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# TRAIL



The magazine of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways

JUNE 2012 No. 406 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON



# A FLAWLESS RIDE ON ANY TERRAIN.



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# IMPORTANT TRF EXECUTIVE

Sunday 22 July 2012, 10.00 am

The Heritage Motor Centre,  
Banbury Road, Gaydon,  
Warwickshire CV35 0BJ.  
Tel: 01926 641 188

This is your opportunity to influence the management of the TRF. Since this is the last meeting before the AGM, we would like to discuss any proposals for constitutional change at the meeting.

Please make sure your group is represented. If you don't belong to a group you are also welcome to join the meeting.

The Old Ford Rally will be held at the museum on the same day. So:

- You will need to tell security that you are attending the Trail Riders Fellowship meeting.
- You will need to be on site by 9:30 if you wish to park near the meeting room.
- Security may ask you to park in the top car park and you will have to walk across the site to the museum building where the meeting is held.

Polly Cody,  
TRF Secretary



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**RUN REPORTS**  
**RIGHTS OF WAY • NOTICES**  
**BIKE & RIDING GEAR REVIEWS**  
**COVER PHOTOS**  
**YOUR VIEWS ON TRAIL RIDING**  
**RELATED TOPICS**  
*or anything you feel  
would be interesting*

## COVER PHOTO:

*from Dick Whitehouse*  
Wales Coast to Coast.  
(see page 7 for article)

**COPY DEADLINE:**  
**1st Tuesday of the Month**

All contributions to THE EDITOR  
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BMF Discount Code 2012: TRF12A231

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## STATIONERY & LEAFLETS

Keepers of Stationery:	<b>Debbie Hutchinson</b>	Leaflets & Membership Forms
	<b>Fred Ellison</b>	Letterheads & Compliments Slips
Display Equipment:	<b>Leo Crone</b>	01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.) Display boards held at Ut 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 2RR

## REGIONAL RoW ADVISORS

Wales & West Midlands	<b>Tim Stevens</b>	01547 529946 <a href="mailto:Offa's Road, Knighton LD7 1ES">Offa's Road, Knighton LD7 1ES</a>
South & South West	<b>Dave Tilbury</b>	See above for contact details
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East Midlands	<b>Robin Hickin</b>	See above for contact details

## TRAIL MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

**Display Ads:** For Advertising Rates please contact Fred Ellison, 01254 823893 [editor@trf.org.uk](mailto:editor@trf.org.uk)  
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**ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for** - £1 per line, £5 minimum. Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 [editor@trf.org.uk](mailto:editor@trf.org.uk)

## NOTICE BOARD

### ESSEX CHANGE OF VENUE

Group meetings will now be held at a different venue,  
The Wheatsheaf in Maldon Road, Hatfield Peveral, Essex.



### THE GREAT LODDON VALE RIDEOUT EXCHANGE

The Loddon Vale group are looking to build relationships with other TRF groups for a rideout exchange. We would be happy to lead your group around our area in exchange for a reciprocal arrangement for our group.

By building up stronger relationships between groups we can join forces for campaigning against lane closures as well as enjoying riding in new areas.

**For more information please contact Mike Rendall: [forum@lvtrf.co.uk](mailto:forum@lvtrf.co.uk)**

Loddon Vale Trail Riders Fellowship: Riding, conserving and enjoying the green lanes of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Surrey. <http://www.lvtrf.co.uk>

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Northumbria TRF Forest Ride 2012** Saturday 7th July 2012. For further information please ring Steven or Nic on 07841 116749 or 07940 133871.

**BMF Kelso Bikefest** Saturday 7th - Sunday 8th July 2012. Borders Union Showground, Kelso.

**TRF Executive Meeting** 10.00 am Sunday 22nd July 2012. Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon.

**Teesside & North Yorkshire TRF Forest & Heather Trail Riding Weekend** Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th August 2012.

For further information contact Richard 07834 632040 or visit [www.nytrf.co.uk](http://www.nytrf.co.uk)

**BMF Tailend Show** Saturday 15th - Sunday 16th September 2012. East of England Showground, Peterborough.

### MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS LISTED

Send any details to The Editor [editor@trf.org.uk](mailto:editor@trf.org.uk),  
Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe, BB7 9DG.

# Take a Spade to it!!

After the wettest April ever many of the lanes in North Yorkshire have flooded up and puddled up.

All the situation requires is a little spade work to improve the situation for riders and walkers.

The debris, from wash down, has clogged up many a drainage channel. The wet ground soon chews up and becomes unsightly. The main idea is to make sure there is a steep enough or wide enough run off area so the channel does not fill up with debris for at least six months.

So now is your chance to show you do care for these lanes.

You do not have to be organised, if you know a lane in need of some care and attention, and you have a couple of spare hours, take a spade to it.

It is also good PR, as the locals see the product of your labours instead of mud and ruts.

We spoke to several walkers during this foray and they were impressed. Not to mention "putting the World to Rights" in passing.

The shot is of Craig and Young Ralph getting stuck in on a fine day for exercise and banter. Thanks lads.

John Robinson, T&NYTRF Group.

# CCM230

In response to last month's article from a Devon rider. I bought one of these CCM 230 bikes about a year ago. Second hand with only 1500 road miles on it, and cheap as well. No problems with it really. Fitted the usual things like a bash plate, handguards, a ring chain etc. Easy bike to ride - ideal for learners, daughter, girlfriend or if I'm feeling lazy or tired. Goes anywhere, but not very quickly. May not be so good in very heavy boggy stuff as it has very little power, but so far never been stuck or broken down. Very heavy steel wheels - and this affects the front

end a bit. Also the prop stand needs the John Mills Mod (a length of re-bar welded to it) as it's made from soft steel. The engine (in mine anyway) is not the same as the Honda 230. It's an older design and made in China of course. Plastics seem ok, though the decals have washed off. Here is a photo of it looking very clean at Derwen Cross last year.

Hugh, N.Wales.



## Cambridge TRF at the BMF SHOW

At the January Executive Meeting we volunteered to run this year's BMF on behalf of the TRF. It was decided that this year it would be better if the main stand was positioned in one of the main thoroughfares and we ended up on the east side of the Arena very close to some of the main trade stalls. In my view, a pretty good position. We also thought that it might be a good idea to book a club pitch as this would provide an area we could all socialize and give a few extra "free Tickets".

When we arrived on Friday we were pleased to find that the main stand was well positioned and had enough space to park our caravans. So Friday evening we began to set up the main display tents and position our vans. Jack Knight as TRF Marketing Director has done a good job of collecting some new kit making this year's setup much easier.

There are three tents; 6 x 3, 4 x 3 and 3 x 3 m which we set in an L shape to one side of the pitch. Our caravans were placed behind with a courtyard for a living area. Early Saturday morning we began setting up and we were ready for action by the time the show started. On the stand we had a selection of bikes (not

a single KTM) and I suppose pride of place went to the Oldies.....DT 125 and 175 of Tony and Roy and News' SP. We had a good selection of trail bikes with an XR 250, Scorpa T ride, Husaberg, XT 125 and a Honda 230.

Our first member was signed up within the first 20 minutes and we were to sign up about 30 more over the course of the weekend. Like last year we had a lot of interest and the stand layout made it easy for people to come in and have a look.

Only four of us camped overnight. We had a great BBQ and moseyed on over to the entertainment where it was rude not have a drink or two.

The following day we made some changes to the layout of the stand making it even more open to the punters. We had Tony's new GSA on the stand (soon to play a pivotal role in the proceedings) and 'Approximately Gordon's' battle damaged 990 undergoing repairs during the day. This year we decide to join the parade and Barbara made the arrangements. We attached a TRF flag to Tony's GSA and prepared to parade. Barbara told me that as late entrants we were to join on the end of the

parade. I decided that she meant the front end so, as Tony did not want to ride, I didn't need to be asked twice and inserted us on the front end behind the Blood Bikes. So, Cambs. TRF were right at the front for all to see.....brilliant. We also got the chance to explain a bit about ourselves when interviewed by the Show Compere.

The crowning glory for us was then to have

been judged as being the second best, out of 85, stand of the show in the National Single Group category, after the Ducati club. This was presented later by the BMF to Jack who should take a lot of the credit as well as all those from the Cambs. TRF who helped.

Well done to you all.

Mike Irving  
Cambridge TRF Chairman

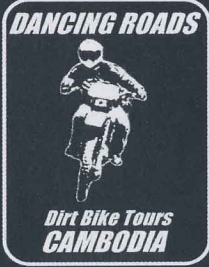


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# WALES

## Coast 2 Coast with a hint of Dakar!

It's not every day you get to spend 9 or 10 hours trail riding with not one, but two, Dakar finishers so when an email dropped into the inbox suggesting I might like six such days with Black Desert Training's Coast 2 Coast Tour of Wales I was up for the challenge.

