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#### WEST ANGLIA

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Rushden, Northamptonshire  
Tel: Rushden 313816

#### WEST MIDLANDS

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Solihull, W.Midlands B92 9AY  
Tel: 021-743 5801

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Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club  
Victoria Road, Blackheath, W.Midlands

# TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 117 December 1986/January 1987



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



# TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

BULLETIN No. 117

## FUTURE EVENTS

### DECEMBER

- 9th West Yorkshire Group. Blubberhouse Moor Run. Contact: Jim Souter. Bradford 42361 (work), Bradford 611789 (home).
- 14th East Yorkshire Group. Boothferry Run. Contact: Don Burt. 0977 - 612258.
- 28th East Yorkshire Group. Christmas Food Shakedown. Ackworth. Contact: Don Burt 0977 - 612258.

### JANUARY

- 17th TRF Executive Committee Meeting. King George V Memorial Hall, Hockley Heath. 1.00 p.m.

Cover Photo: Honda MTX125 – Courtesy of Rosemary Swindells

## EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

Well, for better or worse, you're stuck with me for another twelve months as your Editor. Thank you, to the few of you who attended the AGM, for your continued support by re-electing me. A pity more of you couldn't have turned up at the National Motorcycle Museum as it was quite an enjoyable meeting this year. But there's still next year, and I can tell you now that we will be back at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham for our AGM next October.

Wot no runs!! By now you've probably noticed I'm situated where the dates usually are. Don't forget to send me your runs lists/future events if you want to publicise these to the membership. Many groups I know are afraid that if they advertise their trail rides they will get hoardes of riders turning up on the day, but from my experience you may get the odd one or two, if any. If you don't advertise your starting point, but just a contact number, you'll have control over numbers anyway.

From the letters I've received, Nigel Douglass seems to have stirred a few pens into life with his comments about enduro bikes and riding in the last issue. When asked why I printed his letter/article, when RA 'moles' may take it all out of context, I must reply that, whilst being horrified at the thought of enduro practice on the trails, Mr Douglass is as entitled to his opinion and reasons for trail riding as are his opponents. Articles and letters published in the TRF *Bulletin* are the views of the members and are NOT necessarily in line with TRF policy.

And so finally, may I just say "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" to you all!!

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*Membership Secretary*  
Tony Rose  
29 Anderson Drive  
Kettering  
Northants NN15 5DG  
Tel: (0536) 522274



Will the Honda Transalp be capable of transcending Walna Scar? I think not. Ten out of ten to Honda for creating this White Elephant disguised as a dual role trail/touring bike.

Honda say – "We began with the concept of a conventional trail motorcycle, and assembled the technology and technical know how gained in off-road races such as the Paris–Dakar Rally to create a new concept touring bike. Frame mounted fairing, long stroke suspension and a liquid cooled V-twin engine that delivers the power."

Should be interesting to see how it tests out; but personally, if I wanted a trail bike I'd buy a trail bike, and if I wanted a touring bike, I'd buy a touring bike, not something that could be a let down in both worlds.

LETTERS

My belated thanks to Ken Canham and Charles King for inviting me to participate in the John Ebbrell Memorial Run and the Welsh Coast to Coast Run.

Without their hard work I would not have got the opportunity to spend two very enjoyable days riding with old and new friends.

Long may they continue to get the support and assistance which will persuade them to continue.

Don Burt, 1 Villa Close, Low Ackworth, Pontefract

In Bulletin No.116, you published a short letter and report on the Circuit des Pyrenees from Nigel Douglass. I am not entirely sure how they should be treated, whether as having been written tongue-in-cheek, in an attempt to promote correspondence, or as representing his genuine beliefs. In either case, I think it is unfortunate that some comments were not edited.

Like it or not, there can be little doubt that the Bulletin is taken by an RA 'mole', and we all, therefore, have to be most careful over what appears in print. I entirely agree with Frank Diamond who said, at the 1986 AGM, that it was a pretty poor state of affairs if TRF members could not make jokes in, or write light-hearted letters to, their own magazine but it has to be recognised that the RA does not display the same attitude to Green Lanes as does the TRF, and has done since the time of Norman Smith. We have 'played the game', recognised and respected the rights of other users and been predominantly interested in clarifying the true status of any lane in dispute, so that, if it has been shown, by good evidence, that public vehicular rights have never existed, we have accepted it, just as we have ourselves proposed and accepted Codes of Conduct and Voluntary Restraint.

The RA, however, is 'playing for real' and has shown no reluctance in exaggerating incidents, looking for conflict where none exists or quoting out of context to denigrate all motorcyclists, with the publicly avowed intention of depriving vehicular users of green lanes with vehicular rights.

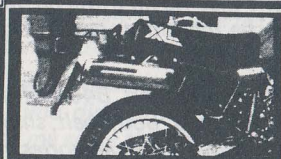
Accordingly, remarks in print such as "a relatively boring run on a trail bike becomes exciting on a responsive, good handling enduro bike. After all, we do it for fun, don't we?" . . . "but for those of us who use trail riding as enduro practice"; . . . "in the course of our hobby we all spend some time travelling along minor roads at 50-60 mph, usually in foul weather conditions: snow, ice, wed, mud, flooded, brakes, trail tyres - all a recipe for disaster" have the potential for providing the RA with valuable propaganda material, whether or not the author intended to be taken seriously.

All members should remember that Green Lanes are public highways and must be treated as such, with proper regard for the safety and interests of other users. Not for one moment am I suggesting that everyone should ride around with a long face, or treat trail rides as seriously as professional trials riders do observed sections, but larking about and the concept of 'having fun' should not enter into trail riding at all. The place for excitement, other than on a purely 'tarmac' machine, is on private lanes, with appropriate permission, in an enduro, scramble or trial, or even just 'having a thrash' around a field, if that is what is wanted. The TRF has a Code of Conduct which imposes A MAXIMUM OF 25 MPH ON GREEN LANES: that, and the remainder of the Code, MUST be observed by all members at all times, otherwise we will surely one day be confined to trail parks or competition riding.



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*I am not proposing, for trail riding, a ban on using enduro bikes, which are, by their very nature, agile and responsive, or on 'knobbles' and I do not wish to appear a kill-joy, but I take the greatest exception, not only to the fact that at least one member appears to use green lanes for enduro practice and boasts about it, but also to the absolute nonsense of the sweeping statement that we all travel on minor roads at dangerously excessive speeds in the conditions he mentions, when body armour would provide little or no help.*

*When I ride either of my bikes (Triumph Adventurer and B40/Bultaco Trials Special) I usually wear body armour, as well as elbow pads, body belt, shin and knee cap protectors, not because I fall (pun intended) into any of the categories mentioned by Mr Douglass, but simply for protection in the event of a collision with a hard object or surface, at any speed. Injuries of a painful kind can be sustained in falls at low speeds, as I well know.*

*In conclusion, I think it would be no bad thing for the Code of Conduct to be printed, in full, in every Bulletin, to remind members that the TRF stands for responsible, non-competitive and non-obtrusive riding on green lanes – and any other roads for that matter – so that if the obligation of complying with the Code is not acceptable to Mr Douglass and others, they can join a club which caters for their sporting inclinations, and have their fun well away from public highways.*

Michael Rowley, LLB, TRF Honorary Solicitor  
8 Delves Place, Westlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme

*With reference to Nigel Douglass' article about doing pirouettes (or was it cart-wheels?) in the Pyrenees.*

*Anyone who uses trail riding as enduro practice, who rides at 50–60 mph along minor roads on snow, ice or mud, with or without flooded brakes, DESERVES to be in hospital. The government provides what they term 'secure hospitals' for such people where they can be looked after without endangering the lives of others.*

*The TRF is a band of responsible riders, who do NOT practice enduros on green lanes. We abide by a voluntary code of conduct. This includes a voluntary maximum speed of 25 mph on green lanes. This speed might suit enduros for pedal cycles? We have a care for other road users and for the countryside through which we ride.*

*I trust Mr Douglass will mend his ways while in hospital or else resign his membership of the TRF.*

Ian Thompson, Glebe House, St Columb Minor, Newquay, Cornwall

*Further to my letter in the last issue regarding the Exec's decision not to spend £300 on Dales and Lakes research. I am glad that the decision was reversed as Rosie said. The point that I would like to make is that it should not have been made in the first place. As Brian Thompson said: "That is what the fighting fund is there for." Another point is that, by the time everyone had complained to the Executive Committee, it would have been too late to do any good; the opportunity gone and the closing date passed.*

*On a brighter note, the offer to lead groups or individuals still stands, especially OUTSIDE the National Park. There are many good trails, some difficult at times, outside the Park and all will come under the review. This is our first review and is being carried out by the Yorkshire Dales National Park, NOT the County Council.*

