



**A**dventure Rider Magazine staffers have been wandering around humming, looking at watches and frowning. The arrival of the SWM Superdual seems to be taking a very long time.

After about...ooo...the 50th phone call asking for an update, the folks at SWM tried to distract us.

"We have a project bike," they chuckled down the phone. "It's an adventurised RS500R enduro model. Would you like to give that a try?"

It was the Superdual we were losing sleep over, but while we were waiting we thought we might as well go thrash someone else's bike for a while. So we said, "Yeah. Okay. Whatever."

After a day's roosting around on this partly converted enduro weapon we're just a little in awe.

### **If you build it**

The bike seen here is an ex-media unit that Mark from MRD Motorcycles in North Richmond, NSW, has been setting up. The idea was to take the enduro-ready weapon and not so much knock the edges off it, but smooth the competitive aggression to make it a little more adventure-friendly.

SWM's NSW and ACT Area Manager Bob Walters told us the background:

"The brief was to build a hard-core adventure bike that was lightweight – 112kg without fuel – that was a hoot in single trail, but would still be good on the road and fire trail," said Bob, heaving the bike back onto its wheels after a rush of blood on a forest trail. "It needed a good fuel range and had to be comfortable over long distances.

"We also wanted to use as many genuine SWM and locally sourced parts as possible."

When we rode the bike it was still a work



in progress, but holy conquer the world, Batman! It's a pearly!

### **So far**

An SWM RS500R Roof Of Africa rallye bike was the inspiration for this Australian build, and when we see the pics we can understand why. It's gorgeous.

The Aussie bike isn't up to the cosmetic stage yet, so it's not properly stickered up and buffed as it will eventually be, but so far the changes include

- ☑ A 19-litre Safari Tanks tank (Husky 510 08/09 model)
- ☑ Husky sidecovers (needed to fit the Safari tank)
- ☑ Seat Concepts seat foam and cover on a second-hand Husky TE510 seat base
- ☑ SWM Superdual screen and mounting bracket
- ☑ JT 15/45 sprockets for taller gearing (standard is 13/47)
- ☑ Force/SWM bashplate and radiator guards
- ☑ Pivot Pegz
- ☑ ROX 50mm bar risers
- ☑ Arrow muffler and FI map
- ☑ Circuit Racing fork covers/wipers
- ☑ Barkbusters

# **SWM RS500R** **Adventure**

We're being a bit playful. There is no SWM RS500R designated as an 'Adventure'. But playful is the way this bike makes a rider feel...playful in the same way a national A grader would feel entering a C-Grader's club race. It all seems so easy, and the fun is in being aggressive and watching the slower bikes fall behind and the surprised terror on the other riders' faces as you explode past.

**Above:** A slim, fast, weapon of an off-roader that thrives on being pushed hard.

**Above right:** A lightweight, hard-core adventure bike that's a hoot in single trail and still good on the road.

**Right:** An SWM Superdual screen and mounting bracket fits well and does a good job of protecting the rider.

**Far right:** ROX Risers raise the 'bars, but there's also some spacers on the upper triple clamp, so the set-up seems tall. It worked really well for stand-up riding and still felt good on the road. It'll depend on the rider, of course.





**Above:** The Force Accessories bashplate is a good idea. The bike will encourage riders to hit rough terrain.

**Below:** Don't leave home without them!

- ☑ Kenda Big Block front and rear, AND
- ☑ Kenda Tuff Tubes front and rear.

That's not a big list, really. But the result left us grinning from one side of our mud-spattered faces to the other.

### Get into it

We obviously spend far too much time on big, luxurious adventure bikes these days, because the instant we climbed on the SWM we had one of those intense flashbacks. The bike was narrow, light and our toes would only just touch the ground. Hitting the starter arced up a motor that, in stock trim, salivated at the prospect of being set free. There was no ABS or traction control to look after us, and as we blipped the throttle the bike felt like an attack dog busting to be left off the chain.

Glorious weekends from our youth were brought to instant life in the synapses of our foggy, comfort-focussed old brains. Joyful memories of sitting on razor-thin, purpose-built race bikes at motocross tracks and enduro courses around the country overwhelmed us.

They were inaccurate memories for sure, but fabulously enjoyable for all that.

The RS500R MRD has put together wasn't quite as hard-edged as a serious race bike. The seat was hard, flat and comparatively wide, the 'bars had been raised considerably and a screen promised at least some basic rider comfort.