And a challenge it was too; I'm writing this on the seventh day amid the good natured jibes of wife and kids who are enquiring how much I got paid to spend the previous six acquiring some spectacular bruises and learning to walk like John Wayne fresh off his horse!

New to trail riding just 3 years ago after a few decades of road bike commuting I have family commitments at weekends and a shift pattern that makes regular riding with mates a no-go. I spend my time bumbling alone around the lanes of Northamptonshire, Leicestershire & Cambridgeshire on my trusty TTR250.

For the wilder, rockier and more challenging trail experiences I have gone down the path of paying for the pleasure, and pain, of riding in places I don't have the mechanical or riding ability to go alone.

Aforementioned Dakar finishers are Tamsin Jones and Craig Bounds, who are based near Merthyr Tydfil, and it was there on a Friday morning that a disparate bunch of riders from all over the UK with vastly different trail



experience met for the first time.

The Dakar entrant for next year who was checking out camping gear & clothing in real (wet Wales type) use, the enduro rider, the Hare 'n' Hounds guy, the Trans American veteran and the young lady about to give up her banking job and 'do a Lois' on a DRZ400.

Craig's son Sam and old mate Mike were the support crew with a van and trailer full of our kit and camping gear. After a day's riding there is no finer sight than Mike holding out a bottle of Budweiser as he assesses the latest damage the hired DRZ has acquired at my hands.

Life, and Trail, is too short to give you a blow by blow account of every lane on each day but if I tell you the places we camped then you can be assured we rode every worthwhile lane in each vicinity.

The first day saw us head down - on trails of course - to the sand at Port Talbot before turning north and finishing with an impressively flooded Strata Florida before pitching camp in the grounds of the Red Lion, in Pontrhydfendigaid.

Recounting tales of the day's events, minor offs and bog-extractions over a few pints in front of an open fire was a great way to cement the bonds that had already formed over the day.

The second day saw us camped on the front at Barmouth after a day that included Happy Valley and many other lovely trails in bright sunshine.

The third day began with a glorious loop around Barmouth with some 'don't look down' moments on trails that took the breath away - sea views one moment and steep rocky descents into wilderness the next.

That evening saw us BBQing near Llandudno after enjoying stunning views of the Great Orme from Conwy Mountain having ridden through Snowdonia that afternoon.

On Day 4 we rode to Llangollen and then on to Llanfair Caereinion via the Berwyn range and some fine open moorland riding as we dodged in and out of England and Wales.

It was my misfortune to drown my bike in a bottomless pit masquerading as a puddle this day but as usual the impressive Craig and Tamsin dealt with it efficiently and with the good humour that the numpty rider appreciates. It's bad enough that you've done it; you know you're a dope and you really don't need to be made to feel any worse for holding up your new found mates.

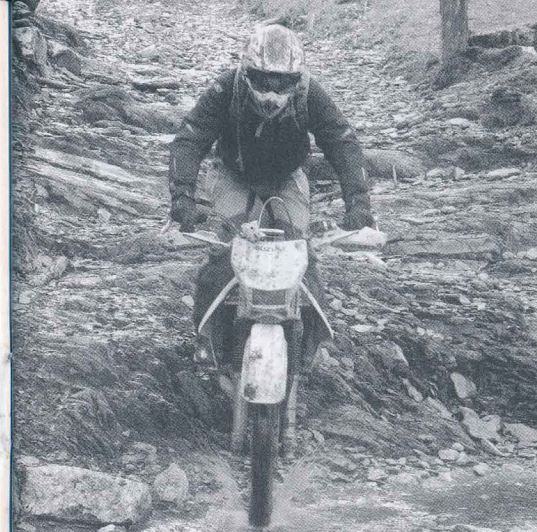
That evening in the superb Goat Hotel in Llanfair I celebrated a shared birthday with another of our little band - I can't remember the last time anybody sang Happy Birthday to me, let alone getting a cake with candles to

blow out....chuffed I was.

Day 5 saw me act my shoe size rather than my newly acquired 55 years on this planet when a simple photo opportunity turned into a potential disaster and narrowly avoiding the ignominy of taking out one of the world's premier lady riders along with two expensive trail bikes, before depositing myself helmet first into the bank of a ditch.

An hour or two later and I was on my backside again with the bike doing a triple pike with a couple of pirouettes before bouncing back onto me as gravity brought it down the hill I had narrowly failed to breast.

It was then that I realised that daily exhaustion was having a serious cumulative effect and resolved to find the mental strength to regain & maintain control - a big part of the 'challenge'



that this Coast to Coast threw at me personally. After my amateur aerobatics the day saw us pitching up on the banks of the Wye at Builth Wells and another top notch BBQ with more soothing Budweiser (other beers are available).

All week long the prospect of a final day trail had been joked about but when, on the afternoon of Day 6, you are completely exhausted and gazing through the rain at a descent featuring rock steps of a magnitude I am not sure I could walk up, it is one of those moments when you feel humble, hopeful and hellishly grateful you've got Tamsin and Craig either side of you with guidance and encouragement.....apart from a couple of

little step-aways I got myself and the poor old DRZ down without incident.

Make no mistake, this was a tough trip and even the best of the paying riders was feeling the combination of long days, heavy duty trails and camping. So of course, I wasn't the only rider providing moments to embroider pub tales about for years to come, the only thing stopping rider and DRZ plunging 400 feet after a cornering misjudgement was a tangle of briars about 20 feet down.....nice view though!

We had good fortune to form a strong group that all got on from day one; even better fortune to be led by Tamsin and Craig who whilst obviously in charge, fostered an atmosphere where I felt like I was on a holiday with mates. ....and the weather was pretty kind to us too.

I've been on a few paid trips in the UK and in Europe with fairly mixed feelings but, to be honest I can't think of a single negative to say about the entire 6 days and I'm sufficiently impressed with Black Desert Training that I will be forking out some more hard-earned on some 1-2-1 riding along with some trail-fix tuition.

In short, if they have any spaces left for their August Coast 2 Coast trip, go for it!

Dick Whitehouse  
Kettering, Northamptonshire



# TRF Open Evening at Premier Bikes, Didcot

The aim of the evening was to promote the Oxford TRF Group in particular, and the TRF in general, to riders who may not be already aware of the TRF and those who were aware but had yet to join the TRF for whatever reason. As Premier Bikes are the only significant dealership in the area offering the bikes and gear we're interested in, it made sense to utilise both their premises and customer database to reach out those in need of education.

The majority of the pre-planning was undertaken by Adrian Allen, Martin Smith, and Patrick Robinson with assistance from Bill McIntyre, Jane-Marie Smith, Manuela, and myself. The structure of the evening was as follows:

**Andy Valentine (Premier Bikes):** after welcoming us all with a generous spread of

food and drink, Andy spoke on the background of Premier and its staff, the differences between the various models of KTM, the differences between the enduro and motocross bikes, basic bike security and the range of gear they offered.

**Martin Smith:** provided a well worded presentation on the roots, aims and basic guiding principles of the TRF, specifically what the TRF does and does not do, with the underlying message being that if you want to legally trail ride in the UK in the future, then you really need to join the TRF to help ensure you're able to do so. Martin had also worked exceptionally hard on a slick video presentation that may have media types knocking on his door.

**Steve Pickford:** I gave a brief outline on my biking history and provided a guide explaining basic trail bike preparation and, for those new to trail riding, how the care of a trail bike can differ to that of a road bike re: chain tension and tyre pressure etc. I also discussed what tools and spares to carry with you on the trails and the importance of wearing appropriate gear and keeping yourself hydrated regardless of the climate.

**Manuela Beis:** gave a more in-depth overview of the Oxford TRF group, when and where we meet, our steadily growing membership, our excellent newsletter (which is the envy of other TRF groups) prior to encouraging people to join that evening at a discounted rate.

We then watched a selection of trail riding videos put together by **Jane-Marie Smith** which went down very well. As Martin recently bought Jane-Marie a 690 Enduro, I believe that he may have had a say in the video compilation put together by Jane-Marie, as there were none of him falling off.

Questions raised by the guests were answered by both ourselves and Andy and his team. We all then mingled with the guests, promoting the TRF and Premier Bikes, answering additional queries on the bikes and riding gear that Premier had on display plus trail riding in general. Names were also taken for those interested in a half day trail ride on Sunday 1st April; I believe that we have six names in addition to those of us who will be taking part. I think there were about 30 people in attendance which is good for a first time event. We signed up several new members for the Oxford Group plus another that I've put in contact with Mike Rendall of Loddon Vale TRF, as he hails from Reading.

