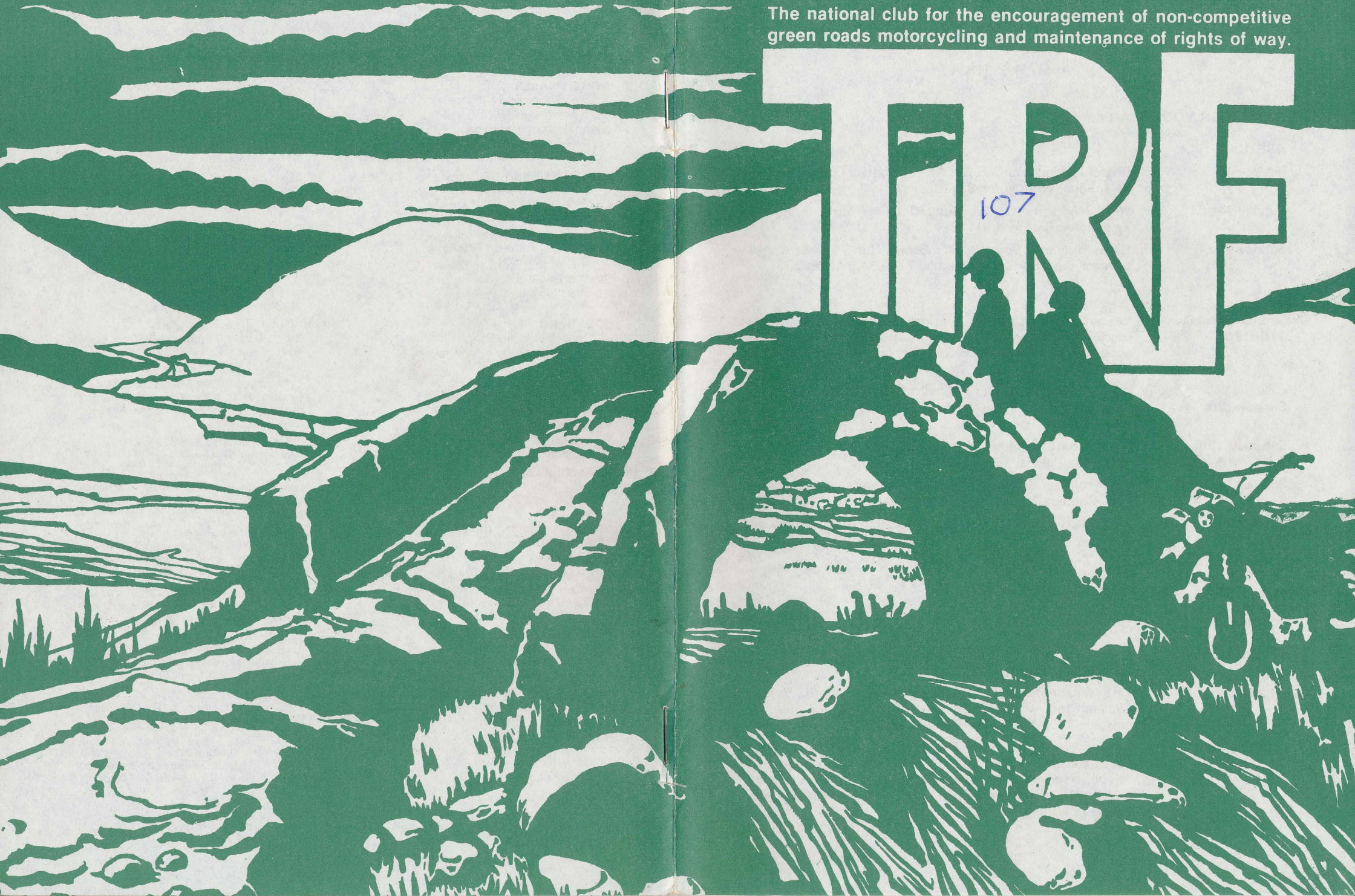


The national club for the encouragement of non-competitive green roads motorcycling and maintenance of rights of way.

TRIF

107



TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

BULLETIN No. 107

April / May 1985

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

- Sunday 14th Bristol Group Run. S.W. Avon. Contact Brian Walters. Telephone: Whitchurch 835165.
- Sunday 14th West Yorkshire Group Run. Details from Jim Souter. Telephone: Bradford 611789.
- Sunday 21st Derbyshire and South Yorks Group Run — Bawtry area. Contact Dave Bonsall for details. Tel: 0742 471882.

MAY

- Saturday/Sunday 11th/12th Lakes/Dales Run. This is a national TRF event following the success of last year's Coast to Coast Run. Early notice appeared in Bulletin 106, but for further details contact Ken Canham, Overdale, Woodside Villas, Hexham, Northumberland as soon as possible, enclosing a SAE.
- Sunday 12th West Yorkshire Group. Yorkshire Dales Run. Details from Jim Souter.
- Saturday 18th TRF Executive Committee Meeting 1.00 p.m. King George Vth Memorial Hall, Hockley Heath.
- Sunday 19th Derbyshire and South Yorks Group Run. S.Yorks/Notts area. Contact Dave Bonsall.
- Sunday 19th BMF Rally, East of England Showground, Peterborough.
- Spring Bank Holiday Weekend 25th—27th MOTOR 100, Silverstone Race Circuit. (See 'Editor's Ramblings' for more information).

JUNE

- Sunday 9th West Yorkshire Group. Peak District Run. Contact Jim Souter.
- Sunday 16th Derbyshire and South Yorks Group Run. Peak District. Contact Dave Bonsall.
- Thursday 20th TRF Meeting during the Welsh 2 Day Enduro. Venue: Llanerch Inn, which is at the back of the Station, near the Police HQ. Contact John Higgin for details.
- Saturday/Sunday 29th/30th Durham/Northumberland Trail Riding Weekend. Any riders not attached to groups especially welcome. Accommodation can be arranged. Anyone interested please contact Alan Kind 3 Mitford Gardens, Wideopen, Tyne & Wear. Max. number 8 per run leader.

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EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

A glance at the events page in this issue shows a varied range of activities for May. The Lakes/Dales Trail Riding Weekend should prove popular if last year's Coast to Coast Memorial Run is anything to go by. For anyone wondering what the MOTOR 100 is, as the name implies this 3-day event has been organised to celebrate 100 years of the motor vehicle. It is envisaged that there will be club/trade stands embracing all types of vehicle and marquees, displays, parades, vintage car and bike racing, personalities from the motoring world, to name a few of the attractions. I understand the TRF (courtesy Dave Knight and West Anglian Group) may have a stand at this event.

Looking further ahead, I have the following notice from John Higgin about the Enduro de Weston Super Mare on 27th October 1985.

FREE TICKETS for anyone wishing to attend this exciting beach enduro with a place close to the action.

The TRF has been asked to help provide some of the 200 marshalls needed for this event. If you can help please send a stamped and self-addressed envelope in an envelope marked "MARSHALLS" to the organiser, Eddie Chandler, 48 Ardler Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire and you will receive a free ticket and instructions about the times you will need to be present and your duties. Marshalls are needed to control the crowd watching and to stop riders cutting the course. Can you help?

Meanwhile, back to trail riding with another article on building a special using the almost classic XL185 engine; it appears to me that the manufacturers have got the UK market wrong where trail bikes are concerned. Take a look at the new bike list, what have we on offer? Underpowered 125s, overpriced 250s or unsuitable 600s! Gone is the DT175, the XL185, the XR200 and, looking at a 1985 Kawasaki brochure, so too is the KE175. You're not telling me it was the learner market that kept sales of this class of trail bike alive.

So when these new generation trail bikes don't come up to their sales expectations, instead of asking themselves WHY they don't sell, the manufacturers just turn round and say that there is no market for trail bikes in the UK! Just what's going to happen when there are no decent secondhand trail bikes, and the last XL185 engine has been sold? You tell me!

On a brighter note, whilst we all know the virtues of trail riding in the popular areas, Alan Kind asked me whether anyone ever writes about the lesser known areas of Britain? The article in this issue "Southern Discomfort" redresses the balance a little, but what about the lanes in other corners of our green and pleasant land — what are they like? No one will know unless you tell us about them.

HISTORY OF THE TRF

Alan Kind has just completed the first 'chapter' of the reprints of past Bulletins. He says "In typically perverse fashion I have started at Bulletin 17 and gone up to Bulletin 39, so this lot is Chapter 2."

The reprints are, basically, the good bits of each Bulletin; overwhelmingly run reports, with some machine tests and a brief commentary on what was going on in the world of greenlaning at the time. All fascinating stuff and will give anyone interested in riding away from their home areas a good picture of what most of the country is really like.

A copy of Chapter 2 will cost £2 or, because the print is so small, £3.50 if you want a copy with larger print. In either case, please enclose a large SAE with your cheque, made payable to "TRF".

Available from Alan Kind, 3 Mitford Gardens, Wideopen, Tyne and Wear.

(N.B. Anyone wanting a TRF tool bag or belt bag — stocks are exhausted at present but will be reordered soon.)

LETTERS

Like many riders, I'm sure, I've often paid lip service to the idea of buying bikes from a local dealer. This after all should in theory assure you of a good after-sales service which the 'cut price' dealers couldn't care less about. However, when it comes to the crunch I have to admit to being seduced by the cash saving.

