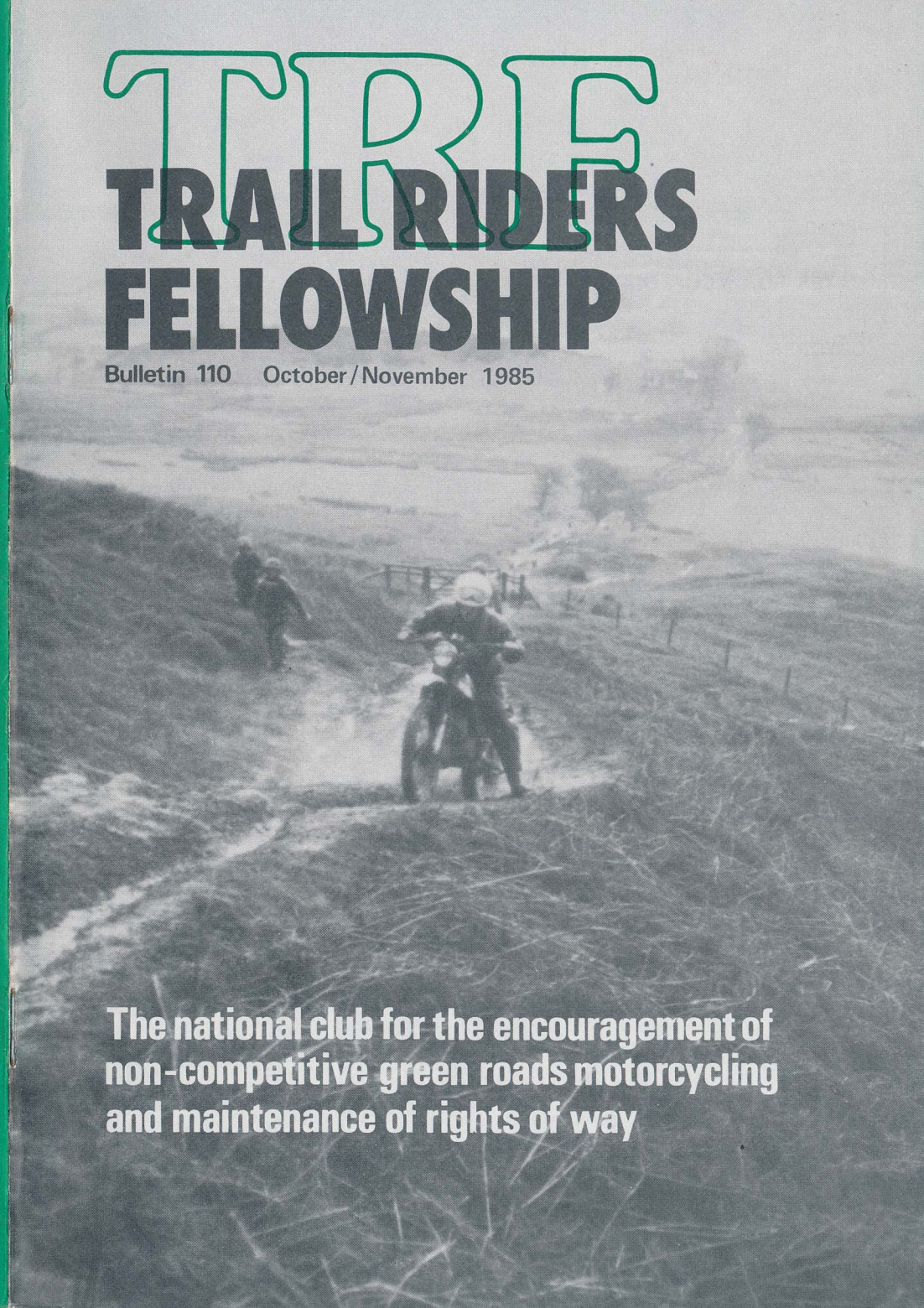
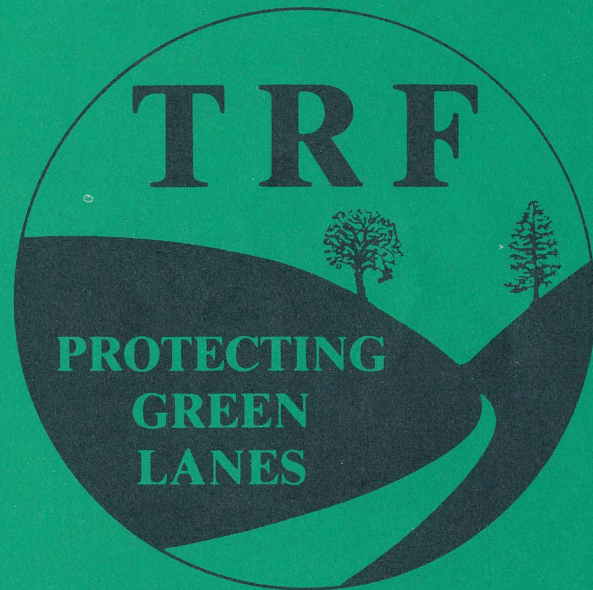


# TRE TRAILRIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 110 October/November 1985



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

# TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

BULLETIN No. 110

October/November

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### OCTOBER

- Sunday 6th Teeside Group. 9.00 a.m. Richmond town square. Trails include Fremington Edge, Stalling Busk, Buckden, Foxup Moor. Contact Leo Crone.
- Sunday 13th West Yorkshire Group. Scarborough Run. Contact Jim Souter.
- Sunday 20th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. National Motorcycle Museum, Bickenhall, near the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.
- Sunday 20th Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Group. Bawtry Run. Contact: Dave Bonsall, Group Rep.

### NOVEMBER

- Sunday 3rd Teeside Group Run. 10.00 a.m. Stokesly town square. Depending on conditions (if above freezing) full day on some of North Yorkshire's finest. Contact: Leo Crone, Group Rep.
- Sunday 10th West Yorkshire Group. Pie Hall Run. Contact: Jim Souter, Tel: Bradford 611789.
- Sunday 17th Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Group. Baslow Run. Contact: Dave Bonsall.

### DECEMBER

- Sunday 8th West Yorkshire Group. Bingley Run. 10.00 a.m. Library Car Park. Contact: Jim Souter.
- Sunday 29th Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Group. Totley "Shake up the Turkey" Run. Contact: Dave Bonsall.

Cover Photo — Cold Moor (The Packhorse)  
Courtesy of Mike Cowling

*Editor & Distribution*  
Rosemary Swindells  
13 Brandsmere Drive  
Woodsetts, Worksop S81 8QN

*National Secretary*  
John Higgin  
11 Askew Drive  
Reading, Berks. RG7 1HG

*Membership Secretary*  
Ian Thompson  
Glebe House, The Square  
St Columb Minor  
Newquay, Cornwall TR7 3HD

Tel: (0734) 882781

Tel: (06373) 2813

## JOHN HOLLOWAY

It was with great sadness that I heard of the death of the Chairman of the Loddon Vale Group of the TRF. It is some four years ago that I had a telephone call from a potential member who had purchased a 'field' bike, got fed up with riding round his local field, and wanted wider horizons. He joined us and soon helped to set up a new group at Reading which became the Loddon Vale Group. He was elected Chairman at our first AGM and, although he loved doing it, because of calls of business and family we had to persuade him to take the job again for the next three years. His remarks of "that's democracy in action" when there was silence in the meeting and his famous shout of "Shut up Beesley" will never be forgotten.

John was very decisive and lived life to the full. He had troubles — don't we all? — but he never burdened us with them, and I hope that he got as much out of trail riding as his companions got out of his company. All our condolences go to Elaine, his wife, Steve, his brother, his children, especially Glen who joined him at Tweseldown, and the rest of the family.

*John Higgin*



## EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

Apologies first off for the late arrival of your last *Bulletin*, but even Editors have holidays sometimes!

Trail riding has once again been in the news over the summer with MCN rocking the boat with their heavy handed style of testing XT Yamahas through the Peak District. Blasting along all manner of lanes, not knowing their legal status is not really the best way to make friends and influence people in these highly sensitive National Parks. It wouldn't have taken much organisation to have contacted the local TRF Group who could either have provided leaders or at least ensured the riders knew the legal green lanes in the area. Dave Bonsall, TRF Group Rep. for Derbyshire and South Yorkshire wrote a suitable letter of disgust to the paper.

John Higgin managed a piece in the *Times* colour supplement in August regarding the Ridgeway. Whilst it may not have been the most flattering of articles, at least it put over the point that it is the agricultural vehicles that are responsible for the worst of the lane damage, not the motorcycles.

And finally to the *Byways and Bridleways Trust Journal* who, in the first of a series of profiles on BBT members, featured Bill Riley, Group Rep. and Rights of Way Officer for the West Wiltshire TRF Group.

Thankfully the TRF will soon be represented again in the House of Lords with the acceptance of Lord David Strathcarron to be our Patron; to be formally voted in at the AGM on Sunday 20th October. So why not make a day of it: support the TRF AGM, meet our new Patron and visit the National Motorcycle Museum.

Those of you who like to keep things in neat array and have so far failed to do so with the *Bulletin* can now relax. Just send £3 per binder for a hardback A5 system of binding two years' magazines in a neat plastic binder. John Higgin hopes to have these in stock at 11 Askew Drive, Spencers Wood, Reading RG7 1HG by the time you receive this *Bulletin*. Cheques, etc. made payable to the Trail Riders Fellowship.

