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Some Common Handling Problems

I was riding the other day at De Wildt and thought about some common problems that some of you may experience.

De Wildt is interesting because you have some very rocky sections, sandy rivers and mean whoops. This demands a lot from your suspension because you need comfort for the rocks, damping for safety on the whoops and correct balance front to rear for sand, whoops and rocks.

Firstly what I recommend is check your manual and put all the suspension adjusters on standard. Especially rebound! My advice is to leave the

rebound alone, or no more than 4 clicks either side of standard if you must.

HEADSHAKE This is mostly a balance problem. It comes from the front of your bike being too low or rear of bike too high. Reasons for headshake are incorrect fork height in triple clamp or from fork and shock modifications being done incorrectly causing the fork to work too low in relation to shock height or vice versa.

Make sure if you modify your suspension valving or spring rates that front and back is done to match each other, it makes no sense softening or hardening one or the other. Both must be done simultaneously.

To reduce head shake try to raise the front of the bike. This is done by pushing the forks through the

triple clamps to raise the front of the bike. Alternatively lower the rear by reducing spring preload.

If the front wheel of the bike pushes out in corners, this is usually the opposite of the headshake scenario. Cure: lower the front by pulling forks 5-10mm through the triple clams. Alternatively raise the rear by adding preload to the shock spring. If you weigh more than 90kg you would benefit from harder springs because you would have to add too much preload to obtain the correct height at the rear. This is one reason why choosing the springs for your weight is critical. Usually if you need to change shock spring you would also change the fork spring to keep the bike balance correct.

Next Month we will continue with Kicking at the rear and harshness on the fork with a few other ideas and tips.