Overall I think the evening can be considered a success. I learnt that my public speaking skills could do with a polish, we attracted new members with the possibility of more to come

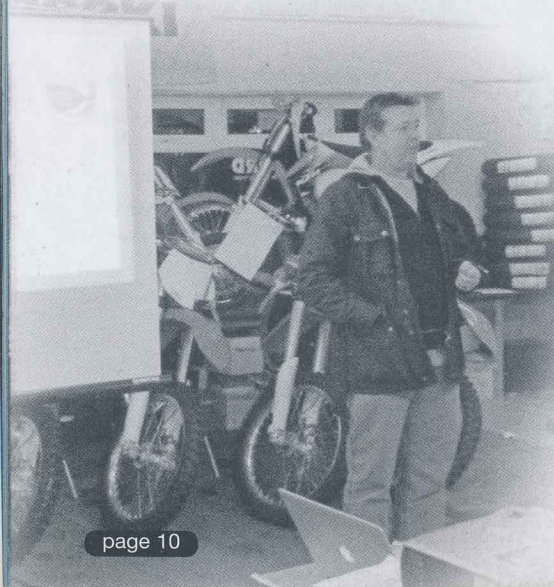
and that Premier Bikes will gain business from the evening, which in the long term is good for all of us, as we are not exactly spoilt for choice for trail bike and enduro-specific dealerships in the Thames Valley. I believe that Premier are looking to join the TRF themselves as a business, which will hopefully mean a steady influx of new members via their customer base.

In addition to those who spoke, I'd like to thank Patrick Robinson for liaising with Premier, Bill McIntyre for his thoughts and ideas and Jane-Marie for the laptop/projector and the videos. Finally, a big thank you to all at Premier Bikes for hosting the evening and without whose support, I don't think the event would have happened at all.

Steve Pickford

(Photos: Manuela Beis)

*Footnote from our esteemed chairman Chris Blomfield: "I was speaking with Andy Valentine at Premier Bikes whom I have known for many years and I asked him for his views on the evening as a whole. Andy's comment was he thought the evening was a success and that the presentations from all involved were very professional."*



# ADV Riders 2012

## March Moon Rally

Doesn't seem that long ago that a fella called 'Timp'o' contacted the Devon TRF group asking for a full weeks riding, Hah, no one can do that ...can they...

Well Timp'o stuck it for a full week in Devon; with us working in relays trying to ensure he got 'enough' riding. And once you've ridden with him, you realise he's a bit 'special'. Not just in his riding ability but in what catches his interest as we ride and the unspoken depths that occasionally emerge.

So when we got an opportunity to be shown round Timp'o's patch, we were totally blown away. Why does he want to ride those tame green lanes in Devon?? And if ever any of us get an invitation for a Timp'o organised event, WE GO!

Timp'o seems to organise a lot of his gatherings through the ADV list. ADV is a worldwide forum for adventure riders and, while every UK ADV rider I've met is a TRF member, its influence goes around the world - narrowed down to the European area - <http://www.advriders.com/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=31>

I wrecked a couple of ligaments in my left knee on the climb up the Grolch at last Mays ADV-HAF event, (HAF= hard as...). Allegedly one of the hardest. Obviously not my fault but a totally unsuitable rear tyre, only snag being everyone else 'oop north' seems to love the chunky CO2, while us Devon boys love our Pirelli MT43 trials tyre. So a slow mend but good enough to escort Timp'o and a group of ADV riders round Devon in September 2011 and finally a rematch 'oop north', this time with the mighty CO2 part worn and only 10 psi, oh and a bit of practice on some greasy Devon lanes in preparation for the March Moon Rally.

Invitation only and, as a result of previous years, lots wanting to attend. The numbers fluctuated and hints trickled down that with 70 or more riders attending, it wouldn't offend if less came up from Devon. So come the fateful weekend, it was Jolly Roger (Hamster), Clarkey, Andy Charlton and me representing the pasty eaters.

Hamster and Clarkey got to the amazing Green Inn venue, about 10 miles into the hills

beyond Oswestry, early enough on the Friday to have a little potter around, but the real men did a full day's work then packed and travelled with no stops, apart from stopping briefly outside No. 3 Acacia Avenue, Oswestry and wondering where the party was. Obviously the sat navs fault, but we forgave her when she eventually delivered us to the venue at 10.15 pm.

And immediately it was apparent that we were in for a great time as the craic in the pub was already in full flow and so many old friends to say hello to, plus the chance to get to know a few more. But who was the Scouser who was sat by the neat little bbq fire under that awesome tree around midnight, he was outrageously good at takin the mickey and things only seemed to get a bit out of hand, when he poured his remaining drink INTO his pants.

Hotel Del Scudo turned out to be a bit chilly on Friday night and me 'n Andy C had little sleep as a result. Hah, we didn't need sleep did we? Up at 7.30 and smugly brewing a warm cuppa, when I noticed everyone coming out of the Pub with a steaming mug, so we ended up having 4 cups of hot liquid to start the day.

It was cold and a bit foggy so we put everything on and wondered how everyone seemed to know who they were riding with, as there were so many people and bikes milling around, plus several non riders who just wanted to 'be there'. Groups of riders from Belgium and Ireland and a splendid contingent of 'Dirty Girls' too. The four Devon boys, local rider Gareth and Timp'o's apprentice Joel were escorted off the premises by run leader Timp'o. Wow! How did we get to be in his group?

This part of Wales is trail riding heaven to us and while there are some trails that feel a bit like home, most are quite different and more, errr, Welsh, bigger, steeper valleys and bigger views generally. As ever, the trails just flowed

by and everyone in the group seemed able to keep up, no matter how difficult the going and as the fog lifted we all found ourselves shedding layers, or in Joel's case finally warming up.

The totally unexpected bonus of Saturday was to find ourselves caught up in a Classic car rally deep in a Welsh Forest and be able to watch, hear and feel some serious old metal going through a snaking section of forest track. Turned out this unexpected bonus stopped us from testing the CO2 in some serious mud. Damn! Fantastic lunch stop at a shop/garage near Lake Vwerny and a real challenge to get going, as it was sooo cool just sitting there, eating an ice cream and watching the world pass by.

Brew up, change and more talking garbage had us eventually in the bar with everyone talking loudly and at the same time, while poor 'Basil Faulty' tried desperately to work his cunning 5 stage catering plan - Book in to eat, Choose from menu, Book a time to eat, Pay before you eat - but not at the bar till, Muster and eat. Devon Group of the Trail Riders Fellowship Monthly Meet: The Dolphin Hotel, Bovey Tracey 2nd Tuesday of the Month 8pm

Just too funny watching him, close to meltdown, as he tried to herd a bunch of renegades who generally do not respond well to being told what to do. "Don't talk to the waitresses, its distracting them" whose gonna tell poor Basil.

Quite how we ended up in the 8.30 eating slot with most of the 'naughty corner' crew baffles me, as I was hoping for some quiet refined reflection over a glass of mulled wine. What we got was continuous max volume banter, especially when the food finally rocked up. Just too much fun and poor old Basil looking a bit grey and totally washed up. He did it though. Fair play!

And where was Joel that fit teenage



apprentice, who regularly competes in Enduro? He fell asleep immediately after doing his 6.00 eating slot and didn't wake for another 14 hours ..... Heh

As a result of our previous night's lack of sleep we took a different approach. I guess 'composting' might describe it, as we piled everything that wasn't wet or muddy on top of the general sleeping area and fitted ear plugs to reduce the volume of snoring, (not me obviously) and the cooling fan for the beer cellar, that we were parked beside.

Day 2 arrived ahead of us and promptly confused us to bits by stealing an hour. So less chillin time.

Hamster, due to his recent shoulder op, had managed to get himself upgraded to 'Dirty Girl' and was replaced by Mike from Reading. Timpo talked in terms of an easier day, as his previous days 'OBE' had caused him some discomfort in his shoulder and possibly a 4.00 finish.

It quickly became apparent that there was no lessening and that we should keep moving and with the early morning mist quickly lifting we soon warmed up and enjoyed some fantastic lanes and views as we worked our way towards Llangollen.

The steep wet rocky climb up Allt Y Badi was interesting as it was a real test for me and the Mitas CO2 rear tyre. None of the careful line picking that the MT43 allows just commitment and carrying speed, as grip is considerably reduced when the tyre is wet. Just follow Timpo then - easy enough.

More fantastic lanes and a dead end climb that, once again, I only completed because I hung onto Timpo's shirt tails, otherwise I would never have got across the substantial drainage ditch and would have lost momentum. Followed by lunch in a lovely village, a shop that reminded me of Royston Vaysey's shop in

'The League of Gentlemen' and a pub opposite, where Andy C ordered tea and coffee for everyone.

A large group of ramblers turned up and sat on the village green, all with their obligatory lunch boxes and we chatted to some of em, who seemed quite friendly but conversation stopped when the waitress brought out our hot drinks from the pub and quickly turned to who should return the cups when we were finished. only to have her turn up to collect the empties and offer to return with a top up! Heh, of course we all needed a 4th brew and another discussion about whether we should wait for her to collect the empties again or someone return the tray.

