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# MT-07 SPECIAL

Why they're great • What goes wrong • 2018 model tested

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# MCN



## MOTOGP MADNESS

# CAL ON TOP!

Brit wins in Argentina  
to take series lead **See p4**



**PLUS**

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**ROSSI** 'I'm scared to be on track with him'  
**MARQUEZ** 'I don't care what he says'

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**£5K ADVENTURE BIKE!**

## TESTED: HONDA CRF250 RALLY

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## FIRST TEST ROYAL ENFIELD HIMALAYAN

## From India with love

So near but yet so far for the cheap and cheerful adventure bike

by JORDAN GIBBONS

**W**e first saw the Enfield Himalayan in 2015 and it showed a lot of promise. We then rode it in India, but back then it was carburetted and not destined for the UK. Fast forward three years and it's Euro4 with fuel injection, a cat converter and ABS. So how does it handle things here in Blighty?

## Rumble in the jungle

Twist the choke (no really...), prod the starter and the gentle thump of the 410cc air-cooled single sends your heart a flutter. Stand back while it warms up and it looks every inch the part – the reinforced steel frame designed by Harris Performance oozes

adventure, as does the 21in front. Even the humble little alloy panniers (£499 extra) fill you with a sense of joy at the adventures to come. Sadly, that joy soon drains away when you hit the road.

Within minutes you're wringing its neck and the gentle throbbing is replaced by terrifying clattering. On a fast A-road with the throttle twisted to the stop in fifth, I had to watch as the photographer's van pulled away with ease. A glance at the speedo showed it had topped out at an indicated 75mph.

In its defence it's vibe free, the screen keeps off the worst of the wind and the Enfield only sips at the petrol, so you can get over 50mpg. But 24.5bhp simply isn't enough when you're dicing with



Starting from cold? Bit of choke please



Gear indicator, fuel, revs and compass!



Sturdy rack boosts the practicality

So Mount Everest is this way, right? Meet Enfield's Himalayan

ROAD TEST REVISITED



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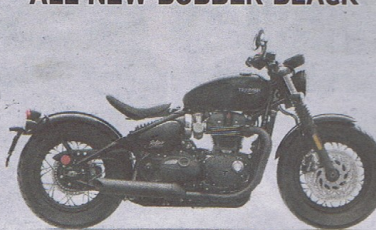
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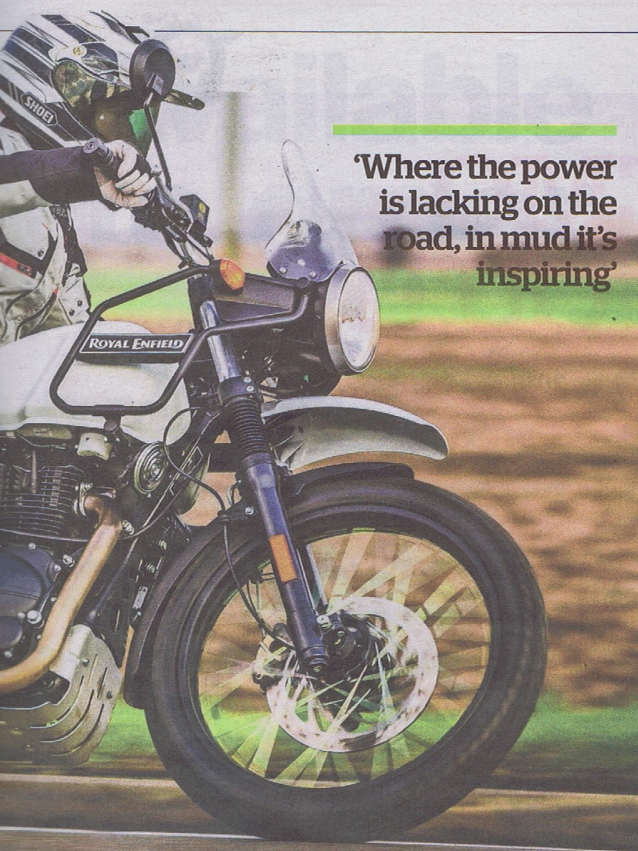
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'Where the power is lacking on the road, in mud it's inspiring'

Big fun in the dirt and it looks the part with all that mud



bigger and more powerful vehicles. There are big old gaps between the gears too, so dropping a cog for an overtake doesn't help.

B-roads highlight other problems. Firing into the first corner, I pulled the front brake only for the lever to come most of the way back. Thankfully the rear has a bit more gusto. Leave off the brakes, try to carry more corner speed and it all goes a bit loopy as the soft suspension begins to struggle. Head off-road, however, and all is forgiven.

#### Flirt with the dirt

Where the power delivery is lacking on the road, in slimy mud it's confidence inspiring. The suspension too comes into its own as the long travel (200mm front, 180mm rear) soaks up all but the biggest bumps. The steering is light (with loads of room lock-to-lock) and

the 800mm seat height is dreamy if you've ever struggled with 870mm+ adventure bikes. It has proper off-road pegs too once you unbolt the rubbers.

The brakes too are pardoned nearly all their ills but you can't turn the ABS off (unless you pull the fuse). Off-road the only thing that restricts it are the tyres – stick a set of knobbles on though (such as Mitas E-09 – £100 a pair) and you'll be flying.

At £3999 it's one of the cheapest bikes going. Compared to rivals, you save a chunk over the Suzuki V-Strom 250 (£4599), BMW G310GS (£5100) and Kawasaki Versys (£5149). Some fag packet maths suggest you could fly to India, buy a Himalayan, ride it to the UK, hang it on the wall as a souvenir and buy another to ride around on all for less than the cost of a fully-specced GS. Gets you thinking doesn't it?

## FACTS

<b>Price</b>	£3999 (£4498 as tested)
<b>Engine</b>	410cc air-cooled single
<b>Seat height</b>	800mm
<b>Suspension</b>	41mm forks; single shock, preload adjustable
<b>Brakes</b>	300mm disc with twin-piston caliper. Rear 240mm disc with single-piston caliper



Power @ 13,500rpm Torque @ 11,500rpm



Weight



Tank capacity

#### MCN VERDICT

If you want to cross a continent on bad roads – a ride into the Himalayas perhaps – then it would excel, but on fast UK roads it struggles. If it had Enfield's new 650<sup>2</sup> twin and the associated 46bhp, then it could be a serious mainstream contender.

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