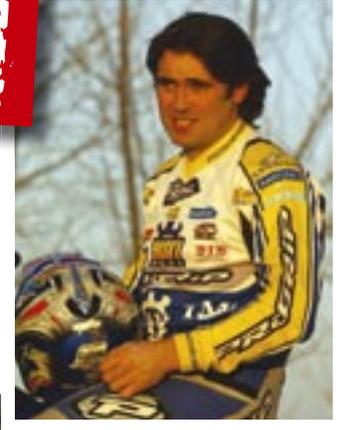




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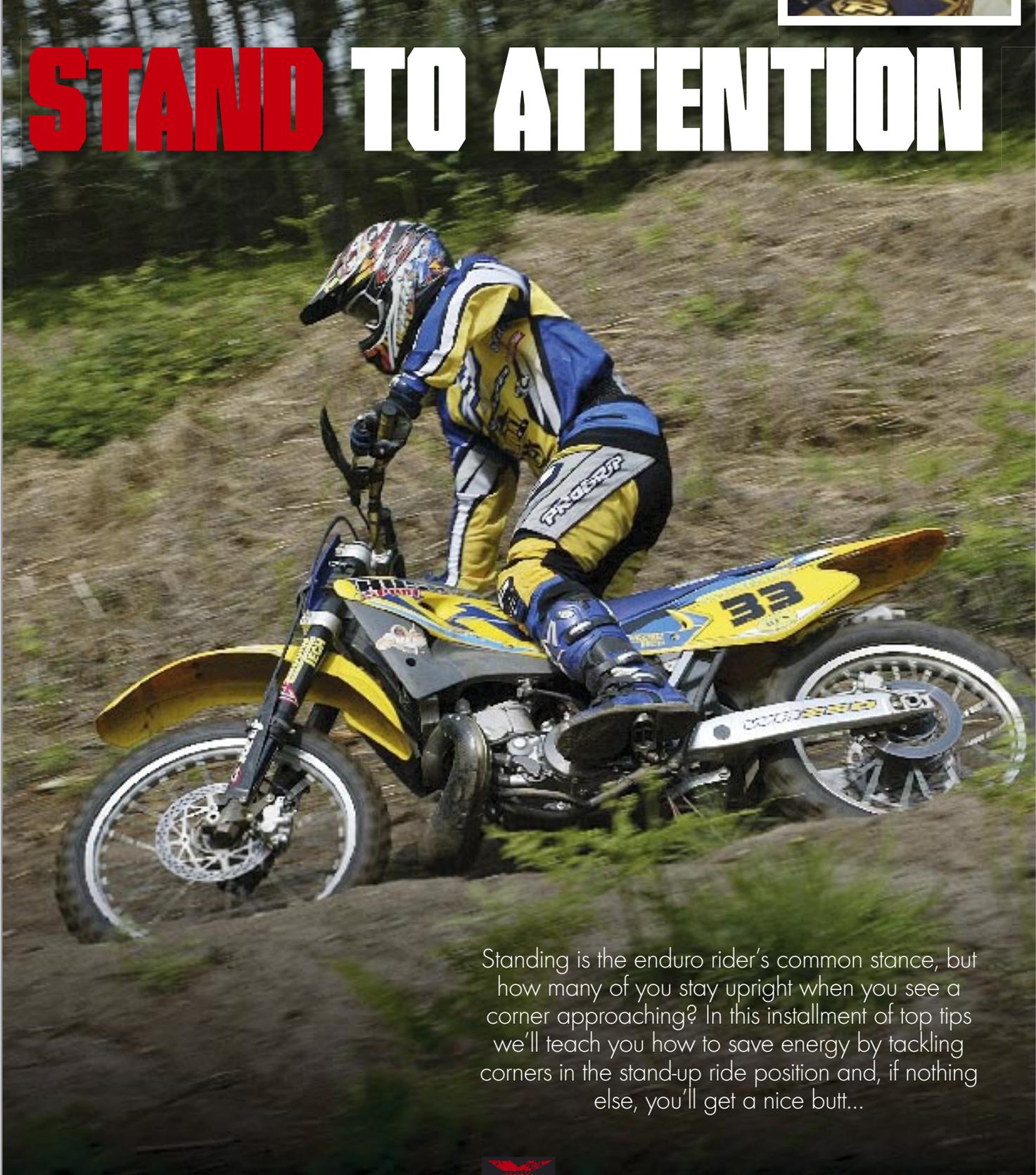
words»Chris 'Kiwi' Hockey images»John Wilkinson

#11



TOP TIPS

STAND TO ATTENTION



Standing is the enduro rider's common stance, but how many of you stay upright when you see a corner approaching? In this installment of top tips we'll teach you how to save energy by tackling corners in the stand-up ride position and, if nothing else, you'll get a nice butt...



