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1st Wednesday. The Fox & Grapes,
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1st Wednesday. Red Lion Hotel,
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2nd and last Wednesday of month
(except December). Bell Inn,
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Last Thursday 8.00 p.m.
Ruishton Inn, Ruishton, Taunton.

2nd Tuesday. Pied Bull, Farningham,
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1st Wednesday. Epsom & Ewell
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3rd Wednesday. Priory Inn,
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Contact John (every other month)
4th Wednesday ie. Feb, April, etc)
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3rd Monday. District Arms,
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Last Tuesday. Lansdown Club, Milton
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1st & 3rd Thursdays. The Hollybush,
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1st & 3rd Monday, Frizinghall
Conservative Club, Off Manningham
Lane, Bradford

Phone Bill Riley

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TRE TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP



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

TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

Bulletin 131 — April 1989

FUTURE EVENTS

APRIL

Details of the 1989 Photo Competition available from John Higgin.

1st Teesside Group Run. Meet 9.30 a.m. Guisborough Town Centre.

MAY

1st Teesside Group Run. Meet Wolsingham Town Square. Contact Group Rep. for meeting time.

20th Executive Committee Meeting 1.00 p.m. (venue to be advised by the Secretary) Any member may attend and speak at these meetings, but only the Group Rep or proxy may vote.

21st BMF Rally, Peterborough Showground. The TRF has a stand and the theme this year is 'outfits'. Any help or outfits to exhibit welcome. Please contact Dave Knight, West Anglia Group Rep — address at back of Bulletin.

AUGUST

1st Motions for the TRF AGM (October) to be with the Secretary, John Higgin

SEPTEMBER

23rd/24th Northumbria Weekend. Ride over the Roman Drovers and Rievers Roads across the Cheviots into Scotland. Ride the old Lead Roads of Hexhamshire. Well worth a trip up the M1. All tracks untouched by 4WD. For more details send SAE to Dave Vaughan, 15 Seaburn Gardens, Sunderland, SR6 8BT

Please contact your Group Rep for details of any trail rides in your own area. Addresses at back of Bulletin.

Cover Photo — Kawasaki KMX125 in Hampshire courtesy Rosie Marston

NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Chairman

David J Giles, 22 Ford Lane, Allestree, Derby, DE3 2EW

Secretary

John Higgin, 197 Britten Road, Brighton Hill, Basingstoke, Hampshire.
Tel: 0256 841350

Treasurer

Tim Ley, 17 Heigham Close, Shelton Lock, Derby, DE2 9QF

Membership Secretary

Tony Rose, 29 Anderson Drive, Kettering, Northants, NN15 5DG Tel: 0536 522274

Rights of Way Officer

Brian Thompson, 39 Warren Road, Thorne, Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
Tel: 0405 814388

Editor

Rosie Marston, 4 Surrey Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO2 9ED

EDITOR'S FAREWELL RAMBLINGS

I hope by the time you read these 'Ramblings' the future of the Bulletin will be secure with a new Editor. It came as much as a surprise to me as it did to the Executive Committee that I find I must stand down from the post of TRF Editor, but your 'umble Ed. has moved into the professional league of bike magazines. This regrettable means that I cannot continue to produce the Bulletin as I will be away from home most of the time scribbling away in a dark little office in deepest Northamptonshire for 'What Bike', amongst others.

I must say have really enjoyed my years as TRF Editor. I took the reins (and the inherited high blood pressure and nervous breakdown) from John Higgin back at the October 1983 AGM in Knottingley. I had only discovered two days previously that the TRF were looking for a new Editor, and always being one for an editorial challenge foolishly stood for election. After all, as a member of then two years standing, what did I know about trail riding. But thankfully, with such a wealth of experience within the membership, I have always had plenty of experts to call upon and would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone who has contributed to the Bulletin in whatever form over the past years - I couldn't have done it without you. Thank you!

By the way, did anyone see the Suzuki GS1000 engined trail bike at the Road Racing show? The builder reckons the factory trail bruisers are for namby pambys. And NO it's not just a show piece and is used off tarmac.

TURTLE WAX/TRF CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

The Competition draw was held on 10th February; all the entries were put in a box ... immediately joined by the cat! and my husband Pete drew the winners.

SPORTS BAGS

Charles Fleming, Berkshire
Donald Graham, Cumbria

M A Logan, Lincolnshire

'T' SHIRTS

John Milner, Derbyshire
Alan Meldrum, Kent

P E Simmonds, Lancashire

BOTTLES OF CLEAN MACHINE

R G Godsiff, Essex
P Hingley, Cheshire
A Gowland, Northumberland
Colin Smith, Gloucestershire
K N Parker, Cleveland
Ian Thompson, Cornwall
Davoid Oickle, Dorset
G Stratford, Surrey
B Cockman, Berkshire
Mark Valentine, Worcestershire
J C Smith, West Yorkshire
R Thompson, Berkshire

Gary Beckett, West Midlands
Henry Jackson, Cumbria
Chris Pyrah, West Yorkshire
Stephen Johnson, Cleveland
J McClark, Gwynedd
G Franks, Derbyshire
Adam Fox, Wigtownshire, Scotland
Don Lewis, Hampshire
G A Keys, Surrey
Keith Bloxham, Surrey
M Jenkinson, South Yorkshire
L Haysom, Kent

LETTERS

In response to Brian Thompson's review of my book, in general I think his comments are fair and favourable. The good points seem to outweigh the bad points. I would like to clarify a couple of things before they are raised again in the TRF Bulletin:

1. Lost lanes. He criticises me for using lanes which he says are now lost to us. I think this criticism was in part to publicise the loss of lanes rather than as a direct criticism, but perhaps that is just me trying to read between the lines. I sought LOCAL EXPERT TRF advice on ALL the English lanes of which he complains. If these folk are unreliable, heaven help us all. In Wales, I describe lanes ridden before the first Rhayader enquiries, when all the lanes I used were open to all. Books are not written in a day, as you well know. This one took over ten years to put together. I assure you I have only used lanes which I personally believed to be public vehicular rights.