My present machine, however, an XR250 Honda I bought from my local dealer, John Banks of Bury St Edmunds, and events were to show that this was an excellent decision.

After eleven months use it ran out of sparks and I returned it to the dealer. A U/S CDI unit was diagnosed and I knew full well that competition bikes (that's what Honda deem it) carry no warranty. However, to my surprise, the exceedingly helpful stores manager said that as I only used it for non-competitive purposes he would have a word with a contact at Honda (UK) and see what he could arrange.

He didn't fail. It took four weeks to get a decision, then Honda agreed to reimburse me in full for the parts and labour. Incidentally, it took Banks four days to fix the machine and return it to me.

I must confess that I did get a pretty fair discount when I made the purchase so really I suppose I must have got as near to 'having my cake and eating it' as I ever will.

I can't close without mentioning Alan Kind's excellent article in the November '84 Countryside Commission News. It would seem impossible to believe that any of Mattingly's Maffia could fail to be moved by Alan's commonsense and logic, but then the deafest always are those who choose not to hear!

Hugh Mason, 3 The Green, Haddenham, Ely, Cambs.

With reference to the letter in Bulletin No.105 headed "The Ultimate Green Lane Rider", may I just add my observations and comments. Yes, the guy in question has been spotted by other riders. I have personally come across the mystery man twice.

The first occasion was on the Ridgeway back in '82 when he whizzed passed, all alone, on his XL185 — head down and arse up.



A THUMPER WITH MORE PUNCH.

For years our four-stroke trail bikes have been some of the hardest-hitting sluggers on tarmac or dust. This year though, two of them have been on a special tonic: RFVC (Radial Four Valve Combustion chamber).

RFVC, with its four massive, radically disposed valves and twin carburetors (one for good low and mid-range power; the other for increased top-end) has given the XL600R and XL250R more punch than ever.

All three of our four-stroke trail bikes,

FOR BROCHURES, NEAREST DEALER AND FURTHER DETAILS PHONE HONDA HOTLINE ON 01-409 3189.

the XL125R, XL250R and XL600R, feature an overhead camshaft single cylinder engine, the 600 and 250 having RFVC.

Output of the XL600R is a mighty 44 PS with a whopping 5kg-m of torque. The 250 pumps out 25 PS and the 125 complies with the latest learner legislation, producing the obligatory 12 PS (9kW).

All three bikes have long-travel, single-shock Pro-link rear suspension and long-travel air-assisted forks for outstanding traction, whatever the surface.

Front brake of the XL600R is a single disc unit, while brakes on the other models are all leading/trailing drums.



ENGINEERING THE FUTURE

The second occasion was about two years ago at the beginning of Therfield to Royston (Herts) lane. This time he had company with him and we had a brief chat before departing on our respective ways. From the conversation with him he did in fact see us down the Ridgeway previously but didn't bother to stop, not wanting to hinder himself and risk clocking up less than his ubiquitous 250 miles a day! I don't disbelieve his claim of 12,000 green lane miles per year either!

Whether he is in fact a TRF member or not, I don't know, but as to who he is — his name is Pete Irons. Brother (I think) of the famous road racer Kenny Irons from Luton. Maybe that accounts for the riding posture he uses!

Good laning.

Steve File, 40 High Street, Stotfold, Bedfordshire

I don't wish to upset Norman Smith, just to say that his letter (Bulletin 106) is totally inaccurate and should be ignored. His old files contained nothing of value. I have RoW papers in every room in my home; if I resign a 5-ton lorry will be needed to carry away all the paper, maps, etc., plus over 1000 byway claims. I am as keen as ever and working hard.

People don't reply to Norman because there is no point. It's all out of date! The WTRA have not folded, the DoE are not 'mean' and Scotland should not be forgotten.

I became TRF RoW Officer in 1975 and I took over when Norman resigned in 1977 as ACU/BMF RoW Secretary.

Those who resign should support officials; I could do with a bit more encouragement and less criticism!

Brian Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster

I would like, after twelve months since our founding as a club, to introduce ourselves. We are the Sunday Winter Club, all TRF members living in Gwent. We meet every Tuesday at the Kings Head, Pentnewydd, Cwumbran to discuss the various events and runs which have taken place and which we are about to take part in.

I would like to dispel any inference that we are loonies (see TRF Dec/Jan issue — Welsh Coast to Coast). I would like to make it quite clear that at least six of our members have written proof that they are sane, and another six are expecting letters in the next few weeks.

This leaves only three; Neil 'Gypsy' Thomas — Gypsy because he wears an earring and eats hedgehogs; Brian 'Forgetful' Wilde — Forgetful because he can never remember which lane to where and how to get there; Ken 'Gates' Levenson — Gates because nobody has ever seen him open or close a bloody gate for us!

The rest of our members are just normal ordinary Homo Sapiens who enjoy the weekly ride out in their wheelchairs.

To close, I would like to say that this year has been very eventful for the club with rides every Sunday and also mid-week. But the event which we still enthuse over is the Welsh Coast to Coast; despite its cock up over leaders it was a fabulous weekend.

The Club passes on best wishes to all TRF members.

Derek Thomas, "Highfields", Brechfa Close, Ponthir, Gwent

Having just received Ken Canham's excellent details on the John Ebbrell Memorial Run, I must say I am disappointed in the format this year. I had expected to ride coast to coast again — which for me was the big attraction.

Admittedly my vision of not seeing tarmac the whole weekend, traversing ancient cart tracks and generally disturbing the dust of ages was a little grandiose and wholly impractical. But couldn't we have something a little more challenging than runs in the Lake District for the event of the year?

Denis Matthewman, Stamford Bridge, York

The January issue of 'Motorcycle Sport' has an article by 'Greenrider' saying that all bikes must have indicators and stop light on both brakes by 1st April 1986. Is this legislation retrospective or does it just apply to machines first registered on or after this date? or will I have to bring my B40 and Bushman into line (I don't think the Bushman could work indicators anyway). I note that a single trials seat excuses indicators.

W. Barlow, 76 Twiss Green Lane, Culcheth, Warrington

(See "Clear 'Grey' Light?" later on which, hopefully, will answer some of your lighting law queries — Rosie)

A PLEA FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Could existing members, especially Group Reps., give some encouragement to those who have 'not yet got around' to renewing for 1985. Remind those who are not sure who to make the cheque out to, that it's the TRF. Lend a pen to those who have mislaid theirs at the crucial moment. I'm afraid there are quite a few who have fallen by the wayside this year. Do help them to see the light.

We lose many good members each year for very good reasons — pressure of work or family commitments, a change of emphasis in their motorcycling interests, or death are all acceptable! But we should ensure that everyone who is actively involved in TRF activities, whether as group members or individuals, is a paid up TRF member.

I understand there are now three volunteers for the post of Membership Secretary when I stand down. All nominations should go to the Secretary, John Higgin. There will be a vote at the AGM to decide my successor.

Ian Thompson, Membership Secretary

CLEAR 'GREY' LIGHT

Towards the latter part of 1984 there was some publicity regarding the 1st August 1984 amendments to the vehicle lighting laws. One monthly magazine produced a rather 'shock horror probe' story stating that ALL machines would now have to have lights by law.

As far as I am concerned, 'The Law' is one big 'grey area' — to take the use or not of bulb horns and knobby tyres, but I digress. To help clear up any misunderstandings, the relevant regulations together with amendments/exceptions are given below.

Regulation 41 of the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1978 stated:

"Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with such lighting equipment and reflectors as to render the vehicle capable of being driven on a road during the hours of darkness without contravention of any of the statutory provisions relating to obligatory lamps or reflectors which are applicable to that vehicle."

However, there was the proviso that read:

"Provided that the paragraph shall not apply to a motor vehicle which is not provided with any front lamp or rear lamp."

In other words, if you had lights you had to have them all — headlight, tail light, reflector and brake light; but if you chose not to have lights at all (and that included any associated wiring) you were OK — Regulation 41 didn't apply.

In August 1984, Regulation 41 was revoked by an amending regulation and it would appear that the relevant lighting regulation is now Regulation 16 of the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1984.

Item 2 of Schedule 1, which covers solo motorcycles, requires a front position lamp to be fitted unless the motorcycle is fitted with a headlamp. There is no proviso within Regulation 16 relating to motorcycles not at present fitted with lights, thus running to the early belief that "all machines must now be fitted with lights."

However, Alan Kind looked further and states the following:

"The Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1984 Statutory Instrument 1984 No. 812.

Exemptions: General

4 — (3) Nothing in these regulations shall require any lamp or reflector to be fitted during daytime hours to:

(a) A vehicle not fitted with any front or rear position lamp."

(N.B. "position" lamps are front, sidelights and rear lights; therefore, as before, if you've got one, you got to have them all!)"