The riding after lunch took us to some of the very best trails I have ever ridden. Yeah the weather was perfect, so visibility was as good as it gets but there's something I cannot fully describe that just blows me away on these special trails. It's an incredibly powerful emotional experience to be climbing up a mountain pass with nothing manmade in sight, just bike, trail and breathtaking desolation in every direction. It's a real Zen thing and only happens in places like the Wayfarers .....

Ello, my name is Noel and I am a mountain pass addict .... And I'm not ready to give it up.

Sorry where was I? Oh yeah the two strokes both played up in deepish water at different times and had to be dewatered but were fairly easy to sort out...Oh dear, did someone mention water?

Ok. I asked Timpo if we could finish on a wet one and possibly clean up bikes n boots a bit. He said he would do what he could and took us to a lovely little ford about 2 miles from base camp. I rolled into the 6" deep water, got off the bike, put it onto the side stand, leaned it over and spun the rear wheel to demonstrate the 'Irish Bike Wash' and invited Clarkey to roll his bike into the water.

The front of the bike was quickly cleaned and he moved along to wash the left side but ended up beside the water wall, rather than in it. It seemed like a simple enough task to rotate my bike on the prop stand ..... with the rear wheel still off the ground and turning ..... no sooner had the thoughts 'loose, round, slippery rock' flashed up, they were followed by 'so this is what it feels like when you pour beer down your pants' then, 'oh goody, no need to worry about stopping the bike engine, its stopped itself'

Un \*\*\*\*\* believable! I've drowned my bike whilst parked and on its side stand and I'm lying on my back in 6" of water! It was a while before anyone could help me, because they were too busy laughing and I couldn't do anything but laugh at the incongruity of my new situation.

Once again ace wingman Andy C took charge of the dewatering whilst I broke out the amazingly still dry oatmeal cookies I had saved for an afternoon stop. He showed us how to rock the valves open with the bike in gear and stood on its tail, until a slug of water dropped out of the air box, indicating the engine had released water through the inlet valves. Kick-start cranking ok, let's try the leccy start. Yup instant start and no spluttering. Bloody lucky I reckon. Probably only took 10 minutes and way quicker than seat off, tank off, plug out.

A short run back to base and I could hardly ride for laughing and by the time I had parked my bike, the bike wash story had travelled round camp!

Now because I'm not the best at run leading or spannering (always got plenty of helpful advice though), it seems only right that I compensate in other ways and so I consider it a privilege to be gate monkey. It also gives me an excuse to ride close to our beloved leader whoever it might be and see what line they

choose, oh yeah and the max number of helpers if it all goes a bit Pete Tong, cos another thing I'm not very good at is pushing and pulling bikes, (i.e. my bike), up steep gradients.

So gate monkey for me. But after the first few hundred or so gates, I found it increasingly difficult to lift my right leg and stupidly, do not know how to get on or off a bike using the other leg. Even after moaning about it and being told to hang back and let others do gates, I still had to do it. Head n heart shouts 'yeah, gate, its mine!' muscle whispers, eeerrr, I say old chap, give it a rest would you?

And as I sit here a week later with typing fingers fully recovered, I'm still not sorted. Perhaps I should jettison the mx pants and lightweight Gore-Tex leggings and try some Lycra or maybe something really baggy with helium pouches, clearly some serious research is needed.

My only other complaint was that there just wasn't enough time to chat and get to meet some of the new faces or even really catch up with old buddies but this has to be balanced against riding time and there's never enough of that. I guess this is why so many arrived earlier on Friday. They have learnt this.

Huge thank you to Timpo for pulling the whole thing together, Hamster and Clarkey for generally goading me, ace wingman Andy C, cos knowing he is nearby is very reassuring and to Gareth for ensuring all body parts were picked up and re-attached as he did tail gunner duties all weekend. Gawd knows how long it took to clean his air filter(s).

And everyone else for making it such a fun event. Oh yeah and we raised over £800 for the N. Wales air ambulance.

What a great way to do something for a good cause.

Noel.

# The Beadlam Tractor Run

Beadlam Rigg  
Beadlam

3

Ten volunteers from TRF Groups in the North were invited to marshal the convoluted, fifty mile course around Kirkbymoorside and Pickering in North Yorkshire for the Annual Beadlam Tractor Run in aid of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. With forty way points to cover over the day each pair of trail riders had to cover several junctions. Not so much trail riding as orienteering. With over two hundred tractors of all shapes and sizes, ancient and modern, the flag waving column took an hour to pass each point. Union Jacks, White Rose and one or two Red Rose flags predominated. Then it was off, cross country for the Marshalls, to the next way point ready to guide the cavalcade as it arrived.

This was a real family occasion. Over three hundred spectators turned up at the starting point, Beadlam Grange Farm, to see the Air Ambulance fly in and the tractors set off.

A few inquisitive spectators were curious as to why trail riders, decked in high visibility jackets, were in attendance. A great opportunity for some good PR.

Just the occasion to inform a few doubters that we do do some good and not just go round "tearing up the countryside" as one guy thought. Mind you after 250 tractors had

passed down one "Green Lane" I have no doubt the Parks Department would be having nightmares, at least until it rained and the debris was washed away.

Most were impressed by our voluntary interest in this "Farmer's gathering". All part of country life. We should all pull together.

The tractor drivers ranged from eighty four years old to seventeen, aided and abetted by wives, girlfriends, children and dogs. Some tractors had make-shift passenger seats in carriers on the back of the tractor, others had cabins to transport their "nearest and dearest".

Minor roads and a couple of UCRs were used to minimise disruption to the holiday traffic and all went smoothly. The weather was fine with plenty of sunshine which was a miracle since the previous two weeks were cold and rain lashed.

Lunch was at Spaunton Manor House Farm where the local community had baked and prepared sandwiches enough to feed "the five thousand".

We were given a free lunch voucher and a commemorative metal badge of the event. What a beautiful spread. They fed at least five hundred people on the day who sat in the field and had a lovely picnic with a sea of tractors in the background.

After lunch the cavalcade headed for Pickering and a Brass Band welcome. The donation collectors were working overtime. Then they headed into the countryside again and a good day was had by all.

This is just the kind of event we, as trail riders, need to get involved in. Just like horse events it gives us a chance to reach a wider public audience and hopefully make more people aware that we are not all "Hooligans on Motorbikes".

Wherever you are set a good example. You can be sure someone is watching.

Thanks to Richard for co-ordinating the volunteers and all those who attended the event on behalf of the TRF.

John Robinson. T&NYTRF Group.

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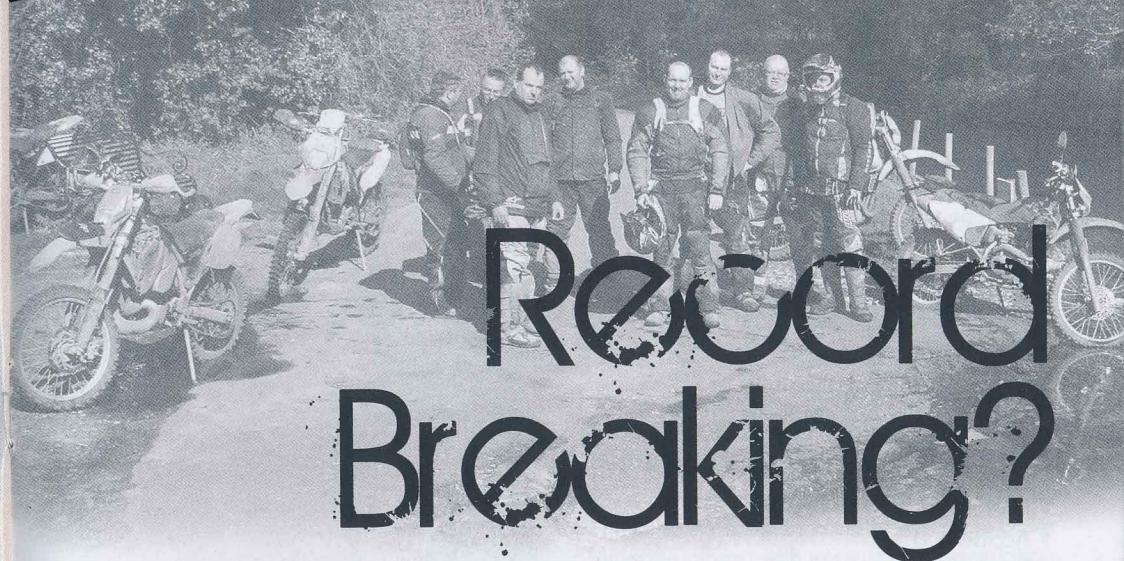
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Steve Vaughan led a trip loosely described as Theftford. However he finished the day a bit annoyed as his secret real plan transpired to be to be fish and chips at Hunstanton from which we were only 15 miles at our nearest point, and in his opinion probably need around another 2 hours on the day to do the run comfortably.

Speaking as a St Albans life long local with 20 years experience of green laning Steve has always impressed me with his definitive knowledge of Rights of Way.

