall we'd said on the final night that whatever the outcome we would still be very happy, for although winning is terrific it was the experience – the country, the friendships, the shared highs and lows – that will stay with us long after the glow of victory will fade."

Second placed Team South Africa were equally motivated from the start. Having completed possibly the most rigorous training of all the teams they had the fitness and riding skills to do the job. But they confessed they misjudged the commitment required – every test required 100% application – as Roger Kane-Berman explained, "We definitely weren't aggressive enough in the tests early on. We noticed perhaps too late that the other guys were really committed."

Team-mate Gerber Strydom was magnanimous in defeat: "It was so much fun. The British fought hard, they were in front every day, they were good riders with good team spirit and so they deserved to win. We fought hard to come back, we just managed not to, but it's been an incredible ride. We did well, we're really proud of each other and it was awesome to have fun with each other."

Equally, third-placed Team Nordic were a very talented team, but they confessed they came together as a team too late.

Team Nordic's Börre Skiaker: "We were three people from three countries [Sweden, Finland, Norway] and three different cultures and that made it a bit different for us. Perhaps our big mistake in the competition was we didn't have a strategy. I think we were missing that last part of the puzzle."

The GS Trophy 2010 – people meeting people.

With 30 competitors from 13 countries, plus 10 'embedded' journalists, not to mention the guides, the drivers and the organising staff, the GS Trophy was most certainly a multi-cultural experience. The bikes and even the riding might have felt familiar for some but the company of strangers gave the event a very





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different atmosphere. And of course, strangers became friends – you could sense in some cases life-long friends – in a very short time.

"I could say I've ridden motorcycles in places like China and Central America, and that was really cool, but this was the most diverse experience I've ever had on a motorcycle because we had people here from so many countries," explained Team USA's Bill Drago. "At first it's weird having so many people around you talking in so many languages that you don't understand, but then you get to like it, it's almost a comforting drone. And you can walk up to any of these guys and ask, 'How are you?' and they'll reply, 'Fine thanks, and you?' Because they all also speak English. it's the best of all possible worlds.

"There wasn't a single person involved in this event, be they fellow rider, doctor, driver or mechanic who didn't seem personally involved and caring for my well being and for that of every rider here. And it wasn't just a case of are you healthy, but are you happy, is there anything I can do, personally, to make this a better experience for you? BMW organised the whole event to run like clockwork yet there was no firm hand, no goading to move us along."

While the GS Trophy was a competition first and a gathering of like-minds and interests second, it was also provided an opportunity for many of the competitors to meet the communities from some remote regions of Africa for the first time. While the daily riding schedules were punishing it was obvious that every last competitor still found the time to meet and greet with the local people.

When one the youngest competitors in the event, Marco De Muri of Team Italy, was asked for his favorite moment in the GS Trophy, he didn't mention the riding, instead: "We reached this village up in the mountains on Day Four. We were stopped for a special test and we had time to meet the children from the village. They had nothing, but their smiles were amazing."

Team Nordic's Börre Skiaker was also moved by the chance connections. "It was like walking into the television. What I saw – I saw a lot of happy people, they were smiling, they were waving, they were trying to take your hand as you rode by. It's so nice to get the contact with the people, it's so real. I like that, it makes me happier and it gets me to thinking about the way we are living in Europe: you can have some question marks about what we think is important and necessary to have a good life."





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The BMW F 800 GS – 100% reliable.

All 50 BMW F 800 GS involved in the GS Trophy finished the entire 2000km course without a single mechanical breakdown. There were a few casualties, but these were the result of crash damage. Not one bike left the event for mechanical reasons. This was an aspect appreciated by the competitors – in fact quite a few asked, at the finish, if they could purchase their bikes.

Dominique Lemaire, Team Canada: “The BMW F 800 GS is a very well adapted bike for the terrain we ran through, there are so many products on the market that are dedicated and very aggressive for off-road riding, but the F 800 GS is a very nice balance for someone who likes to ride on the road, to ride gravel and likes to also ride in more harsh conditions. The power is very smooth and you can really put the traction to the ground, and the styling and the ergonomics are good also. I'd like to buy the bike I used if BMW would sell it to me!”