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Finally, with regard to indicators, these — as with all lights — will have to be fitted to all NEW bikes after 1st April 1986. However, lighting laws are seldom, if ever, retrospective so only new machines will be affected. I know there was some controversy over indicators a year or so ago when the question of compulsory indicators was first raised and the off-road people said that it was ludicrous to have to have indicators on their trials/enduro machines and, as far as I know, they won. At present it is quite legal to remove indicators from your machine so long as you remove all brackets, wiring and switches as well. I expect the new legislation of 1986 will mean that you will not in future be able to take the indicators off your new trail bike if it comes fitted with them. However, as your BSA B40 is unlikely to be a 1986 model, I don't think you'll have to fit them. Only folk with next year's models will find they won't be able to remove lights.

In the meantime, if anyone has any clearer information or if any update/amendment to the law is released, I shall pass this on to members.

Rosie, Editor

RIDER REPORTS

Either we don't have any riders in the TRF or you are averse to filling in forms, but if anyone else would like to help with a Rider's Report on the Honda XL250 or the Kawasaki KE175, please write to me with a SAE for a questionnaire. Anyone who has ridden, owned in the past or currently owns these models is welcome to help with this report.

Thanks to those who have already contributed.

Send SAE to Rosie Swindells, 87 Whiteways Road, Sheffield S4 8EW.

SOUTHERN DISCOMFORT

To help stop the drift of the TRF magazine becoming entirely written by, and catering for, the Northern rider, I thought a few words from the Southern Group would help to redress the balance.

As most of you living north of Oxford (or is it Watford?) will know but not admit, the centre of the green lane universe is not to be found in the north, nor in a foreign country such as Wales. Good though these areas may be, we have in the Hampshire area as broad a selection of types of lane to ride down as you could ever wish for.

Apart from the open tracks over Salisbury Plain and Northern Hampshire, first used by the Roman two wheeled community, we have all types of lane featuring various brews of mud and clay, sand, chalk and rocks (well, two or three!). Some of the best hills in the country are to be found in East Hampshire (Hoad country). Quite a percentage of the RUPPs are of trials section standard and we often adopt the trials marking system whilst traversing them. However, we grade the marks according to which part of the body touches the ground first.

In our playground, about 80 miles wide and 60 miles from North to South, we occasionally take a foreigner for a tour and most seem to enjoy the experience. (We are always happy to have visitors on our runs; should you fancy this, contact the writer on Waterlooville 263323.)

In general, we don't have too much hassle with disputed lanes but there always seem to be two or three which we have to keep a careful eye on and make representations where necessary; for this we have to thank Pete Cuerden for all his behind-the-scenes RoW work.

The Southern Group have gradually evolved a runs programme which seems to suit the majority of members and has proved to have a number of advantages. What we do is meet at the beginning of the Autumn and again after Christmas and organise a programme which will take in every area in our territory at least once in the year. We ride every other Saturday in preference to Sunday which seems to have the following advantages:

1. More petrol stations open
2. Less walkers
3. A chance to get spares on the way or afterwards, if required
4. All of Sunday to repair the bike (if required) for use during the week
5. A full 24 hours more to get out of hospital before work on Monday!

Numbers for these runs vary between 4 and 12; typically the exact number seeming to depend on whether there is a trial or motocross to enter or watch the next day. Regular riders are Alan, Jim, Brian, Pete, John and John, Frank, Derek and myself.

On the machinery front, we reached a peak about 18 months ago wherein 90% of us were riding Honda XL185s. This has now dropped to about 50%. The three odd ones out being an XT500, Pete Wildsmith's hybrid XL185/XL125R/XR200 and some idiot on an XR250 (but I like it!). Incidentally, Pete's bike (which was featured in an earlier Bulletin) seems to be one of those rare combinations where a pile of 1982, 83 and 84 bits have assembled to give a 1985 result.

We have a few local rules which have yet to be adopted nationally. Probably the most notable of these is to stop and get off the machine when we meet horses; this is quite a frequent occurrence in Hampshire.

Unfortunately, due to the predominance of mud in our area, by lunchtime there is no possibility of visits to pubs due to the fact that the few Jet washes we have don't seem to be next door to the pub. For this reason we tend to sit huddled behind some pig farm wall or similar such place eating squashed butties and drinking apple juice and the like.

By now the talk is getting very technical and seems to centre on the best part of trail riding — the bath afterwards. Heated discussions centre round whether a 45 gallon Avocado Armitage is a better all round bet than a 200 litre Sunset Shires with control taps.

The afternoon's ride follows a similar pattern to the morning's, except that there is an additional excuse for "having a close look at the ground" . . . that of tiredness.

Strangely, at the end of the run, when the mind is blurred and the blood is drying we all seem to be saying, without any good reason, "See you all in a fortnight."

Colin French, Southern TRF Group

(Note: For anyone not aware of the TRF Code of Conduct, it does state "stop and switch off engines for horses." — *Rosie*)

RIGHTS OF WAY — Brian Thompson

SOUTH YORKSHIRE BYWAY SUCCESS

After 15 years of hard work in my own rural district of Thorne, South Yorkshire County Council is now willing to concede from 20 to 35 new Byways that have been footpath or no status for 35 years. It helps, of course, to be a member of the CC's own footpath committee and we hope that the Byways can be confirmed before the Council is abolished in 1986. All these 30ft to 60ft wide green lanes are pre 1835 and I think the first highways ever awarded Private Carriage Road by Parliament to be favoured with Byway status which is usually a major stumbling block resulting in bridleway status at best.

This success is yet more astonishing because at a public meeting held in Thorne last year 50 people unanimously objected to trail riders being allowed on the 50 miles of green lanes.

LONDON GAZETTE

The service of sending out closure and diversion notices has again resumed. Copies of the London Gazette plus other notices (that have to be sent to me by law) can be sent to authorised representatives on request.

SOMERSET

Crows Lane in the Parish of Bridgwater Without was due to be closed by Magistrates at Bridgwater on 14th January unless someone successfully objected. We need someone to represent trail riders in Somerset since Ian Thompson departed for Cornwall.

LARKHILL INQUIRY

Bill Riley spent £400 handling the inquiry on behalf of all trail riders. If we had employed a lawyer it would have cost nearer £2000! Local trail rider clubs like West Wiltshire have raised about half. By agreement with Bill, I invite donations towards Bill's modest expenses which can be sent to me at 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster, and any excess will be put into the TRF Fighting Fund which is kept strictly for keeping open green lanes. Cheques should be made out to the TRF.

I am disgusted and dismayed to report that the Cyclists Touring Club (40,000 strong with a full time RoW Officer) did a private backroom deal with the MoD and withdrew all their objections to closure in return for a handful of 'permission only' routes. The CTC said they think the objectors will lose. What a mean and selfish stab in the back, and how callous to give away public rights that belong to future generations. Our only reliable friends are the Byways and Bridleways Trust.

NORFOLK

Andy Downes of Gissing, Diss, Norfolk is starting a much needed TRF Group. Will all interested Norfolk riders please get in touch. Andy has already been successful in re-opening blocked green lanes in the area.

TRAIL PARK STORM

News to many members is that the TRF's Secretary, Treasurer, Honorary Solicitor, myself and other active TRF members play a leading part in running the ACU/BMF Countryside Committee which supports trail parks; like me, they see no conflict of interests. Paul Blezzard, another TRF member, is a full time trail park consultant.

The unity between the ACU, BMF and TRF (the BBT; complicated isn't it?) is the secret of our unique success in repealing anti-trail riding legislation and convincing the Government to preserve trail riding in the 1981 Act. We must not let the minor issue of trail parks disturb this unity. The TRF on its own can do nothing to stop the growth of government and local authority backed trail parks. The ACU/BMF has a duty to respond to requests for help and advice.

Another problem arising out of the TRF's policy on trail parks is that it has cut itself off from potential grant aid. The ACU/BMF has claimed aid from four bodies which, if successful, will employ two full time staff — one for green lanes and one for trail parks. In every case it was not possible to exclude one from the other, but if (and its a big if) we are successful, I don't think it matters who gets helped because its virtually the same people!

I am, of course, willing to explain to TRF groups anxious about what they see as a conflict of interests, and indeed one group wants me to visit them and explain, which I shall be pleased to do. Certainly the very close unity between the TRF and ACU/BMF is not widely known and it is about time it was more widely appreciated. Without it, trail riding would be doomed.

TRAIL RUNS

Many trail riders prefer to explore green lanes in company with one or two friends and this is probably the most enjoyable way to go trail riding.

Even before the TRF was formed in 1970, organised trail runs in parties had always been popular and never more than during the 1970s with George Abbey and myself putting on weekend adventure runs in the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District several times a year. This sort of organised riding has declined in the eighties and, despite an improvement last year, a lot more official runs are needed. Members of the TRF not lucky enough to be part of an active group feel out in the cold and disappear from the membership lists. I am therefore delighted that Alan Kind and Ken Canham are holding a John Ebbrell Memorial weekend run for 1985.

By demand, I shall be holding a day out in Derbyshire on Sunday 11th August starting from Baslow. Still without a proper trail bike since the falling £ forced me to sell the XL185 just before the US trail tour, I shall be leading on a Hondamatic 400. By August the lanes will have dried out nicely and a road bike, semi roadster or pre-1965 trials can offer an enjoyable day out trail riding. Drop me a line; I can promise a worthwhile ride in good company with lots of interesting machines.

In the Yorkshire Dales, Gordon Thackray of 105 The Oval, Otley LE21 2EE, is willing to guide parties around on easy green lanes.

