

#### THAMES VALLEY

Terry Jolley, 4 Halley's Walk, Addlestone  
Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 42935

#### UPPER THAMES (ABINGDON)

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

#### WEST ANGLIA

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

#### WEST MIDLANDS

Peter Cookson, 44 Burman Road  
Shirley, Solihull, W. Midlands B90 2BG  
Tel: 021-745 6128

#### WEST YORKSHIRE

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

#### WEST WILTSHIRE

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

#### WYVERN

Gwyn James, 18 The Spinney  
Wolverhampton WV3 9EU  
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1st & 3rd Wednesday  
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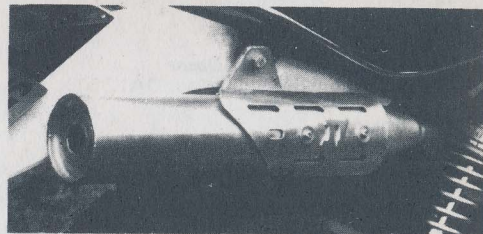
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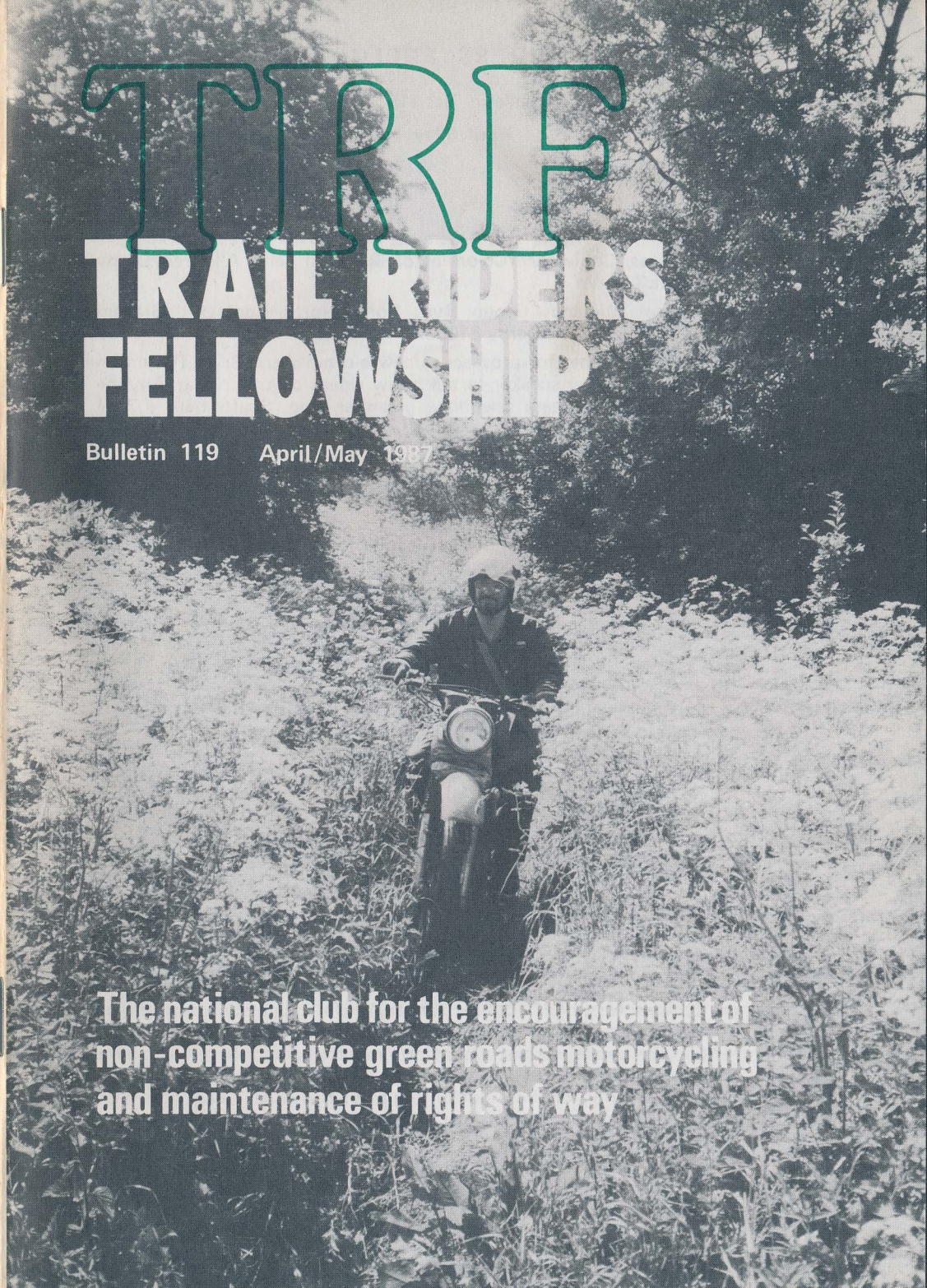
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# TRF TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 119 April/May 1987



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

# TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin No. 119

April / May

## FUTURE EVENTS

### APRIL

- 11/12th 4th TRF Rights of Way Seminar in Derbyshire. Details from Dave Giles, Conference Co-ordinator, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby DE3 2EW.
- 12th East Midlands Group Run. North Notts. Contact : Graham Chinnery, Tel: Derby 810059.
- 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.

### MAY

- 9th/10th John Ebbrell Memorial Run Weekend. Details from Ken Canham (Northumberland Group Rep.)
- 16th TRF Executive Committee Meeting, King George V Memorial Hall, Hockley Heath, 1.00 p.m.
- 16th/17th BMF Rally, Peterborough Showground.
- 17th East Midlands Group Run. Staffs. Moorland. Contact: Graham Chinnery.

### JUNE

- 14th East Midlands Group Run. South Leics. Contact: Graham Chinnery, Tel: Derby 810059.

South London Group organise a run nearly every Saturday. Contact: Brian Wright on 01-661 2296 for details.

*Cover Photo: Ian Satterthwaite riding "The Belp" in North Notts. Photo courtesy Martin Jenkinson, Sheffield.*

## EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

Will everyone please note my new address (with immediate effect):

4 SURREY ROAD, WOOLSTON, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 9ED

Did you miss *Bulletin* No.117 (December/January)? Unfortunately, Postman Pat managed to lose all but a few (mine included!) Tony Rose (Membership Secretary) has a number of spare copies, so please contact him; also contact him if you have paid your 1987 subs. but not received your card. As the 117 issue contained the all important renewal form, for those not in receipt of this issue, please note that your subs. were due on 1st January at a cost of only £8. Cheques/POs made payable to TRF please.

*Editor*  
Rosemary Swindells  
4 Surrey Road  
Woolston  
Southampton SO2 9ED

*National Secretary*  
John Higgin  
11 Askew Drive  
Spencer's Wood, Reading  
Berkshire RG7 1HG  
Tel: (0734) 882781

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

It seems that trail riding and enduros go hand in hand; at least that's the underlying message I get from *MCA* press releases. I quote:

*"... we are keen to promote a number of special off-road race meetings to cater for road riding trail bike owners. The main objective of the exercise is to encourage trail bike owners to use their machines in properly organised and authorised off-road events rather than use them in a casual and, all too often illegal, off-road environment. The event is specially for riders who use their bikes on the road and would like to have a go off-road. The three mile course has been designed by experts to be a fair test of rider and machine alike. . . . Trophies will be awarded to the first three in each class. . . "*

In my opinion, what could have been an excellent chance to promote trail riding, the proper use of green lanes and how to find out where to legally ride your trail bike, has been missed.

The subject of suspension (or lack of it) is a common topic of conversation amongst TRF members. M. R. Holland have yet again increased their already extensive range of motorcycle suspension.

Progressive's range of off-road suspension products is aimed at those riders who demand the best. Replacement fork springs are offered for most dirt bikes. All carry a lifetime warranty, to the original purchaser, against sagging more than 1/4". Baja Magnum Off-Road shocks are available in 15", 16 1/2" and 17 1/2" lengths to suit many twin shock machines. Replacement springs are also available for many single shock bikes and again these carry a lifetime warranty. Prices for fork springs are £39.50pr, Baja Magnum Shocks £149.50pr and single-shock springs £53.50 each. All prices include VAT and postage. Further details from: Gerry Daubney, M.R. Holland Ltd., Unit 2, Benner Road, Wardentree Lane Industrial Estate, Spalding.

Don't forget that TRF members can get 10% discount from M.R. Holland. Owners of Kawasaki machines will also be pleased to learn that Clay Cross Kawasaki (main spares distributors for the Midlands and North, I believe) are also offering 10% discount to members. From experience, I have found Clay Cross to carry an extensive and comprehensive stock of spares - even for out of production machines.

I recently received a letter in praise of some accommodation in the Yorkshire Dales: Bellfield at Masham (home of Theakston Beers) and the Manor House at Melmerby. The facilities, I understand, are excellent. All enquiries please to:

Mrs Rita Dinsdale, Yorkshire Dales Country Apartments  
c/o Manor House, Melmerby, Nr. Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 4TW

I know many people tend to read the end of an article first! So I'll finish with some well deserved thanks. Last year I was asked to organise a collection for Ken and Angie Canham in recognition of their hard work in organising the John Ebbrell Memorial Runs over the past few years. I am pleased to say that in February I was able to present Ken and Angie with a cheque for £100.