I reported last week on the superb quality of the riding in his 6 hour easy jaunt in Central and West Herts with routes I had no idea existed especially around the sensitive Tring and Ashridge area, however Steve has now set the bar higher.

It was not the picturesque scenery, the technical difficulty of the ride, or the remoteness of the area that impressed, it was the scale of achievement in one day and Steve showing his knowledge of the lanes and planning a ride of this scale.

Steve had previously arranged for weather and ground conditions to be near perfect for the day.

The impressive statistics below were a combination of experienced riders, well maintained bikes, steady progress and

sensible riding with consideration for other team members getting the whole group along led by a man who knew where he was and where he was going.

Possibly the best man, Pat Longland, nobly offered to go last, effortlessly taking up the role of sweeper. I look forward to seeing Pat lead his forthcoming trip later this year and I know it will be a ground covering one which will please a few riders.

The terrain was mainly dry with a good few puddles to amuse the children, Luke Ball and Nick Gorringe, by soaking me at every opportunity.

Terrain varied from beautiful fields little used track across Peddars Way to stinking pools of black pig excrement and I can still smell lingering whiffs around 24 hrs later.

I for one would like to nominate Steve's milestone ride for the following;

- Longest Herts TRF ride as a group
- Longest day's ride by Herts TRF
- Longest day ride organised by one leader completely unassisted

and I am welcome to stand corrected by any of our members with any other proposals.

I would like to confirm the "trail" mileage which may take some time using Garmin Base camp or similar however the totals were;

Whole Group ride 237.5 miles/382.2 kilometers from meeting point (Tesco Baldock) to dispersal point (few miles north or Buntingford) (lowest of 3 independent GPS measurements (Garmin) greatest was 241 miles GPS kit/iphone)

The day was made even more interesting by a late-ish 20:30 finish, always interesting when on Daylight MOT bikes with no lights.

Trip in a glance:

- Leader Steve Vaughan 100% of way
- Sweeper Pat Longland 100% of way
- Distance ridden as a group
- Early leavers 0
- Falls 0
- Accidents 0
- Breakdowns requiring assistance 0
- Fuels stops 5/6
- Meal breaks 2: 1400 Swaffham and 1830 Red Lodge

Total Group Ride - 382 kms (meeting point to dispersal point).

Start to Turnaround point to Finish by Google maps shortest route 230 kms.

Deviation Factor = 148.6%.

1. Steve Vaughan - Leader and Herts TRF RoW Officer
2. Pat Longland - Sweeper
3. Peter Briffett
4. Pete Hodges
5. Greg Riddle
6. Luke Ball
7. Nick Gorrings
8. Mark Tricker
9. Mario Costa-Sa

All riders took turns in 2nd man stops and directing the followers.

All in all a fabulous day and Steve has kept his reputation for organising a challenging run and set the bar high for the rest of the year.

This was scheduled in the Herts TRF event diary as a business as usual ride out with no special preparation, booking or entry criteria.

Mario, Chairman  
Herts & North London TRF  
[www.hertstrf.org.uk](http://www.hertstrf.org.uk)



# THE ROAD TO VANG VIENG

*19 hrs, 3 meals, 4 movies and 11 cans of probably one of the world's worst beer*

We touched down in Vientiane the capital of Laos PDR. At this point, and much to my brothers amusement, some bloke proceeded to leave the airport with my suitcase. Devastation crashed down on me at the prospect of losing all my gear and having to cancel my long anticipated ride that I had only travelled across the earth for. After three hours of sheer despair, he miraculously materialised at the airport ..... "Er sorry mate". Disaster aborted, the trip was now back in full swing.

I hadn't been to Laos for nearly 15 years and wow things had really changed. Relatively small for a capital city, Vientiane is perfectly formed with more than a faint whiff of French colonialism. Communism appears to be losing traction and the effects of westernisation are starting to become apparent; Range Rovers and Hummers are not uncommon. Having said that, it's still a very cool, laid back place and easily one of my favourite destinations.

As arranged, our bikes were at the hotel waiting for us. Two XR 250 Bajas. XRs were the bike of choice in South East Asia for a long time. These two were testament to Honda's build quality as they had around 50,000 kms on the clock, nearly all of which would have been done off road and in the hands of unforgiving tourists. Having spoken too soon, my one actually broke down soon after we first set off for a test drive. That afternoon we swapped my bike for one that actually worked then took in some mud roads and then proceeded to eat the cheapest fillet steaks in the world, washed down with far too many cafes of merlot.

The following morning, feeling particularly special, we headed off through the city. Within 10 minutes we were on wide dirt roads, dodging both potholes the size of wheel barrows and smoky old HGVs and pickups. Hour after hour we rode through stunning scenery following the Mekhong river before getting lost and accidentally crossing the Thai

border! After some negotiation, we persuaded an industrial ferry to let us on board with the bikes and within 20 minutes and £2.00 later we were motoring once more (in the right country).

About 50 kms from civilisation my rear tyre blew. Anyone who has ever ridden bikes in tropical conditions will know that the first and most important thing to do when things go wrong is to get out of the sun. Fortunately, there was a small abandoned thatched hut not too far away where we proceeded to change the rear tube. After an hour of cursing

obscurities, the job was done and we were on our way.

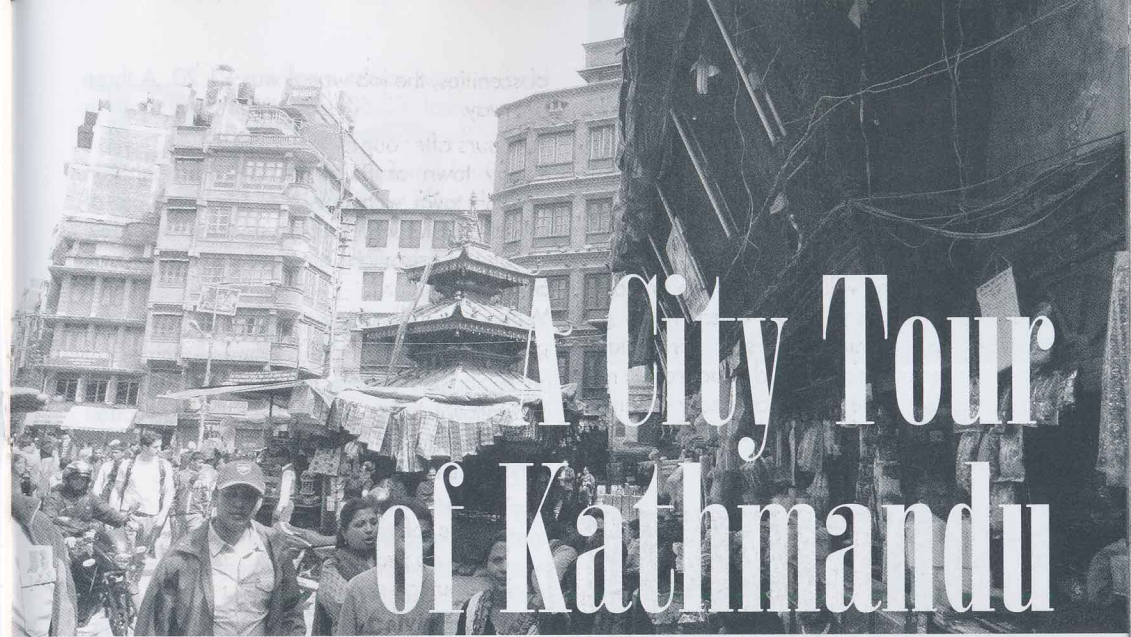
11 hours after our departure we arrived in the sleepy town of Pak Lai. Pak Lai is a nice enough town with not a lot to do. We soon found a hotel which looked somewhat like a Ukrainian prison. However, it had a nice little bar and restaurant opposite, so it would do. With two full meals each and an over generous number of Heinekens, we hit the sack.

The following day our plan was to ride a trail all the way to Yang Vieng via Kasi. We picked up the trail easily enough and immediately we were blown away by the silky smooth surface of the compacted red sand. 80 kmph, no problems, or at least for a while. Without going into extensive detail, all I will say is that the best days' trail riding I have ever experienced unfolded before me. An incredible range of different types of terrain; smiling, waving locals; endless river crossings; elephants and all manner of wild animals leisurely going about their own business and some of the most Jurassic scenery I have ever encountered. Truly breath taking. All topped off with a ride down a derelict Air America runway. I would estimate that we covered somewhere between 150 and 200 kms during a 9 hour day's riding. Yang Vieng is a beautiful town situated on Xong river and formally a base for the CIA in the Vietnam conflict. Nowadays it's a hedonistic mecca for young backpackers looking to find themselves and naturally we had a really awful time.

I have been fortunate enough to travel all over Southeast Asia and have ridden bikes in most of them. I cannot praise Laos enough; it's definitely one to put on your hit list. (Subject to gaining permission from the war office I will be back next year for sure).

Thanks to Remote Asia travel and GT Rider.

Eden Williams,  
Herts TRF.



# A City Tour of Kathmandu

Kathmandu sits in a basin cradled by 3000 foot hills and was permanently smog bound while we were there. There was no wind to blow away the pollution from all the traffic. People wearing face masks to protect their lungs was a common occurrence. The streets were covered in a layer of dust, the composition of which one could only imagine. I assume the monsoons washed the streets once a year but this was the dry season. Rivers were down to low levels and the hydro-electric power supply was cut off periodically for a couple of hours at a time, day and night. The nine o'clock curfew had just been lifted. Up until that point most of the population went to bed early.

Dawa and Mike picked the group up from the Hotel using a minibus for a guided tour of the major Buddhist/Hindu Temples the tourist shopping area and a visit to the Crematorium.

By this time we were used to spinning the prayer wheels and ringing the bells. At the Bodhnath Stupa, a Buddhist temple near the centre of Kathmandu, dominated by the "All Seeing Eyes", was a large Prayer wheel. The bottom section was highly polished metal. The next section, a foot higher, was polished metal. The next section, a further foot higher still, had its paintwork intact. A good indication of the

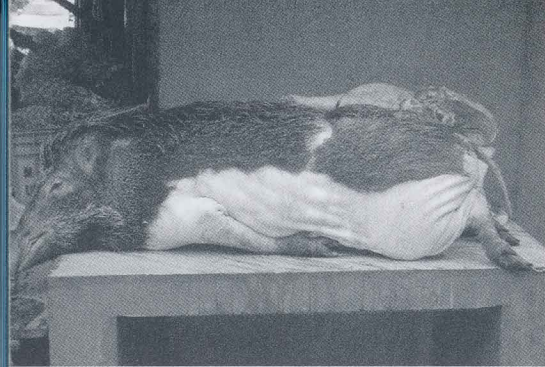
average height of the population and the thousands of passing hand movements.

Here were Lamas (Holymen, not the furry animals), to bless people and objects, bestowing good luck and divine intervention. Some of our group were blessed, some bought prayer flags or silk scarves to be blessed as gifts for taking home. Each of the colourful prayer flags has an illustration and a prayer printed on them. You can find them everywhere in Nepal usually draped from the highest point available to the lowest point i.e. "Heaven to Earth" and they do typify the Country and give it that exotic touch.

The Hindu Temples ranged in splendour from the immaculate, to the every day shrines that looked as though they had been desecrated. The use of fire and liberal amounts of coloured dyes and offerings gave the impression of vandalism rather than devotion. This throw into contrast the cultural norms in religious practices. In our Country all the places of worship tend to be pristine.

Surrounding the temple were Tanka Schools where painstaking hours of intricate work was carried out by Artists and Monks replicating the Life Story of Buddha and various traditional patterns past down over the Centuries. Each





Tanka (painting) takes hundreds of hours to produce yet they were selling them for less than fifty pounds. I visited two or three workshops and the workmanship was amazing.

Buddhist Temples are also renowned for their colourful decorations. Google: Nepal: Temples, for some truly amazing photographs.

The tourist district of Kathmandu was a vibrant mixture of shops, pedestrians and traffic. You can buy anything your heart desires and relatively cheaply.

Every designer brand in the world was on display. Most were made locally or imported from India. Guitars for instance. They sold Gribson, exact copies of Gibson, and they sounded great. Hoofners instead of Hofners. Armani, Gucci, you name it they sold it, at a fraction of the cost of the real McCoy. The other good thing about Nepal was the low price of

food. A main course meal was £1.20. A three course meal £3.50. Ten times less than in Britain. Beer however was £7 a bottle.

Most Butchers shops do not have re Fridgeration so an animal was displayed for a couple of hours and then chopped up and sold that day. For those vegetarians amongst you do not look at the photograph.

The next stop was the Pashupatinath Temple site where the wealthy Hindus cremate their loved ones. Situated next to the river, one side was dedicated to the Temple and the cremation platforms. On the opposite bank was, what can only be described as, a viewing area.

Again I felt this was rather intrusive. Totally contrary to our culture but this is Nepal everyone is welcome everywhere. Visitors are treated as honoured guests. There was a steady flow of bodies being prepared for Cremation, 24/7. Anyone who dies must be cremated the same day. Apparently most people are cremated privately at home. I guess our Ceremonials are all sanitised whereas this was "Death in the Raw".

They still have a caste system in the Country and there were a team of Untouchables wading about in the black water cleaning out all the debris which floated down the river. They dragged all the debris up on to the bank, dried and burnt it.

Large monkeys were scavaging about and stealing food from visitors.

Not a hundred yards downstream about twenty young lads were having a game of cricket on the bankside. As Spike used to say "It's all in the mind, Jim!!"

On a lighter note: Dawa invited the whole group, fourteen in all, to his home for a farewell meal. It was a great privilege to meet his family and we were treated to a banquet fit for any prince.

If you do get the opportunity to visit Nepal I would recommend the experience. The Nepalese must be one of the most welcoming people on the Planet.

John Robinson  
T&NYTRF Group.

# Boa Viagem

It all started with those 'driving a long way' dreams I'm sure we all have whilst on yet another trip to Santander ferry from the Algarve and I can't help but think how it would be to ride up that, or through there or along the other. I can't help myself. I feel the same way about golf courses or beaches or most anywhere my mind gets to wander. Anyways, after many 'wouldn't it be great to' conversations with like-minded friends I came across the annual Transportugal Mountain Bike Race. Sponsored by Garmin, the race divides the length of Portugal into ten sections and is routed by downloading each days ride onto the competitor's GPS at the beginning of each day. No flags, marshals, marker tape, nothing but the GPS track. It seemed to me that this would make a great basis for a trail ride and that we should easily double the pace of the Mountain Bikes and arrive at every other one of their hotels to save finding accommodation. Simple. If only.

Thanks to the wonders of the internerd and the generous members of the Wikiloc community I found a complete track apparently from the Garmin event back in 2006. I chased it on Google Earth and couldn't find fault so set about thinning it down and splitting it up so it would fit into the appallingly small memory available on my Garmin 60Csx.

My two closest riding pals were convinced and

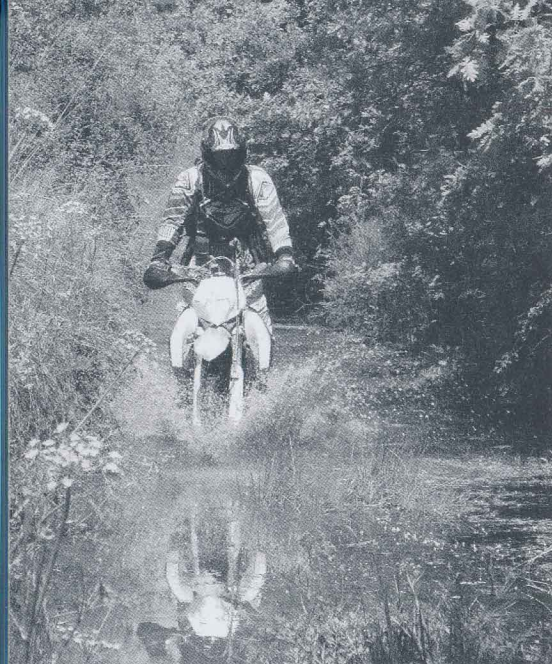
after some messing about with trying to transport their bikes from England we decided it best to do it on mine: an 06 RFS 400 Exc, an 11 400 Exc and an 09 690 Enduro R. Three bikes already in Portugal.

Transport to the start line was an issue but, with a little underhand favour swapping, the infamous Dougal and his Landcruiser were mugged big stylee to complete the 840 mile round trip. Sorted.

Mid May was chosen as the best time weather wise and it was done. Not.

Last minute 'life gets in the way of living' issues meant that one of my friends had to cry off. No-one could fill the space at such short notice so then there were two.

The Saturday before the off we loaded the bikes and ourselves with all the gear we intended to take and set off into the hills for a



## **DAY 0, SUNDAY 15TH MAY 2011**

**Silves - Braganca  
420 miles**

With a 5 am start it was my intention to arrive around lunchtime and get half a day's riding in. Having dismantled and re-wired the back end of the Land Cruiser to get the trailer lights to work we decided that 8.30 am would have to do and off we went. Empty roads and pleasant scenery lulled us into supposing that we didn't need to study the map and so arriving at our start point at 5.30 pm couldn't have been much further from the plan.

It occurred to me that not having a plan means that nothing can go wrong (this sounds like somebody else's idea as it's a bit too brilliant for me).

We enjoyed a cracking evening meal with a penknife each as a gratuity, at a 'too posh for bikers' hotel which featured a coachload of octogenarians clogging up the bar and shouting at the football on TV and we woke to glorious sunshine and a breakfast which was plentiful enough to provide lunch as well.