VIDEO AVAILABLE

Fortunately, I have managed to capture some of the fun of those trail runs on film which has not been transferred onto video cassette. Not very slickly made, but fun, and shows the best of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales plus Derbyshire's green lanes. Look for the novice rider out for the first time and carrying a white handbag which he soon ditched when the going got tough! In VHS only, the video may be hired from me for £5.

GOOD PUBLICITY

Ron Kemp, who runs a garage near Llandrindod Wells, has loaned a couple of trail bikes to ramblers for marshalling a marathon on the Monks Trod. Alan Kind's group provided marshalls for a similar ramblers' event in the north east. John Blackburn organised volunteers from the Derbyshire and South Yorks TRF to marshal at horse enduros in Derbyshire and the TRF in Sussex did the same. John Netherwood, out with a run, organised a rescue for a stricken rambler. Several TRF groups have, over many years, saved ratepayers money by carrying out lane clearing and bridge repairs. Great stuff, but how is it the outside world thinks differently?

We must do what the Countryside Commission has failed to do, which is to make known the 'Green Lane Study', a public document now dismissed, disregarded and out of print. Not one county council or national park that I have visited has even heard of it! We don't spend enough on publicity. Alan Kind, the TRF's PRO should be full time with a decent budget. The trade sell 20,000 trail bikes a year and could afford to help this vital work. I am pleased that the ACU have appointed a professional PRO team, it might be a good idea to get together with the publicity officers from the TRF and BMF and see what can be done.

NEVER ALONE

The magazine *Which Bike?* has urged trail riders never to go trail riding alone. It is like some unwritten rule, though certainly not official TRF advice, and I would be the last person to endorse this rather nannying caution. Solo riding can often be the only choice and if you have some experience and ride sensibly there is nothing wrong with trail riding on your own; even in tough remote countryside such as mid-Wales and Cumbria. Modern trail bikes are extremely reliable and with common sense, a tool kit, a spare chain link and tube, the freedom of the trails are yours to enjoy whenever you wish.

LAND REGISTRY — WCA81

According to Berkshire County Council, applicants for a DMO can serve notices on landowners this way:

1. Go along to the Land Registry Office
2. Ask to see the 'Index Map'
3. Ascertain the registered title number of the land involved
4. Send the DMO notice to the local Land Registry Office with a covering letter and SAE and ask them to forward this to the registered landowner holding title of the land concerned.

Berkshire County Council say that, while the Council may agree to make a DMO on receipt of evidence for a DMO, it is more likely that the person will be asked to formally apply up to serving notices, etc., and going to the SoS if necessary.

Another example of opting out of their duty under Section 53 and making the poor public do all the work.

Thanks to Kate Clow for passing on papers from Berkshire.

NEW TRAIL BIKE PRICES (Recommended Retail – latest known prices)

A.J.S.	250 Trail	£1319	Kawasaki	KE100B3	£659
	360 Trail	£1368		KE125A11	£759
	450 Enduro	£1678		KE175D5	£799
				KLR250	£1549
				KL250C2	£989
B.M.W.	R80GS	£2874		KDX200	£1249
				KLR600	£1799
Beta	125 Rambler	£965	Morini	478 Sahara	£2095
B.S.A.	125 Tracker	£809	Suzuki	TS100ERZ	£729
	175 Tracker	£856		TS125N	£599
				TS125ERZ	£799
				TS125XUE	£929
			water cooled		
Honda	XL125R-C	£930		TS125XE	£949
	XL250R-E	£1398		(20 bhp)	
	XL600R-D	£1880		DR123SD	£859
	MTX125RWD	£998		TS185ERX	£799
	MTX200RWD	£1145		discounted to	£599
				DR600	£1899
Husqvarna	125WR	£1379	Yamaha	DT125LC	£959
	240WR	£1683		DT125LC	£989
	430WR	£1782		unrestricted	
				DT175	£835
				IT175J	£899
KTM	125 Enduro	£1649		IT200N	£1499
	250 Enduro	£1799		IT250L	£1769
	420 Enduro	£1799		IT490L	£1821
				TT600	£1993

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HONDA XL250R-E TEST REPORT by Rosemary Swindells

Honda's new XL250R-E is an updated version of the earlier R-C model and is far removed from the old 'S' model. Styling has closely followed moto cross development ... except where seat height is concerned and, unlike other modern trail machines, is a quite acceptable and relatively low 33". The ultra-modern and racy look of this new XL250 seems sadly to have gained it few admirers. Most adverse comments seeming to be due to the shape of the petrol tank which is now shorter and squarer than that used on the previous R-C model, and which looks more trail-like. Whilst having retained the 21" front wheel, the new XL is handicapped with a 17" rear wheel, once again restricting tyre choice. I feel this is worse than even the 23" front of the S model as it is the rear tyre which will make or break a machine's grip on the trail.

The most radical change to the XL250R-E is the engine which sees Honda's new radial 4-valve head layout – the RFVC as is stamped on the side of the cylinder head. The radial valve concept takes up less space in the combustion chamber, thus offering better and more efficient combustion. It also makes better use of the available space so that the largest possible valves can be used. Six rockers operate the opening/closing of these valves. Fuel mixture is fed via twin carburettors. One carburettor is used for low speed running to increase the speed of gas flow which gives better torque and throttle response at low revs. As the revs rise the second carb chimes in to give the effect of having one large carburettor. The choke lever is mounted to just one of the carburettors.

Initially, our test machine proved to be a rather unpredictable starter. I have more than a passing acquaintance of Honda's XLs, having owned three of varying capacities, and know that they can be pigs to start until you get to know them and their idiosyncrasies. Closer inspection of the 250's spark plug showed that the fuel mixture was rather on the weak side which could explain a reluctance to start from cold. We eventually beat the 250 into submission as, after a day's trail riding and a surprise first kick start by the expert boot of a Norton owner, the XL250 ceased to cause too much of a problem and fired up more easily. (I offer no explanation.) Once running, the engine ran smoothly throughout the rev range, the only problem being a slightly snatchy throttle response – possibly due to the engine running weak. We subsequently noticed a reluctance to start after the machine had been left standing for any length of time and also that our machine had a tendency to flood its left hand carburettor.

I was surprised how revvy the 250's motor felt; I was expecting more of a low revving relaxed motor. Instead, the 250's engine spends most of the time in 6000–8000 rev band and will not pull happily in top gear at anything less than 3000 rpm. The engine makes you feel as though you are riding fast even though a look at the speedo tells you you're not! And to be honest, the 250 doesn't 'feel' particularly powerful, although acceleration away from a standstill is impressive – warn any prospective pillion!

You would be right in thinking that such a motor would be hopeless in a trail machine where low down power is of paramount importance. Wrong! Yes, I too was surprised. In the low gears the 250 will plod along steadily at low revs. So steadily, in fact, that on one occasion it was left in gear on its stand (neutral was being elusive) and the bike just stood there, the back wheel slowly slipping round in the snow, the engine refusing to stall. Unfortunately, our test machine had an annoying flat spot just off tickover which could encourage stalling when trying to open the throttle too quickly; it also meant a lack of instant throttle response.

Such faults, however, are usually isolated to a particular machine rather than to the model. Although there is adequate low range power, I reckon the engine could be improved by a little more bottom end torque even at the expense of a little top end.

I was impressed by the very first mono-shock motorcycle I rode three years ago and the XL250R-E is no exception. The ride is soft but the damping is progressive, thereby negating any 'pogo stick' effect over bumps. On the trail the pro-link rides over varying surfaces better than the conventional twin shock set up which can have a tendency to kick out over excessively stoney ground. On the road, badly surfaced roads which can have my own trail bike nearly airborne were taken much more smoothly by the Honda's suspension.

In theory, the XL250's pro-link suspension unit is adjustable. There is a threaded collar on the shock absorber body which can be either screwed up or down to increase or decrease the spring pre-load. However, there was no toolkit supplied with the bike so it was not possible to see (a) if a tool for adjustment was supplied with the machine or (b) whether it was in fact possible to put theory into practice and adjust the suspension. The unit seems nigh on inaccessible being situated under the seat which is held on by the two bolts which secure the seat strap and two hefty bolts under the mudguard which bolt into the seat base; hardly a quick operation. There was no need to change the setting, in fact, as the suspension worked well for solo or two-up riding and never bottomed out, suspension travel being 195mm at the rear. The box section swinging arm is, surprisingly, only silver painted steel and not aluminium as I first thought.

Front suspension, giving 220mm of travel, is by telescopic air assisted forks of the uncoupled design, which I feel are best left well alone as one is working with such small amounts of air that it would be difficult to get each fork leg air pressure equal without the use of a special adaptor kit as is available for use on the Moto Guzzis. The forks are of a thicker and more sturdy design than those used on the S model and look strong enough to cope with 'off road' abuse. By the mere fact that the front suspension worked unobtrusively just goes to show that it must be good.