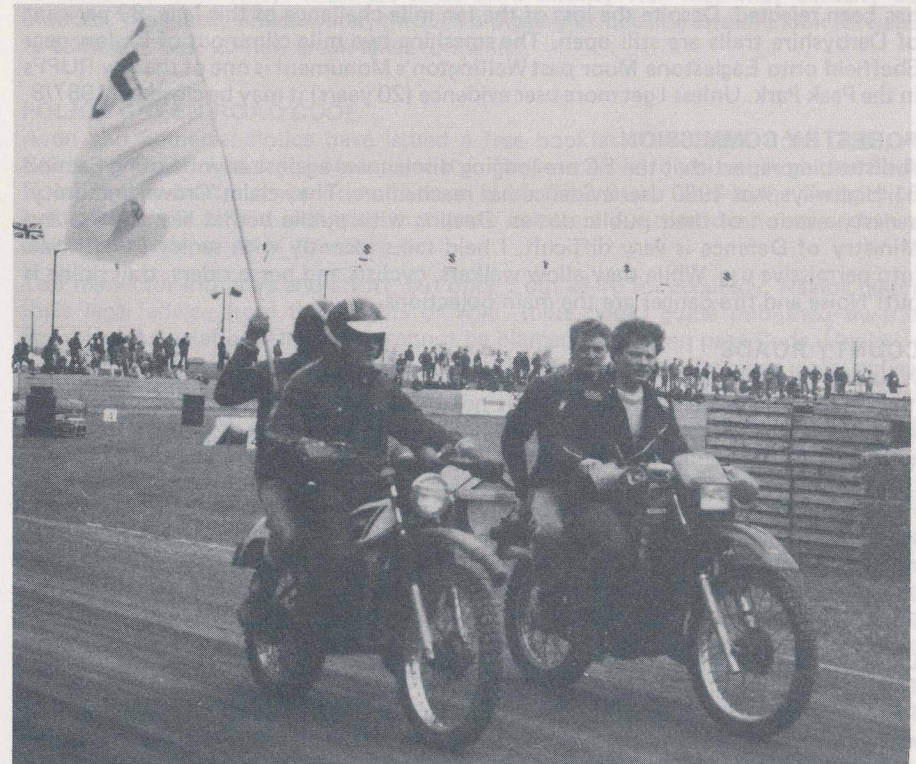
*These trails can cater for all types/grades of riders. Is anyone interested in a Geriatric Run or Weekend? Beginners, of course, can always be catered for, as can experts.*

Gordon Thackray, 105 The Oval, Otley, West Yorkshire

*I should like to thank all those people who helped me in organising the Welsh Coast to Coast Run; without their assistance the weekend could not have taken place.*

*To those people who stayed overnight at the study centre and did not book in advance, if you did not pay Simon Hulme (The Director) could you please forward a cheque to me since the balance sheet for the event is in debit at present.*

Charles King, 11 Sycamore Rise, Wooldale, Holmfirth, W.Yorks



Cambridge Group representing the TRF in the 'Club Cavalcade'  
at the BMF Rally

## RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS — Brian Thompson

### DERBYSHIRE

Following a request from the Peak National Park to go and play at trail riding somewhere else, few riders appear to have taken any notice. I investigated a complaint from the District Council of overuse on Roych Clough and Chapel Gate between Edale and Hayfield but for the life of me I cannot find any evidence to justify this. Both are County Roads and public bridleways and riders are still being challenged by Peak Park Wardens whose information is very lacking. They think they have found a nice prosecution case. Watch out!

A trail rider from Sale in Cheshire was convicted for taking his bike on Jacobs Ladder, near Edale; the ancient road going back to the 14th century but closed by traffic order since 1977. The closure followed the conviction of two well known trials riders for using the old road to ride over the moor. Following regular requests as to how we can get the ban lifted, I have to say forget it. My application to use Jacobs Ladder by permission for the TRF only during mid-week October to April has been rejected. Despite the loss of the ten mile challenge of this lane, 99 per cent of Derbyshire trails are still open. The smashing two mile climb out of Baslow near Sheffield onto Eaglestone Moor past Wellington's Monument is one of the few RUPPs in the Peak Park. Unless I get more user evidence (20 years) it may be closed in 1987/8.

### FORESTRY COMMISSION

A disturbing report that the FC are lodging disclaimers against anyone using Section 31 Highways Act 1980 user evidence has reached me. They claim 'Crown immunity' a nasty evasion of their public duties. Dealing with public bodies like the FC and Ministry of Defence is very difficult. I held talks recently with senior FC officials into permissive use. While they allow walkers, cyclists and horse riders, trail riding is out! Noise and fire danger are the main objections.

### COUNTY ROADS

Wouldn't it be nice if all county roads were shown on current Ordnance Survey maps like RUPPs and Byways? Does it not make good sense to let everyone know what the status actually is, without having to spend three days at County Hall? Not according to the Ramblers Association who have effectively blocked plans to show them on OS maps. They regard county roads as being without legal meaning. Even RUPPs and Byways, they say, are mainly used by walkers. It seems that everyone is scared of going against the wishes of the RA who, after all, only represent 50,000 walkers, a tiny fraction of the seven million regular ramblers in the UK. The Ordnance Survey Committee will not go ahead without RA consent, so we as trail riders will continue to face difficulties.

### LANCASHIRE

The Lancashire TRF Group have successfully negotiated for permissive routes for TRF members. The agreement between the Group and the North West Water Board will allow any member to use green lanes without vehicular rights on the north western Pennines. The agreement, which allows for access via a key through locked gates onto tracks on Water Board land, is a major breakthrough in trail riding history and the provisions will serve as a national model for other permissive routes. There is no reason to fear that the deal with a major landowner could jeopardise public rights of way. Good monitoring and enforcement of the Code of Conduct is very important. And it must be remembered that the landowner can, of course, pull out of the deal given reasonable notice and there is nothing we can do about it.

### RIDGEWAY

Time to start lobbying the government to get the application by the Countryside Commission to close the Ridgeway dismissed. In 1976 letters from motorcyclists and others against a ban equalled those wanting a traffic ban and this was an important factor in the decision by the Government Inspector to reject the application. So get out your pens and typewriters and tell the Secretary of State for Transport, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 3EB what you think about the 1986 repeat to attempt to close the 80 mile longest and oldest problem. Mention also the 'Green Lane Study' 1979 which reported that the problem of trail rider abuse was exaggerated and there is no justification to ban them.

### YORKSHIRE

The results of two weeks full time research paid for by the TRF has discovered 25 green lanes not previously used or known. All are in the Yorkshire Dales and North Yorkshire Moors National Park. Before I pass the information on, they will be surveyed for suitability. What are lanes on a County Hall map may actually be blocked, ploughed, under water, through a piggery or housing estate! I look forward to adding at least 20 new green lanes to the list.

### POLICE GREEN ROAD CODE

Avon and Somerset Police have issued a free booklet 'The Green Road Code; A Guide to Green Lanes for Motorcyclists'. Copies can be obtained from the Bath Road Traffic Unit, Lower Bristol Street, Bath BA2 3QU. This is the first police authority in the UK to recognise that green lanes are a recreational need and that much confusion exists as to status, etc.

Top marks for initiative and effort, but only 5 out of 10 for accuracy. Having taken their legal advice from the 'Rights of Way' (blue book) guide published by the Ramblers Association, the police cannot be blamed. In the ten page Code, Unclassified County Roads are not mentioned at all. This booklet may be taken up by police forces throughout England and Wales so it is very important that it is lawfully correct. The official position on County Roads is set out in a letter dated 9 June 1983 from the Department of the Environment which states "... the term unclassified county roads cover only those ways which have vehicular rights over them." Naturally, you will only find this government letter published by ourselves. A copy of the DoE letter is available free of charge to anyone on request to me with an SAE.

I have asked Avon and Somerset Police to revise their Green Road Code and to include the TRF Code of Conduct. Police advise that a speed of 60 mph applies on green lanes may be lawful, but is most unsuitable and the TRF's 25 mph is much better. There is some dubious advice that "competition tyres and silencers are not legal for use on green lanes". This also needs clarifying to avoid difficulties in the future. Does this include the use of knobbles/enduro tyres which many trail riders fit?

If these comments sound churlish and ungrateful, that is not my intention. I offer my congratulations to the traffic unit.

### A BIT OF COMPETITION

The story of an attempted bribe to force me to give up an old lane prompted many enquiries. It would not be tactful to reveal details, nor would it help to reveal the full facts behind the 1979 attempt to kill off all motorcycle sport in the Yorkshire Dales.

For experienced rights of way workers dirty tricks are not unknown. The most frightening and ugly incident was a false charge of assaulting a farmer's wife in 1983 in Nottinghamshire after using a ploughed out RUPP. This was brought in order to get me to drop my complaint about widespread ploughing of green lanes. The assault charge was later dropped and I received an apology.

A few years ago I organised a public demonstration walk on an ancient way. The Police Chief called round and told me to call it off as they feared a breach of the peace. I was then served a High Court Writ to forbid the use of Causeway Bank old road over Thorne Moors. The demo was called off because no one turned up! On another occasion we were met by a gang of 'minders' employed by a farmer to try and stop our progress, unsuccessfully, I add.

I relate such stories not to 'frighten you off public rights of way work but to warn you that this can be a dirty and dangerous game as well as a rewarding and interesting one. My old tutor, Wm Bunting, of over thirty years involvement in rights of way, has been shot at, bankrupted, sacked, evicted and burgled. The burglar employed to tap Bunting's phone was caught and convicted at Leeds Crown Court and fined £500. Some will stop at nothing to steal public rights of way.

So, if you get stuck in a sticky situation, give me a ring and talk it over first. After twenty years in which I have opened up some 300 green lanes I think I have faced most awkward situations.