## TREASURER'S BITS AND PIECES

I am stepping down as Treasurer at the forthcoming AGM in order to spend more time dealing with local rights of way matters, which I have somewhat neglected for the past three years. If anyone is interested in this important but not too onerous job, please don't hesitate to contact me for more details.

### Stationery and Regalia

The following items are available from me:—

1. TRF logo waterproof stickers. 5p each plus SAE.
2. TRF logo cloth/thermographic sew-on badges. Should be durable on muddy jackets! £1 each plus SAE.
3. TRF 'Visiting Card' for handing out to walkers, farmers, etc. in case of difficulties; it explains who we are and what we are about. £7 per 100, including P&P.
4. TRF headed paper and compliments slips. Free to all officials of the TRF for external communications.

All the above items will be available at the AGM.

*Richard Marshall, 1 Burlington Close, Breaston, Derby*

# Sammy Miller POWER-PLUS SILENCERS

NEW MILTON, HAMPSHIRE, 0425 616446

SUZUKI SP370-400

SUZUKI DR400

£49.85

£45.00

COMPLETE SYST.



HONDA XL100S, 125, 185, 250S YAM XT125

AUXILIARY SILENCERS

£45.00

FANTIC 200/240 YAM TY175 DT 175 MX £19.55



YAM XT250, 500, KAW KL250

SILENCER ONLY

TENSIONERS

Rear Tensioner to prolong chain life

Available for

Buitaco / Montesa / Ossa / Fantic

Honda TL / Yamaha YT 175

All £7.47 inc. P&P & VAT

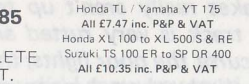
Honda XL 100 to XL 500 S & RE

Suzuki TL 100 ER to SP DR 400

All £10.35 inc. P&P & VAT

£49.85

COMPLETE SYST.



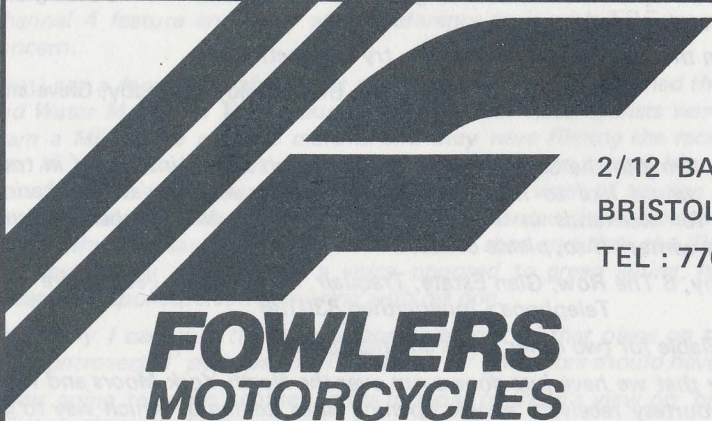
BAR BRACES £4.60 inc P&P + VAT

BAR PADS

£4.60 inc P&P + VAT

BELT BAGS

£5.20 inc P&P + VAT



2/12 BATH ROAD  
BRISTOL  
TEL : 770466

## FOWLERS MOTORCYCLES

HONDA	XR250RF	£1,295
YAMAHA	IT200	£1,295
YAMAHA	TY250	£679
YAMAHA	YZ100J	£499
YAMAHA	YZ125L	£899
SUZUKI	RM125E	£999

WHITE POWER SERVICE CENTRE

HUGE STOCK OF ACCESSORIES FOR THE OFF ROAD RIDER  
IT'S WORTH A VISIT

## LETTERS

*I am writing as a member to enquire whether anyone in East Sussex ever goes trail riding? I see tracks on my favourite trails so I know somebody does. Trail riding alone can be, and is, great but it's reassuring to watch others fall off too; I'm sure you all know what I mean. Please give me a call next time you are going trailing, I'd certainly appreciate it.*

*Could anyone please advise on how to convert feed wire to rear and brake light wire on a DT250 Yamaha; also how to convert this machine to petrol running and the oil tank to chain lube?*

*Finally, any suggestions on an 'ideal' sprocket match to get 60 mph cruising on the road yet reasonable torque to get through the mud?*

Ben Matted, 11 Portland Terrace, South Heighton  
Newhaven, East Sussex. Tel: (0273) 516889

*My mate and I sometimes trail ride to the pub; the route takes us down a muddy hill where my brakes really aren't up to it, and over a narrow bridge, balancing precariously. The track is very rutted and the bikes bounce along merrily into a dark wood and I curse the poor lights; the tyres aren't up to much either. The next hazard is a steep climb where I moan about the lack of power — it's not what it was, that's for sure.*

*Then a quiet country lane leads us to "The Fox Covert" and a chance to recover and discuss various topics such as how to get a lighter pedal bike with more gears and good lights, etc!*

*The ride home in the dark is even more fun — try it sometime.*

John Bloomfield, Thornaby, Cleveland

*Is there anyone living in the Scottish Borders/Edinburgh region interested in trail riding and who would like to meet a fellow enthusiast with a view to sharing transport costs for weekends in Yorkshire, Lakes, Peaks, Northumberland and Durham over the winter? If so, please contact:*

Sean Murphy, 6 The Row, Glen Estate, Traquair, Innerleithen, Peebleshire  
Telephone: Innerleithen 830136

*Transport is available for two other riders and machines.*

*Could I also say that we have just done a run over the North York Moors and were amazed at the courtesy received: people opening gates, telling us which way to go (not like that!), etc. — very encouraging.*

Nigel Douglas, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

*I should like to comment on two matters raised in recent Bulletins. Firstly 'O' ring chains. I agree wholeheartedly with my colleague, John Gillet, that they are a great improvement and well worth the initial extra outlay. There is, however, one snag — tight links — (nothing to do with boozing, John). This problem has already caused me to dump an otherwise good chain. I've tried boiling, soaking, bending, all without success. Has anyone found out how to get chain lube past those little rubber rings once it has found its way out?*

*Secondly, may I take up Brian Thompson's reference to damage caused by big trail bikes on knobbles. I think it's fair to say that different people ride for different reasons. You may be just a lazy rambler — you like nice scenery but can't be bothered walking, or you might be a frustrated motocrosser (and judging from the way many were attired at the 'Lakes and Dales' weekend, there are a lot of these!) Personally, I don't think that damage is caused by bikes — riders cause damage and a small trail bike on trail tyres with a clueless rider on board constantly spinning the back wheel can cause far more damage than a good rider on a big thumper on knobbles.*

*I enjoy the non-competitive aspect of trail riding but it must, for me, be a challenge thus giving satisfaction when the challenge is overcome. If I swapped my XR350 for a 200 then Walna Scar would undoubtedly be easier but definitely less satisfying! Riding an 80 c.c. machine (and even less an 800 BMW) would not interest me, but I respect your freedom of choice. Each to his own please, Brian!*

*Finally, are there any active riders interested in forming a group in the Oldham/Saddleworth area? If so, ring me on (045 77) 2380 and I will co-ordinate if sufficient interest is shown.*

Vince Bottomley

*I was in the Channel 4 piece and at no time did I spew any mud. Maybe my lunch, but mud wasn't on the me and you. (Bigger but not Better ... Brian Thompson Bulletin No.109.)*

*The 109 Bulletin mentions the Channel 4 piece twice; once as the controversial Channel 4 feature and once with a reference to it with TRF members expressing concern.*

*Can I say a few things about that programme? I first approached the Wings, Wheels and Water Makers in Tewkesbury when the Milk Race cyclists were speeding past. I am a Milk Race m/cycle marshal and they were filming the race. The producer was in two minds about a piece and suggested that I send him a few pics and trannies so he could approach his board. Within a week of sending the information we had fixed up a weekend of filming. They wanted the extremes of green laning. That's why you saw a nice easy road on one shot and then the 'Black Lagoon' on the next. They also wanted a voice opposed to green laning, hence the rather sweaty RA spokesperson appearing with his dog.*

*Personally I can only think that good came out of that piece on the television. If it's 'controversial' perhaps the TRF board of governors should have viewed it first!*

*I was going to write another letter in reply to Brian's view on 'big bikes' but I'll tag it on the end of this one.*

*I ride a DR400 Suzuki. I enjoy riding it; it's quiet and I ride it with respect for the countryside I am using. After all, it's not the bike chewing up the lane, but the right hand! I've seen many a smaller bike pull to the stop on some green lanes making more mess than a 'big thumper with monster power'.*

*That's all folks, except to ask how come Alan Kind appears on his own pix? I think we should be told!*

*Yours in enjoyment of green lanes.*

Mike Cowling  
Darlington, Co. Durham

The letter from Chairman Seymour Moss reminded me of the debt we owe to that great gentleman, Norman Smith. He put such effort into matters relating to the preservation of green lanes and was always ready with help and advice.

Some years ago I organised (if that is the word!) a two-day green lane event at Newtown, Powys. I did this for four years and each time Norman travelled with his wife Gladys all the way from Ipswich to help and advise. He was so keen and enthusiastic. As Seymour Moss states, Norman is a very sick man. How I wish I could help him now to show our gratitude for all he did for the movement.

Rod Butterworth's letter took me back through the years to that magical event, the Rossendale Enduro. I competed in it on a 1000 c.c. Vincent for several years and never won a thing, but the pleasure I derived lingers on.

