

THAMES VALLEY

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Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 42935

3rd Monday - District Arms
Woodthorpe Road, Ashord, Middlesex

UPPER THAMES (ABINGDON)

Dave Moore, 5 Whitelock Road
Abingdon. Tel: Abingdon 29138

Last Tuesday - Lansdown Club
Milton Trading Est., nr Abingdon

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 Wednesday
King George V Memorial Hall, Stratford
Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull

WEST YORKSHIRE

Charles W. King, 53 Townend Road
Woodale, Nr. Holmfirth, W. Yorkshire
Tel: 0484 684782

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

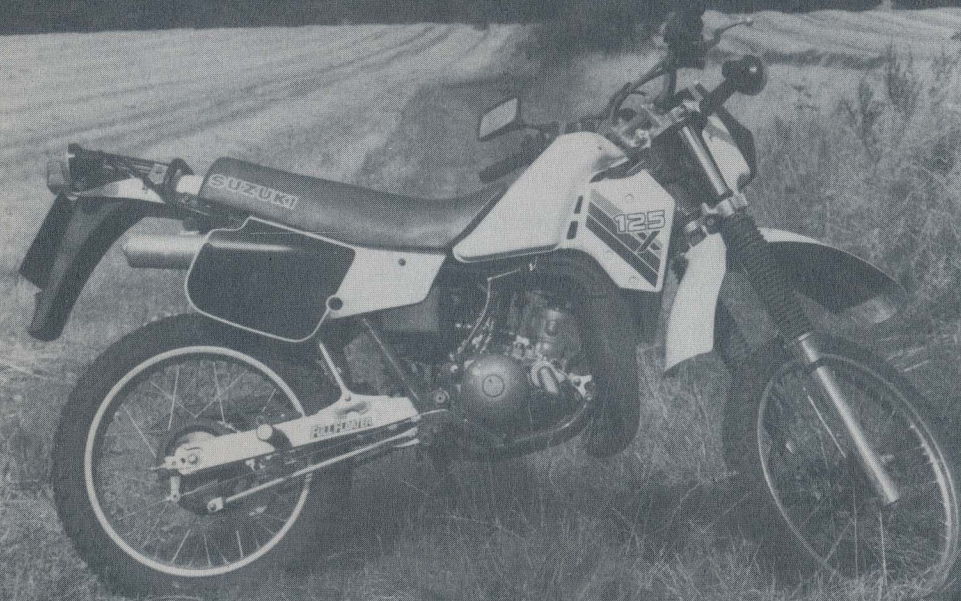
Gwyn James, 18 The Spinney
Wolverhampton WV3 9EU
Tel: 0902 763824

Every Thursday 9.30 p.m.
Hill & Cakemore, Ex-Servicemen's Club
Victoria Road, Blackheath, W. Midlands



TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 118 February/March 1987



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

FUTURE EVENTS

APRIL

- 11th/12th 4th TRF Rights of Way Seminar in Derbyshire. Details from Dave Giles, Conference Co-ordinator, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby DE3 2EW.
- 24th/25th Get together for prospective/new/old members. Brian Thompson and another speaker to talk/show videos on trail riding. Anyone interested please telephone organiser asap. Shaftesbury (0747) 88615.

Cover Photo: Suzuki TS125 – Courtesy of Rosemary Swindells

EDITOR’S RAMBLINGS

Firstly, with the change in Bulletin distribution (by the printer instead of by me), please do NOT send your addresses changes to me. You shouldn’t have been doing so anyway, but, in future any changes to your membership details MUST go directly to Tony Rose, Membership Secretary.

OK so I know the last Bulletin was late, but do remember that minor disturbance call Christmas, which tends to throw the Post Office service into total confusion.

The Bike Show at Olympia last November was a great success for the TRF. We even managed to persuade some folk to hand over their money and join on the day! There were many enquiries from all walks of life, keeping the helpers on the stand very busy. You certainly can’t tell a prospective trail rider in civvies though, the most unlikely looking folk showed an interest when someone actually approached them on the subject. Many thanks to all who helped, and especially to John Higgin who co-ordinated the stand and people, and virtually lived-in at the Show for the five days.

My plea for run reports from lesser know trail riding areas produced a couple of very good reports, unfortunately both about the same area! – the Isle of Man. Apparently maps of the rights of way on the Island are available from the Tourist Board, not bad eh? If more places would actually let you know where to ride legally, it would save much unintentional illegal riding I’m sure.

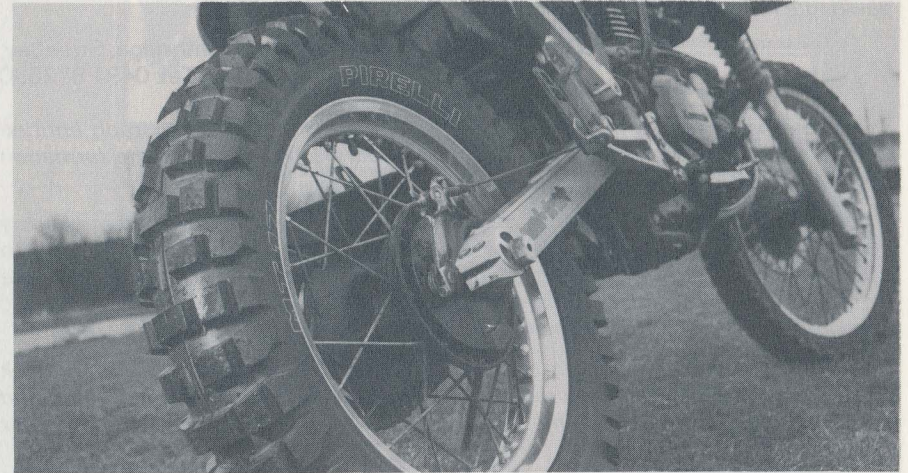
I get many requests from members on all manner of subjects and where possible, try to reply. A request for books on trail riding has drawn a blank. The only title I know of is one of the Ride It! series, written some 10 or so years ago. But as with all titles that mention trail riding, the information is sketchy and only used as a prelude for writing about enduros. Does anyone know of any trail riding books, if so, please let me know so I can publish details.

Reading about trail riding is about all I can do at the moment, but the extensive rebuild of the KE175 is coming along now, and hopefully will be complete by the time you read these Ramblings. I knew I shouldn’t have sung it’s praises in the Members Report!

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WHICH TYRE FOR TRAIL BIKES?

Trail bikes, with their distinctive motocross styling and host of ‘hi-tech’ features are becoming increasingly popular, and are available in many capacity classes.

While such bikes are fully capable of being ridden off road, the majority of owners rarely venture onto the dirt, and for them the ideal tyre is the Pirelli MT40 Trail.

This tyre’s claw tread pattern gives superb grip on tarmac whatever the weather conditions, has a distinctive ‘chunky’ look, and can acquit itself well when trail riding.

However, serious trail bike owners – those who frequently explore the countryside on the ancient Green Lane highways, or have access to private ground – will find that these tyres tend to lose traction when used on wet, soft surfaces. To counteract this, some have been tempted to fit motocross tyres, but the legality of using such tyres on public tarmac roads is far from certain, and definitely not recommended by manufacturers.

Now Pirelli have come up with the ideal solution – the Pirelli MT17 Enduro tyre which is fully road legal, and yet designed for the rider who spends 70% of his time off road. The competition style, widely spaced, block tread pattern allows good self-clearing properties, yet also offers plenty of rubber for gripping on tarmac.

Currently there are six different sizes available to suit most modern trail bikes from 125 to 600cc, and these carry maximum speed ratings of from 93 to 106 mph, depending on the size selected.

Further information from Peter Richardson – Tel: 0908 663727.

LETTERS

I would like to hear from any members interested in spending some time trail riding on the Isle of Man during TT (or perhaps MGP) week. Also if anyone can help with information on where to ride/rights of way on the Island, I would like to get in touch with them.

Chris Thomas, 1 Blackwood Cottages, Southridge, Streatley, Berks RG8 9SJ. Tel: 0491 872630

I was interested to see in the October/November issue the photograph entitled 'Scene at the Valient Trooper, Aldbury in January 1970'. Start of the formation run of the Trail Riders Fellowship.

On the weekend of 26th/27th April, 1969 Merle Morewood, who had previously done a great deal of work including lobbying and petitioning of Parliament on rights of way under the auspices of the BMF, along with John Ebrell, even to the extent of riding in a trials outfit around Parliament Square, organised a trail riding weekend in Derbyshire based on the Little John at Hathersage.

Some of the people attending the weekend were Dick and Jean Sutton, Jack Matthews, Alan and Merle Morewood, Frank and Kay Wilkins, Bruce Preston and others whose names escape me. Kay Wilkins was unlucky enough to break her leg on the outing.

As far as I know this was the first meeting of trial riders on a national basis. I feel that the work carried out by Merle Morewood deserves wider recognition within the movement.

Perhaps other members know more of her efforts. Perhaps other members know of national runs earlier than that weekend in April 1969.

Keith Backhouse, 5 Cornwall Crescent, Baildon, Yorkshire

As a founder member and more lately a sidecar addict, I am pleased to see more action pictures of outfits on green lanes, but I wonder how many members there are and where do they ride? If any sidecar riders would like to contact me, maybe we can organise a run/meeting sometime in the future.

Colin Patient, 14 Ryecroft Close, Woodley, Berks RG5 3BP

No doubt many readers will have seen the delightful old photograph in 'The Classic Motor Cycle' (December 86), taken at the 1933 Services Trial. It shows police taking names and addresses of competitors on a certain 'Oldhouse Lane' in the Chilterns, following complains from a resident that the lane was not a public right of way. Things don't change!

But what has become of Oldhouse Lane since? Does it still exist as a green lane? Is it known to today's trail riders?