## **DAY 1**

**Braganca - Freixo de Espada a Cinta  
113 miles**

As we left Braganca the uncertainty and anxiety about the whole trip melted away as we passed through the small village of Gimonde. Typically lost in time with granite cobbled streets too narrow for modern cars and houses seemingly made from well-arranged rubble complete with oak doors sporting cracks negating any need for a cat flap. The original bridge, just wide enough for a donkey drawn cart, led us across an idle river and up onto the first trail of the week. Heading even further north and rising up into the heart of The Montezinho Natural Park the

terrain and geology here was not dissimilar to the Algarve. A little less hilly but the same loose gravel tracks surrounded by 'Cistas' (a woody sticky-leaved weed) which gave way to occasional Eucalyptus forest.

Within the hour the trail arrived at a perfectly preserved, and bus shelter sized, chapel surrounded by the derelict remnants of a small community. After much head scratching we concluded that the trail headed off down the hillside where there was no sign of a track at all. The long grass and tough shrubs provided cover for the loose rock and shale under wheel. Paddling halfway down we laid the bikes down and continued on foot to confirm there was a way through at all. It turned out to be the right way and a couple of miles alongside a small river took us to a crossing point and back to a more recognisable trail. For the first time I concluded that this particular route was not for anything less agile than the 690.

Every ten minutes we were riding through different terrain, scrub, oak forest, meadow grass, eucalyptus forest, fast open track, tight technical single track, it just went on and on. All the time in glorious sunshine and not a person to be seen, anywhere, even in the many little villages we passed through.

Later in the day, just as we thought it couldn't get any more interesting, we descended a loose challenging track to an old granite bridge. The track up the other side bore a vague resemblance to the pack horse roads in the Pennines except that this was much more random with huge boulders forming steps and edges reminiscent of a trials section. Excellent.

Apart from my supposition that we should double the daily mileage of the mountain bikers and therefore be sure of a hotel, we had made no accommodation arrangements. It became obvious that this wasn't going to happen and despite daylight being good until around 8.30 if we didn't find somewhere to stay around 6ish then we may not find any at

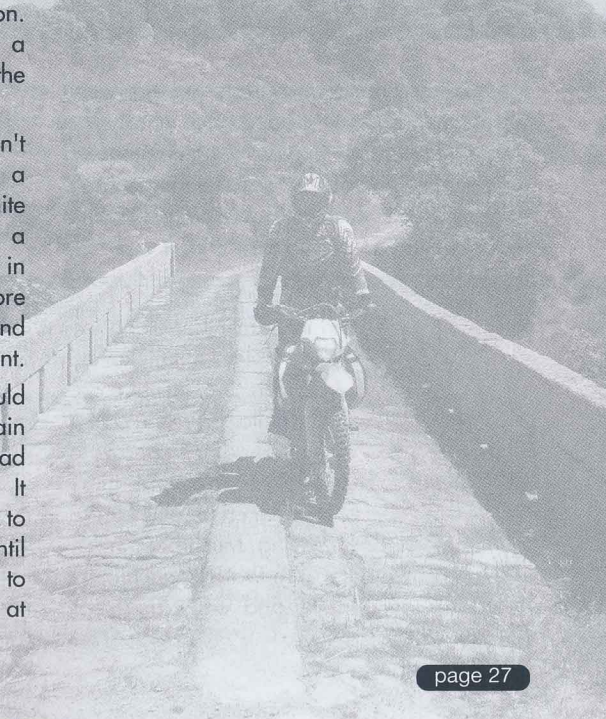
all.

We rumbled into Freixo de Espada a Cinta via the cobbled narrow streets of the old town, across the open square in front of the church and straight up to the police station where two of Portugal's finest were enjoying a cigarette. I thought it best to speak to them before they spoke to us and they directed us through town to the petrol station where I was able to re seat the bead of my front tyre which had caused me some concern earlier in the day. The accommodation we found was a delightful self-catering apartment built into the hillside within a stone's throw of the Douro River and looking out over Spain on the opposite bank

## **DAY 2**

**Freixo de Espada a Cinta -  
Penha Garcia  
138 miles**

We adjusted the chains and topped up the scott-oilers in the just right temperature of the morning sunshine. Our trail could be seen following the river to the south and with nowhere to buy breakfast we got an early start.





wrong would have meant a trip to the bottom of what was now a crevasse. Self-preservation had me walk the bike around the switchbacks and ride the straight sections between. The limited steering lock on the 690 meant Ian didn't really have a choice, he had to walk it round. We stopped many times on this descent, not quite believing what we were riding through. Twenty minutes and an ever steepening track saw us arrive at a bridge where the track continued in the same vein up the opposite side. There was no alternative here, it had to be ridden and we had to get to the top. The chasm beckoned as the track got progressively steeper and more difficult. We exited onto a small road and stopped to review what we had just done. As far as I was concerned the trip could have finished right then. It was that good.

We shared our 'if that had been in England' thoughts and were relieved that it had chosen to start raining after we had got through that particular section.

The trail continued away from the river until we reached a newly graded track on top of a ridge. A return to tarmac was compensated with stunning views. A cleft in the opposite ridge, through which the Douro wound into the distance, had us stop to take it in. It was truly magical. Only as we set off again did the GPS reveal that we were to ride through this piece of stunning scenery. So began the best hour's riding of the whole week.

We descended a vague grassy track, past a couple of dilapidated buildings and down into the valley. As we rounded the rocky outcrop and out of sight of the road the grassy track turned to stone. Huge slabs formed steps which wound down and down via tight and steep switchbacks. The reward for riding it all feet up would have been great but to get it

The Ecomarche at Figuera de Castelo Rodrigo provided breakfast, packed lunch, coffee, water, a toothbrush and a much welcomed shelter from the now persistent rain. Despite having sourced a lightweight waterproof prior to the trip I was now starting to regret leaving it behind. Still, it was warm rain and as we moved on through some very English-esque overgrown single track trails the rain grew ever more familiar in its intensity.

Arriving at the massive star shaped fortifications at Almeida we were faced with a rare 'no vehicular access' sign. A track in the grass allowed us to tour the outside unrestricted. More rain and some long, strong, trails between the grain fields led us to our next tour of a fortified village, Alfaites.

At this point Ian chose to abandon all empathy

by revealing the Gore-Tex jacket he had secreted in his rucksack and on we went with significantly contrasting comfort levels.

A fantastic section through the 'Serra de Malcata' should have seen us at a hotel in the spa town of Monfortinho alongside the stunning River Erges. Unfortunately the section of forest we should have been riding through had been fenced and gated as a nature reserve. Riding around wasn't going to be simple with a cliff faced ridge to the East and the river border with Spain to the West. I didn't believe the whole hillside could be blocked and remained confident of a detour around. Despite a couple of hours trying and even

managing to enter the reserve at one point we failed to find a way through. This was our first major setback to sticking to our intended route and we didn't give up without a fight. We were rewarded for our efforts by coming across a couple of deer and narrowly avoided running over a tortoise which looked most unusual by not having a house number painted in white gloss on its back.

A restored cottage in the centre of Penha Garcia provided the night's accommodation and Wild Boar stew provided sustenance.

*To be continued...*

Mik Stansfield

# THE FORUM

## MIKE HARDING

Regarding Richard Sugden's tale about his encounter with the alleged 'disc jockey/comic' Mike Harding in deepest Derbyshire, as something of a folk music enthusiast (and a liberal pacifist) I would peg the b\*\*\*\*r out for the ants for the way he ruined Folk on 2. But there is a bright side. When I feel really depressed I look in the mirror and say 'Cheer up, Alan! Things could be worse. You could be Mike Harding.' That always lifts me out of the black pit.

Alan Kind

## DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Black & White		Colour	
1/4 Page	£36	1/4 Page	£72
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Contact Fred Ellison on 01254 823893 [editor@trf.org.uk](mailto:editor@trf.org.uk)



# MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS

**ALFER VR250 FOR SALE** 2002 bike in good cond. with MOT & Tax to May 2013. Rotax 2 stroke engine with adjustable power valve, exc. suspension & brakes. A fast & top quality enduro bike. Few spare body panels go with it. £1200 ono. Photos available. Hugh, nr Chester, 07785 745593 hugh.kernow@gmail.com

**KNOX CROSS SHIRT** full upper body protection with chest/back/shoulder & kidney belt. As new cond. as unused from purchase. Size XL. £80. Can post. Tel: 07518 895390 (Devon).

**KAWASAKI KDX 200 SR** for sale, 1989, injected 2-stroke oil, MOT: April 2013, tax: May 2013, total of 11,700 km, mostly at horse events and on tarmac. £850 ono. Tel: 0115 962 5990 (Nottingham).

**BMW GX650X** Challenge 57 reg. 1,500 miles road use only. Long MOT & Tax. Extras inc. rear rack & bag & tank bag etc. £3,500 ono. **Erde 1 or 2 bike trailer** with loading ramp, rails etc. Exc. cond. - as new. £350 ono. Tel: 02476 677423 (Coventry) or 07880 780570.