But the bark from the Arrow pipe and the growl of the induction combined with a light-feeling and narrow bike to brighten up our day.

### Carving up

There'll be plenty of adventure riders who won't see the point, or even be able to handle, a bike like this one. Its race-bike pedigree means it's a slim, fast, weapon of an off-roader that thrives on being pushed hard.



## SWM RS500R (standard bike)

### BIKE SPECS

**Web:** [www.swmmotorcycles.com.au](http://www.swmmotorcycles.com.au).

**Recommended retail:** \$8,990.00 plus ORC.

**Engine:** Liquid-cooled, DOHC, four-valve, single-cylinder four-stroke

**Capacity:** 501cc

**Bore x Stroke:** 97mm x 67.8mm

**Transmission:** Six-speed

**Clutch:** Wet multi-plate with hydraulic control

**Ignition:** GET

**Fuel system:** Mikuni D42 EFI

**Start:** Electric

**Front suspension:** 48mm USD Kayaba fork

**Rear suspension:** Kayaba shock

**Front wheel:** 21-inch with 260mm brake disc

**Rear wheel:** 18-inch with 240mm brake disc

**Seat Height:** 963mm

**Wheelbase:** 1495mm

**Ground clearance:** 250mm

**Fuel capacity:** 7.2 litres

**Weight:** 112kg

**Warranty:** Six months parts and labour

But still, there are plenty of adventure riders who'll love it as well. Especially those looking for a trail bike that'll cover some long distance. The 19-litre tank gives a range of somewhere north of 330km depending on the rider and terrain, and the seating position and seat itself mean long road stretches are pleasant. There's some vibration makes its way to the rider for sure, but it's minimal, and the induction noise gets to be a bit of a drone after a while, but hoo-aah! When the time comes to crack that throttle open and rail a leafy berm, or dive down the inside of an unwary mate and cause him to squirt his last meal in a squidgy mess into his tweeds, this is the bike to be on.

### Being sensible

We had a lot of fun on this bike. We can't tell you how much we enjoyed it. But we're hard-core professionals and we need to tell you some of the important characteristics of the bike rather than just rave about how much fun we had.

SWM is claiming about 46 horsepower at the rear wheel with the Arrow pipe. It doesn't sound like much given the figures on today's big-capacity bikes, but this one weighs so much less than



**Above:** The inspiration for this build, an RS500R Roof Of Africa bike.

the 1200s and delivers its power in a good, strong thrust that'll take the breath away from anyone not used to this type of performance. As we said, there's no electronic aids to make a rider look good. If the rider isn't up to the challenge, he won't be riding this bike for long.

The suspension was firm, but really nice. The bike tracked true with a minimum of chatter over choppy ground and there's plenty of adjustment both ends. Handling is sharp and braking is strong.

The taller gearing gave us a little to think about.

The bike was very happy at 100kph on the road. That was at about 5200rpm. On the freeway 110kph comes up at about 5800rpm. That's mechanically very comfortable, although the bike being slender and light – unlike *Adventure Rider Magazine's* editor – meant it needed a little concentration to ride any faster.

What we asked ourselves though, was what must've it been like to ride that motor with the standard gearing? As it was the front wheel gently went skyward every time we opened the throttle, and we found ourselves working the gearbox fairly hard to enjoy the broad sweet spot of the rev range. With the standard gearing it must be a very exciting bike indeed!

### More to come

We really enjoyed this SWM. Without being intimidating it allows – and rewards – some very aggressive riding, while still being comfortable and relatively easy-going on the road.

There's a bit more to be done, though. There are plans for a Superdual cush-drive hub, pannier racks, twin-stacked headlight, twin Barrett mufflers and, of course, a custom sticker kit. The RS500R has two fuel and ignition maps in the standard ECU, so a map switch will be added to the 'bars so a rider can select a 'power' or 'economy' map, and a EJK/Bazzaz power commander will be used to customise and manage those maps.

The standard bike retails for around \$8990 plus on-roads, and has stock equipment like Kayaba fully adjustable enduro suspension front and rear, Brembo brakes, Mikuni EFI, Athena two-map ECU, a Regina chain and Afam sprockets. So it's a very sharply priced package. The bike we rode is up to roughly \$13000 on the road if an owner did the build, or \$13,990 if MRD does the build.

That's a whole lot of awesome motorcycle for the price. Now. When's that Superdual going to be here?

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