I recall the heated debate in Priddy Parish Council's Emergency Meeting called to prevent Gwyn Thomas opening up a short green lane on the outskirts of the village. I tried to convince the Councillors that clearing a lane of undergrowth did not automatically mean that the lane would be flooded by youths on scramblers. They would not believe me, but I have been proved right with time. Only the local TRF group use the lane by motorcycle, while the whole village has gained a pleasant place to walk.

The same argument applies to my book. It will not produce a flood of vehicles along the lanes described. What it will do is provide a clear picture of what trail riders do - a picture which has been inaccessible to the general public until now.

If novice riders use my book as their guide to green lanes I shall be very surprised and it will not be my fault. It is not easy to extract a route from the information I give. The novice must first buy an Ordnance Survey map, and once he does that map will tell him far more about where the lanes are than my bit of scribbling. Once he has bought a map he is halfway to being educated. The second half of his basic education comes from joining an organised group. I made this point very clear in the book.

2. If people cannot find the TRF, it is not my fault. I wanted to put a list of addresses in the book, but could not include the TRF and therefore left the list out. The same week as Brian's review appeared, I received a phone call from someone who had just bought a motorcycle book that day, giving MY name as TRF Membership Secretary! Whose address should I put in the book? Obvious candidates would have been Seymour Moss or John Higgin! Until the TRF has a permanent office like the BBT it is very difficult to advertise in a long term publication like a hardback book.

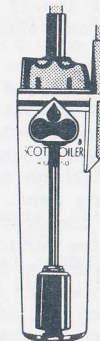
The MCA have a 'Bikeline' which was originally advertised in their little piece in the front of my book. This made no mention of the TRF. Whose fault was that? Because the TRF was not mentioned I asked for the phone number to be removed.

The TRF needs:

- a. a permanent address
- b. better contacts with MCA
- c. better advertising of its own.

Despite Brian's review, the book is selling well. One thousand copies gone in the first fortnight. This is, I am told, exceptionally good. If anyone wants a first edition they had better hurry, only 3000 were printed.

Ian Thompson, Newquay, Cornwall



Fraser M.Scott.

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I read Bulletin 129 with interest, particularly the letter from Gareth Richards. I find I agree with him almost totally. About the only point on which I disagree is that the TRF has already effectively disassociated itself from 4 wheel drive users and is already accused of hypocrisy. If no one else has done so publicly enough then I do so now.

Unfortunately there seems to be a very long way to go before ALL users, be they walkers, horse riders or the various vehicular users, recognise that, as with most things, use involves an element of wear and tear. You wouldn't expect your motorcycle to go on forever without any maintenance and you only have to look at the erosion caused by walkers in the Lake District to see that although nature is capable of maintenance of its own it sometimes needs a helping hand. The answer is not to adopt the 'holier than thou' attitude that is all too prevalent amongst all user groups, including the TRF, but to take positive action to ensure adequate physical maintenance of rights of way. This requires a degree of selflessness which will be hard to achieve given the selfish interests which prevail at present. Undoubtedly voluntary groups may be able to assist. I suggested an official approach to the BTCV at the LARA seminar in April 1988 but have heard nothing constructive since.

Because Gareth Richards appears to be a lone voice in the wilderness and, if he means what he says, will now leave the TRF himself, also because it is the only practice way I can register my dissatisfaction with the TRF, I am not renewing my membership.

I sincerely hope, however, that the TRF will sort itself out before it is too late. It could do a lot worse than take notice of Gareth Richards.

G Browning, Allesley, Coventry

I concur with the last sentence of Gareth Richard's letter that we, the TRF, need to adapt to changing circumstances in order to survive and develop as an organisation. I do not agree with the primary aim of his letter: namely a character assassination of Brian Thompson

I have myself previously made objections to the rash comments that Brian has made at time. But Gareth Richards would do better to look at what Brian has achieved during the last ten years and more, not merely at his failures. Where was he when Brian took over RoW matters from Norman Smith?

The motion at the AGM to appoint BT 'in principle' as full-time RoW Officer was put on one side as even if the TRF are in a position to appoint a full-time officer, Brian Thompson is not in a position to take up that office. Therefore Gareth Richard's first two points are plainly out of order.

Brian Thompson himself made no secret of the fact 3 or 4 years ago that he was overworked. In consequence he gave up attendance at committee meetings of various bodies concerned with RoW matters. One or two people, including, I believe, Richard Marshall, took up where he left off, but in spite of his appeals the TRF remains unrepresented on RoW committees where it ought to be represented.

The secondary aim of Gareth Richard's letter is much more positive. I am sure Brian would welcome having his workload reduced, but who would produce the RoW newsheet?

I think it would be better for all press articles to be channelled via the Press Officer. He can then more easily keep up to date with current opinions, controversies, etc as well as being a single point of contact for the press.

In order to support a regional RoW structure, the TRF will need to develop considerably its present administrative structure. A present there is insufficient communication between local groups and between groups and the executive.

Liaison with and education of 4 wheel drive clubs is important in view of their influence, although our primary aim must be to secure our own interests.

Regarding the opening paragraphs of Gareth's letter, the motions at the AGM which were bypassed or dropped through lack of time were all put forward by one person, Tim Stevens, who kept interrupting the current business being discussed trying to make points of order and to foist on the meeting his own opinions expressed in the motions he had put forward. He made a personal crusade of these motions until he was finally ruled out of order. The AGM was efficiently conducted by the Chairman and for the first time for several years finished on time.

However, one meeting per year is clearly not enough to discuss the issues facing the TRF. I think that at least two and possibly three meetings are needed, where members and executive can debate the current issues. In 12 months the RoW and trail riding scene can change radically.