#### SPORTS COUNCIL MONEY

Do you approve of public money for the Ramblers Association? £26,000 was given last year. The Sports Council have promised to double the grant to the RA by 1995. Despite RA plans to drive motorcycles 'out of the countryside', taxpayers money flows freely and regularly into 1-5 Wandsworth Road. Founded 33 years after the ACU, the RA were very wise to invest money in a travel business and last year this put £65,000 into RA coffers. Pity the ACU with a total monopoly for 60 years did not do the same. Meanwhile, the RA increase their representation on decision making bodies. Gerald McGuire, an RA Vice-President, is a member of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park Committee. Jerry Peariman, the RA's hot shot lawyer, serves on the Yorkshire Dales National Park and other RA officials on the Countryside Commission for Wales and Peak Park. Don't get me wrong! The RA carry out a great deal of very effective rights of way work. They fearlessly prosecute farmers and act as a powerful lobby, much of which we applaud. Councils and governments would do even less without RA pressure. If only they would begin to accept that trail riding is here to stay!

#### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

A great deal of information is available to help you enjoy your rights in the countryside. First is the 'blue book' *Rights of Way; a Guide to Law and Practice* by John Trevelyan and Paul Clayden, 350 pages of somewhat biased information on every possible problem; £4 from TRF Secretary, John Higgin or Ramblers Association, 1-5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LJ and is a *must* despite grossly unfair handling of RUPPs, County Roads and all subjects concerning vehicular rights. Not recommended are the following booklets from the RA: 'Curbing Noise Invasion' and 'A Policy for Footpaths' both plus postage 50p each.

The Countryside Commission can supply: 'Rights of Way Legislation: 1st Monitoring Report' the first RA report to the government as consultants. Price £2.75 ref.CCP202. 'Ploughing of Footpaths and Bridleways' a report into the extent of

destruction by farmers for the Rights of Way Review Committee. A shocking expose of damage and destruction; highly recommended. Price £3.50 ref.CCP190. This report resulted in a 50,000 leaflet issue to all farmers. 'Waymarking Public Rights of Way' a booklet for that vague track and free of charge. Finally, 'Out in the Country' a free 40 page booklet ref.CCP186 about where you can go and what you can do. Almost as biased for trail riders as the 'blue book'. Countryside Commission booklets can be obtained from 19 Albert Road, Manchester M19 2EQ.

I can also supply free to members my own factual three page 'Brief Guide to Public Rights of Way Law'; also copies of the *Sunday Times* Ridgeway articles of 1985 and copies of the pro-trail rider *Guardian* articles in 1978 and 1981. And if you are losing an argument with a farmer, I can supply the official NFU circular explaining the law on green lanes by Dr Bell, which is most fair.

Two new books of interest to trail riders have recently been published. *Walking Ancient Trackways* by Michael Dunn, published by David & Charles, Newton Abbot, Devon at £12.95 post free is 232 pages describing 34 walks using old green lanes and intended for ramblers, not trail riders. The photos are rather poor and some of the trackways like the Ickneild Way are partly metalled. A more useful but smaller book is *Green Lane Walks in Cornwall* Price 75p from Green Lanes Project, Unit 2D, Heathlands Industrial Estate, Liskeard, Cornwall. The Green Lane Project is funded by the Manpower Services Commission and Dartington Institute who carried out the invaluable but suppressed and out of print 'Green Lane Study' in 1979.

Other useful books are *Roads and Trackways in Wales* at £7.75; *Roads and Trackways of the Lakes* at £7.95 and *Peakland Roads and Tracks* at £5.00, all from Moorland Publishing Co., Station Street, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

#### ROOF OF THE WORLD

The highest trail ride in the world and one of the longest has just opened across the Himalayas. An Australian rider on an XT600 has completed the journey from Islamabad in Pakistan to Kashgar in China, the first motorcycle to be allowed over. Though rising to 17,000 feet the Khunjerab Pass in the Karakoram range is passable only for 4-wheel drive vehicles and off road bikes. Only partly paved, some of the 30 foot highway can disappear overnight due to avalanches and melting glaciers washing down the mountain sides. With 200 miles between petrol supplies those Paris Dakar 6 gallon tanks may come in useful at last!

The highway took twenty years to build and cost 500 workers their lives. Mud, ice, snow and rocks are to be expected. Possibly the greatest trail ride of all time is expected to attract many users. Accommodation is sparse and primitive with only 150 beds on the Chinese side. Both China and Pakistan are anxious to attract tourists to the high level adventure route opened officially on 1st May, though a passage through the mountains has been possible since 1979.

The pass is only open from June to October before snow for eight months a year stops all traffic with fifty foot snow drifts above 9000 feet. Due to the altitude, engines suffer a forty per cent power loss at 17,000 feet and small machines under 250 c.c. are not advised. Ah well, and I was just about to take my Kawasaki 80 over!

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**A TALE OF TWO NEW XRs**

Keiran and I went to the 'Open Day' at Tippetts and drooled over the XR250. We both agreed they were the 'business'. Accordingly, we haggled with the various dealers and Keiran found one who would supply them at 0% on HP so we sent off our deposits.

We resolved to keep it from the other club members until we had secretly run them in and then invite everyone on a trail run to the South Downs and surprise them all!

I had spent many evenings comparing tests and specifications; funny, but one seems to obtain almost as much fun choosing a bike as riding it. Anyway, after further deliberation I decided to change my order to the 350 (only a little heavier but much more torquey). I didn't tell Keiran!

On THE day we took the transporter to collect them. I well remember rounding the bend and seeing two large red Hondas side by side amongst all the blue and yellow bikes. Because of the similarity, Keiran did not realise that one was a 350 until later when the dealer said: "Now the 350 has the extra tools." Keiran's face was a picture! When he stopped trying to hit me we loaded up and went to deal with the formalities of putting them 'on the road'.

After a lot less beaucroatic hassle than I expected, we were able to go to the South Downs for a secret reconnaissance run. We found a long muddy hill that we were just able to climb and earmarked it for our route.

The following week, Keiran and I arranged to meet the other club members in the car park at Midhurst. Two of the club had just bought nice new PE175s. We, of course, arrived a little late, so that everyone else was waiting! (There is nothing like timing when making an entrance.)

Eventually we set off and presently arrived at the hill previously mentioned. A wink passed between us as, with a cry of "this way lads" the two XRs set off up the hill. Something like five minutes later we were still sitting at the top listening to the faint sound of a two stroke engine followed by silence and a muttered oath! Finally, a very hot and red faced rider appeared, followed by others walking next to their bikes. Keiran went down the hill and up again, just to show the others that 'XRs rule'; I had to go half way down to collect a rider on the back of my XR for the same reason.

At the end of the day, Keiran and I agreed that non-competitive trail riding can be more fun than competition!

*Brian Wright, 2 Orchard Road, Sutton, Surrey*

**SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING held on 20th September 1986**

1. The Secretary reported that the Fellowship had voted in principle to support a full time Rights of Way Officer at the last AGM and this was now in operation. It was jointly funded by the trade, the sport, the Welsh Trail Riders Association and ourselves.

After the last meeting we explored with our Hon. Solicitor the Abergynolwyn Case but it was not possible to get any further with it. However, the possibility of prosecution for complicity to deprive the public is being looked into.



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The Ridgeway saga continues, all three highway authorities have refused a TRF so the Countryside Commission is applying to the Minister of Transport for a Traffic Regulation Order. We are opposing this.

An approach for Associate Membership has come from the AJS/Matchless Club and they are discussing it. The MCA have replied to our approach of January 1984 to promote a Trail Bike Week but they say they are too busy at present.

Questions were asked about 'misfeasance' in the Abergolwyn Case and Tim Stevens asked about Associate Membership; this was a minimum of £50 donation to the Fighting Fund but very few membership benefits. The Chairman asked for an official delegate to the LARA management meetings and the Secretary was elected to continue with Richard Marshall deputising.

The Committee were asked to agree in practice to the membership of the Land Access and Rights Association for two years from June 1986 – Agreed.

2. The Membership Secretary reported that we had 1319 members at present. This was a large increase and Tony was congratulated on his industry and enthusiasm in carrying out the work. Tony said that we had to register under the Data Protection Act as the membership records were held on computer.
3. The Editor reported that she was keeping a close eye on costs and standards but the present printer was very competitive. A change in distribution method would hopefully speed up delivery of the *Bulletin* to members. She was grateful for all articles/photos sent in to her.
4. The Press Officer reported that Police Officers had visited the offices of *Climber* magazine and the tone had modified considerably. The stance of objectors had changed and it was now recognised that motorcycles were legal in the countryside but objections were now on 'moral' grounds. Over complaints about the recent *Bike* magazine article, Alan said that he had told them strongly of our attitude before the organised expedition but had no control over the editorial content. Alan had investigated costs for display systems for use at the forthcoming Bike Show in London and any shows in the future.
5. The Treasurer reported a successful year to date. To clear up any misunderstanding, the Fighting Fund was used for rights of way work only, for the general good of the public, but club funds were used to benefit the Fellowship.
6. The Rights of Way Officer reported that his son could do research in Wales and Yorkshire. He said that he hoped to get summonses dismissed for the members in Brecon in co-operation with Alan Kind. Brian is to continue to represent all vehicular users on the Central Rights of Way Committee.

There is to be a review in the Yorkshire Dales after 36 years. Research has been done on the Yorkshire Dales National Parks at Northallerton and thirty-five County Roads had been discovered. The BBT is to finance three weeks research in Dorset.

Trail riders had been visited by the police for riding the Great Wold in Yorkshire and Brian had persuaded them not to prosecute. The police had suggested a period of voluntary restraint and this had been agreed. It was noted that the RAC sit on the Ordnance Advisory Committee but had not spoken out against

a move to say that 'white roads' had no legal meaning; however, this had been defeated. Most are County Maintainable Roads.