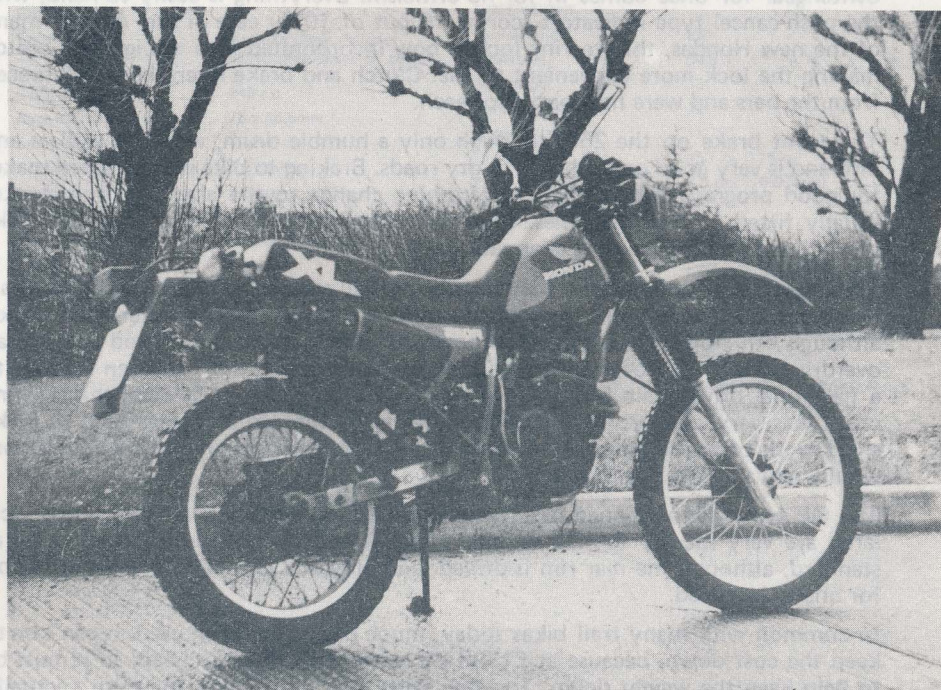
The XL250 is a compact machine, narrow across the frame with the engine well tucked in and, at around only 54" wheelbase, is relatively short making it easy to manoeuvre. The handlebars with their slightly turned down ends contribute to a very comfortable and relaxed riding position. Unlike many trail bikes which suffer from having a very cramped riding position by virtue of the fact that the footrests have to be high to give the ground clearance whilst the seat height has to be kept to a reasonable level, the Honda manages a very comfortable layout and, with a seat that you tend to sit into rather than on, makes long distance riding possible without painful consequences. It is also possible to take a pillion comfortably without becoming very good friends by the end of the journey!

Handling on the road is excellent in the trail bike league. Straight line and fast speed (over 80 mph) stability, positive if rather heavy steering combined with good suspension making it a very pleasant machine to ride. It also corners extremely well for a trail bike. When one is perched high on these machines it can sometimes feel rather precarious dropping into a corner, but on dry roads it was possible to throw the XL quite energetically through bends.

On the rough, over anything other than easier green lanes, I have to confess I found the 250 just too high for someone of my stature (or rather lack of it!). However, I don't think the average male would find too much problem, although the higher the seat height the less chance there is of being able to 'dab'. The heavier steering helped to stop any front end twitch over bumps, whilst the suspension and ground



Honda XL250R-E



clearance looked after any larger obstacles. I feel, though, that the front end is rather too heavy and would make it difficult to lighten the front when riding over small crevasses or larger boulders. All in all, though, an acceptable trail machine for taller folk.

(As an aside, for the serious trail rider, I personally think the too short lived and now discontinued XL185 was the best of the XL range, being of perfect weight/size/power configuration. At around 30 lbs lighter than the 250, the 185 had around the same performance of the 250 but was easier to manage on green lanes. Even today, three years after its demise, many TRF rides look more like 'XL185 Owners Club' outings; and with several people putting the old 185 engine into the XL125R frame, it would speak for itself that a smaller chassis is preferable.)

At long last we have seen an end to that affliction of 6 volt electrics with the XL250R. I could never see why a machine with the same engine and generator as a road model with 12 volt electrics had to be handicapped with a 6 volt system. It's not as though 6 volt electrical systems are cheaper these days. The lights on the XL250R are excellent and certainly the headlight is bright enough for the performance of the machine; even though the headlight is rectangular, a shape generally not considered as good as the more usual round. The small indicators work well and are sensibly rubber mounted at the rear and well tucked in under the handlebars at the front. The rear light is smaller than those that used to be fitted to trail machines and as such is not quite so vulnerable.

The small square clocks — speedo and tacho — are well protected behind the plastic headlight cowling and, until both cables broke, gave clear accurate readings. Well illuminated from behind, these clocks are easily read by day or night.

Switchgear for once comes in for no criticism. Everything is easily to hand, with the push-cancel type indicators scoring 10 out of 10 for ease of use. As with many of the new Hondas, the steering lock is now incorporated into the ignition switch making the lock more convenient to use. Clutch and brake levers were well spaced from the bars and were no trouble to reach.

The front brake on the 250, although only a humble drum, works as well as any disc and is very good on both wet or dry roads. Braking to bike weight/speed makes for good progressive braking — a refreshing change to the abysmal drum brakes usually fitted to trail machines. In contrast to the front, however, the rear brake was not too hot and was just adequate.

The gear change was smooth, the ratios being well spaced with three low ratio gears (good for trail riding) and three higher ratio gears (suitable for faster road work); although 6th (top) gear is none too powerful and could be considered more of an overdrive gear. I had been informed that our test machine had just been fitted with a new final drive chain but, although there was no excessive stretch, this 'O' ring chain was very clonky. The suspension travel of the pro-link does tend to make short work of wearing out a rear chain and maybe the addition of a chain tensioner would help alleviate chain snatch.

The OE tyres, as mentioned, are reasonable but I would advise anyone whose local lanes are very muddy to find an alternative. There are no security bolts fitted as standard, although the rear rim is drilled (and plugged) so there is at least provision for one to be fitted.

In common with many trail bikes today, much plastic has been used. It can't be to keep the cost down, because at £1398 I'd hardly call the XL cheap, so it must be to help keep the weight down. Together with alloy wheel rims there isn't actually

much that can rust on this machine ... except for the ubiquitous matt black exhaust system which, even at 3000 miles on the clock, was starting to rust. The general finish of the machine, though, is very good. I was pleased to see that fork gaiters have been fitted as standard issue, saving the forks much abuse. I also like the way everything removable is screwed on rather than just clipped or push-fitted to help save losing such items when riding over particularly bumpy ground. The black finish on the engine is of good quality and, what little paintwork there is, well finished. A standard issue small rear carrier, being an excellent addition especially when a tank bag, even of the small enduro type, would be impossible to fit as there is no top to the tank as such — the whole 'top' being taken up by a huge petrol filler opening. This rack also doubles up as a good rear grab point for heaving the machine out of the inevitable bog.

Over the test period the XL250 'grew' on me as I became more familiar with it and I thoroughly enjoyed riding this machine both on road and trail. However, I really cannot see what market Honda are aiming for with this model as trail bikes, particularly of 250c.c. and upwards are often used as touring machines as well as trail machines and I really cannot see this model fulfilling either role effectively. As a trail machine it is rather expensive and anyone wanting a 250 will probably opt for the enduro model XR250 which is not much more expensive (£26 plus car tax more at last count) and anyone wanting a touring machine is restricted to what luggage they can fit to the small rear carrier. I also feel that modern technology is a handicap for this model — two carbs to balance, a six rocker head to look after — it does all rather spell overkill to me for a humble single cylinder 250c.c. machine.

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE		DIMENSIONS	
Type	4 stroke single cylinder SOHC radial valve air cooled	Overall length	85"
Capacity	249 c.c.	Wheelbase	54.5"
Bore x stroke	75 x 56.5mm	Seat height	33"
Compression ratio	10.2:1	Handlebar width	32"
Carburation	2 x Keihin	Ground clearance	11.75"
Ignition	Electronic — CDI	Dry weight	253 lbs (115 kg)
bhp @ rpm	24.5 bhp @ 8000 rpm	Petrol tank capacity	2.3 gals (10.5 litres)
Torque	16.6 lbs/ft @ 7000 rpm	PERFORMANCE	
Gearbox	6 speed	Top speed	84 mph
Electrics (power source)	Alternator	Fuel Consumption	65 mpg (overall)
Battery	12 volt 4 amp hour	Guarantee	12 months/unlimited mileage
Headlight	35/35 watt	Price	£1398
CYCLE PARTS		Machine supplied by:	Honda (UK) Ltd., Power Road, Chiswick, London W4
Frame	Tubular — semi double cradle		
Suspension	Front	Telescopic — air assisted	
	Rear	Pro-link rising rate mono-shock	
Brakes	Front/rear	SLS drum/SLS drum	
Tyres	Front/rear	Yokohama Y969 — 3.00 x 21" Y969 — 4.60 x 17"	

**SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
19th JANUARY 1985**

1. The Secretary reported that the person approached as Patron had not accepted our offer. Several further names have been put forward.
2. The Treasurer said that he would be retiring at the end of this year's term of office. Nominations are invited and should be in writing to the Secretary to be voted on at the AGM.
3. The Secretary reported on his meeting with Peter Sheen on the MCA with regard to training and/or publicity for a Trail Bike Week Promotion. After discussion it was felt that the publicity might backfire and it was felt it would be better to let local groups make their own arrangements. A reply was still awaited from the MCA but a scheme would be put forward if the MCA would back the TRF.
4. Appreciation was given for all the work that Bill and Ann Riley had put in at the Larkhill Ranges Inquiry and for all the other members who had attended over the eight days. Any out of pocket expenses would be paid for out of the Fighting Fund. Brian Thompson was told that it was common courtesy to ask the intended recipient of an Honorary Membership before springing into print.
5. Any members wishing to organise a stand at the Trentham Dirt Bike Show 1985 should find out the cost and let the Secretary know before 18th May if possible.
6. There are three new TRF Groups forming — South Wales, Norfolk and Scarborough. More details will appear when known.
7. The 1985 TRF AGM may be held at the National Motorcycle Museum but if not available then Northampton Group would be hosts. Possible date — either 13th or 20th October.
8. Adverse publicity appearing in local newspapers should be replied to by individuals, but if any help is required a copy should be sent to (or phoned through to) the Press Officer, Alan Kind IMMEDIATELY. (Tel: 0632 364082).