John Blackburn, Kidlington, Oxford

PS - The picture on page 27, Bulletin 129 of the gent riding a motor assisted bicycle shows that it is a Berini - 32cc disc valve two-stroke (similar engine to a Cyclomaster) with the cylinder mounted upside down. The oval-shaped piece is a fuel tank. Drive is by roller onto the front tyre. Speed, about 25mph, fuel economy 160 - 180mpg.



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AN EXHAUSTIVE PHENOMENON!!

I hate noisy exhausts. Someone who rides a green lane on a motorcycle with an inefficient exhaust system is a yob - both social and environmental.

So imagine my disappointment after spending £43 on a genuine Honda replacement silencer for my CL250S the exhaust note appeared to be louder than the previous rusty item. I wrote to Honda and complained. They quoted numbers, saying that if they corresponded with numbers stamped on my new silencer it proved that the item was a genuine Honda part and therefore should be OK. They finished the letter with the statement; 'If you do have any problems, visit your nearest Honda dealer who will be able to help you.' I did!

After listening to both me and my machine (at this point I was probably the louder) Mr Branson of Paul Branson Motorcycles, Yeovil, suggested that the number plate was positioned in such a way that it was influencing the exhaust noise. By replacing the plate with a narrower but longer item the exhaust note and volume completely changed, from a bark to an inoffensive muffled sound. Magic! Who would have believed it, bearing in mind that it was the original number plate, never moved and the new exhaust seemed to be mounted in the same position as the previous one.

It makes me wonder if anyone else has a louder exhaust than necessary simply because of an incorrectly mounted number plate. Do check. Safe (quiet) riding.

Nicholas Crocker, Yeovil, Somerset

CONTINUING OUR SERIES OF TRAIL RIDING ABROAD ANYONE FANCY THIS?

Trail Riding In Japan by Ted Davey

(who describes himself as 'Incompetent Novice Supreme')

I have been fortunate enough to have spent the last five years posted in Japan as Marketing Manager for the Far East for a well known engine company and returned to the UK last summer. Basically I'm an oily handed engineer who, like the rest of you, enjoys motorbikes to get away from the routine of work and the controls of normal life.

So, in Japan where those controls and restrictions of ordinary working life are HEAVY it's even more important to have some escape mechanism. For the 'Geijin' (a foreigner) more so than the locals since they are reasonably used to accepting their way of life and restrictions.

Golf? - costs a fortune; sailing - likewise; tennis, squash, judo and these types of sport? Plenty available but they're pricey and the Japanese do all their sports en-mass so you find you really don't get much individual time having a go.

Biking? That's quite a different matter! Bikes up to 750cc are relatively cheap above that they get more costly than here, but the reasoning behind that is another story that I'll explain in another issue. There is an unbelievable amount of traffic so a bike is extremely practical just to get around. I don't have to tell you that a trail bike is just about the handiest bike of all whether in town or out in the sticks. Also, whilst the express ways and major roads are good (and packed!) the small back roads are pretty rough and the locals, who tend to keep their vehicles spotlessly clean, avoid them as a rule. That leaves thousands of kilometres of great roads virtually empty for those who don't mind getting a bit covered in ---glory.

A last bit of explanation on the physical side. Japan has 120 million inhabitants in a country about half again the size of the UK, but the vast majority live on the coastal plains on the main island Honshu. Imagine 45 million of our population all living in Gloucestershire and you have some idea. For them it's around 88 percent of people living on about 18 percent of the land area; Tokyo alone has 15 million people! They are packed in in a way we find hard to even imagine and when they want to 'play' that's quite a few people looking for some space.

So, what covers the rest of the area? The bit that's so darned good for us! The main centre of Japan is one large range of mountains and while they plant rice on all the plains that are not inhabited and on as much of the hill slopes as possible, that still leaves some 55 percent of the country under woodland. This woodland is absolutely riddled with forestry roads and what we here would class as walking tracks. The great advantage there is that, almost without exception, if you can get down it you can use it! It is one of very few things that they do not seem to have very strict or clear cut rules about.

As to the people themselves, by their very history they are a communal type of folk. They always do things in groups and generally the larger the group the more secure they feel. It works very well for them as their industrial success clearly shows. They tend to feel isolated if on their own and this applies to their business dealings and social activities alike so when you meet them for negotiations there are ten of them versus two of you and when you join them in some sport there is one heck of a crowd. Another thing that can be surmised from their success is that they subdue their personal wishes for the good of the majority - try that for size here chaps!

Well, one great thing that it does for our hobby is make it possible for riders (bike and horse), ramblers, bird watchers, climbers and all sorts of people, including those who work in these woodland areas, to live together quite happily, each going out of his way NOT to offend the others. In fact they will usually make a point of stopping to pass the time of day. I always found it most pleasant to stop and chat, as far as my limited understanding would allow, and invariable you would get some friendly advice as to where the path had fallen away, where there were trees down or whatever and I never got tired of 'Have a nice day' in broken American-English or of 'Kyotsu-kette' - 'Be well, drive safely'.

So basically they are very tolerant of each other which is just as well since there are so many of them in a relatively small space. Add to this that it is quite normal in Japan to maintain the 'Wa' - that's the harmony of the place such that as many people as possible are happy and you can see that riding there and particularly riding with a Japanese group is most pleasant if you are prepared to be a bit compliant. But you'd better not be worried about being in a crowd, 'cause there sure as hell will be quite a number of you!

What do they ride? Well almost anything. They have a great choice of trail bikes ranging from 50cc machines from all the Big Four manufacturers to the 600's like the Yamaha XT Tenere, the Honda XL or the Kawasaki KLR. The great majority ride machines between 125 and 250cc because of the licence classes and also because the average size of a Japanese is rather smaller than a European and large, bulky trail bikes are just too big for them to handle off road. As an aside, they're too darned big for me too!!

