

Media information  
07 September 2022

## BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 Southeast Europe. Day 4.



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**Trials but no tribulations in the mountains.**

### Recap of Day 4.

Location: Farma Sotira, Albania

Weather: Sun, 26° dropping to 18° in the mountains

Course: 125km: Farma Sotira Loop

Terrain types: Tarmac 45km, mountain trails 125km

Tests: SP1: Farma Sotira Trial Relay, SP2: Navigation Challenge,

SP3: Albania Slow Race

Top three male teams:

1. UK, 2. South Africa, 3. Germany

Top three female teams:

1. Germany, 2. Mexico, 3. South Africa

**Farma Sotira, Albania.** With the second shortest daily distance of the event, you'd be forgiven for thinking day four of the BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 was something of a rest day. But a rest day it was not, as the day's course, a loop into the Pindus Mountains, called for serious trials skills, as the riders took to virtual goat tracks as they climbed and descended the



Media information

Date 07 September 2022

Subject BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 Southeast Europe

page 2

slopes. And then they needed their trials skills again as two of three special tests today called for superior feet-up technique.

Short day or not, it was again a dawn rising for the GS riders. They'd had quite a night 'under canvas' as the temperatures had plummeted once the sun had set last night. However, they soon warmed up once they got riding, as even the first Tarmac section was highly degraded, calling for maximum concentration. And once they hit the off-road trails they knew immediately they were in for a challenge. While the latter part of day three had felt like riding an enduro, these trails took hill climbing to a whole new level. Calling for trials type technique, today was about riding feet up in first or second gear searching for the perfect line and always for grip on the steep terrain. With every variation of surface, some pure rock, some clay and shattered limestone, some loose stone – and all at an incline that called for absolute commitment, it was an intense ride. And while the climbs on the track were intimidating enough, they were nothing as to the giant granite walls of the Pindus range that towered over the course, truly breathtaking as they rise thousands of metres from the valley floor.

The ride was also something of an ecology lesson as the trails took the riders under the canopy of the broadleaf forests that are common to the area. And just when the riders thought they might be a hundred kilometres from the nearest human influence they rode into a large goat and sheep herd travelling the self-same track as theirs. With sheep, goats, dogs, horses and herders, and of course BMW R 1250 GSs all sharing the track it was a morning traffic jam of the sort few will ever experience, quite comical as animal and GS fought for the same piece of track!

The descent from the mountain tops was no less exciting, and testing, as the GS riders found themselves fighting for control as they skittered over broken stone paths that date back to Roman times. In all it had been an intense test of their off-road riding skills, and proof as if it was needed of the R 1250 GS's versatility – and the tenacity of the Metzeler Karoo 4 tyres.

Once back at Farma Sotira the riders faced a triple header of special tests. Their first test was the Farma Sotira Trial Relay, which saw the three (or two, in the case of the female teams) riders of each team tackling a section of an extended trials course. The first tackled a stream crossing in a wood, twice riding the banks and splashing through the water; the second rider needed to deal with a series of full-lock tight turns, plus a log traverse; while the last rider



Media information  
Date 07 September 2022  
Subject BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 Southeast Europe  
page 3

dealt with a slalom course. At the end, the three reunited to load and secure the last GS onto a trailer ready to be towed away by an Ineos Grenadier.

After that, the teams tackled the Navigation Challenge, using a BMW GPS navigation unit to find a waypoint in the woods, transfer new coordinates into the GPS then race back to the start. On foot. The GS riders are almost uniformly well practiced in this art now, so it was a matter of speed to decide the winners, as accuracy was almost universal. And running in the woods, as they charged through the low branches and bushes, the riders collected probably more bruises than they have in the whole ride so far.

The last test of the day was the Albania Slow Race, the slow race being something of a GS Trophy tradition. Here, all the riders in the team ride a 100m course as slowly as they possibly can, without leaving their 1m wide lane and without putting a foot down. The team with the longest combined time wins.

The day's challenges certainly played to Team South Africa's strengths, taking the lion's share of the points in the male teams competition, closing to just one point behind the leaders, who today is again Team UK. Equally, Team Germany also took a big points haul to dislodge Team Thailand from the top three. In the female teams competition, there was less change, Team Germany continue with their strong form, while Team Mexico had a good day and have retaken the runner-up spot from Team South Africa.

Tomorrow, day five of seven, the GS riders face a 210km ride east as they head toward a new destination on the Adriatic coastline.

## Quotes:

**Esther Pinzon, Female Team Latin America:** "Today's ride was beautiful. The route was very, very technical, but very beautiful too. I made all the climbs – and I have to as I can't reach the ground! It was very entertaining, the views of the mountains were incredible, then we had the fun of meeting the goats and sheep on the trail. Today and yesterday have been my favourite so far. I have really come to like the R 1250 GS a lot – I really love the grip from the tyres, I really love the bike. I think the response from it when riding is huge, just perfect. So now I want one! I have a G 650 at home but having ridden this bike I now need this motorcycle in my life, it's so easy and enjoyable to ride."



Media information

Date 07 September 2022

Subject BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 Southeast Europe

page 4

**Adib Javanmardi, Team India:** "Today was great, we expected it to have a crazy off-roading section, but we got through it just fine, with a great team and marshal. And we got everywhere first: to the lunch spot, to the fuel station and back to the camp! We loved the technicality, there was some mud in the forest, we were ducking under branches, riding sandy cambers, it was all so technical, it was a great challenge. I think the toughest part of day for me personally was the navigation challenge, bashing through the trees and the thorn bushes I got plenty of scratches and bruises! In all, in Team India we've had a great time so far, we've come to know each other better but we love meeting all the other GS riders from around the world. Making friends for life, that's what counts. A fantastic experience so far, we just hope the next three days don't go too fast, we don't want this to end."

### **BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022**

#### **Southeast Europe.**

#### **Day 4 overall standings:**

##### **Male Teams:**

1. United Kingdom 137 points
2. South Africa 136
3. Germany 115
4. Thailand 110
4. China 2020 101
6. South Korea 89
7. Netherlands 86
8. USA 83
9. China 2022 77
10. India 75
11. Brazil 70
12. Latin America 67
13. Japan 63
14. Mexico 60
15. France 59

##### **Female Teams:**

1. Germany 187
2. Mexico 162
3. South Africa 156
4. France 146



Media information  
Date 07 September 2022  
Subject BMW Motorrad International GS Trophy 2022 Southeast Europe  
page 5

- 5. Latin America 142
- 6. Brazil 100

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The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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