HOT TIPS!

Hot tip for XL250/500S owners. The RS250 alternator and flywheel bolt straight on; I got one from a breakers for about £30 complete with rectifier, giving a 180 watt, 12 volt conversion and demon lights.

Paul Blezzard, London

Always replace the wheel bearings of the XL185 with double sealed ones (suffixed 2RS) as the originals are sealed on the outside only.

Ed Wilkinson, Bradford

Don't buy your wheel bearings from a bike shop. Make a note of the number on the bearing and buy from a local bearing shop for about half the price.

Dave Swindells, Sheffield

Got any hints or tips about trail riding, bike maintenance, etc. that you think would be useful to other members? Then send them in to me — *Rosie*

A WEEKEND WITH DICK AND JEAN SUTTON

I had often pondered over the Suttons' ad. in our magazine and studied the near-ideal location of their home on sheet 148, so when an opportunity arose to join a group for a weekend's riding in what is surely the British trail riders' Utopia, I leapt at the chance.

We travelled to Wales on the Friday evening, arriving in total darkness and with little time to do anything other than unload and store the bikes for the night in the large barn and then nip down to the village pub for the last pint.

Up at 8.00 a.m. on the Saturday morning and Jean's excellent traditional breakfast gave us all an opportunity to meet each other properly.

The day's ride was to be based on the nearby Monks Trod and Strata Florida trails and Dick was able to draw on his comprehensive knowledge of the area to advise us on the best connecting lanes to use. These trails are so well known that they certainly need no description from a mere novice — save to say that the Trod has deteriorated quite a bit since the time I had ridden it at the end of last year's long dry summer and 'Florida' was suitably challenging — with the rider crossings well above welly — to say the least!

Although we'd had an adequate pub lunch in Ffair Rhos, we returned to the farm ravenous and once again Jean proved how much an essential part of the team she is by serving a superb three-course dinner over which the day's exploits were recounted enthusiastically to our hosts. A pint to round off a perfect day? No ... first it was compulsory maintenance. Our trusty heaps were wheeled in one by one into a well equipped workshop (complete with goats) and Dick, resplendent in his old Triumph overalls, kept a watchful eye on us as we began work. A new gearbox sprocket for the XR250; a secondhand knobby for the KLR600 (the Trod on standard Jap trail tyres was just too much); a new lever for the PE400 ... and so on, all supplied at modest cost by courtesy of the Dick Sutton Spares Dept. It seemed Dick could provide anything from a frame downwards!

Sunday morning dawned the perfect day for trail riding — clear blue skies, not a breath of wind and the going firmed up by a heavy frost. We'd had little difficulty the evening before in persuading Dick to act as our guide and a feeling of anticipation arose inside me as we followed his XR200 out of the farmyard. It is possible to trail ride right from the Sutton's doorstep and Dick's relationship with neighbouring landowners is such that he was able to put together a unique day's riding, utilising a good many trails which don't appear on any OS sheet. A local farmer even joined our group and the ensuing ride was not only varied and challenging but went through perhaps the most beautiful scenery that I have ever experienced. We rode for miles in dense forests, up hill and down dale, through streams, bogs and at one time even a lake. Everything, in fact, except tarmac!

After four hours or so, we were seemingly miles from civilisation and a definite thirst was beginning to rise. Words like 'parched' and 'pint' could be overheard in conversations as closing time neared. Suddenly a tarmac road appeared and, with Dick's directions, it was every man for himself. The PE chose this inopportune moment to eject its new owner, and the slight delay meant that we were dumping our bikes in the car park of a likely looking hostelry about five minutes the wrong side of closing time. A rather muddy, extremely thirsty but very hopeful band followed our leader inside. Fortunately, Dick knew the landlady and we were soon washing down various permutations of pie, chips and veg. with a pint whilst watching a Geraint Jones video on the bar room telly.

The return ride was equally splendid – though somewhat foreshortened because of the rapidly fading light. Indeed my own ride was foreshortened quite a bit – the 185 ran out of sparks in a muddy but hospitable farmyard and I had to be towed for the last ten miles.

After yet another of Dick's compulsory mugs of tea, bikes and bags were reluctantly packed for the homeward journey. Most of the group were regular visitors to the Suttons' home. And me? Well, I'm converted – it must surely be the Mecca of British Trail Riding.

Vince Bottomley, Denshaw, Oldham

BUILD YOUR OWN TRAIL BIKE based on a Honda XL185 and CR125

We have been fortunate to be in the position to buy a 1977 model Honda CR125 frame, forks, rear shocks, petrol tank, seat and mudguards for £50; all still crated. The 1977 motocrosser provides a nice balance between the old twin shock XR200 and the pro-link XR200 – subject, of course, to an XR200 motor.

The XL185 suffered from a spindly front end, whilst the pro-link XR200 seemed to make things a little too easy and I could never come to terms with its reluctance to tackle steep rock climbs at a sensible speed. Into this void enters the CR125 frame, fitted with wheels and engine from the XL185, which in my case was a non running field bike with a log book costing £35. The CR frame needed slight hacking and welding, but working on clean new components is something else! The XL185 motor was a runner after a top and strip down and the project was completed after eight weeks of odd hours costing £170, which included MOT and tax.

It has proved an excellent green laning, enduro bike – please note that the two are entirely separate. I am on the lanes to relax, step back in time and blend in with and enjoy the scenery. The occasional enduro is the time and place for a good thrash.

I enjoy the CR far more than the XL185, its versatility was superior to my pro-link (which was sold giving me a cash surplus to fund further projects). The front end of the CR makes the bike handle well and, in fact, it weighs in lighter than pro-link XR200.

The money from the sale of the pro-link was put towards uprating the 185 engine to XR specification. An XR200 piston (13101-446-770) £16.13 with rings (13011-446-811) £10.81 was fitted into the 185 barrel. There is no appreciable difference between the barrels, the crankcase mouth diameters being the same. Honda do not list oversize pistons for the XR200 so don't neglect the piston rings. An XR200 barrel costs £79.14 compared with an XL185 barrel at £75.63 so it is well worth putting by a second hand barrel. The XR200 piston makes a considerable difference; the higher compression giving a definite boost.

The large gap between first and second gear caused me embarrassment in the Brinks Enduro so a secondhand gear cluster from an XL125R was fitted (the mainshaft needs careful shimming), the extra gear and closer spacing making the modification well worth £15. In this state it skipped around three laps of the Scarborough November Clubmans Delight but it kept jumping out of second gear into neutral. Inspection of the gear index plate showed two types of indicate plate; one with beefed up cam height and mine with low cam height. With a higher profile cam fitted the lurching over the handlebars ceased.

The next stage was to price an XR200 camshaft: £27 (1984 price) (14101-446) which was amazingly cheap – almost half the price I would have expected it to be. Calculations showed no greater lift, just an extra 5° opening and 5° before closing. With the cam fitted there was only a little benefit to engine characteristics.

The carb had already been jetted up from 102 to 115, so to complete the conversion to 200 spec a larger carb was priced up. Honda wanted £70 plus for an XR200 carb which was considered excessive when a screw top Honda 750 carb was offered for free (being a regular buyer of expensive Honda parts does have hidden benefits!) A throttle stop had to be fitted and the slide ground to suit, plus the rod operation had to be converted to cable operation. The tap needed for this thread is an M6 0.75 pitch. Jetted at 125 it ticked over well (there is nothing worse than a bike that keeps stalling) and pulled cleanly through the rev change.

The CR200 appears to have reached the pinnacle of human development; green laning every weekend it is economical, quiet, quite quick and I can lift it out of almost any bog.

A Honda 250/Husqvarna framed special is now under preparation and would seem set to take High Nun House and the Gulley by storm sometime in the early summer, before things dry out too much.

(N.B. All Honda prices are exclusive of VAT and correct at 14th February 1985)

Changing the subject, Gordon Thackray has mentioned his willingness to lead groups into the Dales and I would like to offer myself as a guide to small groups on a reciprocal basis. Whilst being led is not the ideal way to learn routes, there are benefits to being led by someone who knows the patch for outweights struggling through a marked-up mark, particularly when its raining.

*Bob McConnell, 28 Ringwood Drive, Leeds LS14 1AP
Telephone: Leeds 657365*

Toghill Run, Avon - Bristol Group

I had looked forward with keen anticipation to this run north of Bath and I was not disappointed. The promise of new sections of bridleway and footpath ridden by permission were delivered for our delight and once more Piple Bottom resounded to engine roar and that special 'zizzing' sound of slipping rubber on wet rock.

The spacious car park at the top of Toghill proved to be an excellent starting point for the run – the first to start on the new 9.30 a.m. schedule, though Pete Taylor only just made it.

We're off, all 18 of us! Doynton Lane I, below the road, made a nice start. Doynton Lane II, above the road with colourful deep leaf mould and rock outcrop climbed to an exit via the farmer's field. Hamswell showed the going would be gooey – nice after the dust of last summer. Langridge to Lansdown by the lane to the south of the old battlefield is always a pleasure. Down to Grandmothers Rocks and a very impressive display of self imposed discipline as every one of the 18 engines cut as they sighted a lass on a horse.

Upton Cheney and back onto the south side of Lansdown via Hanging Hill where Steve collected the largest amount of old wire around his rear wheel I have ever seen. A pause at 11.00 a.m. then via the golf course to North Stoke, Swineford and the A431 via another negotiated exit. West into Bitton where we did a new lane which John Davey had found for us. By now we had done eight lanes in 12 miles, three of them brand new in what one might well have thought was well used territory – the day was shaping up nicely.

And so to Piple Bottom; to those who don't know it, it is an old trials hill of the 50s and about as severe as Pipehouse, and it provided the expected thrills; looping bikes, with or without petrol tank — Ian has a very quickly detachable system — heaving and shoving, cheers of derision and praise. Finally the nostalgic roar of a four stroke being 'blasted' as Martin cleared the final section in grand style to warm applause.

"I'm knackered, how far is the pub?" asked Grenville.

"Good question", replied Richard in a tone that indicated that for once he wasn't kidding. Oh Lord, but all was well and the Rose and Crown in Upper Weston did us proud.

We then 'road' to the north east of Bath via the Royal Crescent for our touch of culture. Bannerdown was tough for those on trials tyres but St Catherine had everybody on their knees, ears, back, or any other position you care to name. Grand charges turned into spinning stalls. It must have taken 45 minutes to get everyone up.

On to Ashwick Grange, Rudloe, Thickwood, Evridge Manor and Slaughterford, now seen completely differently through the gloom as steam and smoke cut by headlight beams. The finale at Star Bottom was achieved in total darkness. Magic. Thanks for the planning to Richard and Steve.

Dave Giles, Bristol TRF Group



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DERBYSHIRE and SOUTH YORKSHIRE GROUP NEWS

We held our AGM on 12th February. It was reported that 25 people had rejoined out of last year's 38. The RoW Officers said that apart from some work on Ulley Beeches, no lane clearance had been necessary.

The cast for 1985 now stands as:—

Ian Dunsire
Brian Thompson
Dave Bonsall
Kevin Thackery
John Blackburn
Harry Johnson
Ian Satterthwaite
Ann Stevenson

Chairman
President
Group Representative
Fund Raising Officer
Derbyshire RoW Officer
South Yorkshire RoW Officer
Lane Clearance Officer
Entertainments Officer

The Group thanked Ian Dunsire for his many years as our Group Rep.

Our plans for 1985 include a treasure hunt, trials evening and bar-b-que. It was suggested that we hold impromptu observed sections on more difficult stretches of lanes. Sounds like a good opportunity for those with cameras. We will also be organising more trail riding weekends in other parts of the country as these are quite popular.

It was suggested that we should allot some time during meetings to the subject of rights of way, e.g. how to deal with obstructions, local problems, 'confrontations', principles of RoW work, etc. It promises to be a good year.

On a sour note, Martyn Perkins' SP370 was stolen a few days before our meeting. The registration is **DMG 206V**. If anyone has any information (or maybe you've been offered some cheap SP spares) please ring Martyn on 0742 - 556996.

Ann Stevenson, Entertainments Officer

On behalf of the Group and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian Dunsire for all the work and encouragement he has given us during the past eight years he has been Group Representative but, as the Chairman of our local Group, he can continue to give us his experience and knowledge in matters concerning the TRF.

With thanks.

Dave Bonsall

South Yorkshire and Derbyshire TRF Group Rep.

READING to WALES — ROMAN STYLE

It never ceases to amaze me what can be discussed and decided upon after the fourth pint at the local group meeting.

The Loddon Vale Group were discussing the next twelve months official monthly rides and weekends away when the subject of 'Epic Trail Rides' was broached. Personally, I feel our biggest problem in the Thames Valley is large group turnouts when advance details are given. This should be avoided by all possible means since we have no answering machinery to the RA Press Releases such as "Bikers wreck the Beacons" and "Hoardes hit the hills" which would surely follow. These facts alone are sufficient to divorce me from such proceedings, whether rightful or not.

However, the idea of duplicating Mark Williams' South-North Wales route has been with me for some time, especially since it was conceivable to join long local RUPPs with those in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire to arrive at Swansea from Reading (our base) without many tarmac miles. With this in mind, I put it forward to replace our annual Brecon weekend.

A number of riders agreed and planning went ahead; maps bought and borrowed, local groups consulted and the idea of sponsorship came and went. Finally, on the appointed day, six riders appeared at the Streatley end of the Great Ridgeway to complete the first leg of our four days ride; the least pleasant part as it transpired. Our machines being — Honda XR200 (4), Honda XL185 (1) and Suzuki DR400 (1). Armed with eight OS maps clearly marked, the day was hot, dry and sunny — not the best conditions for this dusty open road. The ruts were deep and extremely hard, but eventually Hackpen Hill came and went, as did Wansdike and lanes around Calne. After an excellent lunch we were at the Southern Foss Gate and two hours later we rested at RAF Kemble. "No, you can't cross" was the earlier reaction when I had rung and written for permission, so we backtracked by road into Stroud (our longest tarmac route) for Thursday night.

Friday dawned cool and overcast and it drizzled as we left for the Forest of Dean. After four hours of very pleasant riding the magnificent Tintern Abbey ruins showed through the trees bathed in sunlight. By road then to Abergavenny, taking in a few short lanes on the way to the Black Mountains, the first of Mynydd Ddu and infamous Grwyne Fawr down into Talgarth. Our timetable prohibited any riding further south so we decided to complete our journey to the Beacons Guest House in Brecon (our base for the weekend) by minor road and local lanes, arriving about 7.30 p.m. The trek was over!!

Total damage — one torn rucksack strap, some injured pride!

Total distance — almost 200 miles (less than 50 tarmac)

Friday night saw seven more Loddon Vale lands complete the party which then split into three groups for the usual fun and spectacular riding for which this area is renowned.

The groups left on Saturday morning with one 'rookie' in each party in cloudy conditions (the beer!). These small groups changed leaders as the day progressed and a routine developed for passing gates and spotting the correct route. Friendly chats to farmers, shepherds and horse riders offset the resentment we experienced from those on foot.

The weekend was rounded off nicely by the excellent meals and accommodation provided by the Smith family at the Beacons Guest House and the facilities offered to us.

Colin Patient
Loddon Vale Group

BRIEF GUIDE TO RIGHTS OF WAY Issued by Brian Thompson

PART I

WHAT IS A BRIDLEWAY?

A public bridleway is a right of way on foot and horse but without prejudice as to any other rights (Section 56 WCA81). Section 30 Countryside Act 1968 allows cycles to use bridleways.

WHAT IS A RUPP? (Road Used as a Public Path)

A right of way on foot and horse, but without prejudice as to other rights (Section 56 WCA81). Often regarded as having vehicular rights which is not strictly true. RUPPs *may* have vehicular rights but this must be tested per Section 54 WCA81 and becomes either byway, bridleway or footpath. Test is, do vehicular rights exist? RUPPs are only shown on Definitive Maps where Special Reviews under Countryside Act 1968 have not been carried out. Most RUPPs, however, do carry evidence of vehicular rights and this should be presented to the highest authority. The admitted confusion surrounding RUPPs will eventually be cleared up when all RUPPs disappear from Definitive Maps.

WHAT IS A BYWAY?

Correct title is Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). Conclusive vehicular rights exist (Section 56 WCA81). No duty to maintain with metalled surface. Subject to Traffic Orders.

CAN MOTOR VEHICLES USE FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS?

No. It is an offence per Section 36 Road Traffic Act 1972. (This Section also includes open moorland.) However, it is not an offence if the landowner gives permission or the user has good evidence of vehicular rights which would satisfy a court of law.

WHAT ABOUT EVIDENCE?

Twenty years user evidence per Section 31 Highways Act 1980 deems the way to have a "presumption of dedication" as a public highway. Such use should be continuous and at least once per year without challenge or hindrance. Applies to foot, horse and vehicular, but not cycles. User evidence less than twenty years is also admissible under Common Law but does not carry the force as statutory Section 31 evidence. In *R v Petrie 1855*, a period of six to eight years was accepted. In *Rugby v Merryweather 1790*, Lord Kenyon held that six years was sufficient and *Jarvis v Dean 1826* accepted a period of four or five years user evidence.

The number of persons sufficient to establish user evidence is one or two per Lord Campbell in *R v South Eastern Railway Co. 1850*. In practice, up to six persons is the most practical that can be presented to an inquiry or court in view of the cross examination and length of time available.

WHAT ABOUT DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE?

Admissible under Section 32 of Highways Act 1980 which says that a court, etc. must take into account any map, plan or history or other relevant document tendered in evidence in determining the status of a highway.

Evidence such as pre-1835 maps by Greenwood c1825, John Tuke c1798 and First Edition Ordnance Survey Maps from 1800 to 1860. Facsimile copies of these first edition maps are available from David & Charles, Newton Abbot, Devon, £2.50 each. Copies of other pre-1835 maps are available from county archives.

Enclosure Awards and Tithe maps are also first class evidence to determine the status of highways and can be seen in archives. Railway Plans and Finance Act 1910 papers are also useful.

WHAT IS AN UNCLASSIFIED COUNTRY ROAD? (Not shown on Definitive Maps)

On county highways map per Highways Act 1980 Section 36. Usually accepted as carriageways. Shown on most Ordnance Survey Maps as a 'white road' and sometimes dual bridleway/RUPP status.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT PLOUGHED WAYS?

To be blunt, very little. Most highway authorities now admit that current legislation is defective and inadequate. A review of ploughing legislation is now under way and improvements should be made fairly soon. Section 134 of Highways Act 1980 as amended by Section 61 of the WCA81 requires the farmer to make good the surface within two weeks or as soon as reasonably convenient. It is an offence not to do so. It is unlawful to plough a headland path, a byway or RUPP, but many are permanently ploughed and we are the first to admit that the extent of ploughed out public rights of way is a major problem. You should complain in writing to the highway authority headed Section 130, Highways Act 1980. There is no right to prosecute except by councils.



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LAKE WINDERMERE. B&B, 26 separate beds, doubles/singles, colour TV, lounge, ale house 20 yards. Yard to lock up 12 bikes. Ample car and trailer parking. B&B £6.75, evening meal by arrangement £4.25. Late and early season reductions for groups of 8 or more persons, 2 nights or over. Brendan Chase, Colledge Road, Windermere, Cumbria LA23 1BU. Tel: 096 62 5638.

Beacons Guest House. B&B & EM £10.50. 17 separate beds. Doubles and singles. Colour TV, Lounge, Bathroom. Two showers. Licenced. Private car park – 16 Bridge Street, Powys. Telephone: (0874) 3339. R.W. Smith.

SWALEDALE FARMHOUSE ACCOMMODATION. On Pennine Way between Keld and Tan Hill. B&B £6, B&B & EM £8.50. Eddie and Sheila Whittingham, Frith Lodge, Low Frith, Near Keld, Richmond, North Yorks. Tel: Richmond 86489.

CLOTHING

BARBOUR SUITS: A5 Gold Medal Jacket £47.95, A7 Inter-Jacket £51.75, A8 International Trousers £34.50. 10% discount to TRF members.

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COPY DATE FOR BULLETIN 108

22nd APRIL 1985

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP**LOCAL GROUP MEETINGS****Group and Group Rep.****Pie and Pint Night Venue****BOURNEMOUTH & POOLE**

Keith Cockrell, 'The Bungalow'
Winterbourne Kingston
Near Bere Regis, Dorset

1st Tuesday — Dorset Soldier
Corfe Mullen

BRISTOL

Julian Dagger, 2nd Floor Flat.
6 Marlborough Street, Bath, Avon
Tel: Bath 333667

2nd Mondays
White Hart, Brislington Hill
Brislington, Bristol

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Hugh Mason, 3 The Green, Haddenham
Ely, Cambs. Tel: 0353 740534

1st Monday of the month — The Falcon
Mill Road, Buckden, Huntingdonshire

CHESHIRE

John Ward, 11 Fern Hill
Mellor, Stockport SK6 5AN

1st Thursday — The Robin Hood, Buxton
Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

CUMBRIA

Pete Deeley, Pine Rigg, Loughrigg
Ambleside, Cumbria. Tel: Ambleside 3050

Golden Lion, Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Ian Dunsire, 1 Lodge Drive, Harley
Rotherham, S.Yorks. Tel: Barnsley 742475

2nd & 4th Tuesdays—The Victoria Hotel
248 Neepsend Lane, Sheffield

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery
28 The Woodcroft, Diseworth
Derbyshire. Tel: Derby 810059

2nd Wednesday — Three Horseshoes
Hemington, Leicestershire
(near Castle Donnington)

EAST YORKSHIRE

Howard Wadsworth
7 Hammond Road, Knottingley
WF11 0HL

2nd & 4th Wednesdays
Kellingley Social Centre
Knottingley

ESSEX

Dave Andrews, 123 Burrow Road
Chigwell, Essex

Last Tuesday — Warley Sports Centre
Holdnes Wood, Warley Gap. Brentwood

EXMOOR

Roy Sraffton
11 Lansdowne Road
Taunton. Tel: 54386

Last Monday of each month
The Stagecoach P.H., Castle Bow
Taunton (Centre)

FYLDE COAST

Russell Clark
133 St Andrews Road South
Lancs. FY8 1YB Tel: Blackpool 33060

Every Tuesday except 1st
Lions Sports Club
Lytham St Annes

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Clive Baxter
29 Linnet Close, Gloucester GL4 9XA
Tel: 0452 32935

1st Monday —
Raglan Arms
Conduit Street, Gloucester

HERTFORDSHIRE

Paul Richardson, 16 Bronte Crescent
Hemel Hempstead, Herts.
Tel: Hemel Hempstead 41136

1st Wednesday —
Sow and Piglets
Toddington, Beds.

LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, 6 Briars Lane, Lathom,
Ormskirk, Lancs.

1st Tuesday — The Hind's Head,
Charnock Richard, Chorley, Lancs.

LODDON VALE

John Holloway, 25 Pheasant Close
Winnersh, Reading, Berks.
Tel: Reading 785995

2nd Thursday — The Lamb
Theale, Nr. Reading, Berks.

NORTH MIDLANDS

Bruce Roberts, Sonwell House
Fountain Square, Youlegreave
Nr. Bakewell, Derbys.

1st Tuesday — Jervis Arms
Onecote, Nr. Leek, Staffs.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Ken Canham, 'Overdale'
Woodside Villas, Hexham, Northumberland

3rd Tuesday —
Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

NORTH WALES

Stan Whitaker, 15 Wedgewood Heights
Holywell, Clywd

1st Wednesday — The Fox & Grapes
Hawarden, Clwd (nr Queensferry & Mold)

NORTH WEST LONDON

Roger Newark, 76 Hale Grove Gardens
Mill Hill, London NW7 Tel: 01-959 2386

1st Wednesday —
Sow and Piglets, Toddington, Beds.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

T. Thornell, 38 Woodlands Grove
Harrogate. Tel: 888191

2nd & 4th Tuesdays — Prince of Wales
Starbeck, Harrogate

SHROPSHIRE

Paul Kingston, 58 St Michael's Close
Madeley, Telford, Shropshire
Tel: 0952 583812

Last Wednesday of month (except Dec.)
Bell Inn, Cross Houses

SOUTH EAST

Steve Neville, 115 Ifield Way
Gravesend. Tel: 57061

2nd Tuesday —
The White Swan, Crayford

SOUTHERN

Peter Wildsmith, 5 Meynell Close,
Eastleigh, Hants. SO5 4DZ

3rd Tuesday — The Woodman Inn, Lower
Upham (on A333 nr. Bishops Waltham)

SUSSEX

John Penfold, 'Marriners'
Nyton Road, Aidingbourne
Chichester. Tel: Eastergate 3036

Contact John (every other month —
i.e. February, April, June, etc.)
Hassocks Hotel, Hassocks, Mid Sussex

TEESIDE

Leo Crone, 35 Flamingo Close
Darlington. Tel: Darlington 282671

1st Wednesday — The Station Hotel
Kirby, near Stokesley

THAMES VALLEY

Terry Jolley, 49 Herondale
Addlestone, Surrey

3rd Monday — District Arms
Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middlesex

WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, 89 Blackfriars
Rushden, Northamptonshire
Tel: Rushden 313816

1st & 3rd Thursday —
Scott Bader Club House (opp. Parish
Church), Wollaston, near Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS

Albert Billington, 171 Valley Road
Solihull, W.Midlands B92 9AY
Tel: 021-743 5801

1st & 3rd Wednesdays —
King George V Memorial Hall, Stratford
Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull

WEST YORKSHIRE

W. John Netherwood, The Barn
Fulstone New Mill, Huddersfield
Tel: Holmfirth 5492

1st & 3rd Mondays —
Frizinghall Conservative Club
Off Manningham Lane, Bradford

WEST WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, 141 Bath Road
Bradford on Avon. Tel: 3811

1st Tuesday in month — The Old Bear
Staverton, Near Trowbridge, Wilts.

WYVERN

Gwyn James, 20 Compton Road
Wolverhampton WV3 9PH
Tel: 0902 771137

Every Thursday 8.20 p.m.
Hill & Cakemore Ex-Serviceman's Club
Victoria Road, Blackheath, W.Midlands