I'll explain. I started with a Honda XLX250, very nice but to get out to the decent riding one must ride about 40 miles on roads and this gets a bit tedious on a smallish bike. Trailers are impractical since you must get permission from the police each time

you wish to use one, so nobody does. When you get there the riding is great; river beds for miles, tight woods, tracks, steep hills and so on. Muggins here got fed up with the long haul out to the good bits so got himself a Yamaha Tenere and put a lighter plastic fuel tank on it. Wonderful bike I thought (and it is), take it anywhere in the world I thought (and you could). Great until the first few times you drop in downside of a hill into the trees and nearly do yourself a permanent mischief trying to get the thing right side up. Sense in the end prevailed and I returned to a smaller bike, this time a Honda XLR250R, which I find just about right. It's a pussy cat of a bike with just enough of everything for an old codger like me.

So really the best type of trail bike in Japan is probably very much like that we would opt for here, something 200 - 250cc, reasonably light, with plenty of 'plod' capability, fair comfort, not too much height but good ground clearance, and so on. However, that sort of bike goes down like a lead balloon in Japan, as was shown by Yamaha when they produced their 'Serow'. It was a near perfect woods bike, meant for just the sort of tight woods stuff they have. It is a 225cc four stroke single, with SOHC twin valve head that fits right between the usual tallish trail bike that tends to look like a sanitised motocrosser and a trials bike. It turns on a sixpence, weighs only 98kg and is geared so even a novice like me can do plenty of clambering about as well as having a high ratio top gear to handle the roadwork. If Yamaha had exported it to Britain I would have bought one in Japan and brought it back with me. It failed miserably in Japan, being wiped on the floor in sales by bikes like the Honda XLR250, Kawasaki KLR250, Suzuki RH250 and Yamaha's own XT250 and even by the 125 and 200cc two-strokes.

The failure was simply one of image. A fascinating side for an outsider to observe is the way the Japanese, young people especially, will buy for reasons that are not the same as ours. See almost any bike rider and you will be looking at a photocopy of his racing hero. The bike he sits on will be in the same colour scheme, his helmet and clothes will be exactly matched to the bike and the 'hero' and the rider will feel a million dollars.

At the other extreme are those who want the old fashioned look whose bikes, whilst having a Yammy 400 or 600 single engine, are camouflaged to look as near to a BSA or Norton as possible and to look at them even in detail you'd be hard pushed to find anything that really didn't look genuine 1950's. This applies across the board; there are no 'normal' motorcyclists, no 'normal' trail riders, they are all M-X heroes or ISDT 'experts'. The point of all this is that what is the real type of bike that suits the need to a tee just does not sell because they see it, quite frankly, as boring!

Thus, it is nothing unusual to come round a corner on a track somewhere up in the mountains, all toggled up in our old oily Belstuffs and battered boots to be confronted by 30 or so lads done up to the nines with full M-X kit, right down to the plastic armour and number plate vests. However, that's not to say they are not both very friendly and, in the main, darn good riders. This latter coming from the Japanese trait of doing everything to the best since to be other than top loses 'face'.

However, for a foreigner, being a bit eccentric can be great fun since, whilst amongst themselves they shun an eccentric, if he's a Geijin then it's allowed and amusing. Also, they are basically very shy but if as a foreigner you go out of your way to be friends then you get a friend for life and one you can trust. There also seems to be a bit of kudos for a normal working Japanese to have a friend who is a foreigner and maybe through a mixture of these two I have made a number of good friends there

whilst pottering around the woods. Friends who are insistent they should take you home for food 'before you make the long journey back to Tokyo' and who are proud to present you to 'honourable father and mother' as a new found friend.

Why do they ride? Pretty much the same reasons as we do, to get away from the humdrum life. The difference being in their case they do so in a BIG crowd as a rule - the Japanese security in numbers. However, that makes it the more enjoyable for them and we can equally well get fun from joining a Japanese trail day out. Tag along with them and you'll see why

I met up with a crowd by accident some 20km into the woods near Sagami-ko, an area about 70km from Tokyo. We climbed another 15km or so up into the woods and it soon became obvious that they were not just out for a day's messing about; there was some competitive intention at the end of it. To them that intention was 'can we get through', for my pal and I it turned out to be 'GULP can we survive--'

The road was an old forestry track that it transpired had been closed and gated two years before as the track had fallen away. The gates, all across river bridges and thus with no easy way round were no problem at all. They had brought ropes with them and since one of their number worked for their forestry commission they knew where there were piles of neatly cut logs about 3 metres long right near.

The next few hours taught me a few things, not the least why they do things in a crowd.

We had some superb riding down the bed of a river criss-crossing the stream. In places where it was too deep to sensibly ride through, six or seven of them would form a line just down stream of the crossing fully crutch deep in the water to assist us across, and incidentally to stop at least three of their number disappearing off downstream, then later back onto the same forest track as it came over the hill brow to look down on the Fuji International Race Track way below in the valley.

Just before the hill crown there appeared what was obviously their challenge of the day. Had I been just with my colleague we would have done a smart about face and gone down the way we had come, but not this bunch, they weren't here for fun - strewth, no! - they were here to prove something!

The track up to this point had varied from reasonable 'Land Rover width' to about four feet with a fairly steep hill to the left and a bank to the right but nothing to make you cringe away from the edge.

This spot was different. The road HAD clung to the side of the hill here but did so no longer - it had totally disappeared. If you had ridden up to it and not seen it you'd need to be able to fly - or die! The left side dropped about 300ft at an angle of 15 degrees to the vertical, the right side went up at almost the same slope and what was left was a huge hole with an earth ledge against the hill of about 9 inches wide. I wouldn't have walked round that ledge but this bunch seemed determined that there was only one way home and that wasn't back.