Standing up on the going (trail) is one of the first things that the enduro newcomer must get his – or her – head around. If you’re coming from a motocross background this could take a bit of getting used to. If, however, you’re coming from a football or table tennis background, then this will just feel plain weird.

And standing up doesn’t just mean standing up, in so much as you don’t just stand there, admiring the scenery. Oh no, you’ve got to work a bit, put a little effort in. And it shouldn’t be the case that you only stand during straight line drags, then quickly sit down at the merest hint of a corner (Swanny). If you’re going to be in the saddle all day and, to be honest, that’s what enduro and trail riding is all about, then you need to conserve energy and that, my dear friends, means standing on the ‘pegs as often as possible, even in the corners.

Sounds tough eh, and a little silly no doubt? You’d think that sitting down would be less like hard work but, trust me, it isn’t. Standing up is the way forward if you plan to spend any length of time in the saddle and, what’s more, it also builds up your leg muscles, and chicks dig big thighs and firm buttocks!

Okay, so I concede: you’re not going to stand up through every corner, especially the tighter ones that necessitate more attention. But for the long sweepers, bermed or not, it’s definitely worth staying in the stand-up position.

The corner I’ve demonstrated the technique on here is a sweeper. If, say, this particular corner was on a motocross special test then you’d probably sit down to gain more speed. But if you’re not going for fast laps and are simply enjoying a Sunday ride then it’s the ideal time to save some energy (or be lazy) and remain upright.



GET ON UP

Right, where to start? Okay ... as you can see in this image I am coming into the corner in the stand-up ride position. My chin is over the handlebars and my elbows are in their strongest position, meanwhile my legs are bent ever-so-slightly and my feet are tucked into the bike so as to avoid contact with tree stumps, rogue rabbits etc. At this point it’s worth mentioning that my eyes are searching the horizon, looking far up the track for upcoming obstacles rather than down at the end of my mudguard.

STEERING WITH YOUR WEIGHT

As you’re probably aware, changing direction on a dirt bike – on a loose surface – is not a simple case of turning the handlebars, this is especially true the faster you are traveling. No, to help turn the bike on a corner like this – with a nice, sturdy berm to rail (ride around) – you have to lean the bike over so you match the angle of the berm’s face (Understand? If in doubt check out the picture of David Knight on page 20 of this issue. Okay so he’s sitting down, but you get the point). By doing this your tyres will get a much better purchase on the ground they’re trying to grip. I should also point out that it’s best to attack the low- to mid-section of a berm, as this is generally the strongest section. The top part is liable to break away, which can result in you breaking away too – in a heap.

Another tip (I’m full of them today) is to weight the ‘pegs. Now I know you’ll be doing this naturally, because you’re standing up, but I mean *really* weight the ‘pegs. Pushing your body’s bulk through the outside footpeg will force the bike into the ground, thus affording you even more grip.

You can also use your feet to help the bike turn: if it’s not turning as quickly as you’d like then weight the inside footpeg and vice versa.



HEY SMOOTHIE

Right, so that’s the art of corner entry and mid-turn heroics out of the way, now all you have to do is get on the gas and accelerate away! Not so quick sunshine. The trick to riding a berm whilst remaining in the stand-up position is to maintain steady acceleration throughout the curve. And you have to be gentle, there’s no point giving it a handful, or dropping off the gas, as you’ll tie yourself in knots before you can say: ‘that’s the fourth time I’ve landed on my arse this morning, my wife doesn’t like bruised buttocks.’

So be smooth, get all your braking done on the straight so you enter the corner relatively slowly, then gradually – smooth is the key word here – build your acceleration all the way through.

The next bit is dead easy: once you get the bike almost upright on the corner’s exit gas it up. Yep, accelerate like a mad man down the next straight and why not pull a wheelie for good measure.



TELL THEM I TAUGHT YOU

Chris Hockey (AKA Kiwi) offers one-to-one or group tuition to those willing to put their lives in his hands (only kidding – he knows his stuff does ol’Kiwi). So if you’re interested in learning from the hairy one...

CONTACT
Tel: 07971 447085
Email: chrishockey@endurotech.co.uk
Web: www.endurotech.co.uk