Guido Gluschitsch, Team Alps journalist: “The F 800 GS was the perfect partner to the riders. They were normal people from normal life, riding so good – you can't imagine that when you see them – and it was the same thing with the bike. It was the just a normal bike, yet it takes all the stones, mud and crashes. And after the crashes you could just pick it up, it always starts and you can go on.”

GS Trophy 2010 – in hi-res and hi-def.

The competition may be over but the media from the event hasn't stopped. The GS Trophy words and images resource will remain available via the BMW PressClub where you will find all the GS Trophy press releases plus hi-resolution images free for editorial purposes: www.press.bmwgroup.com

Also available from now is the 90-minute hi-definition TV footage of the GS Trophy 2010. Again, check in with the BMW PressClub for details on how to obtain the material.





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Interview with Michael Trammer GS Trophy 2010 Organiser

Alongside Tomm Wolf and Jan du Toit, Michael Trammer carried much of the burden of organising and coordinating the GS Trophy 2010. Upon his return to Munich we asked him for his reflections on what must have been a demanding undertaking.

Did the 2010 GS Trophy live up to your expectations?

MT: This event exceeded all my expectations! It was great to see how enthusiastic and well prepared the participants of the GS Trophy 2010 have been. It has been an honour for me to be a part of this community!

Logistically it must have been a huge undertaking, how pleased are you about the way it came off?

MT: I might say that I am very pleased that we had no problems at the border posts and that all of us received their equipment in time. Sometimes it was not easy but thankfully everything went smoothly.

The event was designed to be a proper rider challenge – how much of a challenge was it to deliver an event that gave the riders the chance to take the risks they wanted to take and yet retain a reasonable level of safety for all involved?

MT: That is a very good question! Indeed it is very difficult to find the right balance between demanding special tests as well as challenging routes and a reasonable level of safety. In this context it is important to say that speed was never a relevant measured value during the GS Trophy. I think given Tomm Wolf's daily briefings every participant of the GS Trophy knew very well that "this is not a race!" But Tomm's experience and consultancy was also very helpful in finding the right mix. We did everything to guarantee a high level of safety. The GS Trophy was accompanied by two doctors and five paramedics. I have to point out that I am more than happy that they had not too much work. All together we had more than 100,000 km of riding but only a few injuries which were not very serious.





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Almost immediately there was an incredible sense of goodwill and camaraderie between the riders, the organisers, in fact between everyone involved. And that stayed to the end. How much did you expect this? How much did it surprise you?

MT: This was exactly what we were striving for. We wanted to develop an event which is not only a competition between 10 different teams but more a competition for all 10 teams together. During this awesome week we all became just one big GS Trophy team. The team spirit and camaraderie was overwhelming. This was more than we could expect!

What was the 2010 GS Trophy's greatest success?

MT: The fantastic enthusiasm of its participants and the huge number of GS fans all over the world who were following the adventure via the internet.

Looking forward to the 2012 GS Trophy – what will you carry forward and what might you change?

MT: The big success of this year's GS Trophy confirmed us to continue with our concept. Of course we will analyse strengths and weaknesses, but at the moment it is too early to make any statements. But you can be sure that we start looking for a new destination for 2012 right now! We are really looking forward to continue in two years. We can hardly wait for it!





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And finally – the ultimate GS Trophy rider.

As a team event the question never officially arose, but throughout the eight days of the GS Trophy riders watched riders – techniques were analysed, skills revered, bravery applauded and endurance respected. But who was the ultimate GS Trophy rider?

To the best of our observations we can say this:

The ultimate GS Trophy rider has

the ambition of the South African

the strength of the Nordic

the mischief of the Spaniard

the assurance of the American

the passion of the Italian

the robustness of the Canadian

the coolness of the Alps

the determination of the British

the inspiration of the German

and

the heart of the Japanese.