Out came the ropes again and this time a coil of what appeared to be 1/4 inch rigging wire was spirited out of a bloke's bag. In just over half an hour with quite some discussion, which everyone seemed to be enjoying, they rigged a sort of safety net firmly held by stakes at each end right across this 20ft wide gap and hammered stakes into the earth on the inside of it, putting two logs side by side down the back of the stakes. The 'road' was bloody awful but the safety net was a real feat of engineering adaption.

With true Japanese graciousness they offered me and my equally sweating mate the first 'bash' across. Thanks pals, I thought, and walked the bike along the ledge, but not before I got them to rope it from both sides first and rope me separately as well.

Then followed the rest, some walking on the net with the bike inside them on the ledge, some with two or so blokes handling the bike. Two loonies, though I'll give them their due, they were extremely good riders and had the sense to be roped, rode their bikes round the ledge. All 22 safely across they packed it all up and on we went.

That day was fun and most interesting not least in seeing the seriousness with which these young men went out to achieve something instead of just 'go for a ride'. However, not all trail riding in Japan is that serious and next time I'll take you on a typical day's trail riding out of Tokyo if you so wish. None of this manhood through suffering stuff, I'm well past the age for that, thank God!

GROUP NEWS

TRF SCOTLAND (WEST)

TRF Scotland (West) here, alive and kicking. The Group was formed on 20th August 1988 by Brian Thompson and although the membership is small it's dedicated and turn out regularly for meetings at the Mercury Motorcycle Club's premises at Maryhill (thanks to them). Here we discuss bikes, routes and general Group business.

Talk aside, the Group has done two runs; the first was on 18th September, the famous Corrieyairack Pass outside Fort Augustus (OS 34). Things went well apart from the ill fated section from Melgarve to Roybridge ... that's best left as history. Lessons were learned, firstly that a KLR650LC is a VERY heavy bike to push for miles through marshland.

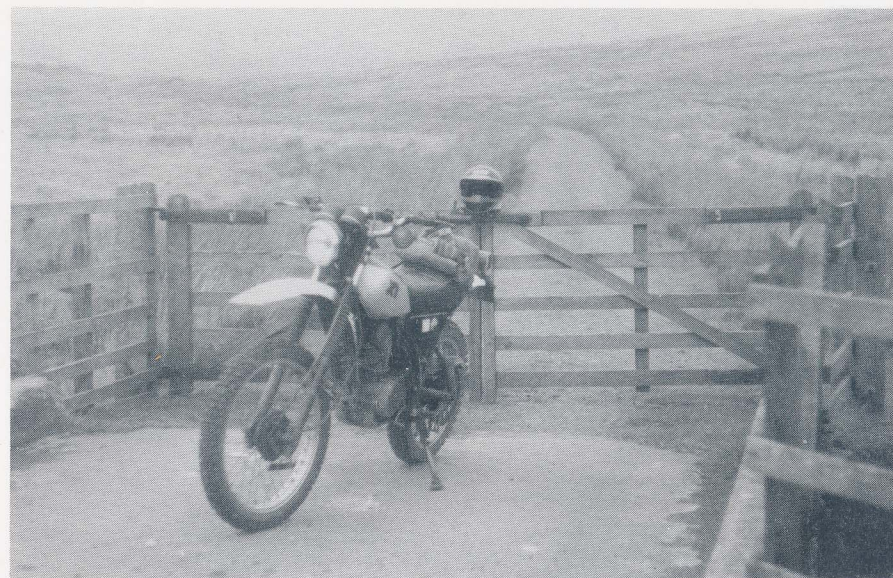
The second run was closer to home, Muirkirk to Fingland (OS 71) which was attempted on 8th October. This track was built by the famous roadmaker John Loudon MacAdam. A lot of pushing and pulling is needed to complete this run, but it's well worth the effort. The only casualty on the day was a bent gear selector on my XT. The weather was dry but cold, we had no major problems and were home for 4.30 p.m. That's a big improvement on 2.30 a.m. on the Corrieyairack.

The next date on the social calendar was 4th December, a Trail Bike Fun Enduro at Gleniffer Braes, Paisley organised by Avon Valley MCC. Only myself and Robert Brydon were foolhardy enough to take part in the event. Both bikes suffered in the wintery, slippery conditions, but it was loadsa fun! My XT was wrecked!

1989 looks like a good year on paper. I have researched many tracks which have to be checked personally for locked gates and angry landowners. We hope to do another run in January or February, hold video nights and have a visit to the Scottish Six Day Trial to help break up the winter. The Group has also built up a vast photo library of Scottish tracks, maps, books and legal info and has joined the Byways and Bridleways Trust; not bad going in a short period of time.

As you know, the Law in Scotland differs from the rest of the country which makes trail riding a difficult business. Locked gates, misleading signs and unsympathetic landowners makes progress slow. There might not be any rights of way in Scotland as such, but the Group are determined to make the best of what Scotland has to offer the trail riding enthusiast.

Davie Purdie, RoW Officer, TRF Scotland (West)



First of Many Gates - Fingland Side

Enduro look for trail bikes

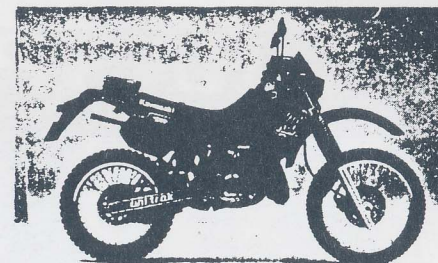
TEMPTING trailsters in the shape of Kawasaki's KDX200R and Honda's XLR 250R have just been let loose on the Japanese market.

Both bikes borrow masses of enduro features from their competition cousins: micro-sized halogen headlight units, stainless discs front and rear, safety seats on slimline tanks. The list goes on and on.

