

# Trials Tales

## New baby blues

It's that time of the year again:

The time when glistening new trials bikes start appearing in the garages of lucky girls and boys who have not been lumped with coal in their stockings. Now, the fact that some of these girls and boys are a little older matters not, but being older, people often have paternal and maternal tendencies. The arrival of a new bike (*some would say a new family member*) in the shed leaves the proud parent on the horns of a dilemma. This dilemma of which I speak is the one that faces all of us with a new baby (*did I say family member*); we want to show it off, but we don't want it to grow up.

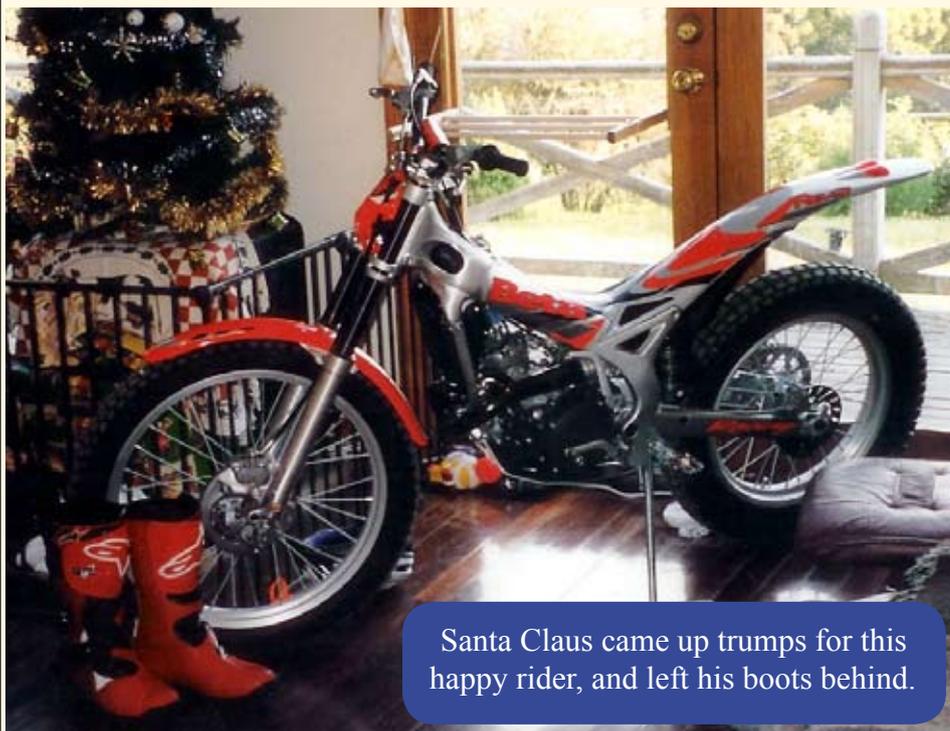
We show it off to all our friends unfortunate enough to stop by; those who don't are bombarded with emailed photo attachments. But, for a new bike to "grow up" it must get out there and be ridden.

Now the purpose of a motorbike is transport, getting me from A to B, to be exact. The real problem is that in getting from point A to point B, I run the risk of getting my new bike dirty. Maybe some see this dirt as a right of passage, but for me it is like the shattering of childhood innocence, that is, once tainted never regained.

I can be accused of spending far too much time admiring a new bike. Let's face it; the new bike is a sight to behold. Those pristine plastics and decals, the unscratched metal work, a noticeably clean chain and sprockets, are all a visual feast. The nice new square cut tyres with those little nodules of rubber intact; still retain a fresh rubbery smell.

Go on if you must, fire up that new bike. But rest assured if you do, putting petrol in the tank runs the risk of spills and spoiling the decals. That new chain, once oiled will now attract dirt like a strong magnet attracts iron filings. Unused, the chain shows flashes of gold links, like a homeboy's gilded smile; these will be lost forever under a coating of inky black oil/dust aggregate. Your boots will no doubt scuff the side covers and swingarm. If you actually use a trials bike for what it's designed for; you will most certainly bang into some rocks and more than likely score the unsullied and super-shiny bashplate. Finally, don't forget what UV rays can do to babies; keep it well covered. God forbid.

I know, I know, you want to take it to the trial and show it off, but wouldn't it be better to just leave it on the trailer?



Santa Claus came up trumps for this happy rider, and left his boots behind.

Riding it only runs the risk of a first scratch and your mates experiencing *schadenfreude* (*look it up*), smug in the knowledge it wasn't their new precious.

I suppose you're thinking here's a guy who is silly enough to write about bikes as if they are living things, from which we get all too human emotions. Well before you get too cynical in the knowledge of your own emotional detachment from machines; who of you can't say they haven't given their bikes pet names? Who can say they haven't admonished their bike for being naughty as they take a trip over the bars?

No, better not to ride your new bike at all; just leave it in the shed or even better straddling the coffee table in the lounge room, where it can be admired as the thing of beauty that it is. *Certainly makes for a good conversation piece...*