Through the Rossendale Enduro it was my privilege to get to know John Ebbrell. What a great organiser he was; he rode in the event too. I remember on one occasion overtaking him on a long steep track (he was on a tiddler 80 c.c. as opposed to my 1000 c.c.) I held out my hand jokingly offering him a tow; he, not realising what an unsafe rider I was, grabbed it. The next few moments were hectic to say the least and how we both stayed on I'll never know. Truly memorable days.

Sid Pryce, Warley, West Midlands

To Blatt, or to Blart . . . . .

Well done John Higgin for getting 1500 words into the Sunday Times Magazine; what a pity that Adam Nicolson's article approached the censorious. Nearly every paragraph was deprecating, with Nicolson's subliminal censure being evenly spread over all the interested parties including the Ridgeway itself!

On first reading I was critical of Kate and John for being so unsubtle as to propel their "..... stripped down machines, with long springs", at a speed which risked being overtaken by Steve Cram during a mild training session, not to mention the district nurse hurrying home to lunch on her bicycle. And the stops every 2000 yards .... he wasn't serious .... was he?

Upon reflection, I realised that it was the writer's intention to put an imperious construction upon everything our members did. How were they to know how expert the writer was as a rider, or how long it would take the eminent scribe to master the vagaries of the borrowed Honda on a road that is notoriously slippery, and Kate probably likes lapwings and rabbits – what are lapwings anyway, are they anything to do with Goldwings?

My sympathy was with John when the best laid plans of mice and trail riders oft time go down the Swanney, and this day was no exception. He needed the two Yamaha jockeys like a mouth full of gumboils, but it wasn't all bad; they could have come up from behind and buried the intrepid journalist in rocks or water or both. Or the unthinkable could have happened, the old lady on the bike could have been going the other way and overtaken them!

I think the writer must have misunderstood John when they were discussing 'blatt', perhaps John's tongue was still stuck in his cheek from his description of the activities of the ".... vast majority of trail riders .... etc." Chambers dictionary describes "blat" as: to cry like a sheep: to make an ineffectual noise .... perhaps that what Yamahas do! Surely the word they were looking for was "blart", a derivative of blast-off, but perhaps we are both right, Yamahas blat, and Hondas blart!!

What really matters is that the article did not overtly oppose our use of the Ridgeway, even if the tone of the prose was condescending, indeed it was in favour of our continued use, provided, I suspect, we do not get too big. It was interesting, however, that an article concerned with the use of motorcycles became a vehicle with which to criticise the Common Agricultural Policy.

Colin J. Edwards  
Blakedown, Worcestershire DY10 3NG

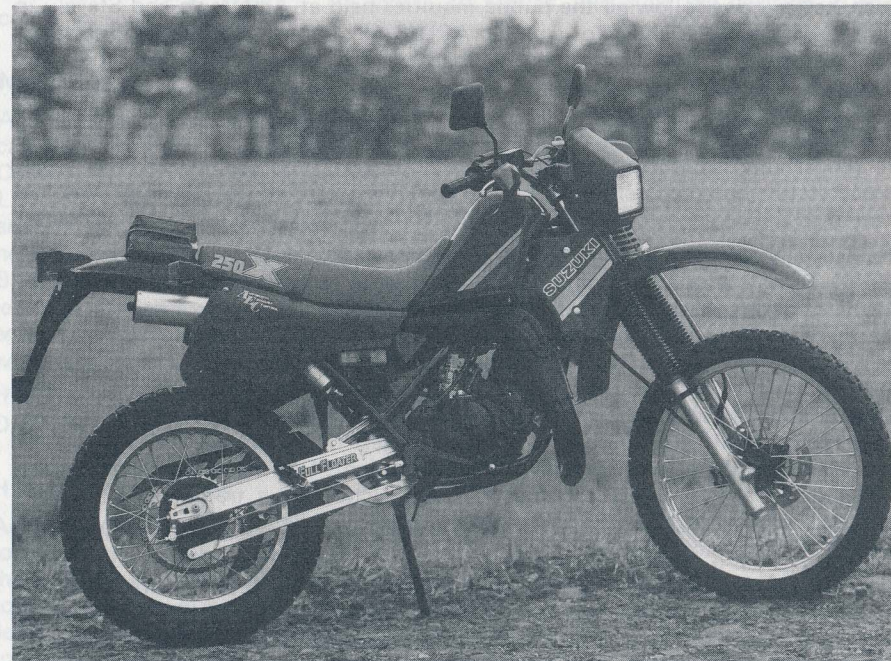
## SUZUKI TS250X

We have just announced the TS250X. Whilst it looks like an RM250 (moto-crosser) with lights added, it is in fact a very practical trail bike. The automatic exhaust control brings the power characteristics closer to those of a four stroke without lighting out on top end.

The decline in 250 c.c. sales generally has prevented us from bringing the model in before, but now we feel the bike has such merits as to make the importation of a few worthwhile.

Because of its comparative rarity not every Susuki dealer will be able to stock it. If we manage to sell out and decide there is demand for a second batch, inevitably the r.r.p. of £1,599 will go up!

Denis Matthewman, Stamford Bridge, York



### LEICESTERSHIRE

Washpit Lane, Parish of Lubenham, off the A427 Market Harborough road, is to be downgraded to bridleway. Richard Marshall, 1 Burlington Close, Breaston, Derby is trying to save this green lane and if you have ever used Washpit Lane do get in touch. Hopefully, Richard can argue that this should be kept open without having to go to court, which County Hall will avoid if they can.

### DEVON

There are no RUPPs or Byways throughout the county. Lots of green lanes but all the wrong status such as bridleway or even footpath! Gwyn Thomas, Minories Cottage, Wells Road, Priddy, Somerset reports serious problems and much needs to be done. He wants to see a TRF group based in Devon. Get in touch.

### LAKE DISTRICT

After the disappointing results from the first batch of thirty-three green lanes comes much better news following the public inquiries held at Ambleside and Stately in 1982 in which I took charge of a united ACU/BMF/TRF team. The major passes of Garburn, Stile End and, best of all, Gatesgarth, are all through as Byways. Upgrading Gatesgarth from bridleway status is one of our most outstanding achievements. We defeated objections from professional full timers from the County Council, National Park and our old enemy the Ramblers Association. Not only did we triumph over the almost impossible triple hurdles of the notorious 1968 Countryside Act to get Byway status, but the Secretary of State actually overruled the Inspector who had given in to the demands of the Lake District National Park who insisted on closure.

The bad news is that any sort of abuse of these new Byways will result in immediate closure. Byway status is balanced on a knife edge says the report, and the ACU Northern Centre have asked me to urge trail riders to be extra careful in the Kentmere area. I would go further; if you see a trail rider misbehaving, let me have their registration number and I will personally take legal action against them. I would hope the TRF would support me on the need for strict discipline in this sensitive area for which we have all worked so hard. Already the *Guardian* newspaper reports trail rider abuse in Mardale. I suggest riders adopt these lanes, patrol them and keep them safe from the hooligan element. One very good green lane in Lakeland has already been lost due to foolish action by a trail rider. I have his name and address and the forces of law and order will be in touch. Meanwhile, we can rightly celebrate a great victory.

The final batch of Byway public inquiry results have now been confirmed by the Government. These concern five lanes under scrutiny at Ulverston and thirteen green lanes at Cartmel. Out of those eighteen we have five new Byways, although ten are already County Road status so remain open anyway, although the RA may consider them closed — watch out!

The best known by far in this batch is Walna Scar Road from Coniston. The official Report says:

"This very ancient highway climbs to over 2000 ft and though unmade and without walls is clear to follow. In places the track is very rough with sizeable pieces of stone. I do not doubt that motorcycles can and do negotiate this route and this testifies to their skill and courage and quality of machine. This road is not suitable for vehicular traffic but as closure would be hardship to those who enjoy riding their machines as a recreation it should be classified as a Byway."

Full marks to Government Inspector, Michael Hurley, for his tolerance and rejection once again of RA 'noise invasion' propaganda. Once again our star witness was 70 year old Alan Todd from Kendal who gave 50 years use evidence. The Barrow Club's Thelma Barton also helped a great deal.

This now completes Lakeland Byway claims. Though Great Wold is a big disappointment, we can congratulate ourselves. These are the best efforts that united motorcycles have ever seen. I am proud to have been able to present the witnesses and evidence at 30 days of weekday inquiries. I don't regret giving up all my holidays for such a worthwhile cause. But without the hard work of Cumbria riders my efforts would have been in vain.

Finally one comment to the Great Wold loss from Eddie Wilkinson who was there. "This week I got a load of gobbledeegook from the Government. Bloodyminded injustice! I am totally disgusted how easily one of the best trail rides in the Dales has been crossed off the list." The difference in attitude between Government Inspectors is very revealing. We could, of course, challenge the decision in the courts, but we won't. No money, you see!

### NORTH WALES CRISIS

All our Byway claims will be withdrawn there unless someone steps forward to carry on the work of securing green lanes now under review by Gwynedd County Council. If not, trail riding within the National Park can be crossed off the list. Like the Lake District, strong full time forces are organised against Byway status and someone with knowledge and skill able to devote time at public inquiries is needed to ensure success. Unlike the Lakes it will be necessary to unite the ACU, BMF, TRF and other trail clubs. I am currently reviewing our capacity to take on lengthy inquiries relying on voluntary labour, bearing in mind the risk of costs against us for not turning up, as was the case in Dorset where I was forced to withdraw many lanes.

If you can help in Gwynedd contact me at 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster DN8 5PP. Every possible help and advice will be given to volunteers.

### HIGH LEVEL TALKS

As the North Wales situation illustrates, we are losing out on the full time efforts to close lanes which is the policy of the RA and all seven National Parks. In July the ACU, BMF and RAC held a meeting to find ways of better protecting our countryside access interests. It was agreed that we are not acting positively to defend our interests in the countryside. I explained that we can no longer rely on voluntary officials giving up all their holidays, me included! The aim is to employ a full time rights of way officer and the TRF and Welsh Trail Riders Association have already said they will financially support this move.

One reason why the TRF is unable to have its own full timer is because too few trail riders bother to join. For example, an active trail rider from North Yorkshire rang me the other day wanting to know about Great Wold. He was rather put out when I refused to help because he wasn't a member of any club that fights to keep open the lanes that he and others like him enjoy. He said he had never thought about it that way!

### RIDGEWAY

No news is good news and still no public inquiry date is announced for the Berkshire closure decision. Rumour is that both Berkshire and the Countryside Commission have no enthusiasm. The TRF's press campaign hammering home the waste of public money is the best way to hit back. Meanwhile the RA, CPRE and Friends of the Ridgeway have formed a powerful closure lobby determined not to lose a second attempt at banning trail riders.

The *Sunday Times* is Britain's top paper read by the decision makers. On 25th August they did us proud with a feature supporting the trail riders' case for keeping open the Ridgeway. The closure lobby came over as nasty and vindictive. Nigel Forward from Hampstead, spokesman for the closure lobby, virtually admitted all the facts and evidence are in our favour. The article came down heavily on the farmers as causing most of the problems that have been blamed on trail riders.

John Higgin and Kate Clow put our case with great skill and care and made some very effective points. Kate referred to the snobby anti-motorcycle lobby who equate motorcycling as a dreadful working class activity with pigeons and whippets in a Yorkshire slum. "They want to turn the Ridgeway into an outdoor Church of England" said Kate. Well said, lass! This article is a real tonic. We must now lobby hard in an effort to get the closure decision reversed.

I have 200 copies of the article and will send a copy to anyone who sends an SAE. It would be well worth sending a copy to every Berkshire County Councillor and member of the Countryside Commission and other closure supporters such as the Youth Hostel Association (a £7m year outfit who have recently joined the pro-ramblers camp). The RA are jumping up and down in fury at their total failure to get Britain's most influential paper on their side. This is the TRF's biggest media success since the *Guardian* articles of 1978 and 1981.

### HANDOUTS

Countryside Commission "Access Charters" are available free of charge as are "Out in the Country" and "Waymarking" booklets from Countryside Commission Publications Despatch Dept., 19 Albert Road, Manchester 19. If you send an SAE I can supply "Charters" — highly recommended.

### DISUNITY

The TRF have upset many in the ACU for criticising them for not doing its job properly. The ACU is the only body recognised by the Government and must be consulted by all councils on countryside matters. I agree; the ACU should provide full time staff to carry out this responsibility but headlines in *Motorcycling Weekly* threatening to ally with the RA to ban enduros is not helpful to say the least. I have worked very hard to unite the ACU/BMF/TRF on rights of way with considerable success. Fighting amongst ourselves wastes energies that should be directed against the real enemies. The ACU certainly does not need the TRF but, like it or not, the TRF depends on the ACU.

### GOING TO COURT

This time, with a bit of luck and co-operation from the Peak National Park, a *Motorcycling Weekly* journalist named Richard Simmonds will also be going to court following publication of the most irresponsible piece of motorcycle journalism I have ever read regarding the road test of a Yamaha XT600. The ramblers have already complained to me and I have asked them to let us join them in the long list of those pressing for prosecution.

We utterly deplore unlawful trail riding which Simmonds freely admitted in *MCW*. Worse still, he did it making as much noise as possible charging about on knobbly tyres in the highly sensitive Peak Park just as we were about to start on Byway claims. To boast about bad behaviour in a national newspaper is a disgraceful and shocking bad example to trail riders, many of them young and impressionable. With Alan Kind we are jointly making a complaint to the Press Council, asking Yamaha and others to ban Simmonds from the loan of trail bikes for test, and anything else we can do to minimise the damage.

### PRAISE INDEED

South Yorkshire County Council's Rights of Way Officer, Mike Gibson, says that trail riders cause no problems in the county but trials riders and 4WD vehicles do by riding on open moorland. Stanage Road Byway on the Derbyshire border above Redmires Dams and a very popular access into the Peak District from Sheffield avoiding hard roads, is to be closed but with an exemption for motorcyclists. This is to stop Land Rovers who have got stuck on the moor and damaged some of the ancient Roman Road flagstones. Stopping illegal trials practising is proving more difficult to control. It was two Manchester trials riders who caused the closure of Jacobs Ladder in the Peak, the best and most challenging trail ride in Derbyshire.

### SOUTH YORKSHIRE

High Ealand Road dates from about 1825 and lies near Doncaster. Until March this year users had enjoyed up to fifty years uninterrupted use along a very popular green lane with wild roses along the way. A letter from the County Council stating that this was not on the Definitive Map led to a padlocked gate, barbed wire, police action, "Keep Out" and "Trespassers will be Prosecuted" notices. To most farmers this means the right of way is theirs, and in this case a cool land grab worth around £3,000; all apparently legal thanks to no review of the Definitive Map for thirty-six years despite the law which says that a review must be carried out every five years.

Letters to the County Council have not worked partly because, like similar authorities, they are to be abolished soon and skilled trained staff are departing for more secure jobs. A warning notice giving the farmer fourteen days to remove the obstruction has failed and so, in the name of the Byways and Bridleways Trust, I have commenced legal proceedings under Section 137 Highways Act 1980. The last time I took a similar case to court the farmer settled out of court and removed the obstruction pretty damned quick.

I am told, however, that the 51 new Byways in the eastern part of the county will be confirmed, which is good news.

## PLIGHT OF A FENIX by Ian Stones

Many times it has been said that behind every successful man there is a woman. If this is true, then I have to thank Mrs Margaret Thatcher PM for the birth of the Fenix (pronounced Phoenix).

Approximately two years ago I acquired a Suzuki TS250 for £170, complete with a bent frame. I rode this around for a few weeks until I was approached by a friend whose TS250 had been semi-stolen, was in dire need of some cash and lightened my pocket of £100. In exchange for the beer tokens, I received both wheels, forks, exhaust, a complete engine and a straight frame.

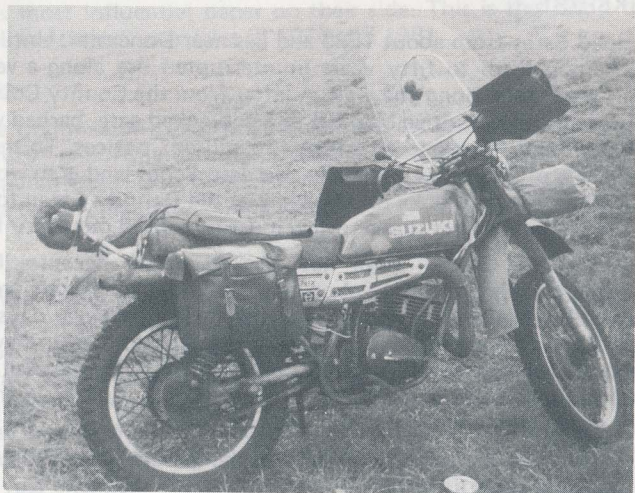
Personally, I have been 'employed' by the aforementioned person for some time now, along with three millionish others, therefore money is every object for a tidying up project. The straight frame was in need of respraying so, having wire brushed the rust off, various spray cans were emptied giving a good technicolour base. The front forks were then swapped over because of a leaking seal. Any remaining parts that needed painting were given a new coat. The total cost of the respray(?) was in the region of £4. When the engine had been replaced and everything had been reconnected the engine fired into life on the first kick — hence the name Fenix. The bike now looks like a refugee from Woodstock.

The latest non-standard extras include several stickers, a windscreen which cost £14, works well against the rain and makes life interesting when windy, and a doll glued to the front mudguard in the best Rolls Royce tradition. I also had some furry dice on the windscreen for a while but sadly these did a runner whilst I was on the A1(M).

Mechanically the bike has only let me down once, during a very wet weekend (read "typical") when the gearbox seized due to a bent selector fork. The said piece cost £18 new, and the local breakers were only interested in selling a complete bottom end for £25, but with a spare engine no prizes for guessing what I did.

The Fenix must be one of the easiest machines to maintain because nothing is done very often except oil changes! What more can be said? The bike goes forward, stops when required to do so, is economical on fuel and is a joy to ride, and one certainly needs a sense of humour to do so.

Egyptian mythology is not always necessary for the rebirth of a Fenix.



## HONDA XL250 — Rider Report

The original concept of Honda's 250 c.c. trail bike was for a motorcycle for use by the Japanese army as an all-purpose machine. In 1972 Honda first introduced the XL250 Motosport trail bike into this country. When compared with other 4-stroke 250 c.c. singles of the day, with their pushrod engines, the XL was quite technically advanced with its 4-valve head and chain driven ohc engine. However, at around 300 lbs they were rather heavy for serious trail riding. In 1976 the specification was changed slightly; the carburetter being centrally located instead of offset. Honda claimed more power output from this model but unfortunately managed to increase the weight of the machine. Hampered by excess bulk, the 250 was reported as being rather gutless.