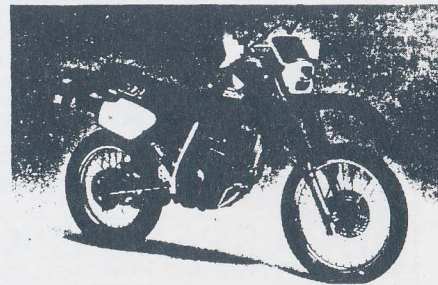
Giveaway

Pillion pegs are about the only real giveaway that these machines are trail, not enduro bikes, and even these are mounted on detachable loops on the KDX.

The big disappointment is that there are presently no plans for these devices to hit our shores.



Kawasaki's KDX 200R



Honda's XLR 250R

Courtesy Motorcycle News

BRISTOL

Following our local AGM the committee for 1989 is:

Chairman - Richard Tallon; Treasurer - Bob Harris; Right of Way - Martin Harding; Secretary - Stephen Say; Lane Clearing - John Hitchings; Run Co-ordinators - Norman Winkworth and Derek Jones; Group Rep. - Richard Tallon; Magazine Editor - Tony Webb.

Stephen Say, Secretary

TECH TIPS

Lots of secondhand KMX 125 Kawasaki's are coming on to the market now and chances are many people will want to de-restrict them for trail riding. Here's how you do it.

1. Remove the restrictor from the front of the exhaust.
2. Change the spring and collar in the KIPS mechanism. (Spring part number 39129 1001, collar part number 92143 1001).
3. Change the carburettor pilot screw (part number 16014 1031).

That's it! 24 bhp instead of 12. Remember, to be legal you must (a) hold a full licence, (b) remove the identification plate on the headstock and indelibly mark the new PS rating and (c) inform the DVLC of the change.

Parts prices - spring 40p, collar £1.76, air screw £1.74, clutch cover gasket £1.88 (part number 11009 1585).

Steve Thomas, Bristol/W Wilts Group

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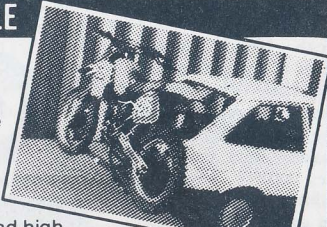
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Mud Wrestling in Hertfordshire with a BMW!

MUD, MUD, GLORIOUS MUD?

We met at the South Mimms services on the M25, a real mixed bunch. There was Dave the fireman on an XT350 - obviously Dave had had plenty of experience off-road, he sailed through everything with a big cheerful smile and left the rest of us floundering. At the other end of the scale was Nigel Huish and myself, with very little trail riding experience. Somewhere between were Steve Clarke and John Bower, who were leading the run; both experienced riders, but human enough to fall flat in the splat now and then. And finally my husband Graham, with some off-roading behind him but with one large handicap - his bike, a modified road going R60/7 BMW with an RS engine.

The first track Steven and John had found for us took us through woods, through streams, you name it, we went through it - or halfway through it as in the case of the stream. Dave got through and spent the next twenty minutes rescuing the rest of us from a watery grave. Graham, Nigel and myself discovered we had the wrong sort of tyres for this kind of riding; the sort of helpful comment that takes some of the indignity out of sliding ungracefully to a halt every fifty yards (but doesn't actually stop you sliding to a halt).

Next we tackled a piece of Ermine Street. Graham had to miss the first half mile as we all agreed the BMW would sink without trace. It wasn't so easy to get the lighter bikes through either - the first hundred yards was thick mud. With plenty of pulling and shoving we got to the other end, where there was a pool thoughtfully provided as a bike wash. Dave, Steve and John obviously prefer showers - they went storming through in a great cloud of spray and steam. Me, I like a nice long soak, I stopped halfway through and had to walk it out.

Graham rejoined us as we continued up Ermine Street to Elbow Lane, through deep ruts, more streams and more mud. Steve and John apologised for taking us into so much muck; the lanes had been fine the week before. Even they didn't realise what the next lane was like.

This was once a nice leafy lane, but in addition to all the rain a herd of Land Rovers had been this way. Imagine a lane with a pit dug out of it, two feet deep, the width of the lane and twenty yards long. Now imagine that pit filled with mud the consistency of school custard (but without the crust). This is what we were riding into every fifty or hundred yards. The technique was as follows: we drove hopefully into each pit, became bogged down and were hauled through, one driving, one pushing on each side, one shoving from behind and one hauling on the rope, wrapped around the front forks. Oh, and Nigel took the photos. Gee, thanks Nigel. The BMW was not the ideal companion in these circumstances - the mud was level with the cylinders - but everyone tactfully refrained from commenting. The mud was everywhere, evenly plastered up the fronts and backs of our clothes and on our faces - oh well, good for the skin.

We managed less than a mile before we reached the point where the lane was blocked by bricks and rubble. We gave up, rejoined the tarmac and made straight for the pub in Newgate Steet. Surprisingly they let us in and even let us stay when Dave and John removed their socks and dried them in front of the fire. Steve and John had a few more miles of track for us, but we all agreed that this was THE END. We went home and hosed down our bikes and clothes. A week later we were still washing mud off the drive. That wasn't trail riding, that was mud wrestling - mind you, I still

enjoyed the day. Many thanks to Steve and John for their hard work organising the run - same again sometime? This time I promise we'll leave the BMW at home!

Words: Julie Bissell Pictures: Nigel Huish



Ford crossing at Muirkirk - Water not too deep - ha ha!!