**WANTED** Any parts for Yamaha XT550 especially tank, seat, panels, guards, CDI, loom & kickstart for J (82) model, but will consider anything, even whole bikes! Please contact Dave on 07769 893071.

**10 YEARS OF TRAIL (2002/2012)** All in excellent condition. Donation of £50 to TRF Fighting Fund. Mike Hembrough, buyer collects S.E. London. 0208 293 5203/07932 002903. m.e.hembrough@gmail.com

**Members Classifieds: Bikes, Riding Gear etc FREE OF CHARGE** Enclose membership number. **ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for - £1 per line, £5 minimum.** Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DG. Tel: 01254 823893 Fax: 01254 887999 editor@trf.org.uk

**WANTED** CRM pre 1989 or Vinduro Bike: anything considered. Ring 01947 897235.

**ITALJET TWIN SHOCK** Green: 1982 Model: Road reg. Ring 01947 897235.

**FOR SALE** A moose for a front wheel of a trail bike. (New bought but not used). Ring 01947 897235 for details & price.

**GASGAS PAMPERA** 2002 with unique T5 TRF numberplate. Lots of spares inc. brand new Talon sprockets & auxillary petrol tank B/plateate, good tyres, well maintained & in good, usable cond. Extras inc. auxillary petrol tank. Long T&T. £1650. Tel: 07920 183 033 (Warwickshire).

## ACCOMMODATION

**BRENDAN CHASE B&B** Windermere village centre location so close to pubs and restaurants, from £25 per night bed and breakfast. Off street parking for bikes. Tel: 015394 45638. Email brendan chase@aol.com, website: www.placetostaywindermere.co.uk

**HOLIDAY LODGES IN MID WALES** (owned by member). Ideally suited for motorcycle enthusiasts. Large site with safe, secure hard standing for bikes and trailers. Utility/boot room in all, fully equipped workshops for those essential repairs. Self catering or provision for grocery supplies and home cooked meals delivered to your door. Excellent rates for TRF members. See our website: www.radnor-revivals.co.uk or telephone 01597 840308 for a brochure and information.

**LLANERCHINDDA FARM GUEST HOUSE & SELF CATERING** - Llandoverly, mid Wales. Ideal base for trail riding with local guide available, map room, secure lockup, spray wash & drying room. Contact: 01550 750274 or info@cambrianway.com or www.cambrianway.com

## GROUPS

**AXE VALE** David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Home), Mob: 0793 1220895. dccjei@talktalk.net 2nd Tues, 8pm, Windmill Inn, Nore Road, Portishead.

**BLACK COUNTRY** John Oseland, Tel: 01902 656011 1st Tues, 9pm, The Longford House, Watling Street, Cannock.

**BRISTOL** Glenn Summers, Tel: 01454 619246 4th Mon, 8pm, The Midland Spinner, Warmley, Bristol.

**CAMBRIDGE** Tony Lacey, Tel: 07753 820520 1st Thurs, 8.00 p.m., The Seven Wives, Ramsey Road, St. Ives PE27 5RF.

**CORNWALL** Adam Hedley, Tel: 01579 349217 3rd Thurs, 7.30 - 8.00 p.m., The Borough Arms, Bodmin.

**CUMBRIA & CRAVEN** Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198 2nd Tues, 7.30pm, The Bluebell, Heversham - 1 mile N of Milnthorpe on the A6.

**DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE** Mick Ellison, Tel: 07780 674192 2nd Tues, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

**DEVON** John Heal, Tel: 01626 366860 2nd Tues, 8pm, The Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9AL.

**DORSET** W. John Williamson, Tel: 01929 553640 Mob: 07850 727873 1st Tues, 8pm, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, Nr. Bere Regis DT11 9AZ.

**EAST MIDLANDS** Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433 2nd Wed, The Clock Warehouse, London Road, Shardlow, just off the A50.

**EAST YORKSHIRE** Simon Garthwaite, Tel: 07980 680026 2nd Tues, 8pm, Londesborough Arms, Market Weighton, York.

**ESSEX** Cliff Eaves, Tel: 07515 330423 2nd Wed, The Wheatshaf, Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel, Essex.

**GLOUCESTER** James Osborne, Tel: 01531 822728 1st Wed, 8pm, Wagonworks Club, Tuffley Ave., Gloucester.

**HERTFORDSHIRE** Ken Marshall, Tel: 01438 312602, marshall.k@sky.com 2nd Wed, 8.30pm, Shire Park Social Club, Shire Park, Central Drive, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AB.

**HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES** Steve Hyde Tel: 07931 728956. 1st Thurs, 8.30 - 9.00pm, The Foaming Quart, 5 Frobisher St., Norton Green, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 8PD.

**ISLE OF WIGHT** 1st Wed, 8pm, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW.

**KENT** Steve Neville Tel: 01474 742705 2nd Tues, 8.30p.m. for 9pm, The Moat Pub, Wrotham, near Brands Hatch.

**LANCASHIRE** John Gardner, Tel: 01695 622792 1st Tues, Black Bull, Hall Lane, Mawdsley.

**LINCOLNSHIRE** Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079 4th Thurs, 8pm, Lincolnshire Poacher, Bunkers Hill, Lincoln.

**LODDON VALE** Eddie Mace, Tel: 01189 333380 2nd Thurs, Inn on the Park, Woodley, Reading.

**MANCHESTER** Phil Kinder, Tel: 07809 647293 2nd & 4th Mon, 9pm, The Fletcher's Arms, Denton.

**MID WALES** Tony Rooney, Tel: 01239 698349 2nd Thurs, 7.30pm, The Crown Inn, Rhayader except July & December.

**NORTHUMBRIA** Nic Gilbert, Tel: 07940 133871 1st Wed, 8pm, The Staffs Club, Blaydon, NE21 4JB.

**NORTH WALES** Neil "Timpo" Thompson, Tel: 07980 555874 1st Wed, 8pm, The Griffin Inn, Mold Road, Mynydd Isa, CH7 6TF. Ref SJ 257 638.

**NORFOLK** Terry Reeve, Tel: 0771 5013 665 2nd Wed, 8pm, White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.

**OXFORDSHIRE** Steve Pickford, Tel: 01865 463626 steve.pickford@gmx.net 3rd Thurs, 8pm, The Gladiator Sport & Social Club, 263 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1SJ, next to Ridgeway VW Garage.

**PEAK DISTRICT** Alan Gilmore, Tel: 01332 553246 1st Thurs, 8pm, The Joiner's Arms, Church Road, Quarndon, Derby.

**RIBBLE VALLEY** Peter Ashurst, Tel: 07817 928329 2nd Tues, 8.30pm, Brown Cow, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59).

**SOMERSET** Fran Bunce, Tel: 01278 662605 2nd Thurs, 8pm, The Old Pound Inn, High Street, Aller Langport.

**SOUTHERN** Colin Lindstrom Tel: 07818 404240 3rd Thurs, 8pm, Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave., Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords).

**SOUTH LONDON & SURREY** Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204 8.30pm, 4th Wed, Nescot Centre for Sports Development, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey.

**SOUTH NORTHANTS** Andy Gerrard, Tel: 07803 600571 2nd Monday, 9pm, The Old Sun, 10 Middle Street, Nether Heyford, Northampton NN7 3LL.

**SOUTH WALES** Christian James, Tel: 01446 410073 1st Thurs, 8pm, Ty Nant Inn, Morganstown, Nr Radyr CF15 8LB.

**SOUTH WEST WALES** Terry Brooks, Tel: 07910 050001 Last Tues, Corner House Pub, Commercial Street, Ystalyfera, Swansea.

**SUFFOLK** Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073 Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

**SUSSEX** Julian Flack, Tel: 01306 740586 Last Thurs, Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing.

**TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS** John Robinson, Tel: 01287 623588. 3rd Tues, The Ranch House, Thoraldby Farm, Stokesley/Hutton Rudby Road.

**VIRTUAL PEAK GROUP** Paul King, kingy@virtualpeaks.co.uk Tel: 07966 289778 This is a virtual group at www.virtualpeaks.co.uk

**WEST ANGLIA** Mark Jones, Tel: 07825 142511 1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Social Club, opp. Parish Church, Wollaston, Wellingborough.

**WEST MIDLANDS** Steve Whetton, Tel: 01527 451089 1st & 3rd Wed, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon.

**WEST YORKSHIRE** Paul Dearden, Tel: 07901 381629 info@wytrf.org.uk 1st Thurs RoW 6.30 pm, Main Meeting 7.30pm, Cue Gardens, Stadium Mills, Stadium Road, Bradford BD6 1BJ.

**WILTSHIRE** Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651 1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford SN12 8LX.

**WORCESTERSHIRE** David Walters, Tel: 07767 204730 1st Tues, White Hart, Fernhill Heath, Worcs.



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