1978 saw the XL range of trail machines given a much needed facelift with the introduction of the 'S' models. Around 50 lbs was knocked off the weight of these machines, bringing them down to a more acceptable 259 lbs. The styling was up-dated to give a lighter, cleaner appearance with suspension travel and ground clearance increased. In the case of the early XL250S the front wheel size was changed from the common 21" to an awkward 23" rim which restricted tyre choice literally to the OE Yokohama. Engine-wise, although bore and stroke remained unchanged and the 4-valve head was retained, the engine was redesigned with a balance shaft which enabled Honda to reduce weight by using a lighter frame. Electronic ignition made its first appearance on the XL250S as did the twin exhaust pipe, used to give a better gas flow and, in turn, better performance. Overall, the 'S' model showed a marked improvement over the old 'K' model and offered a machine better suited to trail riding whilst still retaining the dual-purpose role.

In 1982 the XL250 was further re-styled and brought into the 1980s by the introduction of the XL250R monoshock model; pro-link rear suspension being a noticeable improvement over the conventional twin rear shock suspension. With the headlight/numberplate cowling, redesigned sidepanels and re-shaped petrol tank, to the untrained eye the XL250R closely resembled the very successful competition XR200 enduro model. And so finally to the XL250R-E, very similar in looks to the 'R' model, but with the new radial 4-valve head layout which Honda say gives better and more efficient combustion.

Members who helped with this report owned predominantly 'S' model 250s, with one owning the 'R' model; the general consensus of opinion being that the XL250 makes an excellent dual purpose bike with most using the XL for more than just green lane riding. Average mileage for these mostly early '80s machines worked out at around 15,000 with extremes of 5,000 and 26,300. Reasons for buying the XL varied, but the underlying trend was that it offered a good all round machine which was economical and 4-stroke.

As expected, 998 of machines had been modified, some quite extensively. Most common changes included different mudguards, exhausts, sprockets (notably 13 tooth gearbox to give better acceleration and flexibility 'off' road, although reducing road top speed), the use of the CB250RS carburetter, having the front wheel re-spoked to 21" and fitting higher handlebars. In more detail, Philip Jones has moved the foot rests 3" further back, fitted a chain tensioner and a self-made silencer. Alan Seagrave, a plastic headlight assembly, chain oiler as well as tensioner, XL250R gear and brake pedals, 300 c.c. Dixon conversion, MPS exhaust, EBC brakes, Koni gas shocks 3" over standard, air fork conversion and has had the frame nylon coated. John Bloomfield removed indicators and converted the electrics to direct ignition to do away with the battery. David Southern would like to fit the twin leading unit



off the front of an XL500R, but would like to know if anyone has done this? He also says that fitting high handlebars meant the use of a clutch cable off a CB900F for length reasons. Using split lever brackets means removal is easy without removing grips or throttle assembly. He has also fitted a mudflap to the back of the front mudguard as the standard guard is too short and has modified the electrical system along the lines of the XR version which satisfies legal requirements only but means no battery, regulator or rectifier are needed.

There was little dissent on the mods owners would like to see made by Honda, notably 12 volt electrics, 21" front wheel, more power and less weight. Much of these have been seen on the later models although, instead of the 23" front wheel, there is now a 17" rear wheel rim on the 'R' model. You can't win! It was also generally felt that the bike could be lighter.

Regarding replacements/failed components; other than consumables such as chains, sprockets, tyres, nothing came through as a model fault. Problems included carburation, rotting exhausts, blown head gasket, drive cog seal worn first year, brittle mudguards (on 250R) with only Alan Seagrave having any warranty claim due to oil pump failure.

The only real grumbles concerned the poor chain life and poor (6-volt) lights on the 'S' model, whilst Ian Conman comments on the 'R' model —

"Overall I am quite pleased with the bike, there are one or two drawbacks however, the main one being the size of the rear wheel (17"). My friends can buy ex trials tyres for between £10—£15 but I have to fork out £30 a time and I don't think an 18" rim will fit without modifying the swinging arm.

The rear suspension (Honda Pro-Link) is in fact adjustable; a special 'C' spanner is required and you need to take the bike apart to do it; needless to say I have been unable to adjust my bike's suspension."

All machines are to the greater degree home maintained and are stated as being easy to work on. Spares availability presents no problem, although most said they found some spares prices expensive, e.g. —

Exhaust	£110.00
Camchain	£33.00
First gear pinion	£29.00
Clutch cover gasket	£3.50
Rear mudguard	£30.00
Gasket set	£18.00

But onto the good features which are stated as reliability, fuel economy, good low end power, a practically indestructible engine and comfortable to ride over long distances, which all point to this being a good all round bike.

Fuel consumption averaged out at around 75—85 mpg on the road, dropping to 60—70 mpg on the trail. Top speeds are quoted between 75 and 90 mph, but obviously that depends on the gearing of the machine.

The brakes are considered as being generally poor, but Alan Seagrave said EBC brake shoes helped the front brake. There seems to be a little improvement with the 'R' model, although the front brake is still not considered brilliant.

Most praised the handling but said that the front end was rather heavy; comments on suspension ranged between good and bad, but I think it depended on whether the suspension was modified or original equipment. All said that the XL was a good starter except when on a steep incline or just after being dropped!

Riding position and comfort are all very individual points and in the main the XL came out as average in this area; only Philip Jones found he couldn't live with the footrests which he felt were too far forward. David Southern comments that for commuting the XL is comfortable, but over about 50 miles it gets a bit tiresome. He also stated that the seat is big enough for two-up riding without having to be very good friends!

Other comments?

Alan Seagrave is not impressed by the noise/restriction of aftermarket exhausts other than the Honda replacement or MPS model.

David Southern says that the rear brake light adjustment bracket breaks off too easily in the event of a spill and thinks that the worst part of the machine is the front forks. "No matter how much I play about with fork oil weights and spring preload they still don't seem to be right." He also states that low speed handling/steering is vague whilst high speed steering is OK. The forks don't seem to respond well to terrain demands, making rapid progress a bit hit and miss. On the road it shakes its head a bit around 60—65 mph but I think this is due to me having a 21" as opposed to the designed 23" hula hoop.

But overall, it appears to be a machine well liked by its owners. Certainly a trouble free bike and one which all said they would buy again and have no hesitation in recommending to others.

When it comes to an alternative replacement, overwhelmingly these were the Honda XR200/250/350.



## SCOTTISH RIGHTS OF WAY -- by Alan Kind

I recently went to Edinburgh with only the vaguest ideas about Scottish law, culled from a booklet published by the Scottish Rights of Way Society (formed in 1845; must have been the escape organisation for B.P. Charlie ... what a nasty English chauvinist I am!) I had thought about knocking on their door and announcing that I was an English motorcyclist come to despoil their glens and would they please tell me which ones to use, but self-preservation triumphed over adventure again. A visit to the Edinburgh University Law Department proved a dead loss ... got jammed in the turnstile at the door, so I had haggis and gruel in a local MacDonalds (where else?) and then took a cab to the Map Room of the National Library of Scotland. I have never had to pedal so hard in my life before, but it was worth it. This place has a million and a quarter map sheets and the staff are most knowledgeable and helpful. Being very short of time I concentrated on seeing just what they have, rather than trying to research any particular area (Scotland is three-fifths the size of England) and I acquired an excellent book listing all the known maps of Scottish Roads, Military Roads and Counties (Greenwood, etc.).

Next port of call was a friendly solicitor (makes a change, the bastards are usually threatening to sue me) known through family connections. After promising to make my Dad repay the half-crown he borrowed in 1942, I was given a free look at all the relevant law books he had. This was the most constructive part of the day. (Did you hear about the Scotsman who took his money out of the bank for a holiday? When it had had a holiday he put it back again!) Another cab took me back to the National Library for a dig into Parliamentary Papers relating to the Military Roads then, with a cry of "Remember Culloden", I dashed back to the station, had a leak at 10p a go, and after pushing the chickens and goats to one side, InterCited home.

The outcome of this little expedition is that I have assembled various papers and documents that will tell anyone interested exactly where to look for documentary evidence on Scottish roads, along with an indication as to the law. At risk of unleashing a hornet's nest by stating the law in a few lines: there are two grades of rights of way in Scotland. "Public rights of way" and "Statutory highways". These last are roads built under general and specific Acts of Parliament and are remarkably similar to our county roads. The basic situation is, if publicly maintained then it is *prima facie* a general purpose highway and we may use it. These roads cannot be lost through lack of use but can be closed in court like an English road. The Military Roads fall into this category. The problem will be finding out for certain which roads are maintained by the local authorities. They do not have to maintain accurate maps as yet.

The public rights of way are rather like our definitive rights of way (same three grades) but there is no map. They are proved by a court action where (usually) the oldest local resident swears as to user. These can be lost and downgraded by lack of user. I'm afraid that using these tracks will largely be a matter of permission.

I will be pleased to send the info I have to individuals/groups for them to copy (and return the originals to me as soon as possible). I suggest that each active TRF group could adopt a Scottish County and research it thoroughly, then pool info. Please remember that Scotland is three-fifths the size of England! I do think that the old coach and military routes are well worth the effort and could form the basis of a good week's riding holiday.

## GROUP NEWS

### NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK GROUP

#### Run with Cambridge Group

Hugh Mason paid us a visit one night at the Blue Lion, North Pickenham and during the evening invited us to go on a run in his neck of the woods. The 21st July was the date.

Six members of the Norfolk and Suffolk Group made their way to the meeting point at Huntingdon where we were met by Hugh Mason and Dave Truluck. Our party comprised Dave Rose (BSA), Andy Bedwell (IT Yamaha), Chris Bedwell (XR Honda), David Cornish (Husky) and Andy Downes (GS KTM).

The Cambridge boys did us proud, from steep mud climbs, tight wooded lanes and a nice lot of green lanes and byways. A good dinner stop with an excellent pint and a good meal and we set off again only to go half a mile when Andy's KTM needed open heart surgery — turned out to be a blocked carb jet. Dave Rose's Beezer put him on his bum about six times — too much bike, not enough man, we kept telling him! Dennis Bamber had a feeling his Honda had a hinge under his petrol tank and after Dave Truluck took it for a short spin, he confirmed it had! Dennis is now looking for a 4-stroke with no such hinge.

To all our run leaders on that Sunday we say thank you, we all enjoyed it.

We in Norfolk and Suffolk keep finding lanes to ride; some good, some just about impassable being too overgrown. Our RoW man, Andy Downes, has reported a number of UCRs to the Highways Department, NCC because of encroachment and the Council is now dealing with this.

Plans for winter meetings are now being made with a tyre changing competition (after a demo by an ISDE rider) and a talk by a local RA Big Wig is also being looked into.

Membership is on the increase and if anyone wants to drop in at our meetings, please do. It's the first Wednesday of each month, 8 o'clockish. We'd be more than pleased to see you at the Blue Lion, North Pickenham.

On the Suffolk front things are hard going with only one lane changed to Byway, Scamar Lane — Mellis. This in the main is due to our horsey friends, we the TRF and the local Land Rover Club, but the reclassification took place behind closed doors. As far as I can find out no major problems with farmers have been encountered by TRF members and this alone must be a good thing.

I have been in contact with the land agent of our local forest and he is looking into the use of extra fire roads on a limited scale. Whilst on the subject of forests, any riders using Thetford Forest please stop doing so unless you have permission.

Andy Downes, RoW Officer  
Norfolk and Suffolk Group

## TRAIL RUN WITH THE WELLS JOURNAL/MID-SOMERSET NEWSPAPERS

I took a reporter from the above newspaper group out on a trail run on Sunday 25th August, the intention being to get a favourable feature article on green lanes in his newspapers.

The reporter in question was South African, Hal Williams. He had ridden in some enduros but welcomed the opportunity of riding the XR200 belonging to my wife, in a non-competitive way.

We did twenty lanes on and around Mendip, including Dark Lane, Priddy (the one we had all the fuss about). It was a wet and muddy day but the sun came out periodically to make the Somerset countryside even more beautiful.

"Most encouraging" was the quite unsolicited statement from recently cleared 'Dungeon Lane' (UCR) farmer, Mr David Masters, Croscombe, Near Shepton Mallet that the NFU had commented to him that the TRF were by far the most courteous and well-organised of all the user groups farmers came into contact with. That made my day and I hope the comment will be included in Hal Williams' feature article.

We've only recently cleared 'Dungeon Lane' and David Masters moved some heavy concrete debris from the route with his own equipment. The views from this old road, variously reported to have been overgrown for 30-60 years, are exceptional - especially Glastonbury Tor and the Somerset levels. The workers were Steve Thomas, John Bather, Dave Boon, Martin Matthews and yours truly. Somerset CC have sent us £50 in appreciation.

Hal (the reporter) and I rode the lane on Sunday 25th August. It was taking some surface streams from several springs on the hill.

Hope 'Hal' says some good things about the TRF and green lanes in his article.

*Gwyn Thomas*

## TRAIL RUNS

My road bike green lane day out in Derbyshire on 11th August was a huge success despite filthy weather. Geoff Wilson, BMF supremo, rode all the way from Surrey on his BMW with wife Jenny on the pillion. Keenest of all was a V50 Moto Guzzi rider from Devon who camped out. Thirty riders enjoyed the day out on normally easy lanes, and everyone is asking for more. I had already turned away twenty hopefuls, some in the Panther Owners Club and AJS/Matchless Owners Club. I led a mixture of BMW and CZ/Jawas, a £40 CZ riding alongside a £4000 BMW and enjoying the green lanes together in harmony, which is what trail riding is all about.

This is the third year of road bike trail runs and there is a big demand from the many who have road bikes, pre-65 trials, green lane specials and converted road bikes. Few are TRF members which is sad and this is perhaps one reason why the TRF membership remains at under 1000. I may be wrong, but in the early 1970s nobody had trail bikes, now the TRF only seems to attract those with trail machines, leaving non-trail bike users out in the cold.

However, to meet demand and boost interest, I am organising another Derbyshire run on Sunday 27th October and two for 1986. The dates are 27th April (Peak District) and 10th August (Yorkshire Dales). Help has come from TRF members John Blackburn and Alan Kind. The Lakes, Yorkshire and Derbyshire offer lots of easy lanes for a day out.

*Brian Thompson*

## LEGAL LINES

In general terms, it seems to me that:-

- (1) Despite the attempt at Watford Magistrates Court, as we would expect, trial and trail tyres should not attract adverse comment from the Police, and are, I understand, approved by all manufacturers for road use.
- (2) We are still faced with the uncertainty of what is, and is not, 'suitable'. There is no point in fitting - or keeping - knobblies on trail bikes when it is known that the manufacturers of the particular tyres maintain that they are unsuitable for road use. This immediately rules out Avon, Continental, Dunlop, Michelin and Pirelli, probably Chenshin and the Japanese tyre manufacturers as well. I understand that Trelleborg say their motocross tyres are suitable when used within the speed limits, but Metzeler are quite definite that, used with caution and not above 56 mph, their knobblies - which are excellent for grip and wear - are suitable for use on tarmac, although not recommended for prolonged road usage. (I interpret the latter as being that they are acceptable for the kind of use to which most trail riders of my acquaintance use their machines - that is, at weekends, riding on the tarmac only to get from one green lane to another. Although there should be no difference, in principle, my own view is that knobblies are not suitable for commuting, and that if a rider has one dual-purpose machine for riding to work during the week and green laning at weekends, because of the predominant tarmac usage, he/she should fit trials or trail tyres.)
- (3) The 'dreaded' NHS markings - this is really a matter for interpretation by a court, in the final analysis, but Metzeler say that NHS is insignificant for the UK, being intended only for the US market.

I do not think, therefore, that it is possible to say with absolute certainty that knobblies are suitable or not for use on trail bikes; members may have seen the recent articles in *T & MX News* by Bill Lawless who has covered the subject well. Unlike him, though, I am keeping to my Metzeler which I shall continue to use, with caution, on my Triumph and intend carrying with me in a pocket of my Belstaff Trialmaster jacket a photocopy of the relevant page from the Metzeler booklet, which I shall produce to any policeman who questions my tyres.

If I were asked to stick my neck out - and, after all, in keeping on my Metzeler I am putting my money where my mouth is - I would say, in conclusion, if you want knobblies on your weekend-use only, over 300 lb (4-stroke, of course) trail bike, fit Metzeler.

I am not on the payroll of Belstaff, by the way!

*Michael Rowley*  
*TRF Hon. Solicitor*



*Trail riders helping to marshal at horse enduros and the Eden Marathon Long Distance Run and Walk*



## GREEN LANE SPECIAL OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

There is such tremendous enthusiasm for trail riding from the pre-'65 converted road bike, green lane specials, etc., etc., that I want to encourage this.

They are all such pleasant people and so well behaved, but need leadership and somewhere to ride their pride and joy. All my road bike trail runs are vastly over-subscribed and these will be increased.

I propose to boost this side, with your help, with a 'Green Lane Special of the Year' competition. The many specials seen out on the lanes suggest much interest and much midnight oil burning.

I shall conduct it and, with colleague John Blackburn, judge every entry. The winner will receive a prize of £15, 2nd £7 and 3rd £3.

John Ebbrell did one ten years ago with great success. Dick Sutton won with a Triumph special.

### RULES

Entries from anyone. Full details to me by 1st November 1985.

Winners will be announced 1st January 1986. Photograph and all details required.

The machine entered should be 'home made'.

Any capacity. Should be road legal. Any kind of tyres tho' preference given to trials tyres.

British/foreign or mixture allowed. Any age, pre-war/post-war. Any suspension, even rigid. Any seating arrangement accepted. Must have proper mudguards and petrol tank.

Lights should be fitted.

Points awarded for originality, workmanship, practical off and on road ability, but judges are not expecting entries to compete with modern trail bikes!

That covers about everything, although add anything else you think fit.

*Brian Thompson  
39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster DN8 5PP  
Telephone : (0405) 814388*

## TRUDGING ON THE DIRT — by Alan Kind

I don't like knobblies! Not on the grounds of economics, image or environment. It's a little more Freudian than that. Actually, I was scared half to death by one when just a mere stripping of a lad who should have stuck to sensible beginner's bikes like 360 Huskies and XT600s. No, what I had against all experienced and logical advice was a 500 c.c. Rudge trail bike, no less. What's that? Rudge didn't make a trail bike? Quite right, but it is yet another reflection on the side of the pan our industry has just gone down that they had the means to invent the XT500 ten years before Pearl Harbour.

The recipe is simple. Take one gleaming, original Rudge Special, an acknowledged classic of its time, apply a hacksaw and chisel to all those silly, irreplaceable bits like acetylene lamps, tool boxes, mudguards, brake linkages, etc. and heave them into the bin where they belong. Fit alloy guards, decent tyres and lots and lots of black insulating tape and you're in business. *To forestall a possible barrage of criticism, is the aforementioned procedure any greater blasphemy than cavorting on the racetracks of Europe on a foreign-engined 50 c.c. two-stroke bearing the illustrious name?* Anyway, I plead not guilty to rape, merely to receiving, but I suppose any criminal with a mutilated Rudge in his possession would be caught red-handed.