Tim Stevens asked for a definition of 'over use' and asked why we do not report to the County Council if a road is not in good condition. Brian replied that a CC would rather close a road than maintain it.

7. The Rights of Way Seminar as proposed by David Giles would cost £23 each for two nights and travelling costs of approximately £14. After discussion it was agreed that the Fellowship subsidise the accommodation for members.
8. The Secretary asked that he be authorised to explore the making of a video by a course at a College of Further Education.
9. The current matter of the Ridgeway was put before the meeting and it was agreed to ask all groups to write to the Minister of State for Transport, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1 about the proposal to put a partial TRO on it, complaining about this and putting our case.

### Why do people join the TRF?

#### Ross Clarkson gives his reasons on the subject

Finally, in May this year, I joined the TRF after many thoughts on the subject. A brief history of my first twelve years of motorcycling is: BSA B25 (heap); Velocette Venom (classic – originally bought in full green lane trim 21" front wheel as well, in 1972); Ducati 900GTS (trouble free thoroughbred); Suzuki GS750, Yamaha XS1100, Suzuki GS1100 (Japanese reliability second to none, Japanese character, NONE!). My current road bike is a Kawasaki GPz600; now that's got the lot – Italian handling, Japanese power and reliability, 130 mph and 60+ mpg. What more could you ask for? My off road bikes in that time have mainly been trials sidecars, Bultaco, Suzuki, Yamaha, SWM, with the odd solo DT250MX and Honda 250. The 250 Honda is a 1973 Jeffries Honda in one day trials trim. My intentions are to ride that on future TRF runs which should make keeping up with the leader on his XR350 Honda a bit more interesting.

My off road experience of twelve years constant national and centre competition with every type of win except a national win: 2nd, 3rd, 4th . . . everything down to the last!! The trouble with national trials is that the trial gets in the way of the fun! By that I mean I enjoyed the rides, the well organised side of trials, the rides in between sections, but enjoyed the riding too much to be competitive enough to win. I would often end the day not knowing how many points I'd lost, and not even caring about it anyway. Which is the reason the TRF first became attractive to me. That, and the fact that three kids under the age of six years and two bike shops to run makes riding every weekend in competition a little unfair on the other members of the family.

My intentions are to ride on TRF runs and get to know my local area and then, if the occasion arises mid-week, I can go and explore myself, or with a few friends, or with one of the kids in the sidecar in future years. The idea of seeing a fair bit of the beauty of the countryside without having to foot slog it up hill and down dale is also a very attractive proposition.

Ross Clarkson, 27 Cranleigh Close, Blackburn, Bolton



## TRAIL BIKE TEST — HONDA MTX125RW-F by Rosemary Swindells

The MTX125RW-D was introduced in answer to, and in direct competition to the Yamaha DT125LC; the first in the breed of moto-cross replica trail bikes, brought about by the then new learner law. The Japanese, always quick to respond to market demands, saw a new area open to fill with impressive bikes to lure the young rider into motorcycling. Until then, the 125 c.c. class had devolved into mainly commuter and uninteresting machines.

The MTX125RW-F, basically unchanged since 1983, now features a disc front brake instead of the drum, larger diameter forks (37mm as opposed to 35mm), frame mounted pillion footpegs and, of course, a different colour scheme.

The MTX125 is a liquid cooled 124 c.c. single cylinder 2-stroke. With gear driven contra-rotating balancer this alleviates much of the vibration so much a part of the normal buzzy two-stroke. However, although a smooth motor, the mirrors still vibrate badly. Looking much like its larger stablemate the MTX200, the 125 differs in that it does not use the ATAC (Autocontrol Torque Amplification Chamber) system — a system designed to increase low speed power. The 125 also uses a smaller carb 24mm Keihin as opposed to 26mm, though still uses reed valve induction. A close ratio gearbox gives snappy acceleration which makes the MTX125 feel more powerful than its 12 bhp would have you think possible. Effective water cooling comes at the price of a large vulnerable radiator, which is just asking to have rock punched through it.

Starting from cold took quite some kicks and even when started it was best to let the motor warm up for some time as it had a tendency to stall. The inaccessible choke, which is either on or off, makes fine mixture adjustment nigh on impossible. Once warm, though, the bike always started first kick. A quiet exhaust note — no one could call the exhaust note offensive — a detracting factor from using many older 2-strokes on the trail. The other point which usually makes 2-strokes unpopular on green lanes is the clouds of 2-stroke oil smoke. Apart from a blue cloud left after its first blast on the M4, the MTX remained remarkably clean for a 2-stroke.

With no easy unbolt de-restrictor, this designed 12 bhp 125 actually feels more like the pre-restricted machine. There is none of the power cut-off nor flatness of a machine that has been brutally strangled down to that power. I wouldn't exactly describe the MTX125 as 'learner friendly'. After the restricted NS125, the MTX125 felt anything but, and I found the machine quite a handful at first. Power is so instant that if you drop the clutch too quickly you're likely to be wheelie-ing down the road; try to be more clutch/throttle sensitive and the bike burbles away slowly threatening to stall. It takes quite some miles to get to know the happy medium and even then I was caught out once or twice and kangarooed away from junctions. A relatively powerful mid-range motor for a 125, but with seemingly little bottom end grunt or fine throttle control.

The MTX has all the tricks of the trade in the suspension department, though lacking a certain refinement. Leading axle air assisted forks mean greater fork travel (230mm). Not linked, there is precious little adjustment possible, especially when working within the confines of 0–6 psi. The rear end sports the Honda Pro-link mono-shock system, with 200mm of travel but, unlike the 4-stroke Honda XL125R, this is not adjustable. However, the ride was soft but firm. Thanks to a pair of

linkages which connect the swinging arm to the damper, suspension is progressive, i.e. over smooth surfaces damper movement is small resulting in a very soft ride. However, during hard cornering or over rough surfaces, the damper speed increases progressively giving a firm ride and thus better roadholding.

The small front disc brake works exceptionally well, benefitting from a dual-piston caliper. This design allows the pads to be placed as close as possible to the edge of the disc, thereby improving efficiency. Dual pistons distribute braking force more evenly and also allows the inner diameter of the disc to be smaller, which means the unsprung weight is also reduced. Whilst all this is good for the road rider, one stray tree root on the trail and you could find yourself with an expensive bill for a new master cylinder. I didn't much like the Heath Robinson approach to the front brake hose which obliterated the view of the clocks, then in clear hose, slid down the outside of the left fork.

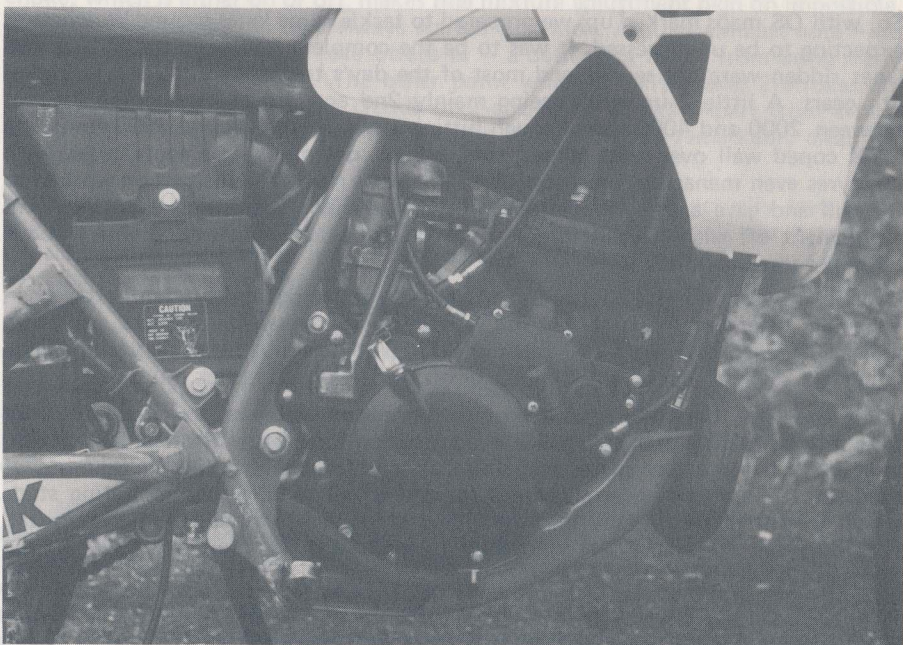
On tarmac the MTX handles indecently well for a trail bike. I've ridden worse handling road bikes by far. On a few occasions I was taken by surprise at the silly angles of lean it is possible to achieve on the MTX; but don't try anything dramatic in the wet as those Bridgestone tyres are a touch slippery over manhole covers. Thankfully, Honda have fitted the MTX125 with 21"/18" wheels so an alternative set of tyres is no problem. Rather unstable in wind and very susceptible to buffeting from lorries, etc., it's quite wearing on the old arms keeping on line. However, the overall stability at speed without these adverse factors was good. I confess to being a little disappointed in the low speed road handling; the bike suffering from a rolling action which tended to make it a little wobbly. A top speed of 70 mph was more than expected given the low gearing, but the machine was happier at lesser speeds of around 55–60 mph. Revving the poor thing to 8500 rpm for a 70 mph top speed may shorten engine life eventually.

So, with OS maps marked up, we prepared to tackle some lanes around Winchester; expecting to be unimpressed. It was to be the complete reverse in actual fact. The lanes ridden were not severe, and most of the day's tracks were tackled in 2nd — 4th gears. A little 2-up work seeing mainly 2nd and 3rd gears; keeping the revs between 2000 and 4000 rpm, though hitting a rough spot around 3000 rpm. The MTX coped well over loose stones, ruts, uphill, downhill, tree roots, grass, with the tyres even managing some grip through a little mud. The suspension worked to the full and gave a soft comfortable ride. Mono-shock suspension is definitely in its element off road. I even forgot the excessive seat height as the worry about having to dab dwindled.

Overall, I was impressed with the MTX's green laning ability; far better than expected, offering a machine that will satisfy the beginners/slower riders' aspiration in trail riding. However, I still feel the MTX would be out of its depth when the going gets really tough on steep climbs or on the OE tyres in thick mud.

Some thought, thankfully, has gone into the machine's use as a serious trail iron; fork gaiters, folding gear and brake levers, folding footrests and a neat rear carrier; large enough for a few spares and a useful hand hold for pulling the bike out of mud, etc. The clamping arrangement for the wheel spindle uses mounting studs which are fitted horizontally into the sliders which makes for easier wheel removal. A good point for trail riders who need to make a quick puncture repair in the middle of nowhere.

Small but clear clocks are sensibly hidden behind and protected by the headlight cowling/numberplate. The ignition switch/steering lock too is hidden deep in the



instruments and, whilst a little awkward to operate, will again be well protected from damage. The switchgear is basic but all works well, but watch the indicator switch which doesn't have a clearly defined off point. Good lights come courtesy of a 12 volt electrical system and a 60 watt halogen headlight.

Though riding position is generally comfortable for short distance work, I found two days hard road riding with wide moto-cross handlebars left me with stiff shoulders. The seat, also, granted well padded and soft, is so narrow at the front as to become very uncomfortable after a couple of day's riding. But, for styling's sake, I really do not see why a 125 c.c. trail bike has to be so tall. Whilst happy on ordinary green lanes, I wouldn't have liked to take this, or indeed any of the new breed of 'moto-cross' trail bikes over severe trails, I'm just too short; that vital dab on a green lane can make a lot of difference! And I can't be the only short trail rider? However, for all its size, I found the MTX125 extremely light, only weighing in at 99kg (218 lbs); an obvious advantage to the trail rider.

The full tank holds a handy two gallons which, at the average test period mpg of 80 to 85 gives a reasonable range; certainly enough for a day's trail riding. However, the MTX does not have the most easily accessible 2-stroke tank. Situated behind the left hand sidepanel, this has to be unscrewed and removed to gain access to the tank filler. However, this operation was made easier when someone relieved me of the sidepanels one day! Prospective owners BEWARE. I have seen several MTXs minus sidepanels, so they would appear to be quite sought after items. I confess I thought the MTX looked nicer without those large moto-cross numberplate sidepanels. The sidestand could do with being a touch shorter as it leaves the bike rather too upright and a little unsteady. On the trails it was sometimes impossible to find anywhere to put the bike on its stand. The finish is average, after only 1100 miles the paint on the frame was already rubbed off by the footpegs and the paintwork on the tank was marked; mind you, the bike had been dropped . . . by another magazine's rider, not me! Good to see that this model has the lighter and more corrosion resistant aluminium wheel rims rather than chrome steel as on the XL125R.

As a restricted learner, the MTX125 is quite high spirited and should keep any owner happy powerwise, as well as for its sheer street pose value. For the trail rider it makes a cheaper alternative to the enduro models, but you need to be tall and, if you've passed your test, you'd probably be better spending out the extra £90 (list price) for the MTX200 for the more powerful motor in the same chassis.

#### SPECIFICATION - HONDA MTX125RW-F

ENGINE		CHASSIS	
Type	Single cylinder, liquid cooled 2-stroke	Suspension	Front
Bore x stroke	56 x 50.6mm		Air adjustable hydraulic forks (230mm travel)
Capacity	123 c.c.	Rear	Honda Pro-link (non-adjustable 200mm travel)
Carburation	one 24mm Keihin	Brakes	Front
Bhp @ rpm	12 bhp @ 7500 rpm		Disc with dual piston caliper and sintered metal pads
Max. torque	1.33 kg-m/7000 rpm	Rear	Drum
Ignition	CDI	Tyres	Front
Starter	Kick		Bridgestone Trail Wing 2.75 x 21"
Transmission	Wet multi-plate clutch, gear primary drive, 6 speed gearbox, chain final drive	Rear	Bridgestone Trail Wing 4.10 x 18"
Electrics	Alternator, 12V 3ah battery, 60/55 W headlamp		

#### PERFORMANCE:

Top speed (indicated) 70 mph; Fuel consumption (average) 80 mpg; Price £1,159  
 Colours: Red, black or white; Machine supplied by Honda UK Ltd., Power Rd., Chiswick, W4

## SECRETARY'S REPORT 1986

This has been a most successful year measured in terms of membership numbers, recognition and influence. From the start last year when we had three displays at Bike Shows in Birmingham, Bristol and Stoke-on-Trent, the numbers of members joining went up dramatically and we kept up those numbers until March.

We have influence on the Byways and Bridleways Trust with a member as a Trustee and one on the Editorial Board. We have a member who is Secretary to the Central Rights of Way Committee and a full time employee of the Land Access and Rights Association; through these bodies we have a voice on all motorcycle organisations and the major Rights of Way organisations right up to and including Westminster.

The well thought out and eagerly awaited Sports Council Report said that, after spending a lot of time talking to people all over the country, the Fellowship was the only body doing anything for rights of way for motorcyclists on a national scale and we were the only body aware of the problems.

The whole team of volunteers that run the Fellowship — and in this I include not only the elected officers but the local representatives and local rights of way volunteers, have given 110 per cent effort in doing work for the Fellowship. I wish to thank particularly those often unsung volunteers who carry the heaviest burden: the Editor for a really great *Bulletin* under particularly trying personal problems; the newly elected Membership Secretary suddenly avalanched by post and new members' applications while trying to learn to operate our computer; our Press Officer who has got us known to every motorcycle magazine and one or two specialist magazines for climbers and the like; and, of course, our Rights of Way Officer who suffered a great disappointment in not getting the full time job he hoped for, and was led to believe was his, and who still spends all his free time on rights of way matters.

Without the willing help of all members my own task would be difficult, if not impossible, and it is a reflection on them that we have had the most successful year I can remember.

*John R. Higgin*

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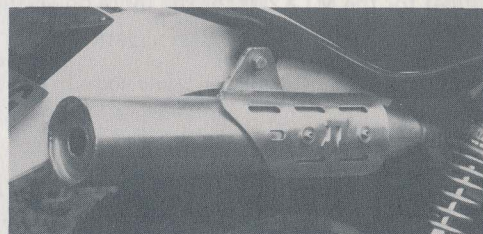
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SUZUKI	400DR	£85
SUZUKI	125DR	£65
HONDA	XL125/185	£65
HONDA	XL250S/250R	£95
HONDA	XR200R	£75



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## GROUP NEWS

### EXMOOR GROUP

The Group Representative for Exmoor, John Gibbs, has resigned and taken the unusual step of forming a rival/alternative club in our area called the 'South West Trail Riders'. This club has no membership fees, no meetings and NO RULES. Apparently, he wants all the fun of trail riding and none of the responsibilities.

An Extraordinary AGM had to be held and I was elected Chairman. At the meeting it was unanimously agreed that Exmoor remain a TRF Group and that to become a members of Exmoor you also have to be a member of the national TRF. The members of Exmoor Group intend to enjoy their trail riding but *also* take an active interest in rights of way matters and lane clearing.

Incidentally, although the 'heart land' of the Exmoor Group is Exmoor area, we regard the whole of Somerset, East Devon, South Avon and West Dorset as being under our sphere of interest.

*Nicholas Crocker, Group Rep  
Sunnymead Farm, Halstock, Yeovil BA22 9RR*

### NORTH WEST LONDON and HERTFORDSHIRE GROUPS

Both these Groups are planning a change of venue from the Sow and Piglets at Toddington, Beds. We are moving to a venue more central to our catchment areas, namely the Red Lion Hotel, Radlett, Herts. The meeting night remains the same for both Groups, and the change takes place on the 1st Wednesday in January 1987 (7th January).

*Roger Newark, 76 Hale Grove Gardens, Mill Hill, London NW7 3LU*

### DEVON AND CORNWALL GROUP

At last! After a lapse of almost ten years the Devon and Cornwall Group of the Trail Riders Fellowship has been reborn. It seems incredible that an area so rich in green lanes should have lacked an organised TRF group for so long.

The new Group Representative is Hugh Croft, 7 Roborough Gardens, Ashburton, Devon. Telephone: (0364) 53042.

The Devon and Cornwall Group will meet on the last Friday of each month at the Rising Sun, Woodland, near Denbury. This is just off the A38 south of Ashburton (grid reference 78966698). Try to make it for this meeting at the end of the month because much important business will need to be sorted out (8.00 p.m.)

Hugh will be handling rights of way matters in Devon and has already made contact with both Devon County Council and the Dartmoor National Park. Please give him all the help you can. He will need it with Devon's current review proposals about to be implemented. Please tell him what you are doing, as many of you are actively involved in fighting for our rights at the moment. I shall try to co-ordinate rights of way work in Cornwall.

The purpose of a Devon and Cornwall Group is to get all trail riders in the area together, so that everyone knows one another, can go out riding together, can get help and advice when they need it and can provide an effective and collective voice to fight for our green lanes.

*Ian Thompson, Glebe House, St Columb Minor, Newquay, Cornwall*

## NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK GROUP

Sunday, 21st September, ten riders left Lynford Stag picnic area on a super sunny morning. Bob Pulford (run leader XT350) spent a lot of time plotting the route. The riders were Dennis Baumber now mounted on his new toy, a Honda 200, Alex Bensley (ER250), Dave Cornish (Husky), Andy Bedwell (XR250), Steve Sutton (XT350), Dave Rose (IT175), Tim Harris (KDX175) and Ted Campen (XL250). I dragged my DT175 out from the back of the shed as my KTM is in need of a gear change shaft.

Dave, Alex and myself got separated from the main group but a detour and some unplanned lanes found them again at our lunch stop, the Blue Lion at North Pickenham, near Swaffham. While we were eating a group of ramblers called in for a bite and a pint. They were a smashing lot, all members of 'Ipswich Rambling Club'.

I had to leave the main group to return home due to work, but the rest of the group had a good run. Thank you, Bob.

As my job takes up more of my time, I will have two assistants for rights of way. They are Bob Pulford and Andy Bedwell. This will make things a lot easier for me.

Group membership is on the increase with about 20 attending group meetings.

*Andy Downes, RoW Officer  
32 Upper Street, Gissing, Diss, Norfolk*

... and news of a proposed new TRF Group starting up in Wales ...

## MID-WALES GROUP

Trust Brian Wright to spill the beans on my impending move to Mid-Wales. I was the only Englishman (actually a misnomer: ¼ Welsh, ¼ Jewish and ½ an idiot!) who had to produce a visa at the Severn Bridge!! Seriously though, the TRF urgently needs a group in the Mid-Wales area to represent its interests. Rumour has it that Brian Thompson will be awarding me a medal at the next Executive Meeting for moving to Wales *just* to set up the new group, so I'd better get started.

I now live in a small village called Cilcinnen, five miles inland from Aberrhonddu and fifteen miles south of Aberystwyth. I should be very grateful for anyone in the Mid-Wales area interested in setting up and running this new group to give me a ring at home on 0570 (Aeron) 470 362 or write to me at my new address.

I would like to thank all members of the South London Group for their support and help since its creation, particularly Brian Wright, who really has done the lion's share of the responsibilities of the group. Looking forward to riding with you all in Wales.

*Clive Morris  
Alma Ty Ysgol, Cilcennin, Llanbedr Pont Steffan  
Dyfed, Cymru, Wales SA48 8RH*



## SPECIFICATION

<i>Engine type</i>	4-stroke DOCH 4-valve single with YDIS
<i>Displacement</i>	346 c.c.
<i>Bore x stroke</i>	86 x 59.6mm
<i>Maximum power</i>	31bhp @ 7500rpm
<i>Maximum torque</i>	30 kg-m @ 7000rpm
<i>Fuel tank capacity</i>	12 litres
<i>Transmission</i>	Multi-plate wet clutch, 6-speed gearbox
<i>Overall length</i>	2225mm
<i>Overall width</i>	865mm
<i>Overall height</i>	1210mm
<i>Dry weight</i>	120kg
<i>Tyres</i>	3.00 x 21" front/110/80-18" rear

-----ooOoo-----

## TRAIL RIDING IN THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS

Going to the North Yorkshire Moors was our first outing away from our home territory. Pete and I were to travel up first, to be joined by Mick, Paul and Vinny the next day. After a four hour trip from Rushden, we unloaded Pete's IT465 Yamaha and my XL500 and commenced our long awaited four days by riding the length of Rudland Rigg and also taking in the Westward trail to Toad Hole and the Eastward Monket Hill.

The Rigg was straight and stoney and, although it wasn't raining, there were plenty of large puddles. Nothing too exciting, but Monket Hill provided us with more of a challenge. The mist soon started to fall on the moors so we loaded up the bikes feeling more confident of taking on any difficult trails that might await us over the next few days. To our delight we quickly came upon the White Horse at Beadlam. After checking over the bikes and oiling chains, we visited my sister near Thirsk where we both fed and watered.

The following morning we met the others to ride the Cleveland Way which, though straight and level, provided us with some great scenery and, as lambing had just finished, we had to be careful not to run into any of our little woolly friends. We only went as far as Thimerley Moor then returned to Little Moor and headed towards Arden Hall where we were reminded by Paul that the pub at Hawnby should be open by the time we got there, and sure enough he was right. The hotel's beer and food was just the job to refresh us.

After bidding farewell to the girls behind the bar, we donned our waxed cotton, rubber boots, etc. and continued onward to Murton Grange where we encountered a water crossing that was to provide some good photos and a few entertaining moments. I went first on the 'Curtis Honda' followed by Vinny on his XT250, then came Paul aboard his XT500, Mick on his recently rebuilt DT250 and lastly Pete on his IT Yamaha. After drying off, Mick and Paul both agreed that the White Horse at Beadlam would be the ideal place to plan our afternoon's activities.

Leaving Rudland Rigg, down Monket Hill, we encountered four rambles, one of whom kept on shouting "Bridleway, bridleway". We just smiled and shouted back "Afternoon". The hill was so greasy that even if we had wanted to stop to enlighten him as to the status of the lane, we couldn't have!

After leaving behind twelve members of HRH Army on a cross country march, we headed for Farndale (we were warned about the peat bogs but chose to ignore what had actually been good advice). All five bikes got stuck and had to be manhandled out of the bogs. Trying to get onto higher ground, Vinny broke a footrest off his XT. Unfortunately, it wasn't interchangeable with the rear ones.

Pulling the XL500 out of the bogs, even with help, convinced me that an XR250 would suit me down to the ground. We struggled for a couple of hours then eventually crossed the river and climbed up the other side of the valley. As we passed a farmer and his ATC he smiled at us as if he knew what we had just been through. My memory of Farndale will not fade quickly. When I think of Farndale I can picture Vinny with his bike above his head (a little too much throttle?)

Anyway, after a change of clothes and an evening spent in "The Feathers" at Helmsley, it was head down for all of us. It had been a long day for the three lads who had travelled up that morning.

Sunday morning was fine and bright and a BSA C15 rider offered to mend Vinny's footrest for him, so a slight delay was incurred. After a chat with the BSA rider and a tour of his estate, which included a tidy little trials club, Vinny and our new found hero went off to see what could be done with the snapped footrest. Half an hour later, with footrest welded, we thanked our friend and headed for Beadlam Rigg.

The lane starts behind the church at Beadlam; the ride being varied — some ruts, puddles, etc. It was made more enjoyable by us joining up with a group of TRF members on the Coast to Coast Run. We tagged on behind and followed them over Stone Ruckles and onto Skiplam Moor, where we let them go ahead. One of them didn't go ahead with his group but stayed with us as we continued northward. It was just as well he wasn't riding alone as Pete had to drag his Honda XL185 off him when he was dismounted by the deep ruts. A mile further up the trail a second group was spotted and our lone rider joined them as we carried on over Pockley Moor towards the typical North Yorks village of Cockayne. Yet another group of riders were seen descending Toad Hill from the Rigg. We went up Toad Hill and onto the Rigg, down Monket (yet again), with just a couple unseated this time. (This particular hill seems to vary every time you ride it — more so than most.)

I'm not sure why, but the fourth group of riders we encountered at Rawson Syke didn't seem as friendly as the other groups we had chatted with earlier that day, so, rather than overcrowd the lanes, we let them go ahead on their own. At this point we sat in the sun and chatted about the bikes and the ones we had seen that day and were delighted that all had behaved well, with no real injury to bike or rider.

None of us disgraced ourselves through the following two river crossings; in fact, confidence in my riding ability was growing with every green mile.

We took the road to Hutton le Hole, Pete's Yam being the quickest over this section. Lunch at Hutton le Hole was followed by returning to the Cleveland Way, this time up to Scratchwood Moor. Never before had I climbed a stoney hill like the one at the end of Scratchwood Moor. Going down was OK, but when we got to the bottom and looked back it seemed twice as steep and twisty and rockier, yet at the same time inviting. We all made it to the top unscathed; the XT250 and DT250 seeming to cope very well.

After a cornetto at the Chequers Tea House on the Cleveland Way, sadly Paul, Vinny and Mick had to return home. So we helped load their bikes onto the trailer and off they went. After all that riding no one had received injury. I felt that, although the XT and DT came out on top as far as size went, Pete's IT had the chassis to match.

Monday morning was wet and misty and not an inviting day for trail riders but, being keen, both Pete and I set off for Hawnby to do a lane ending at Fangdale Beck. This lane had long, long stream crossings, clay, moorland and some terrific views. It was only about three miles long, but it rounded off the long weekend nicely. It was a pity that the others couldn't have stayed to ride that one; still, I have a feeling that it won't be long before we will be riding the lanes together again.

*Robert Plosky*

*34 Hayway, Irthlingborough, Northants.*

PS The OS pre-marked by Steve Thompson was invaluable. Don't go without one.

## A DAY AT THE SEASIDE

Terry Yates, TRF member and chairman of Pendle Motorcycle Club, invited me to join in his proposed crossing of Morecambe Bay from Hest Bank near Morecambe to Kents Bank near Grange-over-Sands.

We met at Slaidburn and eleven riders on a range of trail and trials bikes first rode over Salter Fell towards Lancaster. Even after a long dry spell this trail has some very good bogs which caught out a few riders. A loose sump plug and a broken silencer bolt resulted in one bike being towed four miles to a garage for more oil. At Hest Bank, whilst Terry went to meet our pre-arranged guide, a man appeared saying motorcycles were not allowed to be there and if we did not leave he would call the police. I walked towards him, map in hand, whereupon he said: "... and that's all I have to say." and disappeared back into his garden.

Terry arrived saying that he would lead us to where the guide was waiting. We set off across the sand towards the Keer Channel; the going was good and the channel shallow, about six inches deep and twenty yards wide. After a stop for photographs, with everyone in confident mood and thinking this is going to be easy, we headed for the sea wall across wet sand. The salt water soon got into the electrics and, seeing someone stopped behind me, I stopped too, then my engine died. Kicking to start the engine I noticed the area around me shaking every time I kicked the bike and, looking down, I saw the wheels had started to sink. This was quicksand and I started to worry. Off the bike and heave the wheels out before they went too deep. After that I decided that if the bike didn't start after three kicks it was prudent to move on to another spot before kicking again. With the engine restarted we sped on to the wall which is twenty feet high and nearly a mile long running straight out from the coast. Reaching the top and feeling safe for the moment, we listened to the guide who said we should wait for the tide to fall a bit and then ride down this twenty foot embankment straight into the sea. The guide waded through to show us that it was only two feet deep with soft sand on the bottom. I've been trail riding in all weathers for many years, but I didn't like the look of that! Further along, the water was shallower but the guide said there had been soft deep mud there yesterday. Gingerly, I walked out and found that the mud was only three inches deep, so we rode across.

On next to the Kent channel where we waited for the guide to come up on foot. This was a hundred yards wide, complete with waves and seagulls floating on top. The guide waded out and the water varied in depth from between his knee to half way up his thigh — not only that, but he was headed out to sea and not towards the land. The bloke next to me turned and said: "Are we right in the head, or what?" We set off and some made it and some went paddling, pushing their bikes to the sandbank in the middle of the channel. When all were running again the guide waded out on the last hundred and fifty yards; this was around knee deep and, as before, some made it and some didn't.

The guide left us there with instructions to head for a red roofed building which was on the shore about two miles away. Across the sand and then, when only eighty yards from the slipway, there is six inch deep slimy mud. Slipping and sliding to the shore the bike finally died and it took the RAC to restart it, but we had all made it across. I believe that this may be the first motorcycle crossing of the Bay.

**Warning: Do not attempt to undertake this crossing without an expert or you may not live to regret it.** The crossing is ten miles long and took us 2 hours 45 minutes.

P. Halstead, 112 Walton Lane, Nelson, Lancs. BB9 8HU

## PRESS OFFICER'S REPORT

A period of reasonable coverage in the motorcycle press, with only the 'Throw rocks' incident in *Climber* magazine and an extract from this in the *Westmorland Gazette* in the national press. The *Climber* piece was an utter disgrace and I am pleased to say that members of Cumbria Constabulary visited Mr Unsworth to have a little conversation with him. Members responded superbly to this piece. Read Pete Deeley's response in *Climber* to see what I mean. The tone of Unsworth's piece demonstrates a noticeable change of attitude by the RA, etc. No longer are they trying to pin us down on noise, damage and illegality. The new attitude is on a 'moral stance' of "It may well be perfectly legal to ride bikes on moorland roads, we don't dispute that, what we say is that they have NO MORAL RIGHT to be there." Watch for this. It surfaced at the CRRAG conference at Sheffield this week past. That was a very interesting and thought provoking meeting. A full report will be issued by LARA later.

The motorcycle press continued much as before. *TMXN* and *MCN* continue the regular items. The two specialist dirt bike magazines have a peripheral interest and freelance journalist, Peter Watson, had two good pieces: one on a philosophical discussion on off-road politics in *Motorcycle International* and a report on his ride in the John Ebbrell Memorial Run in *Performance Bikes*.

The latest offering came in *Bike Magazine* and, as I am sure you are now aware, upset a few members. My involvement was to provide (at very short notice) a route for a group test. This was done and the usual pleas and warnings as to article content were issued. The article came out with a rather base tone as is sometimes *Bike's* style these days. However, I do not feel that this article is anything like as damaging as some that have appeared in the past. Offensive to some readers, yes; compromising for the TRF, hopefully not.

Also out this summer was Kawasaki's new booklet for learner riders. This is an absolutely top quality production explaining how motorcycling can be shown as an exciting yet very responsible pastime. This book is available from Kawasaki dealers for free! Well worth seeing for Pete Plummer's and Ken Canham's super photos, although Ken's were attributed to me!

The national PR agency, Murray Evans, are to syndicate a press release extolling the virtues of trail bikes shortly. I believe that this will be up to Kawasaki's standards, so groups may be able to follow it up in their local press.

Now that LARA is underway, I think it is time for me to step back and let someone else have a bash at this job. It is likely that there could be times that my name at the bottom of a TRF release would conflict with my full-time position. Also, one tends to rather run out of things to say and a new voice must be welcome to the ears of editors. I should like to continue helping the TRF in some way other than as LARA's full-time officer. Perhaps I could develop and maintain the exhibition stands and materials. I will be running up and down the country a fair bit now, so I will be able to deliver and collect it without too much trouble and can refine it into a show well worth putting on. What say you?

Alan Kind, 3 Mitford Gardens, Wideopen, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

NB For 1987 we have a new Press Officer, Stephen Harris, who was elected at the October AGM, of 11 Great Close, Chapel Brampton, Northamptonshire NN6 8AN.

## HELP!!! — Where you can ask for, or give advice to fellow members

I own a Yamaha XT350 and have a BIG problem. I thought it might be solved by your report in the latest *Bulletin*. Unfortunately, it was only half solved. The problem is the size of the rear tyre. In the report such tyres as the Pirelli M43, M17 and Michelin T61 were stated but the sizes were not.

The Members Machine Report did reflect my own feelings about the bike. I have found that the air scoops do a good job of directing mud between the two cams and covering the spark plug. Apart from this, I am very happy with the bike.

*Allan Quinney, 606C Berryfields, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6EL  
Tel: Melksham 708855*

Well, you certainly live in the right town to get advice on tyre sizes. Give Avon a ring, tell them what's on at the moment and they can verify what sizes you'll need; as could any bike shop. However, from my experience, most trail bikes (with 18" wheels) use 350 x 18" rear and 275 x 21" front. You may need 400 x 18" and 300 x 21" on a larger capacity machine like the XT350. However, if you are going to fit Michelin T61 tyres, try to get the smaller sizes as they have much more tread on when new, the larger sizes quoted look half worn from new. If any member with an XT350 can help Allan, please contact him on the above number. — *Rosie*

I have found during my attempts at trials and trail riding that the tail light is the part that suffers most, as it is somewhat frail to start with. Being a little fed-up with being asked to pay around £10 for a genuine replacement each time, I have adapted the Honda tail light housing to accept almost any lens, and I thought other members may be interested.

Remove lens remains, reflector and lampholder from housing. Cut out an aluminium plate to fit onto lens housing and secure into lens screw holes. Fit reflector and lampholder to alloy plate. Drill two holes in plate to match holes in replacement lens. Secure lens to alloy plate with long self tappers and spacers. Job done.

Now, providing the replacement lens will cover the reflector, any make will fit. I get a supply from auto-jumbles, car boot sales, etc. for about 50p each.

*Robert Arcscott, 38 Sherwell Lane, Chelston, Torquay*

Robert provided a diagram to explain all this, but unfortunately it will not reproduce in the *Bulletin*. If anyone is interested I can supply a copy of the diagram or, alternatively, contact Robert for further details. — *Rosie*

I've had a fair few bikes since I started riding. I've still got the Vincent and the Velocette, both of which have seen some green laning. Since 1982, though, I've cheated and used an XL185 and lately an XR200. On the old bikes we seem to have three or four chains per sprocket, whereas on the trail bikes the chain and sprockets seem to die together. I've always used Linklyfe and oil and that was beneficial after bog and river crossings because some lube would be squeezed out on the road between trails. I tried a big chain conversion on the 185 but didn't like the noise — I hadn't ridden an XR then! So Clive Baxter of CBS (nice bloke) swapped it back for me.

When I eventually got the XR, I realised how noisy a chain can be and I must admit it took some getting used to. After the first chain and sprocket set I decided to do

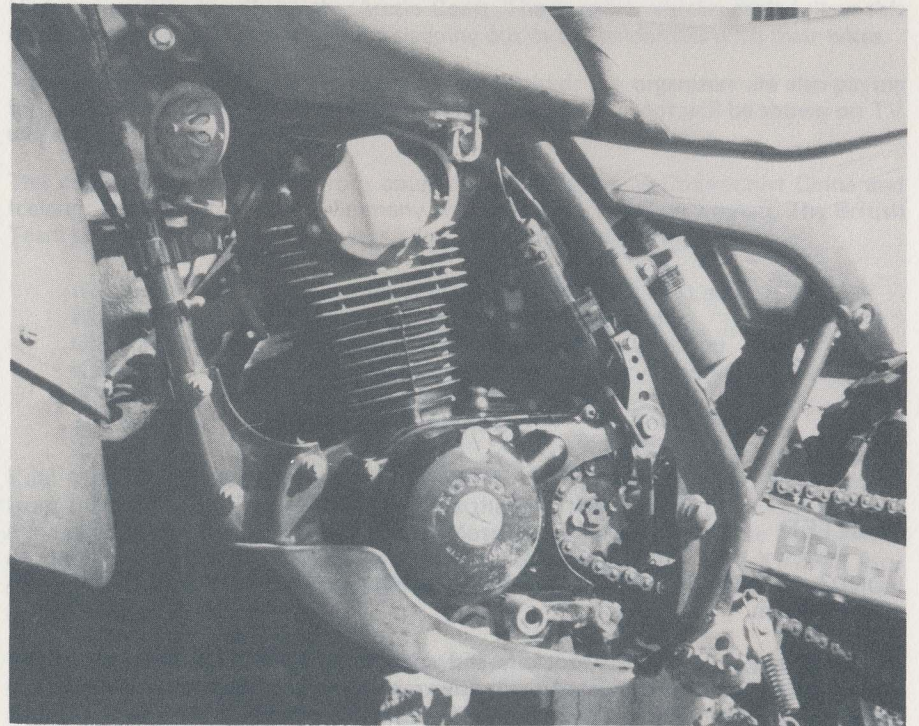
the decent thing and invest in an 'O' ring chain, a good idea for wear, but now another snag. Using Linklyfe was out and, on the trail when the chain has been through the usual mire, it dries out on the road and behaves like a 3d bit.

For a long time I'd noticed the adverts for chain oilers in *Motorcycle Sport* and, after an enlightening chat with Fraser Scott, I invested in one of his oilers. I fitted it on the bike as shown in the photo and it works a treat. The chain stays supple due to the oil and in between trails you can increase the flow to shift some of the mud. The bike feels smoother and less like a giant vibrator. In fact, when the oil supply became trapped at one point the difference was evident. I've had a chat with Fraser, who incidentally runs a trail bike himself, and he did mention the possibility of a discount for TRF members.

I hope a few people are interested. Time will tell if it is any cheaper to use an 'O' ring and an oiler, but I would prefer to pay a little more to have a well engineered system.

And, finally, has anyone got a better way of fixing the gearbox sprocket on as the standard system allows the sprocket to wobble about all over the place and must surely wear it out faster?

*Geoff Hamilton, 124 Quarry Street, Woolton, Liverpool L25 6QH*



The XT350 can be converted to 520 chain thus giving greater gearing flexibility. Use an XT550/600 gearbox sprocket — available in at least 15 and 16 teeth.

The rear wheel sprocket most suitable is the Renthal 129B — is available from stock with 39, 43, 45, 47 and 51 teeth and virtually any other size on special order.

I am not absolutely sure of the chain length, but 110 pitches should cover most combinations.

*Clive Baxter, 29 Linnet Close, Gloucester*

The report on the XT350 was wholly correct in all aspects except the fitting of a knoblier tyre. A friend of mine has owned one of these machines for approximately twelve months, during which time he has ridden over many types of trail and in one enduro. He replaced the original tyre with a 4.50 Michelin trials tyre and found problems with clearance of the swinging arm. When travelling in muddy conditions the clearance was so small that the swinging arm/suspension linkage became blocked with mud.

Prior to the enduro a pair of Pirelli enduro tyres were fitted and no problems with clearance were found. The reason for this appears to be the cross-sectional shape of the tyres; the trials tyre being square, the enduro round and thus giving a greater clearance.

*Steve Jackson, West Murton Blue House, Wingate, Co. Durham*

## WANTED

**HONDA XL250S or XL250R engine.** Telephone Graham Martin (024369) 3690 after 6.00 p.m.

**Cylinder head, rocker cover, rockers and cam for 1973 XL250 Motosport.** Only these parts needed to complete an extensive rebuild before I make my debut on the trails. Will consider whole bike or engine if reasonably priced.

Telephone: Ian Capper (0527) 401100, Ext.225 (work) — (North Worcs.)

## THE TRANS AMERICAS CHALLENGE

On 1st August 1987 one hundred amateur riders, including the four women of the British Team, will meet in Mexico City astride their specially prepared motorcycles. After a carnival start, they will face 9000 miles of appalling roads, broken trails and cross country routes ranging northwards over deserts, mountains and wilderness. One month later the survivors will arrive on the shores of the Arctic Ocean.

Teams from thirty-three countries around the world will be participating in this test of human and mechanical endurance. They will face the extreme heat of Death Valley in California (at 120°) and the Arctic tundra, where even in August temperatures can drop to 20° below.

They will ride their bikes along the high dirt roads above Mexico City (7500 feet), where carburation will be a problem, up to 1000 miles of the Baha peninsula, along the Pacific beach, to the US border. There they will have to abseil the bikes down a 70 foot desert cliff before crossing the desert to Colorado Springs. There an observed trial will test their bike control; at Salt Lake a sprint across the flats will test their speed.

Over the Rockies and across the Canadian border to Vancouver; the teams will load their bikes into white-water rafts and ship them across a three hundred yard waterway. Then up into the lonely northern Rockies, along the Roof of the World Highway, and to Inuvik on the Arctic Coast. The support vehicles can't follow this route, so the surviving riders will be sleeping out in the wilderness with their bikes.

The event is unique in that no entry fee is required; the organisers are also paying for back-up transport, food and petrol. The films of the event will be shown on TV worldwide at Christmas 1988.

The competitors will come from countries as far apart as Communist China and Iceland; three teams (France, Germany and Kenya) include one woman. The British Team consists of four women riders, plus a male mechanic. They are:

Gill Myers (age 27), supermarket manageress from Otley, Leeds  
Wendy Buck (age 26), sales co-ordinator from Sheffield  
Gill Matthews (age 34), primary schoolteacher from Croydon  
Kate Clow (age 39), computer manager from Sunbury, Middlesex  
(Team Organiser)  
The mechanic is Rob Myers, Gill's husband.

Kate brought the team together in December 1985; Gill Myers and Wendy come from the Yorkshire Enduro Club; Gill Matthews is secretary of Croydon MCC and a member of the Womens International Motorcycle Association; Kate is a member of the Trail Riders' Fellowship. Honda have sponsored them with XR250s, very similar to the bikes the girls are used to riding. The team still need further sponsorship, particularly cash funds.

The girls are all keen off-road riders (with a total of 25 years riding experience); they have stepped up their regular enduro entries to prepare for the event. In addition, they are doing regular mechanical sessions, circuit and weight training, jogging and swimming.



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**THE BULLETIN BINDERS** (plastic) will hold 12 copies £4.00 inc. P&P. The 'blue book' Rights of Way: a Guide to Law and Practice £4.00. Cheques payable to TRF. Contact: John Higgin, TRF Secretary (address on page 3).

**TS185ER 'W' Reg. MOT.** Excellent machine for trailing. Knobbles and trail tyres, new shocks. £250. Tel : 0327 (Northants) 41255 (Rob Sawyer).

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

#### LANCASHIRE

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

## LOCAL GROUP MEETINGS

2nd Mondays  
White Hart, Brislington Hill  
Brislington, Bristol

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

2nd and 4th Mondays—The Robin Hood  
Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove  
Stockport

Golden Lion, Market Place, Kendal  
2nd Tuesday, Feb, April, June, etc.

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

Last Friday each month — Rising Sun  
Woodland, Nr. Denbury, Just off A38  
(Grid ref. 789698)

2nd Wednesday — Three Horseshoes  
Hemington, Leicestershire

2nd Wednesdays  
Kettingley Social Centre  
Knottingley

4th Tuesday — White Boar  
Stanford Rivers, Nr. Ongar, Essex

Bath Pool Inn, Bathpool  
Taunton  
Last Thursday 8.00 p.m.

1st Monday  
Raglan Arms  
Conduit Street, Gloucester

1st Wednesday —  
Red Lion Hotel  
Radlett, Herts.

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

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Ballfields, Bradnop, Leek, Staffs.  
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#### SOUTH EAST

Steve Neville, 19 Henley Deane  
(Roman Way) Gravesend, Kent DA12 5TX

#### SOUTH LONDON

Clive Morris, 114 Spa Hill  
Upper Norwood, London SE19 3TZ  
Tel: 01-771 0639

#### SOUTHERN

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

#### SUNDAY WINTER CLUB — CWMBRAN

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

#### SUSSEX

John Penfold, 'Mariners'  
Nyton Road, Aldingbourne  
Chichester. Tel: 024 368 3036

#### TEESSIDE

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

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

1st Wednesday — The Blue Lion  
North Pickenham

1st Tuesday — The Jester  
Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffs.

3rd Tuesday —  
Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

1st Wednesday — The Fox & Goose  
Chester Road, Hawarden, Clywd  
(nr Queensferry & Mold)

1st Wednesday —  
Red Lion Hotel, Radlett, Herts.

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

2nd and last Wednesday of month  
(except December)  
Bell Inn, Cross Houses

2nd Tuesday —  
The White Swan, Crayford

1st Thursday —  
Fox and Hounds  
Carshalton High Street

3rd Tuesday — The Woodman inn, Lower  
Upham B2177(Formerly the A333)

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

Contact John (every other month — 4th  
Wednesday — i.e. Feb., April, June, etc)  
Hassocks Hotel, Hassocks, Mid Sussex

1st Wednesday — The Station Hotel  
Kirby, near Stokesley