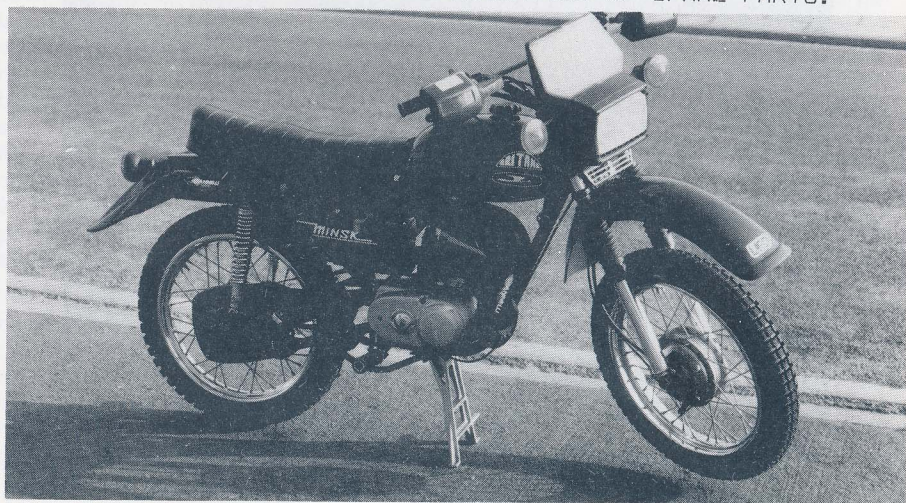
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A BRIEF GUIDE TO RIGHTS OF WAY AND PRACTICE

What is a Bridleway?

A public bridleway is a right of way on foot and on horse, but without prejudice as to any other rights (Section 56 WCA 1981). Section 30 of the Countryside Act 1968 allows bicycles to use bridleways.

What is a RUPP (Road Used as a Public Path)?

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

What is a Byway?

The correct title is Byway Open To All Traffic. Conclusive vehicular rights exist (Section 56 WCA81). There is no duty to maintain with metalled surface. Subject to Traffic order.

Can Motor Vehicles Use Footpaths and Bridleways?

No. An offence per Section 36 Highways Act 1972. (This section also covers open moorland.) However it is not an offence if the landowner gives permission, or the user had good evidence of vehicular right which would satisfy a court of law (see Section 56 WCA81).

What About Use Evidence?

Twenty years user evidence per Section 31 Highways Act 1980 deems the highway to have a 'presumption of dedication' as a public highway. Such use should be continuous and at least once per years without challenge or hindrance. Applies to foot, horse and vehicular, but not cycles. User evidence less than 20 years is also admissible under Common Law but does not carry the same force as Statutory Section 31 evidence. In the case of R v Petrie 1855 a period of 6 to 8 years was accepted. In the case of Rugby v Merryweather 1790 Lord Kenyon held that 6 years was sufficient and Jarvis v Dean 1826 accepted a period of 4 to 5 years use evidence.

The number of persons sufficient to establish evidence is 1 or 2 per Lord Campbell in R v South Eastern Co 1850. In practice up to 6 persons is the most that is practical that can be presented to an inquiry or court in view of the cross examination and length of time available.

What About Documentary Evidence?

Admissible under Section 32 Highways Act 1980 which says that a court, etc must take into account any map, plan or history or other relevant document tendered in evidence in determining the status of a highway. Evidence such as pre 1835 maps by Greenwood c1825, John Tuke c1788 and First Edition Ordnance Survey Maps from 1800 to 1860. Facsimile copies of other maps are available from County Archives.

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

What Can You Do About Ploughing Up?

Highway Authorities now admit that the current law on ploughing is defective and inadequate. However, Section 134 Highways Act 1980 (as amended by Section 61 of the WCA81) requires the farmer to make good the surface within 2 weeks or as soon as reasonably convenient. It is an offence not to do so. It is unlawful to plough a Headland path, a Byway or RUPP. You should complain in writing to the highway authority. There is no right to prosecute except by the Council.

What Can You Do About Obstructions?

There are many kinds of obstructions. Under Common Law, *Seeking v Clark* 1961 59 LGR268 Lord Chief Justice Parker said "It is perfectly clear that anything which prevents the public from having free access over the whole of the highway is an unlawful obstruction." The highway authority is under a duty to remove an obstruction, per Section 130 Highways Act 1980. *Dimes v Petley* 1850 gives rights to bona fide travellers to remove an obstruction, but only sufficient to enable one to proceed. You must not set out wilfully to remove an obstruction.

Do the Usual Traffic Laws Apply to Green Lanes?

Yes. They are public roads and subject to all the Road Traffic Acts. Careless driving charges can be brought.

Are Rights of Way Shown on Ordnance Survey Maps?

Yes. All modern OS maps show definitive rights of way, although some are now out of date, and all rights of way are subject to review. Byways are 100% conclusive carriageways although a Traffic Restriction Order can be in effect.

What is an Unclassified County Road?

Not shown on the definitive maps. Are shown on county highways maps per Highways Act 1980 Section 36. Usually accepted as carriageways and shown on Ordnance Survey as a 'white road' and sometimes with dual bridleway/RUPP status. The Department of the Environment issued a statement in 1983 that UCR status did on balance of probability carry full vehicular rights. So far there has been no case law to challenge this assumption. By virtue of Section 36 Highways Act 1980 pre 1835 highways are maintainable at public expense.

Review of Rights of Way Under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Under Section 54 all Highway Authorities must reclassify RUPPs into either footpath, bridleway or byway by making Reclassification Orders. The tests for each RUPP is:

1. If public vehicular rights exist, to a byway open to all traffic.
2. If public vehicular rights are now shown, to a bridleway.
3. If bridleway rights are positively not shown to exist, to a footpath.

Test for RUPPs under the Countryside Act 1968 for 'suitability and hardship' that caused much exasperation and lengthy public enquiries have been abolished and the simplified test for Byway will be confined to evidence of carriageway only.

(Taken from an article in the Byways and Bridleways Trust Magazine, Byways and Bridleways Trust, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1Y 9BY. Individual subscription £7.50 per annum.)