What then of these sorely abused skeletal remains that passed into my keeping early in that glorious summer of '76? Let me start, to be normally contrary, at the back and work forwards. The rear wheel appeared to be standard; enamelled rim, 19", mounting a 350 section Trials Universal cover, all surrounding the usual massive, but surprisingly light, brake drum. The mudguard was a delightfully slim, tightly curved alloy affair of indeterminate age, but with an indefinable vintage look. Frame was the standard diamond supporting a tatty leatherette saddle and a sturdily built two-compartment tank. If memory may be trusted the right hand compartment took the fuel and the left a fair measure of deliciously aromatic 'R'. Yes, 'R'! Some previous owner had decided for reasons best known to himself, to use the sticky goo that costs more than malt whisky. Now I have always claimed to have a high natural resistance to incultation but a dim spark in a gloomy lobe activated the retrieval system.

"Do not attempt to change from mineral to castor oil without a full engine strip and clean-out" said the sages when *Motor Cycle* was a magazine the first time round. 'Nuff said! I glugged in a top-up when necessary and left well alone.

The motor. Ah! the motor. Post vintage simplicity and tough as old boots. I shall buck the trend here and work from front to back. Tacked tenuously to the front of the cylinder was a horrid little box bearing the legend "Maglita". I never dared to look inside; indeed, I fear that the result would have been akin to the final frames of "Raiders of the Lost Arc". At least the thing could always be persuaded to work with WD40 and a blunt instrument. *When your modern Japanese blackbox dies on some lonely, windswept Pennine road you might as well resort to runic incantations for all the good it will do you.* The pot was topped off by unenclosed rocker gear operating four meaty valves. *Yes kiddies, it really was possible to count above two before the Nips invented the computer.* A total-loss oil pump was mounted to the right of the crankcase, with a little adjustment pointer to vary the flow. I never dared touch it, but the motor always seemed happy on the rations received. The gearbox was a nicely spaced fourspeed affair with an external positive stop unit that did its job every time. This, I suspect, was a retro-fit as the tank had the pickup points for a handchange quadrant. Change action (and that of the clutch) was smooth and light. Quite up to modern standards, if not better. Fuel was metered by an ancient pre-monoblock Amal and everything was covered with a thick coat of burnt on rocker grease and 'R'. *Was this, I wonder, the original formula for Ziebart?* The exhaust pipe had been cobbled up very neatly from the siamesed original and a flat box typical of old British trials ironware. 4 valve, twin port, 500 c.c. four-stroke, simple motor. Could almost be a spec. for the new 500 Honda trail bike, eh?

On to the forks; Webbs, I think, with straight front and banana-curved rear blades. Bushes and spindles were surprisingly good and the action against the enclosed spring unit was pleasantly surprising to one who had always thought girder forks to be stiff and primitive. The front wheel had the original hub laced up to a 21" rim carrying THE knobble. "Avon" said the sidewall, *but if I had been responsible for such a creation I wouldn't have put my name on it!* Another venerable alloy blade stopped a surprising amount of mud and the lot was topped off with 1" diameter bars with a profile that I should dearly like to try on my modern green-laner.

Part of that glorious summer was spent with the bits and pieces spread across the lawn receiving a liberal coat of red lead, black Valspar and grass. A search for the cause of poor starting had revealed valve guides more suited to a Mini Metro and a chum of a pal had recommended an olde worlde engineering shop that would knock me up a new set in a jiffy. A six month jiffy it turned out and the damn things were no bloody good when I finally got them. The olde worlde engineers had miked-up the centre portion of the valve stem, quite overlooking the unworn collet end that also had to pass through. Being somewhat cheesed-off by this time, they went back to be reamed to a usable size in the time honoured fashion; a rat-tailed file.

Towards the end of the summer all came together and the beast was ready for the road. It had come to me sans logbook or numberplate and I had made representations to the licensing authorities to have a new number issued. The faceless ones could not have been more helpful. A police officer was despatched to my garage to check the engine and frame numbers against the latest script for "Police 5" (you might be surprised to know how much information on old vehicle index numbers the police have in their files) and I was told that, subject to a satisfactory MOT test, the bike would be allocated a suitably period registration number from a scrapped vehicle. The MOT proved to be something of a hurdle.

Self to tester: "Please test this bike but remember it isn't registered for the road."

Tester: "No can do, must be road tested on the road."

Self to licensing authorities: "Is it legal to drive an unregistered bike on the road for testing purposes?"

Licensing authorities: "Don't know."

Police: "Don't know, but try it and we'll book you."

Back to tester at 5.00 p.m. Friday with the bike on a trailer.

Tester: "Oh! it's a vintage machine. That's all right then."

Rattle of spokes, kick of tyres, home with certificate by 5.15 p.m.

In keeping with the spirit of the machine a plywood number plate was painted up and bolted to the alloy guard. First road ride was half a mile up the road to parents' home to let them savour the pong. Not deterred by the early autumn rain, I proceeded to demonstrate how to plonk round the apple tree. No problem until the motor coughed and I declutched while on full lock. The clutch cable contacted the wet HT lead, six million volts zapped up my left arm, clutch was dropped simultaneously to the throttle being blipped, motorcycle adopted an attitude of some 45 degrees from the horizontal and the whole shooting match was arrested by the side of Daddy's new Renault. Ouch!

Starting up was always good for a laugh. Several gutless 350 Matchboxes had taught me total contempt for the time-honoured drill; I even ditched the valve lifter from one particularly anaemic specimen. One attempt at a cold start on the Rudge while wearing baseball boots left me hopping for a fortnight; I resolved to approach the beast with respect and Doc Martens in future. A pre-ride ritual was greasing the rockers. They had the original taper nipples, but a couple of turns of rag allowed by Wanner to ram a gill or two of golden gunge into the works, no bother. The cloud of grease spatter on first starting had to be seen to be believed. I was never again troubled by non-waterproof trousers for a very long time.

The Rudge was at that time my only working road legal bike, so it was pressed into service for commuting and shopping. I have never ridden a bike that turned so many heads in town. It wasn't noisy at all; the flat box emitted a low "bonk-bonk" that had to struggle to be heard above the valve clatter. The interest didn't come from obvious enthusiasts either. It was older, everyday people who came over for a look, often to say "I used to have a Rudge" or "Those were the days". It might sound cliched, but it is absolutely true. At town speeds road manners were very good. The brakes had superbly gentle and progressive stopping powers (though not coupled any longer) and the handlebar controls were lighter and smoother than most I have owned. The low gearing and flexibility combined with the low weight soon taught me to lean forward on brisk, uphill starts and to avoid snapping the throttle open when banked over!

The first green lane run for the Rudge was across the infamous Pockstones Moor in West Yorkshire. I reckon I have ridden more junk across this road than the rest of the off-road movement put together! Two trips in particular spring to mind: a Boxing Day ride on a road-going Tiger 100 with ribbed front and K70 rear tyres, most of the trip being three feet above the surface of the road supported by the thin frozen crust on the snowdrifts. Only once or twice did we crash through and the necessary digging kept us warm. Then the time I tried to 'blitz' the infamous Pockstones bomb-hole on a 350 Matchless. We made it halfway across before the front wheel went in. I sailed over the top and skidded along with the waistband of my Barbour trousers scooping up enough wet peat to start a market garden. The Matchy was still standing upright, the front wheel almost wholly buried and quite, quite immovable. Half an hour of hard digging with hands and an old plank of wood was useless. As fast as we dug the peat out it washed back in and I had to resort to a pillion ride home to bring help. It took self, young brother, father, spades, towrope and an agile Renault 4L to effect the rescue. I rode the bike home through the evening gloom not knowing that water had found a way into the motor. It had to be my precious alloy comp. motor. I still cry at the memory of the damage. But I digress. The Rudge was more than competent on the softer going, but you had to be very mindful of the low slung unprotected crankcases on any sort of rockery. The brakes kept their integrity through the deepest puddles, the Maglita kept maglighting, it was light to manhandle and it was fun! *You lads who know no more than XR200s and PE175s really are missing something.*

The first longish trip for the Rudge and self was the annual outing to watch the Scott Trial. I went in company with friends on a BSA-A10 and a modern Suzuki 250 twin. We ambled up through Wensleydale in time to watch the start, then zig-zagged around the lanes to take in the sections. What an event! Best performer was not in the trial but the lad who climbed to the top of a sheet rock face overlooking "Grand Canyon" to obtain a better platform for his photography. He dropped his helmet from the top onto the rocks below, winning the best round of applause all day. Back at the finish a huge crowd watched Malcolm Rathmell change his socks while the tired and battered finishers staggered home. One lad came in with blood pouring from an ear. I always thought this was a symptom of a fractured skull, but he was going to get his teaspoon and die afterwards. These lads are TOUGH. The light was beginning to fail as we headed homewards so the pace was somewhat upped. My companions had commented earlier as to the rather unusual way the Rudge snaked along the road in front of them, but it all seemed very normal to me. Back down Wensleydale we went at a steady fifty or so, the Rudge banging up even steep hills in top gear where the Suzuki would have to shift down at least two to maintain progress. The trouble came at the top of a long, shallow hill where the road dropped away over the brow and the surface suddenly changed. I have never before, or since, experienced a real tank-slapper, but, I assure you, this one was enough for a lifetime. Not only did the bars hammer from side to side, the whole bike seemed to be in the grip of St Vitus' dance, throwing the back wheel from side to side. I could say how I remembered the words of "Motorcycles and How to Manage Them" and kept my arms rubbery and weight low, but I freely confess to hauling on both brakes rather than waiting, terror-stricken, to hit the road. Suddenly the shaking stopped, the tyres bit and we came to a halt, still upright, with me shaking more than the bike had done.

The rest of the journey home was taken at a more sedate pace, the seeds of my hatred of knobbly tyres firmly sown. I must here admit to having had my prejudices weakened recently when I tried a Honda XR200 Pro-Link with knobbles front and back. It handled superbly on tarmac with never a twitch from front or rear, but that is a story for another time.

The Rudge left me soon afterwards in a complicated exchange deal, the constituents of which I can no longer remember except for a late fifties 350 Bullet with the heavyweight front forks and double side brake. This was simply the best British bike I have ever had. I wish it were still mine. I have no photos of the Rudge, nor can I remember the registration number. Does it still bang around in trials trim, I wonder, or has some dedicated restorer dug the bits of tinware from the bin to recreate his idea of the perfect British motorbike?

ITALY'S TOP OFF ROAD SHOCK RANGE!



Specification includes:  
Oleo-Pneumatic (oil & air);  
twin chamber; double acting;  
5 position spring cam adjuster.  
Finished in all red. Come  
complete with top quality  
springs fitted.  
Available in 17 different  
lengths! 11" through 17 1/4"

ALL  
THIS FOR  
ONLY  
**£52.30**  
per pair  
inclusive!

From your dealer or direct from  
Sole U.K. Importers:  
M.R. Holland (Dists) Ltd.,  
Unit 2, Benner Road,  
Wardentree Lane Ind. Estate,  
Spalding, Lincs PE11 3BR  
Tel: (0775) 66144



COD or Transcash  
Acc. No. 202812

10% discount to TRF members



MODEL	PRICE CHROME
HONDA:	
XL 100 SA/SB .....	£55.00
XL 125 K/S/R .....	£55.00
XL 185 S .....	£55.00
XL 250/350 K3/4 ..	£55.00
XR 250 A .....	£55.00
XL 250 S .....	£65.00
XR 250 RB .....	£65.00
XL 500 SR .....	£65.00
XR 500 .....	£68.00
TL 200 E .....	£60.00
YAMAHA:	
XT 125 .....	£65.00
XT 250/500 .....	£65.00
XT 550 .....	£70.00
SUZUKI:	
DR 370/400 .....	£60.00
SP 370/400 .....	£60.00
KAWASAKI:	
KL 250 .....	£55.00
KLX 250 .....	£55.00

All Systems can be  
purchased also in  
Matt Black Paint  
Finish at £5.00 off  
Prices Shown  
PRICE INCLUDES VAT  
POSTAGE & PACKING ADD £4

THESE EXHAUST SYSTEMS  
ARE MADE IN EXTRA  
GAUGE STEEL FOR EXTRA  
DURABILITY AND LONG LIFE

ORDER FROM US AND GET  
MAXIMUM SATISFACTION

MORE MODELS  
COMING SOON

Unit 6, The Moors  
Industrial Estate,  
Roydon, Essex.

Telephone:  
HARLOW 23038  
ROYDON 2277

FOR YOUR 4 STROKE  
EXHAUST SYSTEMS

C.O.D. AVAILABLE

IF YOUR BIKE  
IS NOT SHOWN  
DO NOT DESPAIR,  
AS WE ADD TO OUR  
LIST WEEKLY

WE ALSO GIVE  
DISCOUNTS FOR  
AVAILABILITY OF  
4 STROKE MODELS  
NOT SHOWN.

BRING YOUR BIKE  
TO US FOR A QUOTE

We also make 2 into 1 for most  
Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki  
and Moto Guzzi models

We are specialists in one off models

## M.Zs ON THE BIG TRAIL

Brian Thompson may have waxed lyrical about the capabilities of the M.Z. in the past, but you don't see many of them on the trail.

These riders from the Box Hill section of the M.Z. Riders Club were on a camping weekend near Lynton over the Bank Holiday and expressed a wish to find and ride the famous – if no longer challenging – Beggars Roost.

It's a sight which will surely gladden the hearts of any TRF rider who is concerned at the growth of specialist bikes being used on the trail: two Supa 5s, an ETZ and a V twin Honda replete with top boxes and passengers.

It was a pleasure to lead them to the lane and record the scene for posterity.



*Unsuitable for Motor Vehicles*

*– but not M.Zs it seems, as these riders from the Box Hill area are about to find out*

## ADVERTISEMENTS (Members only – £1.00 for four lines)

### ACCOMMODATION:

**WELSH TRADITIONAL FARMHOUSE.** Under cover parking for bikes, room for cars and trailers. Large lounge, 7 beds., colour TV, home produced food. Cost BB & EM £10. Groups £9 per person – Dick and Jean Sutton, Pen Rochell Farm, Llanfihangel, Rhydithon, Dolau, near Llandrindod Wells. Tel: Pen y Bont 200. Guide available for special arrangement.

**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, College 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.

**UNREPEATABLE SPECIAL OFFER.** New type Dunlop Safety Wellies, seconds £10.99. P&P extra. R & D Armstrong, "Brekarlyn", Mellbeeks, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. Tel: Kirkby Stephen 71780 (after 6.00 p.m.)

### ZINC PLATING

Re-plate those old tatty steel parts or make a better job of parts for your 'special'. Prompt turn-round. Cheques/POs to C. Pomphrett, Parts to CMP, 16 Harley Street, Scarborough YO12 5PY. £1 per item, minimum 5 items, inc. P&P.

### WANTED

Cam Shaft for XL1855 (X Reg.) Must be in good condition. Phone: L. Haysom Reigate 48950.

### FOR SALE:

MXA Tool Bag with TRF lettering. Black PVC with internal strap and fixing bolts. Unused since purchase and now not needed as XR200 already has one. £12.00

Acerbis Rear Mudguard Section c/w Light to fit XL500/XR500? Unused. Accept £12.00 (cost £20.00). Tel: Richard Marshall, Draycott 3416.

COPY DATE FOR BULLETIN 111

24th OCTOBER 1985

## TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

### Group and Group Rep.

#### BOURNEMOUTH & POOLE

Keith Cockrell, 'The Bungalow', West Street  
Winterbourne Kingston  
Blandford, Dorset

#### BRISTOL

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

#### CAMBRIDGESHIRE

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

#### CHESHIRE

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

#### CUMBRIA

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

#### DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

David Bonsall, 9 Blackdown Close  
Sheffield S19 6NF

#### EAST MIDLANDS

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

#### EAST YORKSHIRE

Howard Wadsworth  
7 Hammond Road, Knottingley  
WF11 0HL

#### EXMOOR

Roy Scrafton  
11 Lansdowne Road  
Taunton. Tel: 54386

#### FYLDE COAST

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

#### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

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

#### HERTFORDSHIRE

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

#### LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, 6 Briars Lane, Lathom  
Ormskirk, Lancs. Tel: 0704 893215

#### LODDON VALE

Don Lewis, Ladybower, Dogmersfield  
Basingstoke, Hants RG27 8SS  
Tel: 02514 6359

#### NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

Dave Rose, 15 Shire Green, Fen Lane  
Kings Lynn. Tel: 0553 65661

#### NORTH MIDLANDS

Bruce Roberts, Sonwell House  
Fountain Square, Youlgreave  
Nr. Bakewell, Derbys. Tel: 062 986 724

## LOCAL GROUP MEETINGS

1st Tuesday — Dorset Soldier  
Corfe Mullen

2nd Mondays  
White Hart, Brislington Hill  
Brislington, Bristol

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

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

Golden Lion, Market Place, Kendal

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

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

2nd & 4th Wednesdays  
Kellingley Social Centre  
Knottingley

4th Monday of each month  
The Stagecoach P.H., Castle Bow  
Taunton (Centre)

Every Tuesday except 1st  
Lions Sports Club  
Lytham St Annes

1st Monday —  
Raglan Arms  
Conduit Street, Gloucester

1st Wednesday —  
Sow and Piglets  
Toddington, Beds.

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

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

1st Wednesday — The Blue Lion  
North Pickenham

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

## NORTHUMBERLAND

Ken Canham, 'Overdale'  
Woodside Villas, Hexham, Northumberland  
Tel: Hexham 602553

3rd Tuesday —  
Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

## NORTH WALES

Stan Whitaker, 15 Wedgewood Heights  
Holywell, Clywd. Tel: 0352 712343

1st Wednesday — The Fox & Grapes,  
Chester Rd. Hawarden, Clywd  
(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)

## SUNDAY WINTER CLUB - CWMBRAN

Brian Wilde, 58 Ty-Box Road  
West Pontnewyd, Cwmbran  
Tel: Cwmbran 4742

Tuesday — King's Head Hotel  
Pontnewyd, Cwmbran, Gwent

## SUSSEX

John Penfold, 'Mariners'  
Nyton Road, Aldingbourne  
Chichester. Tel: 024368

Contact John (every other month — 4th  
Wednesday — i.e. Feb., 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, 4 Halley's Walk, Addlestone  
Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 42935

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: 0484 685492

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

## YORKSHIRE COAST (SCARBOROUGH)

Simon Alport, Prospect Villa  
Castle Lane, E. Ayton, Scarborough  
Tel: 0723 864388

1st Wednesday  
Wykeham (ring first)