Chris Wright, 46 Schoolhouse Lane, Halton-on-Lane, Lancaster

I have just jointed the TRF and have just read my first magazine. I found the reading very interesting but very confusing. You commented on Alan Kind landing the job with LARA and passing his exams becoming an LLB and on page 4 I see

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KLX250, KDX175/250/420	4.75	12.00	23.00	38.75	XL500 S, RC	6.00	11.00	15.00	31.00					
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Mr. Smith has been in touch with the BBT with regards to RUPPs, CRFs and CRBs.

Any chance of a key for us new members.

Yours, SG on an XL and a little DIM!

Steve Gibbons, 77 Crowland Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex

You have a good point Steve. It is all too easy to forget the new members who haven't a clue what the 'old hands' are going on about. The LLB is a law qualification, and the CRF and CRB I believe are terms for County Roads used as Footpaths or Bridleways. However, there is a short beginners guide in this Bulletin, but in the meantime, let me put you out of your misery.

LARA - Land Access and Rights Association BBT - Byways and Bridleways Trust
RUPP - Road Used as a Public Path UCR - Unclassified County Road
BMF - British Motorcyclists Federation RA - Ramblers Association

ROSIE

Since the publication of my letter (Bulletin No. 115, page 6-7) my phone has not stopped ringing, and my letter intake has shot up due to irate TRF members, who would appear to have misread my original letter. Therefore I will put the record straight, and remember these are my personal opinions.

An example of a twerp and crackpot, is the person who wrote to the Press saying that Trail Riders should fill-in the holes they had made larger upon the lane known as The Salter Fell Road.

This Road goes clean through that area known as The Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. At the time this letter appeared I had just sent of this Groups comments and a official Statement concerning this area and The Salter Fell Road. If the writer had contacted this Groups TRF Rep. he would have been told that this lane and the whole area is very sensitive, he would also have been informed of L.C.C. policy about lane clearing. My statement of behalf of this group and the TRF must not be worthless. Is this not bringing Lancashire Group into disrespect.

When Lancashire Group negotiates to L.C.C., N.W.W.A., Access Groups, Land-owners, Sport Council, etc. it is stressed that the TRF is a non-competitive organisation, and has no connection with any sporting body, and that the Group speaks on behalf of itself and the TRF as a whole. Over the last 5 years or so some four TRF Groups have sprung up within Lancashire: (1) Fylde Coast; (2) A Group which was going to take over the old County of The West Riding; (3) and the Group attached to the N.L.M.C.; (4) A group who wish to be called the Border Group. Which if one includes Lancashire Group = 5 Groups.

What area does Lancashire Group now represent. Inform me as soon as possible, then I can explain at the next Lancashire Group/L.C.C. Staff meeting.

If Lancashire Group represents the TRF in Lancashire, then surely the said Group should be asked its opinion about other Groups being set up within Lancashire, and its permission sought. That other groups keep springing up within this county must devalue the effect of Lancashire Group.

A letter was printed within the Press stating that there would be a meeting held between TRFLG and LCC Staff to discuss the workings of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, and inviting those interested to attend. The TRF lives or

dies by its commitment towards rights of way. These meetings are set up to discuss this very subject (what other Group has these meetings where the TRF and its members and other interested parties, have a direct access to the County Staff, the very people who state what goes upon the Definitive Map). The fact that only members of this Group attend speaks for itself.

People inform me that they have the right to use public vehicular roads (green lanes) upon their motorcycles, which of course they have. But these are the facts: The total public vehicular rights of way (green lanes) within Lancashire is about 14 miles, as per the Definitive/Highways map (LCC figures). Lancashire Group uses, by Common Law, about three times this figure, and this can be increased ten fold at least, if all those lanes which do not now carry vehicular rights of way, which should carry those rights, did so.

When this Group was formed some 9 years ago it was found out that the rights of way situation was at rock bottom (what the A.C.U. and the like had been doing since W.W. II. I do not know, and never did find out). The Group have managed to save what lanes we had, and entered over 100 Byway claims (1968 Act). We are now of course sending to the County Council Definitive Map modification proposals under the terms of the 1981 Act.

As the National TRF is accepted by the National Authorities as the Organisation to talk to concerning green lanes, so Lancashire Group is accepted by Lancashire County as the Organisation to talk to about green lanes within Lancashire. The inclusion of umpteen TRF Groups within the County surely devalues the efforts of Lancashire Group.

As Lancashire Group is only a sub-section of the National TRF, so other Groups within Lancashire should be a sub-section of Lancashire Group, is this not commonsense? Or maybe, all Lancashire Groups members could cut their travels and split up and form their own little Groups, which of course would be only riding Groups, and to hell with rights of way.

John P. Gillett, 18 Hilton Avenue, Lytham St. Annes

Well - after reading Nigel Douglas' 'modestly' written articles in Oct/Nov issue of the TRF bulletin, I should think Geraint Jones is by now trembling in his boots fearing he may encounter this intrepid hero at his next enduro.

As for using trail riding as a practice for enduros, he must be breaking a large percentage of the TRF code of conduct and a good deal of what the TRF stands for.

What better excuse would the R.A. or other users of the countryside need to have a lane closed than a motorcyclist tearing along as though he were on an enduro course and either running into them or frightening their animals. Surely if this rider wants this type of riding a motorcross course would be more suitable as a practice ground and not the green lanes which some of our members fight hard to keep open against all odds, and are put into jeopardy by people behaving as he implies.

I would like to remind Mr. Douglas that you can be prosecuted for dangerous riding on any public highway which includes green lanes.

As an ex-enduro rider myself, and a brother who still competes in enduros regularly, may I say that neither of us have noticed Nigel Douglas' name in any of

the enduro list of entries. I suggest to Nigel that the best way to practice enduro riding and techniques is to actually ride in them and gain experience that way. Many members get enjoyment out of trail riding and enduros but manage to remember what they are doing there.

Please Nigel remember the rider who also enjoys a quiet, scenic and leisurely ride out and don't spoil their enjoyment by doing your so-called enduro practice. After all, we all want to do trail riding to satisfy our own personal enjoyment but to keep the trails open we all need to abide by basic guide line rules.

Incidentally, with reference to your other article also in the bulletin, I would hardly call a run on a trail bike 'boring'. Whilst understanding your meaning about an enduro bike being responsive and perhaps even handling well, don't you think it requires as much skill if not more for someone to ride a trail bike which is less responsive and make a good job of it over the same piece of ground as someone on an enduro bike with superior suspension and good handling which helps ease the riders work load for them?

The type of letter written by Nigel has angered one or two of the enduro riders who are also TRF members, and feel this puts their names into bad light. They wish it to be known that they do not go on like this when out trail riding! If Nigel can not compromise between the two past times I suggest he keep off the trails until he can.

However, Nigel's letter suggest to me that he is an armchair enduro rider as well as an armchair trail rider.

As group rep. for Mr. Douglas' area I can tell other members that he has never been along on any of our organised group rides since he joined.

Next time please think of the implications of what you are saying before publicly writing articles like this Nigel. It was an insult to TRF members particularly your Northumberland group.

Ken Canham, Northumberland Group Representative

I think the point has been made now. In wonder whether Nigel Douglas has rejoined? I'd like to close correspondence on this subject now. Thanks.
ROSIE

A DAY OUT

The day began with a flat air bed, the cool smell of damp canvas, the birds and sheep in a dawn chorus. It didn't take long to get the fire going, a pile of windfall twigs and a drop of petrol soon took the chill out of our bones, the kettle went on and the powdered milk transformed into what looked like weak polyfilla with water from the nearby tap at the top of a gently sloping field. (ref. 135/774746)

My mixture of favourite cereals was delicious eaten by the fire, followed by sweet coffee with a jam and coconut tart to follow. The discomfort of the cold terra firma and broken sleep was soon forgotten as the bikes were wheeled off the trailer and down the ramp. The spare tubes and tools strapped on plus spare gloves, a tow

rope and maps securely bungled to the rack, inside a plastic bag. We departed uneventually at 8.35 a.m. whilst it seemed everyone else on the site was still asleep; deciding to freewheel down the hill until out of earshot before firing up the three XL185's.

Turning left out of the site over the Devils Bridge then left again towards Rhayader we didn't have far to go before we ventured onto a familiar trail traversed once before in 82. (ref. 135/755827) The going was easy but rain began its usual Bank Holiday assault as soon as the bikes were wheeled off the trailer, and continued to descend in proportion to altitude throughout the day. The map was opened time and time again to ascertain where we were. A route had been chosen but it was all new to us and the numerous forestry tracks marked on the map were constantly throwing us off course. Several ancient paths were shown cutting through the forest but proved too much for the XL's with trials tyres; the gradient too steep and slippery.

Poor map reading hindered by the rain sent us into several dead ends and a waterproof map case has already been added to the next adventure's inventory. Having reached a high point at map ref. 135/804807 we came across a month old quagmire created by a past enduro. The route had followed the RUPP we were proposing to use, but one look at this mess disappearing steeply through the mist into trees left us with nagging doubts as to whether we go on or turn back. Two exploratory reconnoiteurs later on the only bike with a decent rear tyre (Michelin T61) persuaded at least two of us to give it a try, the third just had to follow. It turned out to be a very interesting 45° descent down a winding track rutted by the ravages of time, heavy rain and powerful bikes. The going was firm until the trail began to level out near the valley floor when that black gloop of substance better known as Welsh peat bog took a firm grip on our wheels (ref. 135/800800).

Keith, dropping his front wheel off a seemingly innocent 12" ledge found the bike doing a nose dive into another 12" of black sludge whereupon the rear half came around like a well oiled hinge and left Keith with a look of surprise, staring up at the clouds and muttering some unprintable words!

The going became progressively worse as the unexpected appearance of the sun tried to cook us inside waterproofs and predictably disappeared once the bog was cleared. It must have been hard for those enduro boys back in March or April for among the two to three foot deep ruts I found a side panel, bits of mudguard, a helmet peak and someone's left sleeve with a map and timecard still in the side pocket. They must have been proud to have even completed one 20 mile lap, let alone win.

The rest of the day's journey was the inevitable round of look, search and explore, sometimes we would reach a dead end and have to back track, other times a successful link up with an obvious landmark gleaned from the map. We arrived back at the camp site weary but charged by the experience and the challenge.

The next time we are in this area, we'll know exactly where to go and where to turn off. Then, having wasted no time, a further 20 to 30 miles could be covered. We might have made very slow progress, but the fun experienced just cannot be put into words and has to be experienced first hand.

My thanks to Keith and Gerwyn for their company. Safe riding.

Barry Strong, Porthcawl, South Wales

ROAD TESTS/MEMBERS MACHINE REPORTS

Photocopies of tests are available for 30p per test from the Editor. Please quote model and issue number when ordering. Cheques/PO's payable to 'TRF'.

Model	Issue No.	Test Type*
AJS 350 Model 8	114	OR
BSA C10	114	OR
Cagiva Aletta Rossa 125	102	TR
CZ175	90	MR
Honda XL185	88	MR
Honda XL185	96	OR
Honda XR200	93	MR
Honda MTX125RW	97	Brief Impression
Honda MTX125RW	117	TR
Honda XL250RE	107	TR
Honda XL250	110	MR
Honda XR250	111	OR
Kawasaki KL250C	109	TR
Kawasaki KE175	113	MR
Suzuki SP370	89	MR
Suzuki PE175	98	MR
Triumph Adventurer	95	MR
Yamaha DT175	85	MR
Yamaha DT175	101	TR
Yamaha XT125	101	TR
Yamaha XT250	103	MR
Yamaha IT175G	105	OR
Yamaha XT350	116	MR

* TR = Test Report

MR = Members Report (compiled from questionnaires)

OR = Individual Report of member's own machine

RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS — Brian Thompson

LAND BONANZA

According to several official reports 20% of farming land will soon be coming out of production and turned over to other uses such as recreation, including off road motorcycle recreation. A grand opportunity for the ACU, AMCA, etc., and one that LARA will be involved in during the next decade. But what you ask has all this to do with trail riding? Think about it. If we can get land for thousands of casual off road bikers, frustrated trials motorcross and enduro riders to practice on, instead of using green lanes for the wrong purpose, this is bound to make life easier for the legitimate trail rider.

*LETTER TO THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION FROM Brian Thompson
COUNTY ROADS AND VEHICULAR RIGHTS YOUR REF. 1/1/9 of 27.10.86*

Thank you for your letter above and your complaint that I am in error in claiming that County Road status is not proof of vehicular rights.

I have no reason to doubt that I am wrong for the following reasons:

1. The Department of Environment letter of 9.6.83 which you and I raised via the Review Committee in order to clarify that status of UCR. The DoE state as you know that a presumption exists that UCR's are vehicular ways.
2. More important I think is that the vast majority of highway authorities go even further than the DoE and regard UCR as having conclusive vehicular rights. I enclose copy letters to confirm this. Two major national parks also you will see.
The only HA in England to support your 'meaningless' view is Devon.
3. Alan Kind LLB, LARA consultant and Central Rights of Way Committee Secretary has studied this matter in depth in his 1985 dissertation for a law degree at Newcastle University. Like myself Alan generally supports the Government view of UCR status and adds many persuasive arguments.
4. The Byways & Bridleways Trust support the DoE view.
5. Our own Solicitor Michael Rowley supports the DoE view.
6. The entire Cumbria Special Review adopted a SoS ruling that UCR's were vehicular and although the RA objected to every one the RA did not challenge this in the High Court.

We have been using UCR's for 20 years in an organised way and for many decades before that by ACU and BMF members without challenge.

For 99% of UCR's we can provide additional evidence that vehicular rights exist in pre 1835 maps, tithe maps etc per S32HA80 and to prove S36 HA80 UCR/carrigeway status. Our solicitor has used the powers in HA80 to create UCR/highways maintainable at public expense in Staffordshire from bridleway status.

I do agree with you on one point. That no statutory definition of UCR exists that confirm this as a carrigeway in the 1929 Act or Highways Act of 1959 and 80.

But in practice there is widespread acceptance that County Roads are fully vehicular and all vehicular user bodies accept this as such.

In other words as a question of FACT UCR's are vehicular. If the RA are right then highway authorities are wrong. They were wrong for example to make up as a metal road such green lanes as Wrynose Pass and Hardknott Pass in Cumbria which were mainly used by walkers. We know that they were metaled purely on their UCR status.

A further argument used by Mr. Kind is the Agricultural Improvement of Roads Act 1955 which describes cattle grids on UCRs. If UCRs were merely bridleways cattle grids would not apply and thus Parliament clearly implies that UCR must be a carrigeway and thus suitable for grant aid to improve 'green lanes'.

The popularity of the RA/OS 'Blue book' guide makes no mention of any of my arguments and you dismiss the status as meaningless as your submission to the Ordnance Survey Committee did. This book widely accepted as accurate has led to considerable conflict and confusion over the status of County Roads.

I do find it necessary therefore to make m/cycle users aware of their rights.

I do know that the founders of the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers share my concern that your otherwise excellent guide is somewhat biased against vehicular rights.

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SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on 12th October 1986 AT THE NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE
MUSEUM, BIRMINGHAM

1. The Chairman opened the meeting at 11.00 a.m. and the minutes of the previous meeting, as published in the Bulletin, were agreed as a true record.
2. John Higgin reported a successful year measured in numbers, recognition and influence. From the start of the year there had been displays at three shows in six weeks. The Land Access and Rights Association had been launched and a TRF member was its full time Rights of Way Consultant. The Sports Council report said that the Fellowship was the only active nationwide body who were aware of problems and doing anything about them.
3. Tony Rose reported that at present there were 1319 members and we hoped to top 1500 at the Bike Show; an increase of 50% in one year. There was a vote of thanks to Tony.
4. Tim Ley reported a successful year and said there was no need to increase the subscriptions. The main costs being Rights of Way and the Bulletin.
5. Seymour Moss gave the Press Officer's report as Alan could not attend. He said that as he was a full time employee of LARA he felt he could not carry on as TRF Press Officer. He reported that the Police had visited 'Climber' magazine on his instigation and the tone had modified considerably. The stance of objectors had changed and it was now recognised that we had a right in the countryside. The article in Bike magazine was discussed but Alan could not exercise editorial control and said that he regretted the rest of the magazine was in such poor taste. Ron Carter asked if the purchase of a camera had been worthwhile, it was believed that it had not been as useful as had been hoped. Don Lewis asked if any publicity was good publicity in view of the Bike magazine article. After discussion it was said that we had this method of getting or name known, but had no control over the content. There was a vote of thanks to Alan for all his hard work.
6. Rosie Swindells thanked all contributors both for articles and photo-graphs over the year. She welcomed new ideas and had plans to reprint past road tests. It was agreed to get the distribution done commercially. Michael Rowley said that he was surprised to see the letter from the hospital bed in the last issue, about enduro practice on green lanes. This had been edited but it was hoped that members would let the editor know their views in writing.
7. Brian Thompson reported that it had been a good year starting with the dismissal of summonses on six riders for riding the Great Wold. He welcomed the Sports Council report and read out the main points affecting the Fellowship. Brian's membership of the All Party Rights of Way Review Committee (Haslehurst) was a personal appointment and not as a result of the ACU/BMF Countryside Committee. He pointed out that the 'Blue Book' on Rights of Way was incorrect in parts but was used as a guide by many solicitors and County Councils. He planned to publish a booklet giving the correct information, written by Richard Marshall and checked by Michael Rowley. Brian reported that many 'new' old roads had been found on Enclosure Act maps and these had replaced the roads lost in the recent Review. He said that the ACU who had been delegated the responsibility had failed to put forward any evidence or witnesses in Brecon and many roads had been downgraded on the Definitive Map.

Brian reported that his son had done valuable research in Yorkshire and found many County Roads. He would be looking at Dorset and Kent in 1987. John Higgin asked if Brian could ask for evidence for 4 to 6 green lanes in each issue of the Bulletin, as Norman Smith used to do, so that local members can get involved in reviews. Barrie Prazak asked if there was a nationwide Rights of Way Committee. It was pointed out that there was a Rights of Way Sub-Committee and they were organising a training course in April.

8. Election of Officers

Chairman - Seymour Moss Secretary - John Higgin
Treasurer - Tim Ley Membership Sec - Tony Rose
Editor - Rosie Swindells R of W Officer - Brian Thompson
Press Officer - Stephen Harris, 11 Great Close, Chapel Brampton

9. Discussion Items/Any Other Business

- a) Endorsement of membership of the Land Access and Rights Association - agreed.
- b) Approval of a period of three months voluntary restraint on Great Wold. This was discussed and it was pointed out that it must be made known to the Bulletin Editor and Executive Committee - agreed.
- c) If groups are organising rides in other than their home areas they should contact the Group in that area and notify them of dates and route as a matter of courtesy and principle.
- d) That the Fellowship apply for prescribed body status. In discussion it was said that the ACU were interested in the countryside but from a sporting and competitive viewpoint whereas the Fellowship is interested in the Countryside.
- e) The motion that the policy of not fighting lane closures in National Parks was discussed. It was said that even if we win a Public Inquiry a Traffic Regulation Order may be applied for. This policy be agreed either at this AGM or the Rights of Way Seminar. Brian Thompson pointed out that much time and effort was spent fighting lane closures that could be closed later. Michael Rowley agreed, but pointed out that this would only apply to Section 103 closures in the Highways Act and he would go only for County Road claims. Gwyn Thomas asked if it was true that byways required no maintenance. Michael Rowley said that all public highways were liable for maintenance.
- f) Ridgeway - Seymour Moss asked that all members write to the Secretary of State for Transport, John Moore, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1 asking that he does not support the Countryside Commission application for a partial Traffic Regulation Order on the Ridgeway.
- g) Don Lewis asked for a clarification of the Executive Committee Meeting travelling expense claims. He was told that expenses were paid for elected members and group reps on a journey over 100 miles towards travel costs.
- h) Gwyn Thomas asked if we could have more punchy posters and point of sale materials. He was told that if volunteers were available to design them they should make themselves known to the Committee.
- i) Vince Bottomley said that he would organise a meeting in the Isle of Man during TT week.
- j) The Chairman asked if the National Motorcycle Museum was convenient for the majority of members for the AGM. The opinion of those attending was that it was the best place.

- k) Hugh Mason asked that an updating service be operated for lanes that were closed, by people markings maps. This was largely impractical but relied on the volunteers to do what they could.

JOIN THE MILITANT WING!

It seems that the pressure groups who obtain results in their fight for a cause use a number of ways, or combination of several methods. Some of these are:

- 1 Publicity
- 2 Violence
- 3 Demonstrations
- 4 Influence (in high places)
- 5 Change the Law
- 6 Attract large numbers of like minded people.

In our fight for green lanes it would appear that, No. 6 will take too long. No. 5 should not be necessary, although small changes may help. No. 4, well we can try. No. 3 demonstrations have not got MAG anywhere, but in France the story is different, 'Les Motards' are well organised and have won a number of battles. Obviously there is strength in unit, we can learn from this. No. 2 violence, I cannot see this doing anything for us. Although we should use violence, or the threat of violence against us, to our advantage (ie 'Climber' magazine article).

No. 1 publicity, would seem to be our most powerful and useful weapon. With respect I do not think that one person can do justice to the job. I think we need our own Saatchi and Saatchi to help publicise ourselves. We need more Sunday Supplement articles or perhaps a series of articles or adverts telling people about trail riding. The cost of employing a public relations company may be covered in part by fees from increased membership, partly by not having to fight for every lane, and certainly increased enjoyment by less aggressive challenges by other users. I think the TRF must make more effort to raise money by grants for projects. These would be good publicity on their own.

Now, fired by my enthusiasm, any member can make a start, at little or no costs, in the following way:

Go to your local library and borrow a copy of the Sports Council publication, study 28 'Providing for Motorsport'. If not available, ask for it to be ordered for you. Mark (in soft pencil) all relevant passages: there is plenty of good propaganda in it. Then take it to your local council and ask for it to be circulated to all relevant departments. They might even buy their own copy! Alternatively you could photocopy relevant parts and send these to individuals.

What do you think, maybe other members would comment? I must stress, however, that these are my personal views, and not those of the South London Group.

Brian Wright, 2 Orchard Road, Sutton, Surrey

I would be interested to hear from any one interested in forming a Dorset Group. I already have seven adults (four are new to TRF), and four youngsters interested. It may well be that it could be a North/East Dorset group as I note Nick Croker has 'claimed West Dorset' in this issue as part of Exmoor Group. On a recent none TRF run the Saturday after Xmas, thirty or so riders set off from Yeovil. During the course of the day we saw about 60/70 trail riders out, in a county with *no official TRF group*. There must surely be a message there. To my knowledge, of that assembly there were only four or five TRF members present. If we could get only twenty of those 60 or so riders to join the TRF we would have a stronger voice in Dorset.

Contact: Dairy House Farm, Berwick St. John, Nr. Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0HQ.
Tel: 0747 88615.

SUZUKI TS125X ROAD TEST - Rosemary Swindells

The aired cooled Suzuki TS trail bikes have been around since 1977. Facing competition, more so by looking dated than through performance, in 1983 the last model was given monoshock rear suspension. By 1984 the company finally decided to up-date their TS125 engine to compete on equal terms with the popular, more fashion conscious and up-to-the-minute moto-cross clones from Yamaha (DT125LC) and Honda (MTX125RW). Giving the TS125X watercooling, moto-cross styling (with a seat height to match), this image of race machinery would provide a more saleable product to the young learner. Indeed, as one dealer told me, 'You make a 125 look like the 600 cc model and its far more likely to sell to the youngsters'.

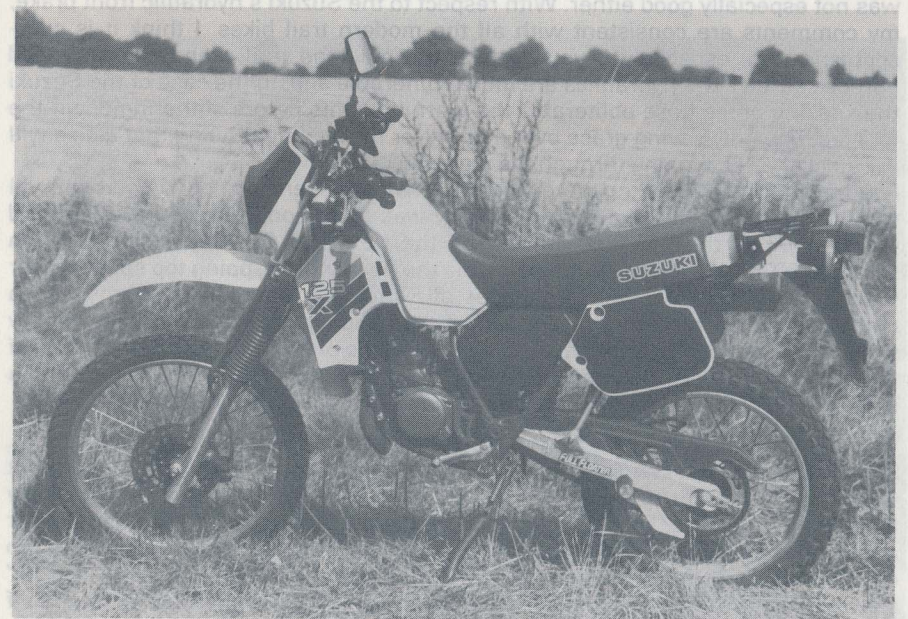
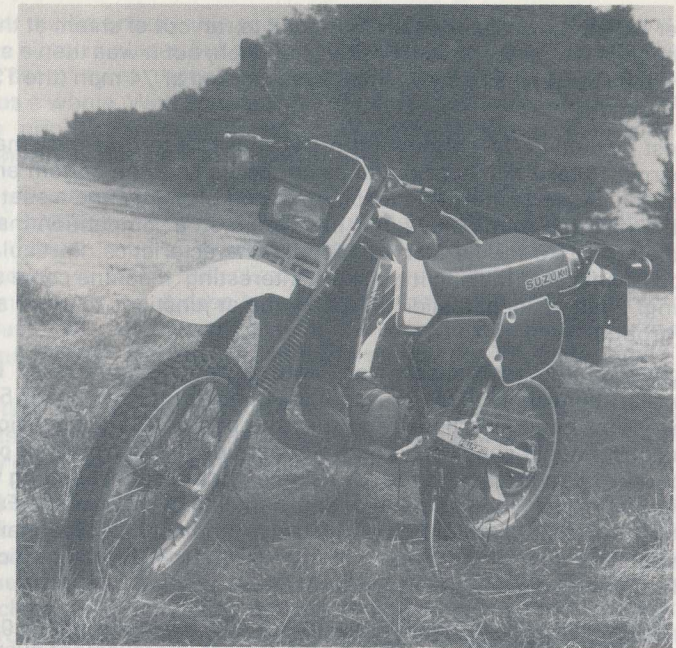
Since its introduction there have been few changes to the specification. The drum brake on the 1984 model was changed for 1985 and has been retained for the 1986 version. Styling remains unchanged except that the 'Suzuki' and '125X' logos have swapped positions on seat and tank!

Available in restricted and unrestricted forms we tested the restricted model as a comparison to the Honda MTX125. However, there is not much difference between restricted and de-restricted engine-wise, power reduction on the TS achieved by a large washer welded into the end of the exhaust header pipe nearest the exhaust port. This washer apparently alters the exhaust gas flow sufficiently to reduce performance to the required legal limit. It is said to take about 30 minutes to de-restrict a TS125, which is good news for full licence holders.

But generally, the motor is nothing radical. A 123 cc single cylinder water cooled 2-stroke, sharing the same bore and stroke as the Honda MTX125 (50 x 50.6 mm). The TS125X uses a similar bottom end to the previous air cooled models, but with, of course, the addition of a water pump. Carburation is by flat slide 24 mm Mikuni with reed valve induction. As with all the watercooled trail bikes, this sophistication has the drawback of an ugly (and expensive) radiator stuck up front.

Starting was generally first kick and often without the choke, even when cold. Which is just as well as the choke lever is nigh on impossible to locate once moving - having to manoeuvre your fingers between frame and fuel pipe. Throughout the test period the TS125X remained quite a smoky machine but this was most likely to be a case of the mixture being set up to run slightly rich to save on wear and tear. The TS125 did use quite a lot of oil, the oil light forever flickering on, especially at anything 60 mph+, but never would that tank take any more than 1/2 litre of oil. Towards the end of the fortnight we tended to suspect a faulty warning light switch.

The power starts at 5000 rpm, but at 6500 rpm there is a definite power band. Though having similar gearing to the MTX, where the Honda's power came in smoothly throughout the rev band, the Suzuki is more peaky. This gives the impression of more power and in fact the Suzuki is quite a lively machine under acceleration at 'around town' speeds. However, these power characteristics actually made the TS a more tiring ride as you tended to want to try to keep the bike in that narrow 6500-7500 rev band rather than let the revs drop slightly to 5000, as with the MTX, and enjoy a slightly more laid back ride.



At the other end of the scale, the Suzuki tended to run out of steam at the top end of the rev band. It would accelerate briskly to 60 mph, but it was then a struggle to wring out a top speed which, surprisingly was clocked at 74 mph (the TS actually indicating 72 mph).

To be honest I wouldn't have thought the TS125 was a terribly easy machine for the raw learner to take his/her first steps on. Snatchy at the bottom end, with a need to slip the clutch to make the machine set off promptly and a seat height of 35" (which until lately would have only been seen on a competition machine) do not immediately strike me as learner-friendly characteristics. Particularly so if, like me, you're only 5'3" making it quite an 'interesting' machine come setting off and stopping! I had to adopt a slide off technique at junctions to place a steadying toe on the ground.

All mod cons on the rear suspension, with a definite plus point being the adjustable rear monoshock. This proved easy to adjust, taking about 5 minutes. Just remove right hand side panel and turn the bolt on the suspension unit (ie same as a conventional shock absorber). Set at mid-point for most of period this gave a firm ride. In an attempt to reduce seat height the softest setting was tried, but this caused rather pogo stick back end handling. The Suzuki's Full-Floater system actually uses an aluminium swinging arm, and not just silver painted steel as most machines have. Front forks are standard tele-hydraulic which despite being on the soft side did not dive overly under hard braking.

The front disc brake was a little disappointing and felt more like a good drum rather than a disc. Admittedly the TS's disc is a great improvement over standard trail bike drum brakes of the past and stopped the bike adequately, at speeds up to around 40 mph, felt decidedly underbraked stopping from higher speeds. The rear was not especially good either. With respect to the Suzuki's hydraulic front brake, my comments are consistent with all the modern trail bikes. I think it is over-sophistication, especially if you do take the machine trail riding - it's intended purpose surely! The hydraulics are more vulnerable and, in the case of the Suzuki the snaking brake hose obliterates the warning lights before slithering down the fork leg. The only saving grace over a drum for the trail rider being that a disc will dry quicker after running through the wet.

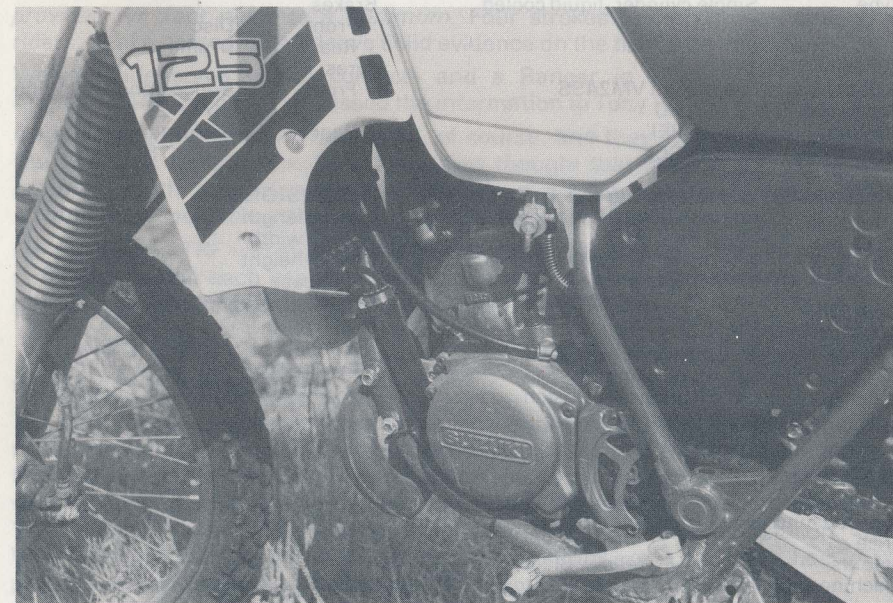
Road holding and handling were very good, with suspension coping well with all types of road surface. High speed stability was exceptional given the height and light weight of the machine. In fact on the return to Crawley, riding through 'Hurricane Charlie' the main problem was the head wind sapping top speed rather than blowing the machine around at all. The only handling problem was a tendency for the rear end to feel as if it was sliding when banked over at low speeds. I'm inclined to think this is a characteristic of the trail tyres rather than of the machine chassis. Slow speed handling too was impeccable. You can ride to a halt and still balance for a few seconds before having to try to put a foot down.

Which brings me to the seat height, surely unnecessarily high for a road machine. I'm all for modern technology improving existing machinery but not to the extent when in an attempt to emulate moto-crossers they become almost impossibly high for many riders. Trail riding is worlds apart from scrambling and for shorter people these machines are really too tall for mere ordinary trail riders. I admit to capitulating on the trail sections as my 28" legs just couldn't cope with the 35" seat height. When the going got tough there was no way I could stop myself hitting the deck.

On the trail the first noticeable point was the lack of tyre grip. The lanes were only just a little slimy in places but any amount of mud had the rear end sliding away. A decent set of tyres though would soon sort that out, so its no fault of the machine as a whole. With standard 21" front 18" rear a set of T61's or similar will transform grip, as indeed for any trail bike. However, the front end, still Bridgestone shod managed to stay on line better.

We were surprised, as had been with the Honda MTX125, at the bottom end power the Suzuki managed to exhibited on the rough. It was possible to keep the TS going through mud at a walking pace in 1st gear. However there was not enough power to tackle hill climbs unless you could take a good run up to 5000+ rpm in first. But it does help to know the lane if you're going to take this sort of 'blast your way through' action. But overall I was pleased with the Suzuki on the lanes. Given the peaky road performance the TS made a mild mannered trail bike. Smooth throttle response at trail riding speeds, light and positive steering, this contributed towards a more controllable ride that was expected. No complaints over on-the-trail handling, the suspension soaked up the bumps well and easily outclassed the engine's performance.

The clocks and switchgear are pretty basic stuff. The steering lock in the headstock is old hat by today's standards, and to my mind looked too easy to hacksaw off positioned open to view on the right hand side, as well as being fiddly to use. The seat lock too, exposed to anything the back wheel could throw up, was prone to clogging up and being difficult to unlock - not good if you want to get to your 2-stroke tank. The 12 volt lights are excellent, a good beam from the square headlight with the TS having one of the brightest rear lights I've seen on a trail bike. Another good feature being the short stalked square mirrors which gave a good rear view as well as being well tucked in.



I didn't like the side stand which although looks sturdy could have come off a Guzzi! Springing up as soon as the weight is removed, I found it difficult to get the thing to stay down before I could dismount from the bike - there being no way of getting off the machine with the stand still up - except by parachute.

Comfort too isn't one of the TS's watchwords. The seat as well as being high is quite solid and should you wish to take a pillion is far too short. Two-up work is very cosy and uncomfortable as the pillion gets to sit on the back mudguard. The riding position is very forward and upright and you feel rather perched up in mid-air, all rather remote from the wheels down on the road.

Considering it's trail abuse, the finish on the Suzuki seemed to be standing up well, there being the usual trailed signs though of paint wear on the frame above the footpegs, and some from the engine casing. The plastic radiator cowlings on the TS look somewhat vulnerable and rather garish, but they suit the overall style which must be the most radically styled of the Japanese learner trail machines, most closely copying the moto-crosser. As a spin-off though this styling has it's advantages for the trail rider with folding gear lever, flexible mounted indicators, small rear carrier, and fork gaiters as standard issue.

For sheer street pose value the TS125X scores 10 out of 10, you certainly get a lot of height for your money. A pretty powerful learner machine with a more lively engine than most restricted learners and also the easiest of the Japanese makes to derestrict. The experienced rider will probably find this a fun bike to ride, but as a learner machine I'd say it could prove a pretty tricky ride to the raw novice. At £1,149 it is on a par with other watercooled trail bikes price wise, but tall riders only need apply!

SUZUKI TS125X ENGINE

Type	Single cylinder, liquid cooled 2-stroke	Brakes	
Bore x stroke	56 x 50.6 mm	Front	Disc
Capacity	124 cc	Rear	Drum
Carburation	one Mikuni VM24SS	Tyres	
Bhp @ rpm	12 @ 7000	Front	Bridgestone Trail Wing 2.75 x 21"
Ignition	Suzuki 'PEI'	Rear	Bridgestone Trail Wing 4.10 x 18"
Lubrication	Suzuki 'CCI'		
Starter	kick		
Transmission	Wet multi-plate clutch, gear primary drive, 6 speed gearbox, chain final drive	DIMENSIONS	
Electrics	Alternator, 12V 4ah battery, 45/40 W headlamp	Overall length	82.1"
		Overall width	32.7"
		Overall height	46.9"
		Wheelbase	53.3"
		Ground clearance	11.4"
		Seat height	35"
		Dry weight	105 kg (231lbs)
		Fuel capacity	9 litres

CHASSIS

Suspension	
Front	Telescopic, pneumatic/coil spring, oil damped
Rear	Full Floating suspension system, spring 5-way adjustable

PERFORMANCE

Top speed	(indicated)
Fuel consumption	(average)
Price	
Colours	Yellow, Black, Red
Machine supplied by	Suzuki GB Ltd., Gatwick Road, Crawley, West Sussex

ASSOCIATION OF COUNTRYSIDE RANGERS ANNUAL STUDY CONFERENCE

5th-9th November, 1986 - Manor House Hotel, Okehampton

Mendip Ranger, Tom Elkin, invited me to address the assembled Rangers at their Conference on 6th November and put up a display of publicity material and photographs. This was a splendid opportunity for TRF public relations which was much appreciated. The Rangers are at the 'sharp end' of countryside issues and liaison with them is invaluable.

The discussion group theme was 'Motorcycling - As Acceptable in the Countryside as Horse Riding?' After Tom Elkin's introduction, I was able to present the role of the TRF, its campaigning influence and positive benefits to the public. I also described a typical TRF group run and stressed the responsibility and character of its members. Tom explained the good work we do in lane clearnace projects, ie self help. The TRF was making positive contributions to the protection of green lanes, he thought. Other user groups frequently complained about tracks and paths but did little to improve things.

One ranger asked how organised TRF groups could be recognised from 'informal or non-legal' users. My response was that I was trying to persuade the TRF nationally to adopt bibs and vests for run-leaders and back-markers and that I already used one myself. This will be put forward as a motion at the 1987 AGM, as it is something I feel we must do.

Other points were that because we were 'trail-blazing' this only encourage the informal elements to ride spatially and illegally! The Eppynt Forest in South Wales was cited by the Ranger concerned.

There was also the argument about habitats, wildlife, etc. But other rangers spoke up in support of our rights and the safeguarding of vehicular interests in the UK.

Finally, the view was that we *were* as acceptable as horse riders, if not more so, *provided we kept noise to a minimum*. Four strokes preferred. As I said, trail riders, unlike horses, do not leave solid evidence on the trail . . .

We've made some useful contacts and a Ranger in Northamptonshire has requested TRF support. I've passed the information to Tony Rose.

Overall opinion supported trail parks, of course, and they wanted to know what the TRF was doing in this field! They also thought that the TRF should actively promote youth education of motorcycling in schools, youth centres, etc. to encourage responsible attitudes.

I hope that the TRF will support the ACR Conference annually. It takes place in a different location each year and is ideal for getting our views over. We were the only user group represented; surely a feather in the TRF cap.

Gwyn Thomas, Priddy. Bristol/Exmoor TRF.

WINTER PLANNING

The dark nights are best for planning those Spring and Summer adventure trail runs. The Ramblers Association publish a useful Bed and Breakfast guide that I find useful and always end up with comfortable and inexpensive accommodation with not a bit of prejudice for being a trail rider. Available from outdoor shops and YHA shop or price £2.00 post free from the Ramblers Association, 1/5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8. Better let them think you a walker! It has 2,500 places in every county.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

An Introduction to the law concerning unsurfaced vehicular rights of way

INTRODUCTION

These notes have been drafted to give guidance to vehicular users of 'green lanes' and briefly answer some of the most frequently asked questions by new TRF members. For further information the purchase of 'Rights of Way: A guide to Law and Practice' published by the Ramblers Association is recommended reading. This is available from the TRF secretary, price £4.

ABBREVIATIONS

WCA81 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
HA80 Highways Act 1980

WHAT IS A BRIDLEWAY?

A public bridleway is a right of way on foot or horseback only, but without prejudices to any other rights which may exist. (WCA81 Section 56). Motorcycles are therefore not permitted to use bridleways, except where strong use or historical evidence is available.

WHAT IS A ROAD USED AS A PUBLIC PATH OR RUPP?

A RUPP is a right of way on foot or horseback, but without prejudice to any other rights which may exist (WCA81 Section 56). They are often regarded as having vehicular rights, but this is not strictly true, as some RUPPs have vehicular rights and some do not. The duty of Highway Authorities to reclassify RUPPs was brought in under the WCA81 Section 54 in order to clarify their status. When reclassified RUPPs will become either Byway, Bridleway or Footpath. The test for reclassification to Byway is 'do vehicular rights exist?' and any such evidence known to users should be presented to the highway authority. The admitted confusion surrounding RUPPs will eventually be clarified when all disappear from the Definitive Path maps.

WHAT IS A BYWAY?

A Byway open to all traffic is a right of way with conclusive vehicular rights (WCA81 Section 56). The highway authority is not obliged to metal the surface or make it suitable for wheeled traffic.

WHAT IS AN UNCLASSIFIED COUNTY ROAD OR UCR?

These are roads maintainable at public expense and are shown on the lists of county maintainable roads held by the highway authority. The lists and related maps are available for public inspection at County and District Council offices (HA80 Section 36). It is usually accepted that these have vehicular rights, although this is disputed by the Ramblers Association. The Dept. of Environment issued a statement in 1983 that 'UCR status did on the balance of probability carry full vehicular rights'. To date there is no case law to challenge this assumption.

It should be noted that UCRs are not usually shown on Definitive Path maps, although in some cases they are shown as footpaths or bridleways. In these instances it is generally accepted that the higher ie vehicular, rights prevail.

Richard Marshall – Assistant Rights of Way Officer

GROUP NEWS

SOUTH LONDON GROUP

Clive Morris moved to Mid Wales in November and we have not heard from him since. Perhaps members will keep a lookout for DT remains on the Monks Trod!

Please note at the back of the bulletin the new meeting place and group rep (me). We now have all the luxury facilities of a football club room, including upholstered seats, two dart boards, pool table and fruit machines. All this rent free so long as each member joins the football club as an associate – only £1.50 per year. Of course the great drawback is that we might receive a challenge of a game of football with the club members.

Twice recently we have organised a Ridgeway Run with a difference. Instead of riding along the Ridgeway, we cross it as many times as possible by using the many other byways available, lots of these are little used. They do not tend to be very challenging to ride, but can be challenging to find! Some need clearance and we found long wet grass can soon have you as wet as riding in the rain.

Don't forget club night is now the first Wednesday.

Brian Wright, South London Group Rep.

THE ALTERNATIVE 1986 T.T. DIARY

Although I have been going to the Isle of Man TT for years now, 1986 was the first year I took a trail bike – simply because '86 was the first year I had one!

Needing a good road bike, and not being able to afford a separate trail bike a BMW R80G/S was purchased; it's a trail bike, isn't it? Joining the TRF I realised my choice may not have been ideal, but I had a lot of fun in the Derbyshire hills. Come TT time, I realised that there was no reason why the G/S should not fulfill its dual role. But where were the Manx trails? There did not appear to be a TRF section there, so out with the OS map for a starter. Ever noticed the similarity between OS maps and dictionaries? You start looking for a word/place, then find a more interesting one, then another, and so on. In the end you can't remember what you were first looking for. Anyway, I dug out an old 1" OS map, and carefully marked in all the tracks that did not appear on my modern map. Load up the bike, (amazing how much room cans of Guinness take up) and away.

First day there (Saturday) and first day of racing, but no racing because of fog, what a surprise! What with the chaotic ferry crossing, everything's about on par for a TT week.

Mad Sunday, and most people were, because fog rendered two-way traffic on the mountain. I said I'd go with mate Dave on the road on the way up to Ramsey, then I'd shoot (plod) off up a trail. We start out the 'wrong' way round the circuit, but I pull in, 'What if not everyone has heard that traffic is two-way?' said I, and pulled off to take a side road. Dave says I am chicken, and promptly follows me! There is a side road that links the Laxey Road with the Gooseneck. Off this there is a left turn signposted 'public footpath', but a bit further on, there is a right turn that has a grass track with knobbly patterns imprinted on it. That's for me, my first Manx trail.

It's all downhill, and not rutted (remember that word) so looks easy. But the Manx grass does not hold very tightly to the earth and I go horizontal before I reach the gate. But I don't mind because I am on holiday, and no harm done. I slip and slide a bit down the trail, and the Sun comes out and I start to get a bit hot, so I stop to take off my jumper and then plod on a bit more. Suddenly the mist clears, and the sea opens out before me, a copse smelling of a damp spring growing is on my left, and open heath on my right. Down below me, Ramsey, and the pier completes the picture. A grass trail under my wheels, magic! The road is short and leads to another gate, through this and the trail goes under a tree canopy, the surface is mud over loose shale, easy enough, but needs care. It comes out onto tarmac just outside Ramsey, so I nip off to see if I can find Dave. I wander round the Brit bikes at Mooragh Park. There is an immaculate Trophy there, but I resist the temptation to ask the owner for a go (thrash) because he is polishing the small triangular timing plate for God's sake!

Out of Ramsey, and back up to the Gooseneck . . . and straight past it. Turn round, and miss the turn again! Folks on the bank must think there are an awful lot of G/S's around this year, as I finally get it right. The surface exhibits the other type of Manx trail surface, dry, loose broken slate. The trail steepens, but an easy 2nd gear, on the pegs and sod the bangs and clatters from below. Twists and turns in a cut between dry stone walls indicate an old road. Getting into the mist, and at the gate before the unfenced moors, there is a nearly ruined house that I immediately covet, it would make a great holiday home, but I'd probably get sick of emptying the septic tank. Anyway, remember the phrase deep rut? The trails on the moors are usually wide, but can be very badly rutted, partly through agricultural use, and partly through water run-off. Most ruts are shallow with a good base, some are very deep and boggy, there is no way to tell which is which of course, short of riding in them. But the turf just to the side of the trail is usually firm enough. The mist is down again, and I am enjoying my quiet little world of plodding carefully and gently upwards. Then, for a microsecond, a 2D picture is projected flat against the fog of a group of motocrossers at the start. Next moment, they are filling the space around me as they fly, splash and dig their way down the trail. Rhetorical shouts along the lines of 'Alright then?', are hurled over vanishing shoulder, they mean well though. Their speed and contempt for terrain is awe inspiring, and is strongly contrasted with my carefull 'plod on, plod off' style. Having a proper trail bike, and four mates must do wonders for your confidence though. Anyroadup, I don't care cos' I'm on holiday. As the quiet settles around me again I am reminded of how much the Manx moors are like my Derbyshire dark peak, with boggy ground undercut with streams. I stupidly cross one or two, in the full and hard learnt knowledge that they could well be feet deep because of the undercutting. Dead lucky though, no problems. I stop and walk around as the trail is getting indistinct. A few (very) dead sheep in the streams, but its a good place to be. Ever been up Arbor Low on your own in the mist? Such places are timeless, like this. Eventually I make my way back to tarmac. In find the contrast between the solitude of the hills and the intense, fast traffic of the main roads breathtaking, still, not that much gets past me on the way back into Douglas.

Back outside my hotel, a very used XL and ditto rider informs me that the map to use is a larger scale. R.O.W. map from the tourist board office. Good lad too, as he shows me some lovely moorland ridgeways.

Next days trail riding was interesting, but curiously deflating. The trail looked promising on the map, and half way up I met a rider on a MZ roadster, who said he

had used this moorland trail before, but from the opposite way, anyway, it petered out to nothing, with the right of way going over a 5' wall. So we turned round to go back. He went first and opened the gate, parking his bike on the sidestand facing downhill, engine running. 'That's good, mine 'ud fall over if I tried that', thinks I, so does his! He swears at the broken indicator etc. and bogs off. Hmm, pride after fall? I find a field *full* of empty scallop shells, its so surreal, I park the bike in the middle of them for a piccy. But this is getting nowhere. A few wanderings bring me to a badly tarmaced road with a gate at the end. A look at the map indicates two options, the one North into the mountains has lots of 'Private' signs and barbed wire, so I can't be bothered with it. The other goes west along the contour, and gently down. It's easy and wide, but steepens and narrows, with ruts filled with running water. Easy enough though, with a few twists and turns, and a rubbly exit onto the main road. As I pull out, I glimpse a road bike coming round the corner, so as not to inconvenience him I accelerate hard, to match his speed and stay in front. Whoops, I forgot the back tyre tread is still full of mud, and in my mirror, I see a rooster tail of mud enveloping him, another satisfied customer.

Next morning, nursing a hang-over, I recollect with horror the tenor of the previous nights conversation. - Me, 'Oh yeah, I could easy get ton-ten, ton-fifteen down Creg'. John, 'What, with those tyres?'. Me, 'Yeah, no problem'. John, 'Well, I'll follow you, just to see that you do it'. Dave, 'I'll take pictures'.

Hope they have forgotten. If its Tuesday, it must be Ramsey sprint. Then watch the racing from the Goosneck. That over, down to the serious trail stuff. Bags of time, so plan on doing some of the recommended ridge routs, and one marked as starting in a plantation, and going onto the moors. This one first, and it starts in a most beautiful setting, almost, almost Alpine like, with waterfall, clear lake and pine trees. The only trouble is the hillside is infuriatingly difficult to get on to, as the way on the map is definitely not on the side of the road. I scurry about like a spider trying to climb the side of a bath, until I find a loose rubble track that will do. It takes me over the head of a waterfall, where I pause for piccies, then into the woods. In trying to find the track through the woods I go down most of the dead ends there, but its all good fun, and 'what the hell?'. The woods deaden any sound, and I go slower and slower until all I can hear is the tread of the tyres of the bed of pine needles. I feel a bit of an interloper, but not an unwelcome one, perhaps like a tourist in a Cathedral, when a service is taking place. A gate on the edge of the woods leads onto a wide track that is cut into the hillside, with a sheer cliff on the left, and a steep drop on the right down into the woods. It twists and turns, but is easy enough, if a bit boggy, but as a gated moor appears, the going gets very soft indeed. I park the bike on safe ground, and walk up to the gate. Although the ground is difficult to walk on, there are tyre tracks leading through the gate, and the bit on the moor, that I can see, looks safe enough. I am very tempted, but for once, common sense prevails, and I turn round to go back the way I came. Still, the 'spots of time' are reinforced as I go back, so I'm feeling pretty good. Back on tarmac I ride upon to the moors to find the ridge way. It's easy to find with a well defined, wide and rocky gully lading up by a plantation onto the open moors, easy, but a bit of clanging and banging. It leads to an incongruous sign post, and at first, I go straight on. This trail does not really seem to go anywhere, but there is a fantastic view over a steep drop down to the sea between two hills. Back down the other track, it dips and climbs over the moors. There are open views all around me, and in the distance I can see a busy tarmac road with fast bike traffic on it, but no sound reaches me. I stop for, well, for no

reason really, why not? After I carry on a bit, a piece of soft looking ground looms, it looks even softer around the trail, so I try and keep the bike on the harder top bits, needless to say, I drop off and become totally bogged. Half an hour's work sees me back on hard ground, and, before I retreat, I trot over the soft surround to see if there is an alternative path, the 'soft' ground is perfectly firm! Idiot. So I go through this at a fair rate of knots, just to show it I don't care. This bit is at a trail cross roads, and I head north, leaving the other for another day. The moors are very much enclosed off from the surrounding cultivated land, but the trail is old, wide and well defined, and a gradual drop around the contours leads to a sandy trail through the fields, a rough tarmac road, then out onto the main road near Ballugh.

I take the long way back, and pull into a pub yard near Greeba, get a pint, and sit outside, near the bike. It's always interesting to eavesdrop on other folds conversation when the subject is your own bike. Comments along the lines of, 'not all posers then' were nice, but my favourite was the succinct, 'bloody hell'.

Back in Douglas I meet up with Dave (irredeemable tarmac rider) and walk along the front to look at the bikes. It's funny how bikes only really stand out when they have a rider in character with them. The racers being ridden up to the grandstand through the town are the best example, and the really fast roadsters, with their purposeful full-leathers-and-rip-off visor riders being another. But my street cred vote went to the incredibly scruffy and dirty group of off trail riders and their bikes who copped a few stares as they rode through town, complete with feathers tucked in goggle bands. On the other hand, an immaculate, parked Cagiva Elefant only managed to look incongruous, as well as making my G/S look positively dainty.

Another day and I decide to explore the flatter north and south extremities of the Island. Going to the Tynwald near St. Johns in years before, I have often glimpsed tempting looking tracks, now is the time to try them. But first I have a look at the small roads near the Sulby river in the north. To hear some TRF members speak, height of ecstasy is directly proportionate to depth of mud, and I haven't got really wet yet. A couple of the fords are really easy, but one closer to the mouth of the river is deeper than I would really like, and when a couple who I passed walking away from the river as I came down to the ford, return and take up station to watch me plunge in . . . well, even I can take a hint! I dry my boots by riding down to St. Johns, there is a trail marked on the map near here that heads back up into the hills, worth a look, and that's about all I get. As I pull onto the track, a rider with a 'proper' trail bike is just shutting the gate. As he lets me through, I ask him it's like, he looks at me and the bike, and says I should be OK. Then he says to let him go first, as he is with a party (and I might get in his way?). I easily keep pace with him on the rocky, steep, but dry, climb. His mates are waiting at another gate, and one of them lets us both through. He looks at my bike with pity and a bit of amazement. I am unnerved, and seem to babble on about his mate saying I should be OK. He says now't. I set off last, behind him, and get enormous satisfaction from him making a complete hash of a fairly easy bit, when he veers off up a vertical bank and stalls it. I smugly kill my bike, and motion him to proceed. It's not easy for him to boot his bike up, due to his precarious position, and I condescendingly thumb mine back into life as he gets his going. It's easy to follow him, I could certainly go faster than this, even though he is trying to catch his mates up. I'm feeling pretty dead good about now when . . . the trail narrows, to about three deep gullies, very deep, with no way to ride on the narrow, broken

tops. He picks his feet up, and goes through the middle one, I approach the widest one and look down, the left pot sticks him, then, in silence and alone, I turn round and back down. This idea of seeing the flatter parts of the Island is getting pretty frustrating, and definitely no fun. So it's back to the hills to explore another of those ridge cross roads. The lower track takes me down the side of the heather covered hill, on almost a sheep track. The scenery is fantastic, and I stop for picnics, and a bit of a lie down in the heather. Back on the bike, I pass some very serious Army 'yomper' types, who disdain to reply to my 'howdo'. They have compass, backpack, the lot. Me, I'm just, 'stepping Westward', I'd rather be happy in silliness than happy in seriousness anyway. The moors are wide open, and I'm on my own again, save for rabbits and some game birds. Lots of sheep too, if we go self-catering next year . . . no, if I bought a sheep back through Douglas over the tank of my G/S it would only confirm Dave's worst fears of me as a trail rider. The trail ends at a tarmac cross-roads, still on the moors, just down the road it starts up again, so with the throttle sense that comes from riding on the Island, I go through the gears with full positive feedback, the road is a switchback, and it is possible to leap from crest to crest, such fun! I do it again. Eventually, back to the trail, it's easy, good view, but short as it comes off the moor to a well locked gate. I think I can see tyre marks in the field, but it's a feeble schoolboy excuse to say, 'Well, everyone else was doing it'. So I back track to the tarmac where a load of Germans are studying maps. I gesture up the track, and they laugh and pat the sides of their R.T's and R.S's, no sense of humour, eh? I ride back through Tholt-Y-Will, its very beautiful, but every time I see a turn off that resembles a trail, I twitch the bike, Pavlovian like towards it. God, this trail riding is addictive. Back in Douglas we eat, then start on the pubs, and I don't remember anything after that. Next day I'm going home. I pack and pay, then sit in the lobby. The sailings not for hours and hours yet. That's it, bugger the bike and luggage, some more trails. I pick another moorland route. Off the tarmac and through a gate, and it is obviously a 'way' marked route as well. A sandy, wide track through gorse up, and at the side of a steep hill. Deja-vu hits, but I can't place it. Through another gate, the track flattens out on top of moorland, where am I? Then it clicks, it's just like the climb up to Wellington's monument out of Baslow, back home, except there I fell off, here, I didn't. On the moor, I park the bike on a convenient slab of limestone, take my Belstaff and helmet off, put my headphones and a bit of Elgar on and settle down. I remember a flask of Manx whiskey I bought, and have a pull, the Sun is out and HOT! A proper trail rider buzzes up, stops, looks down at me and asks if I'm alright? What a question! Absolutely bloody great, mate! Time passes, and I hop back on the bike. The trail is wide, but cut neatly three feet into the moor. In a fit of indecision I flit from rut to rut. It's funny how the rut your in always seems narrower than the ones either side, so you heave the wheels into a wider one, only to find it mysteriously and suddenly narrows. Perhaps it's me? It ends, and so has the holiday really. Your chum, tired, but content, bends his weary way homeward. (Via a late Steam-Racket, 2 G&Ts and a Ducati with no lights, but that's another story.)

Ian Grimshaw, 95 Belper Road, Bargate, Belper



A BRIEF TRAIL IMPRESSION OF THE 125cc KAWASAKI KMX

Those whose minds stretch back to 1966 may remember that the British Motocross 250cc title of that year was won by one Freddie Mayes on a Greeves. In later years he also rode CZ, BSA, Montesa and AJS before hanging his helmet up in 1977, and opening a Kawasaki dealership in Cambridge.

This year however he decided to make a comeback, racing a KMX in the trail bike class in enduros. Having learnt this fact from another of our group I was able to persuade Freddie to lend me the machine to take on our regular monthly run, and let any interested member give it a 25 mph 'belt'! The machine was, of course, the 24 bhp (unrestricted) version in standard trim, except for knobby Dunlops, and having shed indicators, mirrors and pillion pegs.

Engine performance was most impressive. It pulled strongly all the way from tickover to about 7000 rpm, whereupon it really flew into the 9500 rpm red line. All of the Japanese manufacturers have their own pet names for their induction systems, and Kawasaki have called theirs KIPS (Kawasaki Integrated Power-valve System). This, together with a gear driven engine balance are probably responsible for an engine unit which feels both smooth and unburstable. Weight is a very respectable 99 kilos, seat height 865 mm. 230 mm of travel at both ends of the suspension gives a very comfortable ride, and whilst stability may not quite be up to the standard of a 'pukka' enduro tool, it was more than adequate for trail use, being really predictable. The six speed box is very slick in use, and seems to offer a ratio for every occasion.

Discs front and rear are superb with plenty of feel, and dry out after a soak far quicker than drums. A small but nonetheless useful item is the near carrier, quite big enough to carry oversuit and spare tube without being obtrusive. Exhaust silencing is absolutely superb, whilst the water jacket keeps mechanical noise to a minimum. Even the most miserable RA man would be hard pushed to find genuine cause for complaint about noise pollution from this motorcycle.

As all riding was performed in daylight hours I can only quote the lighting spec. from the brochure, namely: '60/55 Watt halogen headlight brightens up your nights', sounds promising! We also didn't have the machine long enough for an in depth assessment of fuel consumption, but a rough check showed 60 mpg overall.

And the verdict? All in all a most enjoyable little machine with no real vices (this being the opinion of all those who ride it on the hard baked trails of Cambridgeshire in July). Except for one thing, the damned seat kept falling off. Having spent so long in sorting out all the complex 'hi-tec' problems it seems ironic that such a basic thing should turn out to be the only criticism. Interestingly, when 'Trials and Motocross News' tested the KMX they also had the same seat trouble with their machine.

To sum up the little Kawa seems to stand up well to the rest of the 125 opposition, and can be had in either white or the more familiar lime green.

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

HELP!! - Your chance to ask for the help of other members, or to offer advice and help

THIRTY MINUTES AND SIX POUNDS OR ELSE!!

In response to the large number of XL125, XL185 and XR200 owners living locally I have listed an idiot proof guide to the procedures to follow when replacing a cam chain on the most popular of trail riders' bikes. So often have I come across engines where the cam chain has worn beyond adjustment, jumped the camshaft sprocket and bent one or both valves, resulting in a parts bill of at least £30.00. It would appear the life of a cam chain is around 10,000 to 15,000 miles. JT Morgan of Swansea, who advertises regularly in MCN, supply DID 25H-100L chains for £6 including P&P.

Procedure

Turn petrol tap off.

Get a sharpened pencil and plug into fuel cap breather, this enables the bike to be layed on its side, avoiding draining the engine oil.

Remove gear lever.

Remove chainguard (over front sprocket).

Slacken phillips screw holding generator wire by chainguard.

Slacken and remove four generator 8 mm bolts and remove generator cover.

Slacken 14 mm bolt holding rotor, this might be a sharp jar!

Undo the two phillips screws on CDI cover.

Undo 10 mm bolt on the end of the camshaft.

Undo the two 8 mm bolts on the CDI casing and *carefully* ease off. This means the timing is *not* disturbed.

Pull the complete unit off to reveal camshaft sprocket.

Remove the two 10 mm bolts holding camshaft sprocket onto the camshaft, make sure the 'pip' on the camshaft is at 11 o'clock. Ease the sprocket off the camshaft and remove from chain.

Remove the 14 mm bolt holding the rotor on. The rotor can be removed by using the rear wheel spindle from the XL125 or XL185; XR200 obtains a spindle before you start the job! Using the rear wheel spindle screw into rotor end, this will pull the rotor off the crankshaft.

Remove rubber boot from camshaft adjuster and remove 10 mm bolt from top of tensioner. Slacken (2 turns) 14 mm tensioner bolt.

The camchain should now be in a heap around the crankshaft sprocket. Undo the 10 mm bolt holding camshaft tension mechanism allowing the cam chain to be removed from the crankshaft sprocket. Bin the offending item!

Feed new camchain from top of tunnel, loop over camshaft and ease over crankshaft to locate on crankshaft sprocket.

Replace 10 mm tension bolt and tighten.

Get a very thin screwdriver or allen key and push into the hold in the 14 mm tensioner bolt (the one which had the rubber boot over it). With the rod fully

depressed nip tight the 14 mm tensioner bolt. Watching this operation it will become clear how the tensioner device works.

Line up the keyway in the rotor and push onto the crankshaft, tighten 14 mm bolt finger tight.

Timing

Turn rotor anticlockwise until 'T' mark on rotor lines up with the indent on the crankcase - support the camchain at the camshaft end so that it cannot 'double up'.

The 'pip' on the camshaft must be at 11 o'clock.

Locate the mark 'O' on the camshaft sprocket and make sure that the 'O' is at twelve o'clock. There should be a straight line between the camshaft sprocket bolts and the 14 mm rotor bolt. Fiddle the camchain over the sprocket and check the above marks are all correct before tightening the two 10 mm sprocket bolts. (Make sure these bolts are tight.)

Fully tighten the 14 mm rotor bolt.

Carefully seat the rotor cover and tighten the four 8 mm bolts diagonally.

Tighten phillips screw locating the generator wire.

Replace chainguard and gear lever.

Line up the pip on the camshaft with the indent in the auto advance unit and slide onto the camshaft. Tighten the two 8 mm bolts securing the casing.

Don't forget the 10 mm bolt that fits into the end of the camshaft - tighten.

Replace CDI over tightening the two phillips screws.

Loosen the 14 mm tensioner bolt and then tighten.

Replace 10 mm bolt in the top of the tensioner and replace the rubber boot.

Lift the bike upright. Remove the pencil from the petrol tank breather.

Petrol on - fire up, drool over that whisper quiet engine.

With tools ready and rotor puller available the time taken should be around thirty minutes. If it takes slightly longer I am sure you will be closer to 30 minutes when you do the job again after your next 15,000 trail riding miles.

Thanks to Gil Myers who was an excellent guinea pig in compiling these instructions.

Bob McConnell, 4 Arthington Lane, Pool-in-Wharfedale, Otley.

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T-SHIRTS. White with green TRF design on the front. £4.50 inc. P&P. Your local TRF Group name printed on the back - extra 50p. Cheques made payable to 'Printess', 5 The Woodlands, Corton, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 5BZ. Tel: 0502 730899. Order NOW!

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TRF 'SAVING GREEN LANES' sew-on patches: £1.50. David Bonsall, 9 Blackdown Close, Sheffield S19 6NF.

THE BULLETIN BINDERS (plastic) will hold 12 copies £4 inc. P&P. The 'blue book' Rights of Way: A Guide to Law and Practice £4. Cheques payable to 'TRF'. Contact: John Higgin, TRF Secretary (address on page 3).

SUZUKI TS185 (T reg) PARTS. Wheels, tank, fork yokes, swining arm. Various other bits. Also various RV125 parts. Bevis Billingham. Tel: (0903) 714140 (office), (024 369) 5128 (home).

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1st Monday of the month

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2nd and 4th Mondays - The Robin Hood
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2nd & 4th Tuesday - The Victoria Hotel
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(Grid ref. 789698)

2nd Wednesday - Three Horseshoes
Hemington, Leicestershire

2nd Wednesday
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

LODDON VALE

Don Lewis, Ladybower, Dogmersfield
Basingstoke, Hants RG27 8SS
Tel: 0252 616359

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

NORFOLK & SUFFOLK

Dave Rose, 15 Shire Green, Fen Lane
Kings Lynn. Tel: 0553 765661

1st Wednesday - The Blue Lion
North Pickenham

NORTH MIDLANDS

Brian Smith, 'The Smithy'
Ballfields, Bradnop, Leek Staffs
Tel: 0538 384218

1st Tuesday - The Jester
Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffs

NORTHUMBERLAND

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

3rd Tuesday
Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

NORTH WALES

John Mills, 7 Brookfield Drive
Holmes Chapel, Cheshire
CW4 7DT

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

NORTH WEST LONDON

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

1st Wednesday
Red Lion Hotel, Radlet, Herts

NORTH YORKSHIRE

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

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

SHROPSHIRE

Paul Kingston, 52 St. Michael's Close
Madeley, Telford, Shropshire
Tel: 0952 583812

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

SOUTH EAST

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

2nd Tuesday
The White Swan, Crayford

SOUTH LONDON

Brian Wright, 2 Orchard Road
Sutton, Surrey SM1 2QA
Tel: 01 661 2296

Epsom and Ewell Football Club
West Street, Ewell, Surrey
1st Wednesday

SOUTHERN

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

3rd Tuesday - Priory Inn
Bishops Waltham B2177 (Formerly the A333)

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: 024 368 3036

Contact John (every other month -
4th Wednesday - ie Feb, April, June, etc)
Hassocks Hotel, Hassocks, Mid Sussex

TEESSIDE

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

1st Wednesday - The Station Hotel
Kirby, near Stokesley