## AN APPEAL

On Sunday 11th January 1987 I took four relatively new riders out in the Dales to show them what trail riding is all about. Whilst travelling on the road running from Blubberhouses to West End, I was leading and saw two trail riders coming very fast from the new church; they were cutting all the corners regardless of oncoming traffic. As they came out of the corner we were approaching I slowed due to catching a glimpse of a third rider approaching very quickly.

Had I continued (one foot from edge of road) I would have hit this rider HEAD ON. Unluckily for me, and almost like a comic sketch, the young lad behind me pulled out to go round me. He then saw the oncoming bike and had to come in to the side of the road and subsequently hit me.

The rider who caused this accident did not even bother to stop but rushed on to catch his mates. What I would like him to do is contact me and pay for the damage his recklessness caused, i.e. new bars, new twist grip, new brake lever and new gloves. Not to mention the loss of skin. I know he was riding an XT, probably a 500, and one of his group had a purple tank on either Honda or Kawasaki. They had just crossed Pack Stones Moor and we suspect earlier possibly crossed Blubberhouse Moor.

Any information leading to my tracing this 'Boy Racer' will be gratefully received and kept confidential; or slowly I will find this person and then report him to the Police. So, sir, own up now and pay up and then avoid more trouble.

Regarding this incident, I would like to ask riders to stick to the LEFT of tracks when approaching blind bends, etc. It is so easy to be lulled into thinking you are the only people out that day.

David McWhinney, 44 Walderden Road, Brierfield, Nelson, Lancs.

## LETTERS

I was very interested to read P. Halstead's account of 'A Day at the Seaside, crossing from Hest Bank to Kents Bank', as in the early 1970s my late husband John Ebbrell attempted this crossing but, due to bad stormy weather conditions, they only just managed to rescue their bikes from quicksand and had to abandon the attempted crossing.

Mrs Eileen Ebbrell, Holcombe Brook, Nr. Bury

In Bulletin 118 you asked for information on trail riding books. Well, the ones I have are also old, but very good. They are from the USA but you can buy them here. I got mine from Foyles Bookshop, 113-119 Charing Cross Road, London WC2 in the motorcycle books department.

The books are: "How to select, ride and maintain your trail bike" by Doug Richmond, HP Books, printed in USA 1972 and distributed by Argus Books Ltd., 14 James Road, Watford, Herts., and "The Boonie Book, How to Ride Dirt, Take Care of your Bike and Yourself" by Carl Shipman, HP Books, printed in USA, 1974.

If you need further details on these books, please contact me at the address below. There are also more HP books of which some may be of interest to the trail rider.

Jon Watson, 10 Thurlow Hill, London SE21

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### HONDA

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| * XL 500 R .....     | £75.00 |
| * XL 500 SZ .....    | £75.00 |
| * XL 600 RD/RE ..... | £75.00 |
| * XL 600 LMF .....   | £75.00 |

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| Yamaha TY 175 .....      | £19.55 |
| Yamaha TY 250 Mono ..... | £25.00 |

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TS 250 / X

### ENDURO

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| YAMAHA Round £24.00 Oval £32.00 |
| IT 125 / 175 / 250 / 495        |

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| XR200 Twin Shock              | 4.75 | 12.00 | 22.00 | 37.75  |     | MT50, MTX50               | 4.00 | 8.00  | 8.50   | 19.50 |
| XR200 R Pro Link              | 4.75 | 12.00 | 22.00 | 37.75  |     | XL100/125/185 S, XL125 RC | 4.50 | 8.00  | 9.75   | 21.50 |
| XR250/350 R                   | 4.75 | 12.00 | 23.00 | 38.75  |     | XL250 S, RC               | 6.00 | 11.00 | 15.00  | 31.00 |
| <b>KAWASAKI</b>               |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| KLX250, KDX175/250/420        | 4.75 | 12.00 | 23.00 | 38.75  |     | XL500 S, RC               | 6.00 | 11.00 | 15.00  | 31.00 |
| <b>SUZUKI</b>                 |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| PE175/250/400 N/T/X/Z         | 4.75 | 12.00 | 22.00 | 37.75  |     | KAWASAKI                  |      |       |        |       |
| <b>YAMAHA</b>                 |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| IT175/250/645                 | 4.75 | 12.00 | 22.00 | 37.75  |     | KE125/175                 | 4.50 | 7.00  | 9.75   | 21.25 |
| <b>TRIALS</b>                 |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| BETA TR32                     | 6.50 | 9.25  | 15.00 | 29.75  |     | KL250                     | 4.75 | 10.00 | 15.00  | 28.75 |
| <b>BULTACO</b>                |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| Sherpa - all models           | 4.00 | 8.75  | 15.00 | 26.75  |     | SUZUKI                    |      |       |        |       |
| ARMSTRONG 310-320             | 4.00 | 9.25  | 15.00 | 27.25  |     | TS50/100 ER all models    | 4.00 | 7.00  | 8.50   | 18.50 |
| FANTIC 125/175/200/240        | 4.00 | 9.25  | 9.75  | 22.00  |     | TS125 all models          | 4.00 | 7.00  | 9.75   | 19.75 |
| HONDA TL 125                  | 4.00 | 9.00  | 9.75  | 21.75  |     | TS185/250 all models      | 4.75 | 10.00 | 15.00  | 28.75 |
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| 123/200, 248/348, 349         | 4.75 | 8.75  | 15.00 | 27.75  |     | DR/SP 370, 400            | 5.50 | 9.25  | 15.00  | 28.75 |
| SUZUKI RL 250/320             | 4.00 | 8.75  | 15.00 | 26.75  |     | <b>YAMAHA</b>             |      |       |        |       |
| OSSA                          |      |       |       |        |     |                           |      |       |        |       |
| M.A.R. 250/350 Yellow, Orange | 4.00 | 11.00 | 15.00 | 29.00  |     | DT50M/MX, TY50, DT100     | 3.50 | 7.00  | 8.50   | 18.00 |
| SWM 280/320                   | 4.00 | 9.25  | 15.00 | 27.25  |     | DT125/175 MX              | 4.50 | 8.00  | 9.75   | 21.25 |
| YAMAHA TY80                   | 4.00 | 8.50  | 7.50  | 19.00  |     | DT250/400 MX              | 5.00 | 9.50  | 15.00  | 28.50 |
| TY175/250                     | 4.00 | 9.25  | 9.75  | 22.00  |     | XT250/500                 | 5.00 | 9.50  | 15.00  | 28.50 |
| TY175/250 Big Chain Conv.     | 4.00 | 9.25  | 15.00 | 27.25  |     | XT550                     | 6.00 | 9.50  | 15.00  | 29.50 |

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*I am writing about two-strokes. My views will upset many users of 'stokers' but in seeking acceptance of our activities in the countryside, the TRF must put its own house in order. Smelly, noisy two-stroke machines will always be an anachronism on green lanes and tarmac byways. The National Executive should, as a matter of policy, strongly discourage the use of two-strokes and have as its target by, say 1995, an all four-stroke policy, quiet ones at that.*

*On a recent TRF run I was very concerned at the palls of offensive blue smoke being emitted by two noisy machines. No wonder people don't like motorcyclists. Two-strokes must be as objectionable as anything can be.*

*The TRF should prove it is a responsible body and cut out the smoke and reduce noise. I would add that these are my own comments and not, I suspect, the views of local TRF groups.*

Gwyn Thomas, Minories Cottage, Wells Road, Priddy, Wells, Somerset

By way of some reply, I would suggest that the noisy two-strokes are mainly older machines, as the two-stroke trail bikes I tested last summer were totally inaudible above three yards, and were only smoky when run on the road at speeds of around 60 mph. I suggest it is the poor quality of aftermarket exhausts that are to blame for the noise. Maybe we should campaign for cheaper genuine replacements — *Rosie*  
Any comments from other members?

*After reading this month's trail test of the MTX, I feel I must pass on my findings. I bought the bike, a second hand 'Y' reg MTX 125 for my wife to learn on. This bike did have the ATAC system engine. While still in its learner legal form I did a Wiltshire area run one afternoon with my wife on the pillion and was very impressed with the way the bike handled with two adults on board. However, owing to the forward sloping seat the pillion did have a lot of trouble staying on the rear half of the seat. This was also the case when my eleven year old son rode pillion with me. We found the bike very controllable and comfortable. For me, I found the bike very light after my KLX 250.*

*Riding the bike on trails in the dark — not a habit I might add — I found the lights superb, which forced me into converting the KLX over to 12 volts. I then de-restricted the engine to obtain the full 22 HP our foreign friends get the bike supplied with. What a transformation this was. It was like having a 250 but without the extra weight. I geared the ratio up, which on the road gave over 80 mph but still left it very handleable off road. By this time certain of my haunts were getting very muddy thanks to four wheel drive tractors. I now found a very nasty flaw in the bike. It boiled up very quickly on slow tortuous sections. Three other ex-MTX owners have told me they suffered the same problems. I did not find the bike too 'tall' as mentioned in the test report; it was, in fact, quite a bit lower than the KLX I was used to, so I have to admit I found it easier to ride on very deep mud sections.*

*Like the other ex-MTX owners, I sold the bike before we suffered any overheating problems of a serious nature, and bought an 'X' reg XL125S; a much lower bike, a good slogger and very reliable. As my wife points out, there is also the bonus of no radiator to break if one falls off. My fuel consumption figures on the MTX were a good bit lower than those stated in the mag report.*

Dairy House Farm, Berwick St John, Nr Shaftesbury, Dorset

Sorry, but I couldn't read your signature. As to bikes being tall, at 5'3" I find most trail bikes tall! — *Rosie*

*As a new member I was glad to have the meaning of county roads explained in the last Bulletin; amongst other things. Suffolk CC inform me they have 93 maps covering the county which are available for inspection and copying from. This being a mammoth task, I wondered if such maps can be bought from yourselves?*

*Having read Gwyn Thomas' report from the Association of Countryside Rangers AGM on the subject of TRF bibs and vests, are these available yet?*

*Lastly, will you be publishing a list of future runs across the country?*

John Alston, Durham Cottage, The Green, Acton, Suffolk

To answer your questions. The maps held by County Councils are not available from the TRF. These usually very large scale maps (hence the large number quoted for your county), are the definitive maps, kept by the Council on, I believe, a one-off basis; therefore, as they say, you may go and inspect and copy. Sorry, but no one said rights of way work was easy!

Regarding the bibs, these are not available from national TRF sources yet. Contact Gwyn Thomas who may be able to help you.

And on the subject of runs, I publish only those runs that are sent to me for publication. Most groups hold runs at least once a month, so if you are thinking of venturing further afield I would suggest you contact the Group Rep of the area you wish to visit. The John Ebbrell Run is the only national run I am aware of for this year, but details of all nationally organised runs will be published as and when they are arranged. — *Rosie*

Those of you with sharp eyes noticed a little item of news that I would be exploring ways of having a video made to tell people what we do and all about us. The original idea was to find a College of Further Education doing courses in making videos and ask the students to make the video as a course project. However, I have had no response to date from any college. When or if we get a response, the course will need a script from which to work, or at least some ideas to make a script from. If we can give them a few storylines then we can ensure that they start the right way, rather than on pictures of trail parks, or motocross, they might think we are representing. So, all you budding scriptwriters out there, put on your thinking helmets and put a good storyline down on paper. At the moment it doesn't need much development, just the outlines of a story, perhaps with picture boards as in real films, or children's books. No prizes as such for the winner, but you could see your own work on screen.

All entries to "TRF OSCAR SECTION", 11 Askew Drive, Spencer's Wood, Reading, Berkshire RG7 1HG — by 1st May if possible.

John Higgin

## MEMBERS' MACHINE REPORTS

In answer to a request, the next Members' Machine Report will be on the Honda XR250. If you have owned in the past, still own or have ridden one of these machines, please write to the Editor enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for a questionnaire to complete.

Please respond as quickly as possible so that I may complete the report promptly.  
Thanks. — *Rosie*

## REPORT FROM RUNS CO-ORDINATOR

During my year as Runs Co-ordinator I wrote to many groups asking them to organise a run for other members during the year. Some groups responded to this while others did not. However, the groups which did endeavour to arrange a run had little response.

Many people appear to prefer to arrange their own runs and make arrangements with various Group Reps, etc. in the relevant areas themselves, which really I feel is fair enough. It does show that members who are interested in riding not only in their own areas but in other areas are capable of arranging their own rides. I feel that for the time and work which groups put into organising a run for others in comparison to the response to runs which were offered and not attended, this post is probably non viable.

There does, however, seem to be more response to the mass runs such as Charles Kings Welsh Coast to Coast and the John Ebbrell Memorial Run. Angie and I are presently arranging the 1987 J.E.M.R. which will take the form of another Lakes and Dales weekend using the Tebay Venture Centre as our base.

The general attraction to members who take part in this run appears to be the idea of the mass meeting of TRF members having a good weekend's trail riding together, exchanging views, and meeting other members from other areas and arranging rides out for each others groups during the year. This in a way does some Runs Co-ordinating in itself.

*Ken Canham, Northumberland Group Rep.*

## REPORT FROM PRESS OFFICER

The stated objective of the Trail Riders Fellowship as per section (a) of the Constitution, is said to be the maintenance of vehicular rights of way in the countryside. We also have a duty TO WORK WITH ALL OTHERS WHO HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS IN RELATED SPHERES.

Having regard to this last sentence, and following a recent incident in the national press with the Ramblers Association, I now wish to draw members' attention to the power of the printed word and to realise how easy it can be to alienate any one particular user body by ill informed opinion or personal prejudice that can be interpreted as being the view of the Fellowship.

From this date onwards, therefore, no mention of a specific user body will be made to the general press, by members, upon OPINION alone.

We cannot afford to throw stones whilst living in a glass house.

*Steve Harris*

## Green Lane Special of the Year

What is your idea of the ideal trail bike? Something like the Paris-Dakar replicas perhaps? Or the Honda XR range? How about an adapted roadster made from a box of bits? You might even prefer a sidecar attached. Maybe you like your bikes to have character and prefer British iron such as a BSA B40 or B31/33 adaption, or even a Triumph Trophy or Cub.

No matter what you prefer, I can safely bet a month of my wife's wages that you will have modified it in some way, shape or form to be more useable on the rough. Some hardy souls even try to build a Special to get the best compromise of tarmac road ability and rough stuff toughness. Something similar to the RM500/XT250 hybrid that I am still trying to complete after eighteen months. My excuse is lack of sufficient time.

Well, in order to gee up all my fellow lazies and get them out into cold, dark garages, there is now a little competition designed with them in mind, and to motivate those sore bottoms into action: The 1987 Green Lane Special of the Year Competition. It's a free competition, yet the prizes will reflect the standard of the finished article. There will be a First, Second and Third, with a Cup or Plaque for the top position and suitable prizes for the other two. In addition, all three will be offered a year's free membership of the Trail Riders Fellowship, Britain's largest trail riding club.

To qualify for entry, you will need a motorcycle that has been modified to some extent for green lane use as well as tarmac road use. Obviously, because all green lanes are public roads, it goes without saying that anything entered must be road legal. This could mean an automatic disqualification for anybody that just fits battery lights and speedometer onto their Husqvarna motocrosser.

The main theme of the competition to be borne in mind is "Would a reasonable person recognise that the bike has been modified sufficiently to meet a true dual purpose machine within the spirit of the competition?"

The entries will be judged by the following five people:

1. Brian Thompson, a household name in Rights of Way circles, and a motorcyclist for more years than he may care to remember.
2. A mechanical engineer, of Formula One race car standard, to assess the quality of any home fabrication or welding, etc.
3. A motorcycle journalist in the form of Terry Snelling, *Motorcycle News* Road Rider columnist.
4. The opinion of a lady rambler and equestrian on the 'impact' value should the two meet whilst out on a green lane.
5. A Police Officer to judge for legality under the various Road Traffic Acts.

The competition will close on 31st August 1987 so there are several months left in which to fettle, weld, polish and paint if you haven't yet done so. Send your entry to 'Special of the Year Competition 1987', 11 Great Close, Chapel Brampton, Northamptonshire NN6 8AN.

You will need to list full details and any modifications carried out plus machine history, if known, either typed or written legibly on A4 size paper, along with four clear photographs. These must have been taken on 35mm or larger format, and must comprise of two side views and two of your choice. You must enclose a SAE if you want anything returning.

The results will be published in the Autumn and should make for interesting reading . . . now where's the spanner?

## Street Cred for Trailies

It is a wonderful quirk of human nature that enables small groups of people to establish themselves sufficiently differently for them to have what is now known as 'Street Cred'. Not only are the majority of MZ riders happy with their 'Zed Cred', some riders go completely OTT and use them for trail riding!!

Now trail riders, or trailies as they like to be called, have their own brand of one-upmanship within their own circles. Cast aside those brightly coloured Elgren nylon motocross pants and those matching coloured leather boots because they are DEFINITELY last years fashion, and we don't want to embarrass our fellow trailies, now do we? Picture instead the sartorial elegance of ex Coal Board wellies complete with yellow toecaps and matching yellow PVC fire brigade issue over-trousers, artistically blended together by the strip of old inner tube strapped around the bottoms to stop them flapping and snagging on branches.

The oldest Belstaff Trialmaster wax cotton jacket to hand may be used under the optional dustbin liner worn when conditions are really muddy and wet, tied around the waist, of course, with old baler twine. Gloves vary from your sister's white leather ones to old fingerless leather jobs.

Serious trailies go for the 'Total Concept' and wear a pheasant's tail feather in the goggle headband along with white chapstick on the lips to protect them from either sunburn or frostbite (even other trailies in some cases!). This also ensures that your pint glass can be recognised during the obligatory pie, chips and peas at lunchtime, the wellies having been left outside, of course, to reveal odd coloured socks.

As far as trailies machine cred goes, arriving late at the start of a run will ensure that everyone will notice that extensive layer of last month's cow dung presently insulating your rusting exhaust. Mentioning in a stage whisper that you have still got that 21 inch inner tube inside the 18 inch back tyre after your last puncture can be equally effective. However, painting several human silhouettes alongside the 'I Stop for Toads' sticker on the tank ranks as high on the Street Cred list as its possible to reach following on from last year's chart topping blood group on the helmet feat.

Whilst trying to achieve max riding Cred, it must be said that riding with the left wrist on the bars, leaving the hand dangling, a la McQueen, is now out. So is squinting at people on a dull day. Instead, the thoroughly modern trailie will achieve Street Cred status by holding the snapped clutch cable with the fingers whilst stationary at traffic lights. Tools carried are a matter of personal preference, but please note that the lump hammer has now been replaced with the jemmy.

In fact, Street Cred can only lead to one thing in trailie circles — the first round. Mine's a pint, please.

S.R. Harris  
TRF Press Officer

11 Great Close, Chapel Brampton  
Northamptonshire NN6 8AN

## RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS — Brian Thompson

### HEREFORD

Geoff Brookes has been beavering away in Hereford on behalf of the TRF for some years, though without the backing of a group. He has uncovered 500 RUPPs which 'disappeared' from the official Definitive Map although they appear on the official Statement that is part of the Definitive Map. Geoff is trying to get these lost RUPPs reinstated as there are no green lanes designated as RUPPs in Hereford. Geoff tells me he wants to form a TRF group of Rights of Way workers as he thinks (and I agree) that getting rights of way comes before trail riding. Anyone interested in helping Geoff should get in touch at "The Orchard", Church Lane, Orleton, Ludlow, Salop.

### RIGHTS OF WAY SEMINAR

This is not another of my training courses for all and sundry. We have a first class line up of guest speakers; a surprise is Major General Peter Shapland, MA, Senior Inquiry Inspector from the Dept of Environment. This is quite a feather in the TRF cap and David Giles, Conference Co-ordinator, has pulled off a big one. The government has often ignored us in Countryside Commission booklets such as 'Out in the Country', so this is another small step along the road to full recognition and acceptance following the Sports Council placing the TRF as No.1 body on rights of way. Other guests attending are David Wallace, MA, Cambridge University lecturer in Land Uses and BBT official; Mike Gibson, former South Yorkshire County Council boss; Alan Kind, LARA chief, and possibly someone from the Countryside Commission. Dave Giles invited John Trevelyan, Deputy Director of the Ramblers Association, and Lady Kirk of BBT. Both were sorry not to be able to attend. There is some grumbling among TRF reps without an invite, but every group rep has been asked to nominate someone. I am planning the course programme with Dave (an expert on training, if not rights of way) and will include a mock public inquiry which last year had to be dropped due to overwork. The seminar will end with some powerfully backed resolutions for the TRF AGM to increase our grip on rights of way, which is the only way that trail riding is going to survive.

And, no, the TRF has not 'gone all posh and establishment'. For a small 2000 member voluntary organisation, strictly non sporting, we seek our place at the top table and this is the way to go about it. Don't ever forget that the RA, Cyclists Touring Club & Open Space Society (President: Dr David Clark, MP, Labour Shadow Environment Minister) are *all* hostile to trail riding. We are, however, like BR, getting there'.

### DERBYSHIRE

The Chapel Gate case is now brought to a most happy conclusion. Police charges against all six TRF members have been dropped and a new gate will replace the obstructed gate which forced the riders to divert over open moorland. This is another TRF victory to chalk up; the third in six months in which our determination and legal expertise led the Police and Crown to back down. The TRF Cheshire Group sent me a very nice letter of thanks for handling the case.

### YORKSHIRE DALES

A 'review' of the 1954 Definitive Map is now underway by the Yorkshire Dales National Park using the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 which, in theory, should

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make getting Byways a lot easier than the viciously biased pro RA 1968 Countryside Act. The National Park is acting on behalf of the County Council and all claims and queries should be sent to Mrs Sue Arnott, YDNP, Hebden Road, Grassington, Skipton, North Yorkshire. They are dealing with the Parishes of Carperby, West Burton, Carlton Highdale, Carlton Town, Castle Bolton, Thorlby, Aysgarth, Askrigg, Newbiggin (all in the Richmond area) at the moment. County Hall in Northallerton have stated that evidence requirements for Byway are eight users on motor cycles for a period of at least 20 years. Documentary evidence, of which the TRF has plenty, is disregarded, although in law (Section 32 Highways Act 1980) it's just as important as use evidence (Section 31). I see this (and the Lancashire TRF agree) as the usual bias designed to deter Byway claims. I have asked the County Surveyor to reconsider their requirements, otherwise very few Byway claims will come from the TRF simply because we don't have a long history of user evidence available since we started in 1970.

As an old timer, now in my 50th year and 30 years of riding green lanes, I am one of few TRF members with good user evidence. During the Cumbria Byway inquiries part of which lie in the Dales National Park we faced total hostility from the Dales Park Authority however suitable and despite cast iron evidence. They have mellowed somewhat now thanks to the Byways & Bridleways Trust, but I am very suspicious especially as the National Park and County Council have adopted the Ramblers Association policy that all 500 green lanes designated Unclassified County Roads are no longer regarded as fully vehicular despite a categoric statement ten years ago that they were. This puts trail riding in a hazardous legal position. With Alan Kind, I shall try to get the County Surveyor to reverse that decision. We now depend, therefore, on common law evidence!

It has to be said that the RA's 'blue book' bias against County Roads has scored a major victory by getting the largest county in England and Wales to adopt dubious RA policies. Meanwhile, the ACU Northern Centre are claiming Byway status for most Dales lanes backed up, I presume, by good use, which given the 84 year history of the ACU, is possible. LARA and BBT have also claimed Byways and, of course, the TRF is linked with both. This complicated and, to many trail riders impossible to understand, situation will rightly be discussed thoroughly during the TRF Seminar in Derby, April 11th/12th.

Meanwhile, keep riding the Dales lanes and gather use evidence! It's now vital for survival.

### COUNTY ROADS

Will county Rights of Way representatives (apart from those already carried out) please write to your County Highways Department and ask them if they consider that all Unclassified County Roads within the county have public vehicular rights. Send me a copy of the reply and keep the letter safely. This is very important and may prove vital later on if the RA succeed in getting more County Councils to withdraw the status upon which we tend to rely. Head the letter 'Highways Act 1980 Section 36. Unclassified County Roads'.

### WALES

Thanks to Jeremy Atkinson, I now have a copy of the County Road Map and a full list of new Byways in the Radnor part of Powys. I have therefore been able to bring up to date all my marked master maps and most of the 'own risk' status can now be regarded as fully vehicular. No wonder very few riders were challenged! Jeremy has done a first class job for the TRF and has taken up several obstruction problems.

He is willing to help in the Radnor area which is a giant leap forward. I am trying to encourage other TRF members in Mid Wales to take up rights of way work. Mrs Richards, Powys Rights of Way Officer, is asking for TRF Byway claims and I will seek to encourage this on my July visit. While hundreds of RUPPs were downgraded in 1981, about 30 Byways are shown, plus County Roads confirmed, so I am able to add some new lanes to maps already marked up if you want to send OS Maps Nos. 136, 147 and 148. TRF groups should return one map only for correction. Include SAE.

I have received complaints from trail riders that Monks Trod and the Claerwen Reservoir road near Strata Florida in Dyfed is still badly damaged in parts. The Claerwen track used to be passable on a road bike twenty years ago but not now due to enduro events — they should repair the damage they cause which inconveniences other users on foot, horse and trail riders. With the TRF unknown in Mid Wales for 17 years this is now coming to an end. A new Mid Wales Group has been agreed and they have asked me to come and meet members in July and advise them on Rights of Way matters. Unlike a few TRF groups which contain a hotch potch of paid up and non members, all group members must join the TRF after one introductory trail run or meeting. Officials have yet to be sorted out, but if you are interested contact Gwyn Jones on 0239 810255.

#### FIRST TRF RUN — Report by Ross Clarkson

My first TRF run was in June 1986, assembly point being Hogett Towers near Blackburn. The assembled riders included a lady on a TY250, Leslie — by all accounts a nutter on the road sections, and I found out later not too slow on some of the trail bits. The rest of the bikes being XR350, XT250, KLX250, XL200, XL125, MZ250, TS250, DT250; quite a good turn out by all accounts. I was on a DT125LC with no front fork oil, no damping in the rear sock, loose swinging arm bearings and Japanese trail tyres. Definitely *not* the best handling bike of the group.

The ride started with a ford crossing; everyone who had done the run previously being in dread of the crossing as the water level usually comes up to the tank, but after the recent dry spell it was only six inches deep! From this point my knowledge of the route is sketchy, in fact most of the experienced riders amongst the readership will have a better idea of where we went on the day than I. We passed north through small villages and down leafy lanes, missing anything resembling civilisation; through the Trough of Bowland, Dunsop Bridge and finishing at Settle. The route covered 103 miles, roughly 50:50 tarmac and trail. We travelled down many tracks that I have walked in my youth as a Scout or with the school, but it was more enjoyable to travel by motorised transport and to see so many different views in one day. We rode many long lanes, the longest being Salter Fell, which was most enjoyable. I got stuck in only one bog, but by all accounts the fact that it had been dry for a while had made the notoriously tough fell a lot easier.

Due to a few mechanical problems (by others) on the fell, I was able to stop and observe the very varied bird life up there; as a member of the RSPB I found this most enjoyable. As a part time bird watcher it made a change to actually stop and observe them instead of doing so whilst still riding, which is much more dangerous. The day ended near Settle when our MZ owner clipped a bank and twisted his ankle. After a tea stop and a little rest we set off back home escorting our lame member along the road in case he had difficulty riding home. After following him, leg trailing at 70 mph, overtaking on double white lines, changing gear BY HAND!

all at the same time, his ability to make it home was definitely in doubt.

Overall conclusions of the day's run — EXCELLENT — best day's motorcycling I'd had for many years, superbly organised, very knowledgeable and intelligent fellow members, challenging and enjoyable lanes, breathtaking views, varied wildlife, good beer at lunchtime. Definitely the start of a long love affair.

One final comment. I found the bike I was riding to be very enjoyable and taxing to ride. The fact that it didn't handle and didn't have any power to note, made it a challenge. What would have been very easy lanes to ride on my trials machine became more difficult with a non-competitive machine. I can appreciate it would have been a very easy ride on an XR350 but, in my mind, not so enjoyable. I intend on some future runs to take my outfit — now that *would* be a challenge. When I find a candidate to passenger the outfit, I'll let you know how we fared green laning.

27 Cranleigh Close, Bolton, Lancs. BL6 5PP

#### OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE TRF



Loddon Vale Group 'mudplugging'







*Helping at Horse Enduros and at the Weardale Marathon*



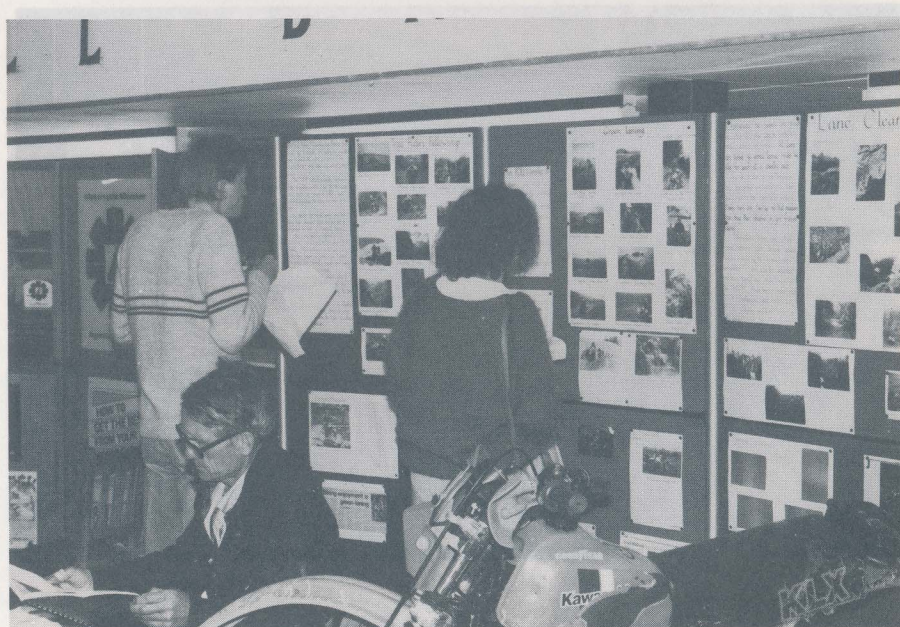
*On . . . and off the bikes!  
(Simon de Trey White and Ken Canham)*

*(on the Millenium Way, Isle of Man)*



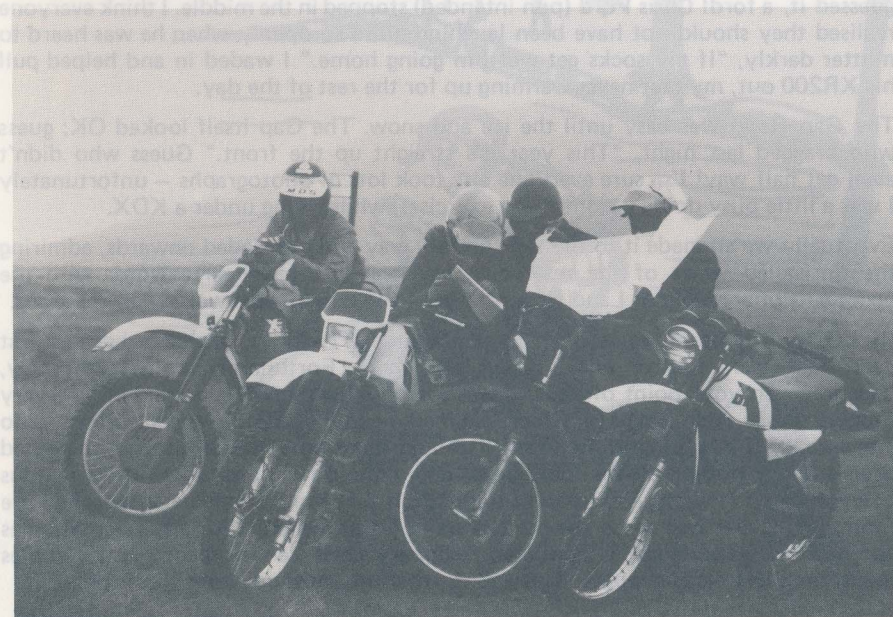


Publicising the TRF at Shows  
Olympia '86 and Bike '86, Newton Abbott



The Trans-America Team  
(sorry to hear Wendy's bike - left - was recently stolen)

Every which way but . . .  
(on the Millenium Way, Isle of Man)



## SOUTH LONDON GROUP RUN

Someone had the bright idea of making our annual Brecon run more difficult by going in February – well, I don't mind the cold!

Having booked six places, I had to fill them. It took a certain amount of arm bending to replace the 'armchair cop outs'. Eventually, I collected four riders and four bikes in the transit and trailer, having installed an extra seat. We met Allan and, wonder of wonders, Clive at Brecon.

Saturday started cold but sunny and we set off full of enthusiasm. The second trail was blocked by a fallen tree – the exertion warmed us up nicely although the sun helped too.

We left the first ford until after lunch, which was as well because I drowned my KDX in it! What a rotten experience it is, to stand there in the deepest part of a river feeling the freezing water seeping into your boots. Still, fortunately, I was not the only one. Ian dropped his TS185 right under! At this, Clive and Steve crossed by the bridge. After half an hour of revolving the engine with the bike inverted and drying out the ignition, we proceeded.

At the second ford there was no bridge. Aha! I thought, "After you, Clive and Steve." Unfortunately Steve found a shallower crossing than us and used the rocks to 'dab' on. Well, it is a TY125 – not good for deep water. Clive made it too, looking like the Loch Ness monster emerging from the water. Due to the delays and cold feet we did not complete the whole of Sarn Helen, turning back just before the river crossing, surprise, surprise!

Sunday was even colder and snow was forecast – whose idea was this? Everyone except me had to defrost their rear brakes and Ian also his throttle. My KDX found its way into the van for the night! One of the first lanes contained . . . yes, you guessed it, a ford! Chris Ford (pun intended) stopped in the middle. I think everyone realised they should not have been laughing quite so openly when he was heard to mutter darkly, "If my socks get wet I'm going home." I waded in and helped pull his XR200 out, my feet never warming up for the rest of the day.

The Gap Road was easy until the ice and snow. The Gap itself looked OK; guess who bragged last night, "This year it's straight up the front." Guess who didn't even get half way! I'm sure everyone else took lots of photographs – unfortunately I was a little busy doing weightlifting exercises, whilst lying under a KDX.

Eventually we all made it to the top the easy way and proceeded onwards, admiring the unrivalled views of the reservoirs, exchanging a few hearty words with the occupants of a couple of Land Rovers, almost the only people we saw on the trails.

By common consent we stopped for lunch at the Trekkers, probably because last year there were lots of horse riding girls there. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on your point of view, it was too cold for them. We carried on to a very slippery gully near Talgarth which claimed nearly everyone except Steve, who managed his TY125 irritatingly well. I should mention at this point that there had been a lot of ribbing by the 'old hands' about the difficult nature of the infamous Grwyne Fawr. It was therefore with trepidation that some members approached the foothills of what was to be the hardest trail of the weekend. For any rider who has not had this experience, it consists of slippery grass, rain deepened ruts, pebbles rocks, boulders, large slippery slaps and, further up, snow covering all of these.

Unwisely I stopped to give Allan a hand round the hairpins, Allan then rode on and left me to walk back up the hairpins; no wonder walkers are so grumpy! By the time I caught up, everyone was stuck on snow covered boulders. However, just to prove we all made it to the top we wrote "SLG TRF" in the snow. By the way, we all agreed that knobbly tyres do less damage, at least on the terrain we traversed. I have a photo showing that a trials tyre spinning does cut into the surface, whilst knobbles just leave a pattern. I'm comparing similar weight of bike ridden in the same careful way.

On the way back to Brecon I had a fiendish idea; there is a ford between Trefca and Fredustan which was blocked by trees last year (only I know the best route through). We just happened to go that way. Disappointingly the fallen trees were still in the river; however, close investigation showed that just a few yards downstream access was available. At this point a mutiny was brewing. Steve saved the day by leading the way. I suppose it was poetic justice that I was the only one to have a dab.

May I add that, after a hot bath, everyone agreed it had been a great weekend.

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

PS – A thank-you to Ian Grimshaw for the interesting and descriptive Alternative 1986 TT Diary.



## GROUP NEWS

### BRISTOL GROUP

At the recent AGM of Bristol Group it was decided that honorary membership of the group be awarded for 1987 to two TRF members who have had considerable influence on the group in the past. They are:

Bill Riley — West Wilts Group  
Dave Giles — East Midlands Group

Honorary membership entitles them to the dubious privilege of our quarterly magazine and the opportunity to participate in any of our runs.

The following committee was elected:

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Chairman:              | Richard Tallon               |
| Secretary:             | Martin Chandler              |
| Treasurer:             | Jonathan Harris              |
| RoW Co-ordinator:      | John Davey                   |
| PR Officer:            | Gwyn Thomas                  |
| Lane Clearing Officer: | John Hitchings               |
| Run Co-ordinators:     | Norman Winkworth/Derek Jones |
| Magazine Editor:       | Tony Webb                    |
| Group Representative:  | Ian Hingley                  |

*Ian Hingley, Bristol Group Rep*

### SHROPSHIRE GROUP

Good to see a few groups producing a newsletter/magazine for their own group. A change for local members to hear more 'grass roots' news about their own areas than is possible with the national magazine. The latest I've seen is from the Shropshire Group, written by Graham Williams. Very entertaining, too, with run reports and news on the Rights of Way front. However, they admit they're not sure what they are looking for when they go hunting through County Archives. I think this is a problem for many groups. The Rights of Way Seminars organised by Brian Thompson and Dave Giles should be a help to those lucky enough to attend. Perhaps for the benefit of those who are unable to attend, some feedback to the *Bulletin* could be arranged for would-be Rights of Way researchers?

*Rosie, TRF Editor*

A new club called 'The Teif Trail Riders' has now been formed from members of a local ACU affiliated club, the members of which are all experienced trail riders and are conversant with all the trails in Mid and West Wales. We would welcome any new members who are dedicated to quiet riding and keeping our trails open. Any visitor to the area can be accommodated and organised runs can be arranged, normally 100–150 miles in a day.

Contact Ken Gore, 2 Bryn Rhosyn, Gorrison, Swansea — Telephone (0792) 796474

### SOMERSET (formerly EXMOOR) GROUP

At our recent AGM it was decided to change our name from Exmoor to Somerset; a more, but still not totally, accurate description of the area we cover. Nothing else has changed — same group, new name.

In the last few months the Somerset Group have taken part in a very busy, interesting and above all enjoyable programme of events. A big thank you must go to the members who led runs. It is very pleasing to have members who know their own area particularly well. In recent months we have had runs in East Devon, West Dorset, Quantock Hills, West Somerset, Exmoor, South Avon and South Somerset. With a little bit of organisation it's possible not to ride the same lane twice in six months, therefore hopefully avoiding the 'boredom factor' — riding the same old few lanes month after month. In December we paid a visit to Hampshire and West Sussex and were shown around by members of the Southern Group. An excellent weekend — many thanks to Southern.

The Group is slowly clearing a very long and overgrown RUPP at Westonzoyland. At the moment we are clearing a section alongside a 'gipsy' camp. Our Secretary, Eric White, had his helmet and goggles stolen, eggs have been thrown by children and a curse put on us — a rather unpleasant group of people.

Recently we have helped marshall horse events in the Quantock Hills. Great PR exercises plus an opportunity to ride places we don't normally go. We seem to be appreciated — searching for missing riders and, at the beginning of each event, going around the course replacing markers that anti horse people remove. We are not alone, in the countryside, having enemies.

I am confident that the next few months will be as enjoyable as the last.

*Nicholas Crocker, Group Rep*

### DORSET GROUP

Dorset Group has now got 'off the ground' and our first (inaugural) meeting is to be at *The Drax Arms*, Bere Regis. This venue has been chosen on account of it being the most central available to the four corners of Dorset. The other major factors are the Landlords, Alec and Sandra Wyle, who are already familiar with motor bike clubs. To this end they have given us the use of the Stable Bar complete with a TV and video recorder free of charge to help us have a good start to the new group. Some of the committee are new names to most of you in the TRF, others are names that are known in other regions. One of the founder members is a former *T+MX News* correspondent.

So, we look forward to meeting you all at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday 26th April in the Stable Bar. Brian Thompson and his son are spending the weekend with me; his son then goes on to the Dorchester area for several weeks research of Dorset RoW. The following day, Sunday 26th, we are all going on the first official group run, with the two Thompsons as guests. It will be their first journey around this area; we hope not their last. Anyone wishing to join us on this run please phone me as we obviously have to calculate numbers and routes.

It may be that we split into two groups taking different routes if need be. Details of run starting place will be announced at *The Drax Arms* or, if you are not attending the evening meeting there, by phoning me on Shaftesbury (0747) 88615.

*Norman Howard, Dorset Group Leader*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING — 17th January 1987

King George V Memorial Hall, Hockley Heath, Solihull, West Midlands

### MINUTES

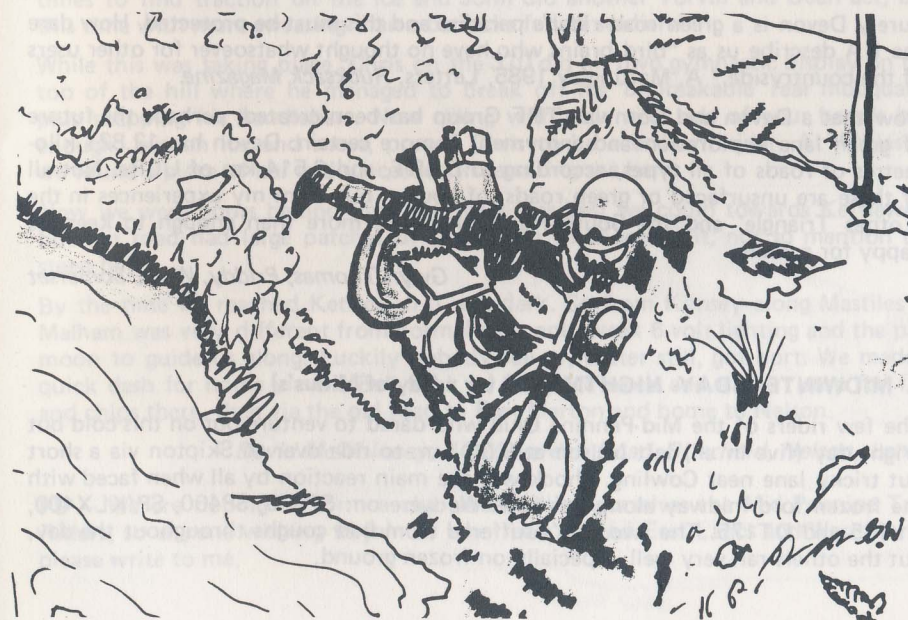
1. John Higgin gave his report as Secretary and noted that the Fellowship had been represented at three shows: Olympia, Trentham Gardens and Bristol, and this had led to a substantial increase in new members. Rides and Rights of Way work all over the country had been successfully continued.
2. Seymour Moss read the Runs Co-ordinator's report from Ken Canham; Ken did not feel that his post was viable as attendance at other group's rides was not very high, although attendance at National Rides such as the John Ebbrell Memorial Ride was good. After discussion it was recommended that all groups should organise rides for beginners and/or visitors at least once a year. Richard Marshall said that he felt it was very important that dates of rides be given to the *Bulletin* Editor for the Diary Page. Seymour Moss asked that Rosie Swindells note this and make it a priority item.
3. Rosie Swindells Editor's report was read out and she asked that items for the *Bulletin* be sent in before the last copy date. It was noted that the *Bulletin* had gone astray in the post (now found). Brian Wright asked if the *Bulletin* could be sent out monthly; it was asked whether the Editor and finance could stand the additional work. The consensus was that the current frequency was sufficient but additional issues or local issues would be welcome if possible.
4. Tony Rose reported on membership: we had 1614 members at the end of 1986 which was an increase from 1314 on 1st October. There had been 110 new members traceable to the Olympia Show, 10 to Trentham Gardens and 17 to Bristol.
5. Tim Ley reported on the Financial state and said that we were down on last year due to lack of renewals and the lost *Bulletin*.
6. Steve Harris gave his first report as Press Officer and said that he had been overwhelmed with work in response to articles in the press. He had taken over the column in *Motorcycle News* on the strict understanding that this was for news, not recruiting. He asked for permission to purchase a reliable Press Directory, and this was agreed. He offered for discussion that raising the subscription could allow more money for a more professional approach and asked for guidance on how to deal with enquiries from the four wheel drive users. It was agreed that much surface damage could be caused by these vehicles and that they should be treated with caution.
7. It was agreed that the Cambridge Group organise the stand at the BMF Rally at Peterborough.  
Dave Giles reported on the Rights of Way Conference; he said that to date 23 places out of 30 had been taken up. He had applied to the Sports Council for grant aid and generally it was going smoothly apart from the incorrect report in *Motorcycle News* — TRF A Team.
8. Brian Thompson gave his Rights of Way report and said that he had persuaded the Police to drop charges against riders on Chapel Gate in Derbyshire. LARA had also got charges dropped against riders in Brecon. Brian understands that North Yorkshire want to downgrade and wipe out all vehicular rights of way

in the Park and that we must be prepared to give and show evidence of vehicular rights over these, classified incorrectly as Bridleways. He said that since the demise of the metropolitan authorities for South Yorkshire, 50 Byways have been stopped, six lanes ploughed, all with no apparent action from the local councils.

Stephen Thompson is to visit Dorset in April to research RoW and Brian is to address a new North Dorset Group.

The Professional Association of RoW Officers have met opposition from the Surveyors organisation who consider this as duplication. The TRF have been asked to monitor ploughing of public RoW and Brian asked that he be sent a copy of any letters to the County Council regarding ploughing which comes under Section 134, Highways Act 1980.

9. Brian Thompson presented a Motion that Bill Riley, Mike Rowley and Seymour Moss be put forward for Honorary membership. Bill Riley had previously declined, Mike Rowley was not known and Seymour Moss said that he would go along with the Motion if the others were willing. It was carried 11/5 to put the Motion to the AGM.
10. Don Lewis outlined his experience in the Popham/Dummer Bridleway Case at Basingstoke Magistrates Court, which had recently been lost.
11. Alan Kind outlined his work for LARA and said that he could help on cases referred to him. LARA was producing a computerised evidence form and recording programme. The Sports Council are interested in putting money into motorised sport and he thought that the TRF was the ultimate grass roots organisation. They are to have a local Seminar to discuss matters, and are having an Open Forum at Harrogate on 22nd/23rd/24th March.
12. Seymour Moss asked that Mike Rowley and/or Richard Marshall produce a statement that would correct the incorrect parts of the 'Blue Book'.



## THE TOTNES TRIANGLE

"Oh, I don't think so. There are so many." Thus spoke Alec Morley, teacher of mathematics, 55 years of age, resident of Newton Abbot, South Devon, father of two horse-riding daughters, member of the 'Kickstart Club' for machines of pre-1960 vintage, and now recent member of the TRF and BBT.

Alec was making his comment when I enquired whether he would ride the old carriageway/green lane at a rural crossroads currently shown as Bridleway on the OS Map Sheet 202, Torbay and South Dartmoor. Such is the paradise of green lanes that abound in this most magnanimous of triangles – Totnes, Newton Abbot and Torbay.

This hinterland, to the south of the Teign estuary, where you can ride all day, as if in a bygone age, is little more than 15 kilometres across. It is bounded by those most beautiful rivers – the Dart and Teign.

My impressions, so vivid, on that warm October day were of being transported back in time to the more leisurely era of horse and cart, taking produce from the local mill to nearby seaports. One particularly memorable carriageway bordered the River Dart, passing Fleet Mill on its way to Stoke Gabriel. This lovely lane, stoney and watery in some parts, muddy in others, went for over two kilometres. Alec and I met neither walker, horse rider nor trail rider on this lane. We were at peace in our 19th century environment; travellers in a time-warp. Apart from using machines of the 20th century we were experiencing what roads must have been like 150 years ago. The red soil of Devon, the sunken lanes and minor roads, the isolated farmhouses and settlements, the micro-landscape – so seemingly remote yet but a stone's throw from urban development.

All routes were unclassified county roads. One had a dead sheep plus a Private Road sign! Some were so overgrown that they were impassable. Fallen trees blocked some, as Alec found to his cost and the cost of one broken headlight and speedometer.

Surely Devon is a green road rider's paradise and this must be protected. How dare the RA describe us as "bird brains who have no thought whatsoever for other users of the countryside." A. Mattingley 1985, Letters, *Rucksack Magazine*.

Now that a Devon and Cornwall TRF Group has been created, perhaps the future of green lane exploration and enjoyment is more certain. Devon has 12,821 kilometres of roads of all types, according to DART, and 6,514 km of UCRs. Not all of these are unsurfaced or green roads, of course, but from my experiences in the 'Totnes Triangle' and the South Hams, there are more than enough to keep us happy for a while.

*Gwyn Thomas, Priddy, Wells, Somerset*

## A MIDWINTERSDAY NIGHTMARE (or a Day of Minus's)

The few riders of the Mid-Pennine Club who dared to venture out on this cold but bright day (five in all) left Nelson at 9.00 a.m. to ride over to Skipton via a short but tricky lane near Cowling. Shock was the main reaction by all when faced with the frozen ford midway along this lane. We were on: SP370, SP400, SP/KLX400, XL185 and DT175. The two 400's suffered from bad coughs throughout the day, but the others ran very well, especially on frozen ground.

From Skipton over the rutted track to Draughton causing only two minor spills, was a good testing ground for riding ability. Then it was by road to Long Ridge and over to Blubberhouses. Everyone managed the bobby hill except the SP/KLX 400 whose rider found an ideal way to keep warm . . . dragging his bike through two feet of mud.

Onwards now, keeping good time to West End where I had a road accident caused by an oncoming XT rider cutting a corner. We succeeded in straightening my front end enough for me to continue, minus finger ends in one glove. I feel I should point out that this particular day never went about 0°C all day.

The frozen mud on Rock Stones made the going easier than normal although ice on the eyes caused a few people to make errors, namely Andrew on the SP/KLX 400 who claims he never even saw the four foot drop he went over.

I suppose the track from Middlesmoor to Arkleside proved the most entertaining, as well as hazardous. Not more than 300 yards out of Middlesmoor the fun began. Anyone who knows this track will know the drains which run across it. This day they were frozen, as was the area above each for about 60 feet. All except John (SP400) succeeded in navigating their bikes over this ice. We four stopped to wait and watch the spectacle of John doing an ice dance routine with his SP. The SP got four 10/10s . . . John only 5s. After 20 minutes we decided to rescue him.

The fun over, we attempted the descent to Scar House Reservoir. It was sheet ice for the first 180 feet then patches for the remainder. The only route down was on the narrow 2 foot grass edge above a very, very steep drop. Many curses were offered to the gods and to me for suggesting this run. With some relief we reached the bottom. The track along the far side of the reservoir proved a pleasant rest. The track up and out was to prove the worst of the day. The SP370 and DT175 were first up and managed it without problems; I followed on the 185, eventually finding grip. The problems were once again with the two 400s. Both failed several times to find traction on the ice and John did another Torvill and Dean act, but this time with more swearing than a barracks full of soldiers!

While this was taking place, Chris on the 370 did his own gymnastic display on the top of the hill where he managed to break off his 'unbreakable' rear mudguard, plus snapping his handlebars. Now riding with only one side of your bars is bad enough, but on ice and snow, proved Chris to be a brilliant rider. At Arkleside we found a piece of bar and succeeded in repairing the bars.

Now we were hours behind time and rushed as best we could towards Kettlewell, but the road had large patches of three inch thick ice on it, not to mention the steep hills.

By the time we reached Kettlewell it was dark. So from Kilnsey along Mastiles to Malham was very different from normal with only weak 6 volt lighting and the pale moon to guide us along. Luckily nobody fell or, better still, got hurt. We made a quick dash for home via the Bell Busk to Gargrave track and a short stop for fish and chips there, then via the old road to East Marton and home to Nelson.

*David McWhinney, 44 Walverden Road, Brierfield, Nelson, Lancs.*

**PS** – We are hoping to form a club soon calling ourselves the Mid Pennine Trail Riders, so anyone wishing to join us who lives around East Lancs and West Yorks, please write to me.

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

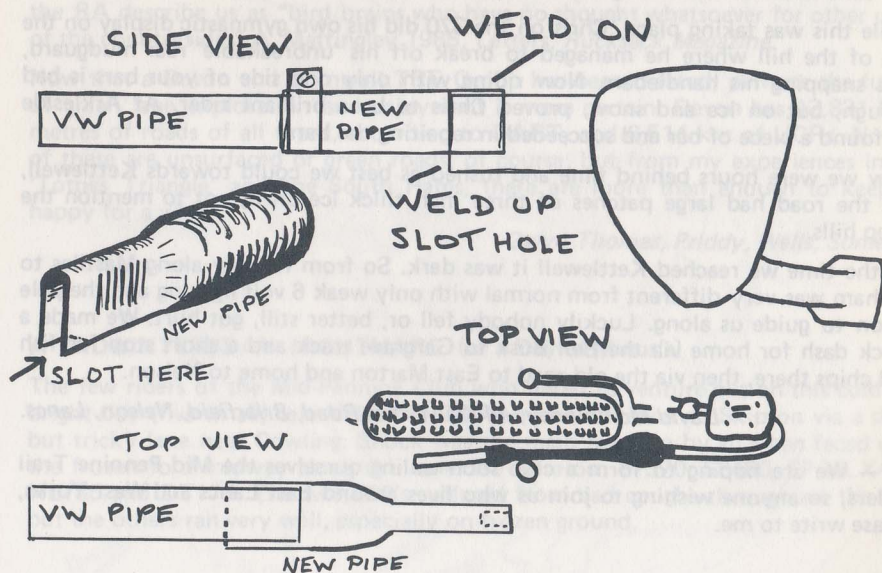
Has the tailpipe section of your Honda XL185 exhaust rotted away? Can you afford a new Honda system? Are you reluctant to pay for a cheaper, probably inferior system? If so, read on . . .

A modification can be done utilising an 11" long VW Beetle chrome tailpipe, plus even if the heart shaped pre chamber is rotting, this can be welded up giving more life out of your system.

Cut off the old tailpipe at the flattened part of the system behind the top shock mounting about 3¼" from the pre chamber. You now need a length of exhaust pipe. I got mine from the local Free-Fit type of place; there's usually some waste they will let you take away. It needs to be at least 7" long and its inside diameter must be the same as the outside diameter of the VW tailpipe, so the tailpipe fits snugly inside. About 3½" of the pipe now needs to be flattened. I squeezed mine in a vice, a thin wall tubing is easier to squash, of course, but most tubing nowadays is thin anyhow.

The difficult part is marrying up the new pipe to the old. The new flattened pipe should slide snugly over the old flat cut off part of the old system. A slot needs to be cut at the bottom of the pipe to allow it to slide on 1". Once you are satisfied with the angle to clear mudguard, frame and tyre, weld into position. Slots must be cut in the end of the pipe to allow for compressing clamp to secure the tailpipe. Tailpipe should go in about 1½". For extra rigidity, a bracket can be made to fit to the frame. I also put a self tapping screw underneath through the new pipe and tailpipe. Care must be taken to allow for tyre clearance under full compression.

The result is a quieter and slightly more powerful system and neat to look at too.



Another useful modification eliminates that costly seal that joins the front pipe to the silencer. Cut off that part of the pipe that houses the gasket/seal and weld on a piece of pipe at the correct angle to fit the front pipe, the inside diameter being exactly that of the outside diameter of the front pipe, cut slots for new clamp.

XL125R owners might be interested to know that, having fitted one to my son's bike, the Fresco system made for that model gives a useful power increase.

Another modification members might be interested in is to the gear selection on the XL185SA as it sometimes has a habit of jumping out of first or second into neutral. Two parts from the later S.B. model can be fitted and this cures the problem. A fair bit of dismantling has to be done but the crankcases do not have to split. The two S.B. parts are: CAM 24411-446-650 and PLATE 24621-446-650. Total cost about £11.00.

*Pete Wildsmith, Southern Group*

## LATE DATES

April 12th Trail Run (venue to be decided). Contact Ian on Richards Castle 413. Run Fee £1 to be paid on the day.

April 26th We are holding a FUN DAY TRIAL, location 'Brickyard' Nr. Eaton Constantine, Shropshire. Map Ref: OS Sheet 126 - 592068. Trial starting time 10.00 a.m. sharp. £1 entry fee. Contact Phill Davies on Cressage 421 for further details.

May 17th Trail Run in Wales (venue to be decided). Contact Phill on Telford 619082. Run Fee £1 to be paid on the day.

June 14th Trail Run (venue to be decided). Contact Lynton on Shrewsbury 58423. Run Fee £1 to be paid on the day.

July 12th Trail Run (venue to be decided). Contact Dave on Ellesmere 2772. Run Fee £1 to be paid on the day.

We hope to have a stand at the Blackpool M/C Show if the Lancashire Group can get sufficient volunteers. Details are 10th/11th/12th April 1987, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

Meeting at Welsh 2-Day Enduro, informal. Thursday evening 18th June. The Llanerch, Llandrindod Wells, so the many TRF members who visit the Welsh can get to know the names of all those faces they see both around the course and in this *Bulletin*.

## MY PRIDE AND JOY – XR250 HONDA

I was interested in the trail test of the Honda XR250 by Steve Neville in the December/January TRF *Bulletin*.

I bought a new XR250RE in September 1984 and also found that starting could be a bit tricky. Adopting the recommended procedure of no choke when hot, full choke when cold and absolutely no throttle in either case, hot starting was no problem but starting from cold, especially after the bike had been out of use for a few days, was a pain in the proverbial. Careful adjustment of valve and decompressor clearances and idling screw gave no improvement. Honda Equipe of Ludlow told me that my experience was not unusual.

When I used to ride a BSA B34 500 in trials (heavens, am I that old?) the standard starting drill was to ease the engine just over TDC using the exhaust lifter and then give it some welly. Perhaps the British technique might help with the XR. No automatic decompressor in those days. We all know that leaking valves equals poor compression and this results in poor starting. Is this not exactly what the automatic decompressor does – lift the exhaust valve and thereby degrade the compression pressure? It was a simple job to remove the automatic decompressor cable and now, surprise, surprise, no more cold starting problems. Full choke, no throttle, ease the piston over TDC with the manual decompressor lifted, release manual decompressor, a smart kick or two and the engine bursts into life. No choke when hot, of course, otherwise the technique is the same. Or if you feel lazy, leave the manual compressor alone, ease the kickstarter until you feel compression and then boot it over TDC. Removing the automatic decompressor also gave more reliable starting on my previous bike, a Honda XR200A.

My motorcycle usage is a mixture of road riding and the easier trails – i.e. I try to avoid the axle-deep bogs and two-foot rock steps. The XR250 is a much more pleasant road bike than either the XR200A or its predecessor, a DT175MX Yamaha. The Yamaha was a delight on the trails, rather easier to manage than the slightly more top-heavy XR200A and much easier than the XR250 if you need to do any footing or manhandling. Despite being fairly tall, I find the XR250 seat a bit on the high side. On the other hand, for road use the DT175 and XR200A were buzzing their hearts out at 60 mph, were very prone to side winds and caused one to feel a bit jaded after a 100 mile trip. The XR250 is sheer comfort roadwise and has useful performance. Suspension on road and trail is excellent.

I fitted a stop light to the XR200A and found that the stop lamp bulb blew unless the headlight was on. I overcame this by fitting a DT175MX voltage regulator – £12 s/h as the new price is over £30. A Lucas 6 volt zener diode would do the same job. The XR250 has neither stop light or dip beam facility, although the headlamp is fitted with a twin-filament bulb. Modifications were to fit a DT175MX lighting switch to the handlebar, DT175MX voltage regulator, XL185 brake light switch and stop lamp tail light assembly.

Reliability? No problems so far, but as I have not yet clocked up many miles, I am keeping my fingers crossed. Which reminds me – my biggest moan about the XR250 is that stupid speedo/trip recorder which only reads up to 99km and then repeats. How the hell do I know when an oil change is due? The XR200A had a very sensible speedo with a large knob to reset the trip and the traditional recorder up to 99,999. My crude solution is to stick Dymo numbers on the speedo (e.g. 0, 1, 2, etc) and peel off the lowest one each time the trip passes the 99km point. The cumulative mileage is then the lowest number x 100 plus the trip reading. Must buy a decent speedo sometime.

Would I buy another XR250? Well, probably, unless Honda brought back the XR200 pro-link when its lighter weight might tempt me despite the loss in road performance compared with the XR250. Why do I ride an enduro bike rather than a trail bike? Very simple. The XR250 is 1Kg lighter than the XL125R and 19Kg lighter than the XL250R – that is in commonsense units a weight saving of 42 lbs.

*Geoffrey Noble, Spindlewood, Llanedi, Pontardulais, Swansea*

## TOY RUN REPORT – Yorkshire Dales, Christmas 1986

Northumbria TRF's annual Toy Run moved from its usual location of Weardale this year and started from Bainbridge in the Dales. This was a cunning wheeze because the generous Geordies had seen smoke signals from the tiny hamlet of Teesside and were thus aware that a contingent from the strange tribe of quasi-Tykes who live around Scotch Corner would be riding in the same place. These lads all had their Yorkshire riding suits on – especially made by Barbour with pockets so deep that hands could not reach the bottom – but they were pursued across Bainbridge village green, herded into the bus shelter and had a generous donation extracted. The expression on some faces was heart rending. Worse than an Oxfam poster.

The day's entertainment started with young Gordon (who will remain nameless to protect the innocent) cocking a leg athwart his XL125, feeding in the clutch, then promptly crashing over in a very unpleasant heap, breaking his brake lever. When we all stopped laughing, several small groups headed off in different directions on what was, lightwise, one of the shortest Sundays of the year. My group headed south and east towards Coverdale and Deadmans, via Stake Allotments, where Dennis Wardle had a puncture on the back of his XR250, giving the brothers Canham a chance to demonstrate their incredible bladder-flashing technique. 3½ hours later I decided that, since it was Christmas, I would tell them they were trying to inflate the security bolt. After extracting the pump from my Ellgrens (no sense of humour, that Norman) we headed for lunch at Horsehouse. The Thwaite Arms has recently changed hands and the new proprietors, Tony and Doreen Longstaff, have sensibly kept to a wipe-clean floor in the bar. They are amazed that so many loonies venture out in weather that would frighten a Finn, and Tony already tells a nice story about two farmers who rode a farm ATC from Middlesmoor, right over Deadmans Hill, in the middle of a wet, cold evening, just for a beer! Must get them to sign some user evidence forms. After a loop over Deadmans and Woogill, the 2-strokers demanded a spin down to Kettlewell for juice. By this time the rain was absolutely horizontal and the light was going. Disaster! for the first time in living memory the Wilk's garage was shut. Panic reared its ugly head and the vote was that we strangle the bloke with most petrol and share it between us. However, the good discipline of the TRF code of conduct asserted itself and it was every man for himself on the very long, very cold and very wet run back to the cars at Bainbridge. Surprisingly, everyone made it back, only to find two garages open within a quarter of a mile of Bainbridge! Just goes to show that no matter how daft you think you are, there is always someone dafter.

I was heading home through Wensleydale in the pitch black when I met Rob McConnell and two chums from the West Yorkshire Group, mapless, somewhere near Castle Bolton, with a long run ahead of them to their cars at Masham. Hope you got home, chaps. If you were real men you would have gone via Redmire Fords in the noble cause of research for the Review! Next year's Toy Run will be held in the back bar of my local hostelry, with a roaring fire, a video of the Paris Dakar Rally, and a large bucket of water to tip over anyone daft enough to suggest going trail riding outside of August.



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### FOR SALE

**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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**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).

**HONDA XL125S.** 1981 New Sebac Shocks, new exhaust. New C.B.S. Big chain conversion. Red epoxy coated frame, good trail tyres, meticulously maintained and in trail trim. Excellent condition £425. Tel: Dean (0594) 23055.

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#### SOUTH EAST

Steve Neville, 19 Henley Deane  
(Roman Way) Gravesend, Kent  
DA12 5TX. Tel: 0474 332785

## 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 Tuesday — The Victoria Hotel  
248 Neepsend Lane, Sheffield

2nd Friday each month — Rising Sun  
Woodland, Nr. Ashburton, Just off A38  
(Grid ref. 789698)

Telephone for details

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.

2nd Tuesday  
The White Swan, Crayford

#### LODDON VALE

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

#### NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

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

#### NORTH MIDLANDS

Ray Morse  
4 Sidmouth Avenue  
Baswich, Stafford

#### NORTHUMBERLAND

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

#### NORTH WALES

John Mills, 7 Brookfield Drive  
Holmes Chapel, Cheshire  
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#### NORTH WEST LONDON

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

#### NORTH YORKSHIRE

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

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Paul Kingston, 52 St Michael's Close  
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1st Tuesday — The Jester  
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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  
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2nd and last Wednesday of month  
(except December)  
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2nd Tuesday —  
The White Swan, Crayford

1st Thursday —  
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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