Brian Thompson, National RoW Officer

'RIGHTS OF WAY: A GUIDE' by J Trevelyan and P Clayden

A Criticism by Brian Thompson

It is a pity that this useful and very popular book contains a few serious errors that are proving troublesome to vehicular users. The guide is widely accepted as factual by council staff, farmers and users alike. Main criticism is on page 108 last paragraph under 'Motor Vehicles' paragraph 5.8 and I think reflects the known bias against vehicular recreational use. The guide says "... it is not possible to acquire a right of way for vehicles over a footpath/bridleway as per Section 31 Highways Act 1980 (use evidence) or common law. Unauthorised use is a criminal offence and no right be be acquired to commit a crime ..." Strong words that scare the hell out of some vehicular users! The main argument against this is what is a footpath or bridleway and how did they come about? If we rely on the Definitive Map then this cannot apply, because Section 56 WCA81 states that the right is without prejudice to any other right.

The Definitive Map after all is mostly out of date and merely a record. It has no power to extinguish or exclude any right; see *Suffolk CC v Mason* 1978 All 11 ER) page 379, 383 and 384 dicta by Lord Hailsham (now Lord Chancellor) and Lord Fraser. To highlight what a nonsense the Definitive Map (often with a Relevant Date c1952) really is, let us look at the 1000 miles of green lanes wrongly 'Public Footpath' on the Definitive Map. In Yorkshire we have miles of 60ft wide green lanes with mature trees either side dating from the 18th century. All are 4ft wide 'Public Footpath' on the 1952 Definitive Map! No one can tell me exactly where the 4ft footpath contained in the Statement lies! Is it down the left or right of the 60ft lanes? Could it be down the middle? Despite being awarded 'Private Carriage Road', County Hall accepted them all as Byway in 1985.

Over the past 17 years the TRF has relied on user evidence of over 20 years to establish carriageway status in the courts and at public inquiries without difficulty. There is nothing in Section 31 HA80 to exclude users on vehicles. The 'Guide' replies on dubious case law which excludes any vehicular use after 1930 (*Cargill v Gotts* 1981 1 WLR 441). However, this has not been tested against S31 HA80 or Common Law.

Now it gets even more complicated. The *Sheringham* case in 1904 is important. This decided that the way must be capable of dedication ie. width which is common sense. No one wants to upgrade a 'real' 4ft wide footpath by 20 years vehicular use which is not capable of being so dedicated. *Turner v Walsh* 1881 is another important case which stressed the need to look at all the evidence and not to rely on just user. 'Law of Real Property' McGarry & Wade says the same. Every case is different and depends on the evidence; all the evidence to arrive at the TRUE status.

We want to arrive at the TRUE status which quite often is not the same as the Definitive Map. To sum up, I have no doubt that a highway of reasonable width and wrongly defined as footpath or bridleway can be used by vehicles 'as of right' and upgraded to Byway.

Other Criticisms: Pages 56 and 57 deal with documentary evidence (Section 32 HA80) which fails to mention Section 36 Highways Act 1980 sub-section 5(a) or the closely connect case law *Kent CC v Loughlin* 1975 119SJ528 Lord Denning's dicta "maps up to 1820 were too small to show more than public carriageways" or *R v Secretary of State (Hood case)* Lord Denning again "... Our ancient highways came into existence before 1835. It is important that they be preserved and known." Finally the *Sorenson v Cheshire County Council* 1979 case which relied entirely on pre 1835 maps to prove Section 36 HA80 related to public carriageways maintainable at public expense.

The Guide's most damaging page is information on page 63 regarding 'List of Streets' paragraph 3.9 in which it deals with Unclassified County Roads per Section 36 HA80 created by Local Government Act 1929. The Guide states that vehicular rights do not exist on UCRs whereas 48 out of 51 highway authorities accepted UCRs as fully vehicular. A small point that the author's might have mentioned! The Department of the Environment's position on UCRs is ignored.

This Guide is so widely accepted and believed that it is paramount the the Byways and Bridleways Trust points out these errors or 'differences of opinion'. Conflict, disputes and trouble is increasing for vehicular users in the countryside as a direct result of the advice contained in the Guide. With 80% green lanes the wrong status of footpath or bridleway on the Definitive Map (4000 miles out of 5000 miles in England and Wales) this is a serious matter. The prospect of converting those 4000 miles of green lanes with vehicular rights into Byway in the next 20 years is extremely poor.

* * * * *

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MENDIP
Gwyn Thomas, Minories Cottage, Priddy,
Nr Wells, Somerset. Tel: 0749 75294

NORFOLK & SUFFOLK
Andy Bedwell, 5 The Woodlands, Corton,
Lowestoft, NR32 5BZ Tel: 0502 730899

NORTHUMBERLAND
Dave Vaughan, 15 Seaburn Gardens,
Sunderland, Tyne & Wear, SR6 8BT
Tel: 091 5293202

Local Group Meetings

2nd Monday of the month 8.30 p.m.
Tennis Court Inn, Deanery Road,
Kingswood, Bristol

1st Monday of the month.
Golden Bull, Boxworth. Off A604
North of Bar Hill

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

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

2nd and 4th Tuesdays. The Victoria
Hotel, 248 Neepsend Lane, Sheffield

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

1st Tuesday of the month 8.00 p.m.
Stable Bar behind the Drax Arms,
Bere Regis

2nd Wednesday. Three Horseshoes,
Hemington, Leicestershire

2nd Wednesdays. Kettingley Social
Centrel, Knottingley

4th Tuesday. White Bear,
Stanford Rivers, Nr Ongar, Essex

1st Monday. Contact Group Rep for
meeting place.

Tuesdays. King's Head Hotel,
Pontnewyd, Cwmbran, Gwent

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

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

2nd Tuesday. The Lamb, Theale,
Nr Reading, Berks.

Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy, Nr Wells,
Somerset (ring Gwyn for meeting date)

1st Wednesday. The Blue Lion,
North Pickenham

3rd Tuesday. Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton