

# GROUPS

## BRISTOL

Richard Tallon, Tel: 0249 715426  
 2nd Monday, Tennis Court Inn, Deanery Road (A420),  
 Kingswood. 4th Friday; Social Night - Tel. for location.

## CAMBRIDGE

Howard Biddle, Tel: 0223 232879  
 1st Thursday, Golden Ball, Boxworth

## CHESHIRE

J. Johnson, Tel: 061 427 6963  
 2 & 4 Monday, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane,  
 Hazel Grove, Stockport

## CORNWALL

Roger Fogg, Tel: 0726 67198  
 3rd Thursday, Ring Secretary for details.

## CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 0539 725198  
 2nd Wednesday, Albert Hotel, Bowness on Windermere

## DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

David Bunsall, Tel: 0742 748688  
 2 & 4 Tues. Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Attercliffe, Shef. l'd.

## DEVON

Richard Arscott, Tel: 0803 612950  
 2nd Tuesday, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr.  
 Newton Abbott

## DORSET

Pete Boyce, Tel: 0305 783210  
 1st Tuesday, The Royal Oak, Bere Regis

## EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 0332 863433  
 2nd Wednesday, Three Horseshoes, Hemmington, Nr. M1  
 Junct. 24

## EAST SCOTLAND

Les Mollison, Tel: 0382 738530  
 2nd Wednesday, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd

## EAST YORKS.

Dave Barrat, Tel: 0977 672402  
 2nd Wednesday; Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley.

## ESSEX

Neil Gamble, Tel: 0245 461643  
 4th Tuesday, The White Horse, Old London Road, Widford,  
 Chelmsford

## GLOUCESTER

Ron Carter, Tel: 045 382 2707  
 1st Tuesday, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

## HERTFORDSHIRE

Alan Vincent, Tel: 0923 775263  
 1st Wednesday, Coach & Horses, Newgate Street, Nr Cuffly

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 0983 866361  
 Last Thursday, Liberal Club, Longford Rd, Shanklin, I.O.W

## KENT

Nick Moon, Tel: 0322 865335  
 2nd Tuesday, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr. Brands Hatch

## LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 0704 893215  
 1st Tuesday, Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

## LINCOLNSHIRE

Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 0529 60793  
 4th Thursday, The Mall, Woodhall, Spar

## LODDON VALE

Don Lewis, Tel: 0252 616359  
 2nd Thursday, The Lamb, Theale, Berkshire  
 NORFOLK & SUFFOLK Stephen Canning 0359 31018  
 Last Wedne. Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd. Bury-St-Eds.

## NORTH MIDLANDS

Ray Morse, Tel: 0785 661543  
 1st Tuesday, Leek Area - Contact group rep (above)

## NORTHUMBERLAND

Dave Vaughan, Tel: 091 529 3202  
 3rd Tuesday, Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton

## NORTH WALES

John Mills, Tel: 0477 34425  
 1st Wednesday, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley,

## SHROPSHIRE

Steve Rodenhurst, Tel: 0952 244161  
 2nd & last Wednesday, The Bell, Crosshouses, Shrewsbury

## SOMERSET

Peter Banks, Tel: 0749 86396  
 Last Thursday, The Canall Inn, Wrantage

## SOUTHERN

Euan Harrison, Tel: 0962 733781  
 3rd Wednesday, The Priory Inn, Bishops Waltham,  
 Hampshire

## SOUTH LONDON & SURREY

Brian Wright, Tel: 081 669 4214  
 9pm Every Wednesday, Epsom & Ewell F.C., West St, Ewell

## SOUTH WALES

G. Jones, Tel: 0239 810255 - Meets to be arranged

## SOUTH WALES (WTRA),

Bill Kershaw, Tel: 0633 895241

## SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 0243 585128 Last Thursday, Ashing  
 on Soc. Club, Rr. of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles N. of Worthing

## TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS

Leo Crone, Tel: 0325 380117  
 1st & 3rd Wednesday, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby.

## THAMES VALLEY

Bob Williams, Tel: 0344 24958  
 3rd Monday, District Arms, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford,  
 Middlesex

## WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 0933 313816  
 1 & 3 Thursday, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish  
 Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

## WEST MIDLANDS

Dennis Hayter, Tel: 0527 23550  
 1 & 3 Thursday, Duke of Marlborough, Studley, Warks.

## WEST YORKSHIRE

Gordon Carr Tel: 0535 644568  
 1 & 3 Thursday, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close,  
 (off Cleckheaton Rd.), Odsal, Bradford

## WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel: 02216 3811  
 1st Tuesday, The Toll House, Holt, Trowbridge

## WYVERN

Gwyn James, Tel: 0902 763824  
 Every Thursday, Hill & Cakemore Ex-Servicemen's Club,  
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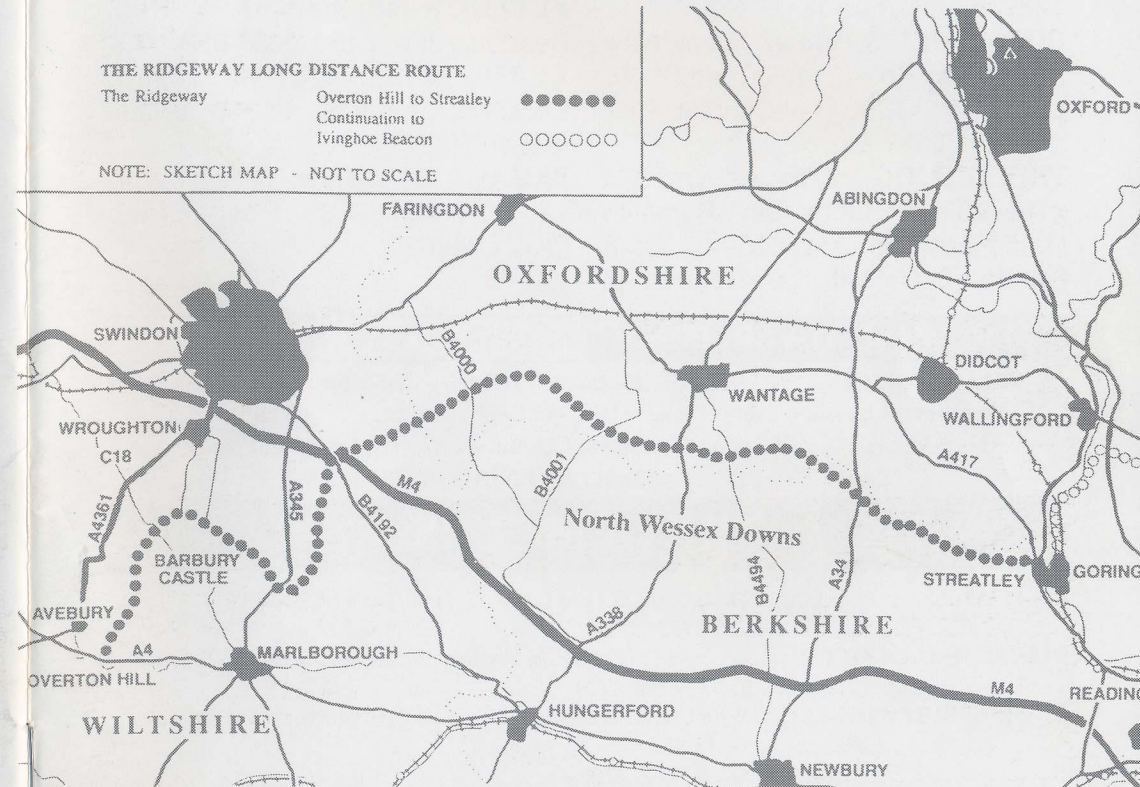
# TRAIL

JUNE 1992

No. 167

The Bulletin of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways.

## RIDGEWAY SPECIAL



THE RIDGEWAY LONG DISTANCE ROUTE

The Ridgeway Overton Hill to Streatley ●●●●●●  
 Continuation to Ivinghoe Beacon ○○○○○○

NOTE: SKETCH MAP - NOT TO SCALE

RIDGEWAY CONTROVERSY: SEE RoW.

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Try to make it interesting! . . . All contributions to the Editor  
**COPY DEADLINE : 1ST TUESDAY IN EVERY MONTH**

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.

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## EDITOR

**M**OST of you will have never heard of the "Surveyor" - no, not a man with a measuring tape and theodolite but the magazine! If you have heard of it, you've probably consigned it to your list of the world's ten most boring publications - at least that's what I did with a copy sent to me by the Weasel! Except that on pages 14 and 15 was a fascinating article on a new £3.7m Government scheme "to have all rights of way legally defined by the year 2000 (I quote).

The initial "push" will involve 15 participating councils who will be given a grant of £900,000 in 1992/3 to get the project up and running. I don't have a list of all 15 but the article does mention Leeds City Council which covers parts of the North Yorkshire area. One Richard Wellborn of Leeds ROW section has already indicated that they will "liaise largely with user groups" to get the scheme under way and a Liaison Officer is to be appointed for this purpose.

The project sounds like one of the most significant and exciting things that could happen for the TRF - providing, of course, we are "in" at the beginning. Our first step must be to obtain a list of the 15 participating councils and for appropriate TRF Groups to make contact to ensure consultation for it is clear, as with the Pennine Bridleway project that "they" will certainly not contact us.

On a lighter note - Did you spot Willie Eckerslike on TV last month? Not, unfortunately, defending the TRF but the South Yorkshire Miners. I am also able to further demolish another Willie Eckerslike claim regarding the financial status of his Group. When we "bumped" into them on Dead Man's Hill recently almost everyone was XR or DR mounted - and the latest models too - shame on you Willie!

**NETTLEBED.**

P.S. Photocopies of the "Surveyor" article available on request.

**P.P.S. READ THE RoW BIT FIRST - THERE IS AN URGENT MESSAGE FOR ALL READERS - THEN READ THE REST.**

# LETTERS

## The Isle of Wight Abroad, again

Here is an account of the Isle of Wight Group's recent trip to Exmoor, riding green lanes from the Island and back as well as taking some days to explore and appreciate the West Somerset District.

The plans are made, bags are packed, and we are ready to go, when a 'phone call from Christine informs us that our good friend Pete Mogg has had a bad accident on his mountain bike, and is unable to come with us. Get well soon, Pete.

Pete Woodford (KTM600) and myself, Mick Holbrook (XR250), meet at Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, on Friday, 8th May. We will be joined later by Roy Groves, (XT350) and Rob Richards, (XT350). We cross the Solent by ferry to Lymington. (Believed to be the most expensive ferry service in the World....Probably.) We have changed our route this time, going by way of lanes on Toyd Down, through the ford at Stratford Tony to join the old Tollgate Road at Barford Down.

Across the A303 to Whitesheet Downs, where narrow country lanes lead us to a short hill climb at Pitcombe, and on the Priddle Hill. The double gates here are a reminder of the once level crossing with the railway.

A prearranged stop at the home of Peter Banks at Ditchat for very welcome tea and mapmarking, and we thank Peter for his hospitality. With some new directions for the locality we set off to cross Boulters Bridge, and on to the A37. We end the days ride here, and find our beds for the night.

Saturday, about 10am, and it's wet, very WET. The four of us meet at the home of David Dyer, in the village of Wootton Courtenay, near Minehead. Davids mate John is also here, and he rides as back-marker, while David leads us. Despite the rain, everyone is eager to get started. David takes us through a succession of lanes and County roads, his local knowledge saving us much time map-searching in the rain. Rock steps, giant wet boulders, mud, hill climbs, etc, are the order of the day. Clapper Bridge at Tarr Steps is a raging torrent today. Front wheels are dipped in and taken out! Roy ventures across first, the tank and seat are the only bits of his bike that are visible above the surf wave as he crosses the ford. Then Rob and myself go across. (Rumour has it that one rider crossed both ways without footing! I wonder who that was ....?)

We ride the old road to Dulverton along Hawkrigde, pausing to watch a pair of Buzzards soaring high above the valley, heads bowed, searching the ground 100ft. below. Breathtaking! A brief visit to the Oxgrove, then back to Wootton Courtenay. Our thanks to David and John for a special days riding and for the marvellous tea and cakes!

Sunday starts fine, our meeting place is a small village called Lydeard St Lawrence. Rob and Roy have arranged to ride in this years' Jubilee Long Distance Trial. Peter and I watch the riders start and wish our friends good luck. We meet again on a muddy lane, south of Spaxton. We leave the Trial for a while to ride the old coach road over the Quantock ridge, and at Old Cleeve, near the coast, we meet riders again along Black Monkey Lane (the longest ford in England, we are informed) and stop to chat while one fixes a throttle cable on his DT250. (Nice bike, the DT, I rode Pete Mogg's in Wales about 6 years ago. Looks ugly, goes very well!!)

We ride South on the A396, taking in Pittbridge, Kersham lane and Lockwell Bridge. It's raining hard again as we try the hillclimb to West Howetown where we were yesterday. The hillclimb at Bury and on the Moor we end the day's ride. Monday, and we head for home, some lanes at Aisholt providing our last riding in the area. Then we ride for the Isle of Wight, using lanes at Keinton Mandeville, deep mud and a fallen tree here. Stopping for lunch at Alfreds' Tower, the site where Alfred the Great raised his Standard against the invading Danes in 895AD, the tower being built later to commemorate this act. We ride the old Drovers road to Downton and finish the four days on a short lane at Hale, this one is like riding through a tunnel of Rhododendron bushes. A fitting end to the ride..... Special thanks to Rob and Pam Plant of the Watermead Guest House, Chard for putting up with us and our bikes for the three nights. (They'll do the same for you, you know!!)

*"The Trail Riders' Ramblings"*. A foot-note. The ramp on the ferry is down, we ride aboard and tuck the bikes away. Sitting on the open deck, we finish off our lukewarm coffee. Half a mile away, a yacht is being carried up the Solent on a Spring Tide.

She's got all her canvas up, a brilliant coloured spinnaker billows out in front, catching the Westerly from the Needles. Where is she from? Bound for Bucklers Hard or Cowes? Did these Part-Time Mariners have such a time as us? Equal perhaps, different certainly. Better: we think not.

*Mick Holbrook. TRF IOW Group Rep.*

## Enjoying Southern Hospitality

We can boast of a hardcore of between 25 and 30 enthusiasts who organise runs on Saturdays and Sundays most alternate weekends throughout the year, including our now famous Xmas run, lead by Lee 'Loop It' Wildsmith. Between 5 - 12 members normally arrive at the designated Grid Reference at 0930 Hrs to participate in a game of follow my leader, or in some cases 2 leaders until exhaustion or darkness overtakes our Lemming instincts.

We can offer Run Leaders who specialise in different Fetishes. Malcolm 'The Mudlark' Whiting's speciality is - yes, you've got it in one - MUD, and we followers of that delight will flounder through some beautiful Glens and Forest Tracks in East

Hampshire guaranteed to emerge the other end plastered, steaming, and gasping for a fag and a cup of tea. In Wiltshire, Gareth will lead you across 130 miles of MOD restricted Tank Training areas and Artillery Ranges on Salisbury Plain without once referring to a map, providing that is, you promise not to wander from the designated routes. Farther to the west, in Dorset, I am reliably informed we can offer the delights of rivers to drop into for the Water Babies amongst us. This I have yet to experience.

The technically minded may be interested to know that our mounts vary from PE'S to KMX'S and from DT/XT Yamahas to XR Hondas, some suitably enlarged and quite serious. I ride a DR 350 as does fellow member 'Motorcross' Martin. Our Archie (I shall never get used to these new hair styles), rides a 500 Maico, which seems to suffer from a number of ailments. Peter Wildsmith rides a very special Honda XM 200W he created and, I believe, which he told TRAIL about some 2-3 years back.

We have quarterly 'Runs Meetings' when we are encouraged to 'Bring and Buy' Autojumble which may be of interest to other members. Our dedicated and long service Club Leaders Peter Wildsmith and Alan Watts have had little difficulty in filling the Diary with the next quarters Runs Leaders and now they have both stepped down (Peter to dedicate more time to Rights of Way duties), our new leaders, Euan Harrison and Peter Whalley are continuing the task admirably. What is the problem we often hear you say about finding Runs Leaders, come South and see for yourself. We have members who are also actively involved in AWDC, and have even worked on temporary assignments for the Local Council in the Rights of Way Department. This particular clever sod, rides Trails and even gets paid for it! This has helped liaison between our Group and other Countryside Associations. It has also resulted in joint lane clearing excercises, barbeques and Marshalling at Horse Eventing Trials.

We welcome contact and exchange from other Groups, and have been known to travel to Wales to join with Groups there for weekend trecks. Visit us and try your skills at the notorious Butser Hill, if you succeed please let our John know how you do it - he still keeps trying.

*Malcolm Godbold. Southern Group, Hants.*

### **Twelve Go Mad On Exmoor**

For the third year the combined forces of the TRF in the South West (plus Dave Giles this year) descended on Exford to help the British Horse Society with the Golden Horseshoe Endurance Ride, their premier event.

Once more under the expert leadership of Peter "I'll hang on to these meal tickets" Banks and after a night in a crowded Youth Hostel (Just WHY did they put the TRF men in the womens wing?) we set off in small groups to spend a very pleasurable ten hours and sixty odd miles in the National Park, fording rivers, crossing moors, careering down ravines, riding many miles of terrain not normally open to us and generally having a Good Time, we did also manage to tie small pieces of tape to a variety of objects every

so many yards, to hammer in countless flags and Martin and his Kawasaki even managed a dip in the Exe. I think they were going for their TRF swimming badge.

Monday was the first day of the event and started badly. Very badly. 5.30 am badly. The first group of us out probably woke the birds. it was an extremely hot day and we were really concerned for the horses, the course is very difficult on Exmoor with the steep sided Coombes and rocky going presenting problems for many riders (both horse and motorcycle eh Paul..). The TRF maintained a high profile throughout (Hard not to in a 46" chest flourescent bib), riding around the course in small groups talking to walkers, riders, vets, check point controllers and so on. Dave Giles was our secret weapon he would talk to anything that moved and quite a few things that didn't. The ride went well, with many horses finishing the course and an unusually high proportion of bikes finishing it too. Largely Honda mounted (barring Norman who rode a Yamaha largely equivalent to three Hondas) we were predominantly four stroke, with Tony's two stroke kept well out of action by Peter Bank's subtle ruse of making Tony drive his car.

Tuesday was however more colourful, with more horses out on the course, hotter weather and the task of course clearing to take on. Amazingly, Adrian-I-Haven't-seen-a-horse-all-day and Norman cleared most of the course which left the rest of us free to ride in with the horses and Be Useful. By mid-morning we had our drama, "A rogue trail rider is out on the course, tearing around kicking down stakes" buzzed the radios. Had Bill been out in the sun too long? Had curly failed to suppress his urges, (on a 350 Husky this can be tricky). Was it really one of us. An Exmoor ranger appeared "it's alright, the Police have him". Excitement over, it wasn't a "trail rider" at all, just a local farmer's son on a motocrosser, depressing that our image should be thus tarnished after all our good works though. With so many water crossings on the course the horses managed with the heat very well, as did Tony, by now on the lawn of base control clad only in swimming trunks and knee protectors (where WAS his TRF sticker?). The remainder of us rode around the course, picking up messages, keeping an eye on horses, chatting to walkers and posing for the Official Photographer, "go back and come down flat out, I'll get a good action shot then" he offered. I have to admit that I had been flat out on the first pass....

And that was it really, the tapes and flags were in by 9.00, and we were free to go. So many of the competitors stopped to thank us that I feel our 'positive profile' was raised greatly by our efforts and of course it was just great to spend three days and 200 miles almost exclusively off road, it made the four mile ride to work on Wednesday seem very dull indeed.

P.S. If anyone is interested we had four XL185 Hondas, two XR 200 Hondas, an XL250 Honda, a 350 Husqvarna, A KMX 200, a Yamaha 250, a 600 Yamaha and last and definately least (ouch) two 250 Kawasakis. Quite remarkably they were all still going at the end too.

*Sally Madgwick. Cornwall.*

**Now look here Tim...**

I would like to reply to Tim Stevens comments in the May issue of the Trail.

I note that Tim Stevens has commented in the May issue of the Trail about the Dorset Group of the TRF's reservations as regards byway claims. If we decided to claim all our possible byways it would take us probably the next 20 years and a lot of effort required by all members. Tim seems to think that (a.) We know where all the possible byways are. This is not the case, we have researched approximately one third of the county with still a lot of work to do. (b.) Riding these researched rights of way presents us with no problem. Not so, we are always being challenged by landowners for using, as they see it, non-vehicular rights of way.

So Tim, things are not as good as you think they are in Dorset, we would love a county full of 'definitive byways to ride but as that it not the case at the moment we will continue to do our research and ride legal carriage roads. At least we bothered to reply to Tims questions, perhaps next time we may give it a miss-like all the other groups.

Keep producing a first class bulletin Mike and team, well done.

*Dave Greenslade. Rights of Way Officer Dorset Group.*

**Now look here Editor...**

I am enclosing with this letter, a letter which I wrote soon after your publication of the Tim Stevens French Trip. I never did send it.

But now, you are asking for contributions. It was bound to happen wasn't it?... Life's like that!

I enclose a copy of my article, the third I have sent, and I would appreciate your comments on why you don't like it. Don't be frightened, I'm too old to get miffed and I've found there are about 3,287 ways to skin a cat! (*Well, we couldn't hold out any longer - see 'Drome' article further on in this magazine. Ed.*)

I've just returned from 2 weeks in France. Been in the Cevenne (again), Monte Lozere, and Central Provence. I have now discovered the BEST route from Le Harve to Orleans to pick up the Autoroute to Clermont Ferrand and I know how bone-fide motor-cyclists can get discounts on Channel Crossings, especially Dover/calais. But that's of no interest is it? Nothing personal, you're doing a great job. By the way, this trip I discovered a most interesting French Legal fact about the fairly common French Restriction Sign 'Sans Riverains', which means, on face value, 'Local Users Only', or something pretty similar. But then, I don't suppose any TRF Members would be interested, would they?

How nice it was to read the report about the Tim Stevens organised trip to France last October. It's about time we heard about what goes on outside our shores.

I was a bit miffed though, I have sent to you, and to the previous Editor, a missive about the Tim Stevens trip to the Drome some 18 months earlier. The article also contained some interesting bits about my experiences whilst taking part in a 'semi-competitive' Trail Ride. I suppose I must smell or something.

I have no doubt that eventually in the Bulletin we shall hear long moans about people not sending things in. I wonder why?

I am sorry that you feel my knowledge of the French Alps (2 trips.. 10,200ft reached), 2 visits to the Drome, 2 entries in the Trophee Cevenol (winning a Cup each time), 3 visits to the Cevenne, 1 visit to Vercour, 2 visits to Provence and a 3 day trail ride with the French Trail Club Hexagone, is to not be encouraged to share with others.

This year I shall be exploring two other parts of La France with my French Friends, the Tarn and either more Provence or around the Tarn. It is absolutely wonderful to have found French contacts who are giving me some of the most wonderful riding I have ever experienced and marking my maps for me. I also know how to get discounts for motorcyclists on the Channel Ferries, but that would be of even less interest, would it not!!!

And to David Giles I say that having not seen ANY recognition for the TRF Riders who have helped at the Horse Events I was involved in last year, then this year the money paid will be shared between the riders and I will leave it to them whether they make a Donation to the Fighting Fund or not. Over £250 in 1990, £150 in 1991. Less recognition results in less money!

Sorry.. but Camels and Straw and things like that, sort of fit after reading the December Bulletin. My Friend John Ebbrell, would not have been happy. Yes I actually was a friend of John, look up the results of the Rossendale Enduro which he organised and which caused his interest in Ancient Vehicular Rights of Way.

*Rod Butterworth Aged Trail Rider Friend & Amdirer of John Ebbrell, deceased.*

*Sometime Awkward B\*\*\*\*\*d. (Me,.....not J.E.)*

**Bits and Pieces - From A New Member**

I have just returned from a very "Wet" trail run at Easter in Wensleydale and Wharfedale. A great time to go green laneing as there was no one about thank you to the weather for that.

I would like to say thank you to Tim Stevens for some very good advice on the trails that myself and two friends where planning to use. P.S. Tim we didn't use Craven Old Road as we have done it before and concentrated on new ones.

The weather meant that there was no one around and we came across two walkers on Foxup who had no maps or compass and I was not convinced they knew where they were

or even going, so we directed them down to Horton in Ribblesdale.

My marked up map is a bit old and I noticed that the lane from Horton to High Green Field had a hand written notice claiming that there was no access to motorcycles. Is this true or is my map out of date? ( Hand written notices are not legal).

I am interested to know what happens about Green Laneing in Scotland as they have a different set of Rights of Way. So is there anyone out there who could let us young ones know the low down on Scotland. I also have a 4wd drive and was in a private event (I dont green lane it) and heard a Scots man talk about green laneing but did not get the chance to nail him.

When I travel north I stay with the inlaws (who are very good when I return to clean everything at their house) who live at Carnforth. Yes, you guessed, does anyone lead runs across Morecambe Bay, is it still a ROW or is it just plain stupid? I believe the Duke of Edinburgh has done it in a carriage. *(It is a RoW- Ed).*

Finally a database for lanes sounds like a good idea. It would only take about half an hour to create (I use Super Base 4 for those Techies out there). The thought would have to be in getting the information and maintaining; would this be on a regional basis or centrally and more importantly how it would be used eg. who could access it for map marking etc.

*Derek Barton. Gwent.*

#### **Our fragile hold**

For over 30 years I have been deeply involved with motorcycles, and for most of those I have been riding 'off road'. You could say that I was a trail rider before 'trails' were discovered.

I can remember riding pillion on my father's 350 Enfield Bullet as he struggled to climb a farm track to a house where he was working as a carpenter. That same hill in Derbyshire is now part of the M.C.C. Edinburgh Trial route. At that time local motorcyclists would use the tracks as part of their network of roads and no complaint was ever raised by local residents.

Two significant factors have brought about the present fragile hold that we have on our right to ride in the countryside.

The first, which we can do little about, is the 'political' issue of land access. This has been cleverly exploited by such groups as

the rambblers, quangos running national parks and many landowners. They are highly organised, have access to lots of cash and are much more numerous than us. Sadly, they have the public's support, or at the very least indifference to motorcycliny on their side. We don't stand much of a chance do we?

The second, which we can do something about, is the image we portray in the countryside. We are making ourselves too visible: too easy to criticise.

Too many riders are rushing about in 'circus' clothing on noisy bikes. Just the way to attract the wrong sort of attention and give the 'antis' the ammunition they need to close off our access to the dwindling amount of legal trails we can ride.

When country lovers, and I include responsible T.R.F. members in that group, see or hear noisy bikes rushing about on Sunday morning it's not surprising that they get a little miffed.

The motorcycle industry must bear a lot of the blame for this. They have promoted a flashy, hyped up image for motocross which helps to line their pockets as they sell a lot of expensive bikes and riding gear. Young riders have stereotypes in competition who ride noisy, smelly 2-strokes and wear outfits that would not be out of place in a carnival, or a junior skate board championship.

Not only does this gear look totally out of place in the countryside but the vast majority of it is totally useless at providing protection in the event of a fall. Have you tried to buy a strong, durable pair of off-road gloves or a plain coloured pair of tough trousers or boots recently? Have you ripped the palm of an expensive motocross glove in a comparatively minor fall?

When you ride a quiet, clean running bike and blend with nature's background colours you will offend very few. In fact you will be noticed by very few and, dare I say it, if you are tempted to ride the occasional....*(No you dare'nt. Ed.)*

Small numbers, quiet machines, subdued colours and slow speeds when in view of other countryside users. That's the formula for hassle free riding.

Remember: What the eye does not see and the ear does not hear the heart does not grieve about.

*Mike Parry. Bucks.*

#### **Data file again**

I write as a member of the Cumbria Group who are presently discussing purchasing a computer to record and log all the lanes we have ridden. If there are any other groups who have successfully done this could they please write and give us some advice and



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information, we would be grateful.

Thanks. P.S. Great Mag!!

Barry Todd, Sherwood, Kirkstone Road, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 9EL

### You cannot be serious

I cannot decide if the letter asking us not to ride in the centre of a green lane was a wind-up or not.

Assuming it to be serious, then No Way Mr Bailey. The TRF is fighting for our right, to ride legal lanes and is bending over backwards to do so in harmony with other users - but there are limits and being told which particular part of a lane I can ride on is over that limit.

If I consider it less 'dangerous' to myself to ride in the centre of a lane, then I shall continue to do so, except when I encounter a horse rider at which time I will pull over, switch off engine etc etc.

Yours. Green Road Hog.

Have you not got the guts to supply your name and address? Ed.

## GROUP NEWS

### NORFOLK & SUFFOLK GROUP

Firstly, let me tell you of some changes in the group: *Group Rep*: Stephen Canning, "Babbacombe", Fen Road, Fakenham, Bury-St.-Edmunds, Suffolk. *Tel*: 0359 31018.

*Secretary cum Treasurer*: Eric Saffery, 15 Mildenhall Road, Bury-St.-Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 6EH. *Tel*: 0284 704235. Eric also holds the post of honorary poseur!

The new meeting place is the Manger Pub on the A135 Sudbury Road, just a few minutes from Bury at the TRF code of conduct 25mph. Group meets are the last Wednesday of each month.

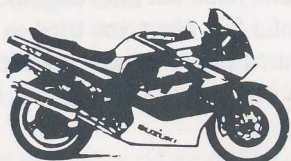
*RoW Officer (and present regular run leader)*: Andy Downes, 11 Gissing Road, Burston Diss, Norfolk. *Tel*: 0379 741539.

Bikes doing runs to date are mostly oriental, a couple of Euro-bikes, but no good-old, made-in-the-UK, and as yet, solos only. I have a hankering for a third wheel - some might think stabilisers would be better!

On the RoW front: Scama Lane - Burgate, Suffolk, a Byway for some years, now has a TRO on it, so we can't use it now. It didn't give us a big mileage in itself, but it's still a loss.

Apart from attending a couple of RoW meetings at County Hall, that's about it.

Andy Downes. Norfolk.



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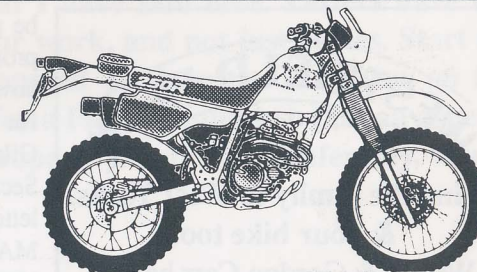
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# RoW NEWS

## RIDGEWAY BAN - PLEASE WILL YOU HELP?

Our dear friends the Countryside Commission want to ban us from using the Great Ridgeway (from Wiltshire to Berkshire) on the only days most of us can get there.

They are so keen to 'improve access to the countryside' that motor vehicles will be excluded on Sundays and Bank Holidays throughout the year.

The TRF believes that trail riders cause no problems on this route, and our belief is endorsed by the Ridgeway Management Team. This group of users, local authority workers, and wardens, has recently issued a detailed and comprehensive report on the Ridgeway, its problems, and the current work to find solutions to these problems. They reported no concerns over legal motorcycle use, and made no suggestions that reducing our access would help in any way. Not once did they even mention the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). This indicates to us that the ban is being sought not on a straight, honest, factual basis, but because of irrational fears, prejudice, even bigotry.

So what can we do? We believe that the best way to bring the facts out into the open is to

have a Public Inquiry, at which everyone can be properly heard, and the real facts can be produced as a basis for a fair decision. But - how do we get an Inquiry? Simple, we all ask for one. It is no use me writing, or Dave Giles, or Don Lewis, or Brian Wright. The Secretary of State must be overwhelmed with letters, from ALL OF YOU and ALL YOUR MATES, too. So get your pen out, and write NOW. Here are a few points you might like to mention.

1. The Ridgeway has been a vehicular route from time immemorial, it is not restricted to any type of user. Banning vehicles would alter its character as a rare example of a pre-historic road. 2. Only when walkers were funnelled along the route by calling it a Long Distance Path did anyone start to claim 'conflict'. The expectations of walkers that it was a route for them alone were encouraged,

not dispelled, by publicity material. 3. There would be less need for a special route for walkers if all the footpaths in the area were properly open for use. Rather than clear these known problems a few selfish people want to push us off one of the very few routes which are open to us. 4. There are (a few) other green roads in the area which should still be open to us, but they too are obstructed, ploughed out, or wrongly signed. No ban should be applied until these alternatives have been properly restored to us. 5. Green roads are THE most useful countryside resource for recreation. They are not made more useful by closing them to us. 6. Walkers already have more than twelve times as many miles of footpaths (for them only), than the green roads they share with us. If we are banned, our loss will be twelve times as significant as their gain. 7. We call for a Public Inquiry so that justice can be seen to be done. Unless this is the case it will be harder for user groups to persuade unattached users that they should co-operate in any management scheme. 8. The call for a ban comes after the application of agreed Codes of Conduct, and a period of Voluntary Restraint, both of which have been effective, with the signs reminding users of this still in place along the route. If a TRO is applied despite this it will be more difficult to encourage such initiatives anywhere in future. 9. No local council has applied a TRO to any part of the route affected by this proposal, despite urgings from selfish users. So why should the Countryside Commission, a non-elected body, try to do their job for them? 10. Any TRO will only be obeyed by the more responsible, who already respond to Codes of Conduct, and Voluntary Restraint. Those who care little for laws and regulations will relish the opportunity to 'get away with it' again. So a few quiet, gentle, riders will be kept away. Who gains from that?

**Please do not just copy out what I have said here. Letters have the greatest effect when they are your work, and not just copies. Start off with 'I wish to object to the proposed TRO on the Ridgeway on the grounds listed below, and I call for a Public Inquiry so that all aspects of this threat to access can be properly heard'. Or, preferably, words to that effect. Write to:-**

*The Secretary of State  
Department of Transport  
Senet House  
Station Road  
Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1NJ  
Reference: MSE5043/0/0/41/22/1*

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### The Prelude.

It's amazing how a run through snow covered hills in the depths of winter can concentrate ones powers of thinking. All the more so if you have spent a total of two hours stamping your feet and swinging your arms for warmth. The cause? People lost and a bike which won't go. The aggravation? The run leader who seems surprised and unsure of what to do next and deals with the situation by muttering about how many miles there are still to do.

You've heard them, "Me and my mates frequently do a thousand miles on a good day" Well this isn't a 'good day', actually its a fairly usual one, so why is he so surprised and apparently unprepared? I recall that some leaders are so concerned to complete their predetermined mileage that they press on regardless on the hardest of days finishing the last lanes in the dark or sometimes miles from the park where the trailers are. I wonder what will be the outcome today?

Four hours later. Common sense has prevailed and I'm now replying to my driver's questions about the day as we head home. "It's daft and its dangerous" I say with a big yawn snuggling into the warmth of the 'big man's' car swishing through the motorway slush. What do you think? I ask "I agree" he says, laying the trap. "You know how some leaders press on to complete their route"... I enlarge. "Yeah" he says to encourage me. "When somebody breaks a leg and the stretcher party find out that it was already dark when we-went into-the lane we will look really stupid" "Absolutely" came the response, prodding me to further indiscretions. "What a field day for the Ramblers" I yawn again and one eye closes. "Any good leader of a hillwalking party knows the weather forecast, when night falls, the route and if conditions or circumstances change several alternatives lines of retreat to a more sensible low level route". "What are you suggesting?", he asks with a glance in the mirror pulling the Sierra out to overtake. The bait is laid in the trap. "Well we ought to be able to do as well as the walkers, didn't we?" says I, both eye lids now too heavy to struggle anymore. "I mean any run leader worth his salt knows his route, the time it will take, bearing in mind the conditions and the experience and fitness of the party. 'Sod' being alive and well - and riing shotgun on his trip - he should expect trouble and be ready to divert to plan B and the slow schedule." "You ought to write a n article about it for the mag the 'professional rep' ", he says in soothing tone. "Yeah, I suppose I ought" I reply more asleep than awake." "Good, I'll enjoy reading it and I will tell the 'Ed' to expect it" I awake with a start as the lights on the Severn Bridge flash by. I've been conned. Bloody P.R. man Gwyn has done it again.

### PART TWO

#### The Suggestion

Do look at the map(s) and work out variations in routes-available to you. Try to link the green lanes together in the most economic manner.

i.e. minimum roadwork, maximum green lanes. We usually tackle hills from the bottom. Work out the mileage from the map. Now is the time to be surprised, not on the day. In the short days of mid-winter 50-60 miles is a sensible maximum figure. Leave longer runs for longer days. If it has been very wet, (or it snows), go for plan B. I believe there should always be some alternative, a lower mileage option in case it's 'one of those days'. Whatever, determine the time you intend to stop - while it is still light - and stop! That is a mark of strength not weakness. Your route must be over lanes which are Byways or RUPP's for a club run relying on the markings on the O.S. map is not good enough! - you should know the lane designation and its status.

Don't forget the pub. It is important that we are welcome and that they have enough grub. Look at your starting time and planned mileage again, now look to see what the villages about five-eighths of the way round have to offer. Use the phone to the police, or the local post office (if they haven't closed it), will give you some names. Yellow pages does the rest. Do something similar for petrol stations. Then I reckon you ought to do a recce to check everything out particularly if anything is new to you. Take a mate for safety and talk him into being your No. 2. on the day. This is a good way to bring new people along and there is no reason why you should not let him lead some stages and you go 'tail-end Charlie'. The point is you see that if things go wrong the two of you knowing the route should have a chance of meeting up again. Both parties must have maps; memories are fallable. Dawns the day and you have 3 things left to do before you begin your run. Most of us are self-conscious about addressing the 'mob', but to ensure a fair chance of a good day it has to be done.

(i) Appoint your 'tail-end Charlie'. (ii) Tell everyone they must ensure the person behind them sees where they turn off. Instruct them to stop and wait if necessary. (iii) Ask if everyone has full tanks because the first petrol station is X miles.

To this you can add if you wish reasonable reminders about speed, wheelie-popping and noise through the villages etc. Oh., and have you paid your run donation?

Everyone is of course responsible for their own preparation and bike maintenance but it's worth having the Finilec or spare tube and PUMP to ensure the run is also fun for you. After all, you have been working jolly hard to put it all together and you deserve it

DAVE GILES.

**DON'T FORGET TO WRITE IN ABOUT THE RIDGEWAY BY JUNE 26**

## TRIP TO THE DROME

We all gathered at Ferme Grangieres on Saturday, 14 April 1990. Who is ALL? Tim (RUN-ORGANISER) & Mary Stevens, Stephen Dickenson, Alan Carter, Rodger Dawson, Rod Butterworth, Bill and Joe Buckingham. Machines (just for interest), 2 x Honda XL185's, Yam XT500, Honda XR250, Honda 250 Trials, Honda XR200 and, let it be said very quietly, a HUSQVARNA 250 AUTO MATIC.

### THE FIRST DAY. Sunday

Tim led us over a half circle starting from our base. Sounds great, but unfortunately it was drizzling, hailstoning and snowing, all driven by a cold wind. However, our leader finally got it right and led us into the sunshine. Total of 86 miles was recorded and we were so well organised that after two bikes running out of fuel we all filled up at the local Station. Our Towing ability is now much enhanced especially with the Swedish Heavy Recovery Unit. We also found that the area can produce an incredible mixture of clay and pine needles which is far more effective than Araldite. It was incredible to see Tim's front wheel absolutely stopped by the mucilage. Dinner at the Farm was a most excellent Duck Dish, only degraded by their belief that Fromage de Chevre is universally acceptable. (Goat Cheese !!)

### THE SECOND DAY. Monday

This was led by our Host, Pierre, (a Frenchman, surprise, surprise), who had an absolutely first class knowledge of his home area and specialised in 1 in 2.2 climbs over clay/pine needles. The Heavy Recovery Unit found it heavy going because automatic gearboxes have a mind of their own and decide to change up or down at points at variance with the riders choice. A pattern eventually emerged with the XR200/XR250 following the leader to avoid being baulked by the less well designed machines. ( A phrase carefully contrived to avoid offence!!). This day we did 60 miles (Roger's figures) and I reckon that nobody will disagree with my summation of the day to be enjoyable but not really easy. In England we do not realise that struggling at 1500ft. is quite a different matter from struggling at 4000ft. There's less Oxygen about and it's noticeable. You need three gasps where one would suffice in the UK. Dinner tonight was the Farms Pig, now turned into Sausages, with Rice and home-made Tomato Dressing which was super and we finally got our message over about Goat Cheese with the Farm Proprietors saying they would get some CAMEMBERT tomorrow. HOORAY !!! The night finally ended with the hardened drinkers amongst us trying to show that our vast experience allowed us to drink and drive with blind oblivion.

### THE THIRD DAY. Tuesday

Tim leading we set off to the West of the Farm and after a few pleasant tracks Tim found us a couple of hairpin bends starting with a leaf covered straight about 1 in 3 and

followed by a rocky pine needle covered stretch about the same gradient. Apparently it had not caused any trouble in previous years mainly because it had been done in the other direction!!! I think today will go down as the 'perchy' day because 50% of the tracks were at angles downwards, usually with nasty drops. Care was needed. We booked in at the Creperie in Jonceres for the following day and then had a lazy run back to the farm ending with a mad blind up Clutch Hill. Nice climb enlivened by a slight bog at the start. With getting back a little early most of us went off to Die to do a spot of local shopping whilst I took steps to improve the Breakfast situation and the Cheese drought. Bill was not with us today - he took his son pillion on the Husky and followed some easier routes.

### THE FOURTH DAY. Wednesday

Pierre led us today and was quite gentle in the morning. Roughly followed the same track as the first day with obvious local variations. Lunch at the Creperie was an education for those of us who had not frequented such establishments before. The choice was wide; egg, ham, bacon, cheese, mushroom, anchovy, tomato et alia, and that was only the first course. Washed down with a local cider followed by tea or coffee to taste.

The run in the afternoon was the route of the local enduro. One part of it followed a reducing v-shaped gully quite steeply upward ending in a near vertical climb. No real problem to us experts except that at the time it was SNOWING HARD!!. We eventually came into lower areas in which lived Adhesive Mud which had a distinct taste for Tim and Roger. A WET run home, but at least the evening meal of Duck lived up to the standards we have come to expect.

### THE FIFTH DAY. Thursday

Not a good start. Tim had warned us that we had a few road miles to start with. Alan had crunched his knee the day before, so had lent his XR250 to Bill who was therefore riding with the handicap of trying a new machine. Rod & Roger were a little behind the first three. Tim decided to slip into the forest to cut the first corner and disaster struck. Suffice it to say that after 53 minutes we were all together again. Basic Trail Riding Rules regarding who is following you do apply in France as well, and carrying on with an incomplete party can hardly help matters.

Tim led us to Valdome where we climbed towards the local Ski area. Spent quite a lot of time bombing over snow, looking for a probably non-existent track which Tim said existed. We eventually lowered ourselves down a rocky gully and returned to civilisation in the shape of a Ski Station restaurant where we had lunch. After this repas (I think the chocolate was English - it was good!) we carried on downwards. Tim decided to use a 'shortcut' track to cut-off some road work. This started at about 1 in 4, then went to 1 in 2.5 and finally hurtled downwards like an open sided pit shaft with young fir trees growing from it, until eventually we were forced to a standstill pending an exploration resulting in an escape route being cleared leading to a forestry track. Stopped for a beer in BEAURIERE and then someone had the bright idea to use a goat/mule track home. As far as I was concerned, after walking up and down steep French forests I'd had enough and wanted home. We got there eventually. Rabbit for dinner was a good compensation.

## THE SIXTH DAY. Friday.

Also the last day. Set off with Tim leading, the idea being to take some new tracks near Valdrome. Eventually, after Bill and Rod trying various alternatives, the Buckingham Way was eventually forced, albeit thro' snow. Again it was obvious that the XR/Husky machines had a better chance in the conditions of cloying mud. Tim and Roger both suffered with mudguard blocking problems and Stephen's XT500 could be quite a handfull on the slippery tracks; a lesser rider would have packed up. A mention for Mary, whose ability was outstanding during the whole week. We tend to forget the 'other' sex when Trail Riding, but it must be said that Marys' confidence was less than her ability. Mary the Mortal continued where us Gods had fallen off!!

After crossing a high, snowy and cold Pass we descended to lower regions and had lunch followed by an hilarious Photo Session. Then onwards until we lost Rod. The ignition coils on the XR200 had come loose, cracking the case, and after a rapid repair, we found that the sparks had disappeared. A tow was organised with Stephen's XT500 towing the XR200 for nearly 30 kilometres and round more than 17 hairpin bends. Thanks Stephen, I like XT500's.

## SATURDAY

Slowly but surely everyone loaded their cars/vans and departed. That is everyone except Rod who stayed on, and that's another story.

ROD BUTTERWORTH. STAFFS.

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## TWO UP AND TYRES

PART ONE

It is certainly true that in the North East we have a wealth of fine lanes to ride. The last Friday in February and a fine frosty day, I took a days holiday and with my wife Mary and I riding my old XL185S, and a novice green laning associate from work with his XT350, we took in some fine lanes in the area.

We met up at about 9 o'clock at the entrance to Chopwell Wood near Rowlands Gill and rode through the access road that skirts the wood. On to Hedley on the Hill and down the lane past the golf course. Met a pleasant lady on her horse and passed the time of day with her. Through the lane past Wheelbirk Farm and on to the lane past the leisure/holiday development at Slaley. Now the interesting stuff begins. Just a few miles on to Whitley Chapel and a left turn into the road that leads to Rawgreen. Just a couple of miles along this road on the left there are two lanes that form a loop, not having ridden either leg I thought that it would be a good idea to take the farthest one and go around the loop. The first half was rather boring as green lanes go, being tarmac, but as the farthest point of the loop was reached and we turned left to the return leg, things became more interesting as it developed into a steep muddy lane with a few rock steps thrown in-for good measure. At the bottom there is a ford and it seemed a good idea for Mary to take to the footbridge rather than risk an early bath. The river was quite deep, flowing quickly with some rather large rocks on the bed but both the bikers managed the crossing without getting overly wet although my companion complained of a wet foot, later to be found due to the fair size hole in the sole of his kick starting boot. At the farthest point on this loop are a series of lanes and as it was our intention to use one to get over to the road that leads across Blanchland Moor it was necessary to retrace our steps across the ford and up the muddy hill. Dave the XT rider didn't fancy this option so set off to re-ride the loop while I re-crossed the ford, was joined by my wife and we set off up the hill the interesting way which in fact didn't present any real problems. At the top we spent a few minutes talking to the sheep who seemed to have been attracted by the sound of the Honda, while waiting for Dave to rejoin us.

We then rode through Slaley Forest past Leadpipe Hill and took the road onto Blanchland Moor. The track in the summer is fine but the surface in wetter weather is covered with some really slippery, clinging clay and even riding solo is interesting, two up it was even more exciting, front wheel in one rut and the rear in another on a couple of occasions. As we stopped at a gate, one of only a few on this lane, Dave seemed to be taking a long time catching up. When he did appear it was apparent he had also found it very slippery having dropped it in the clay somewhere along the way.

From the end of the Blanchland crossing we made our way over the moors on the metalled road through Linzgarth near Rookhope and over Linzgarth Common taking the

easy green lane down into Westgate. We then rode down to Eastgate and just over the bridge turned left. After about half a mile a right fork leads to a gate and through this to where we really got warmed up. There is a fairly steep track up across a field and then it becomes even steeper, I believe this is used as a section in some Pre 65 trials, a fact confirmed by a couple of guys we met who were demonstrating a pair of Quads in the adjacent fields. Two up we managed about half way up the steepest part and then Mary had to dismount as I did a restart on the hill and continued the rest of the way solo. Dave was in deeper trouble near the bottom of the hill so I went down to ride his XT up for him. Mind you it wasn't that simple and I was truly warmed up by the time I had the XT up to the top and I was ready for a breather and my sandwiches. We then dropped down into Stanhope and into a cafe for a cuppa. Staff very friendly, prices good, wish I had noted the name to recommend it to others.

The afternoon's run consisted of a series of lanes I had not ridden before. I always find first time lanes the most interesting/exciting? I suppose the various uncertainties about a new route add to that feeling. About 3 miles down the Wear Valley at Frosterley we crossed the river and turned off to White Kirkley along the Wear Dale Way, past Allotment House to join Middleton Lane where we turned left to pass Harthope and join the road to Hamsterley. The county road across Hamsterley is very good, that is in the sense of a green lane with a couple of fords, and a variety of going, some a little hard for riding two up, but not overly so. Having reached the Grove in Hamsterley we took the forest drive for just a short distance and then turned off onto the county road that emerges opposite Maryland Lea. We passed through Woodland and at Copley turned right. At the foot of the hill we took the green lane on the right that ends up at Langleydale Common. We were then going to ride the Egglestone Coal Road from Woolly Hill to Hill Top but it was full of these woolly things and it didn't seem to be worth the hassle we were likely to cause by using our rights, so that one will have to wait for another day.

The next track was only a short one but worth a visit. It's near Hill Top, off to the left just before the sharp bend at Blackton Beck. It leads down past a caravan park and over a ford before rejoining the tarmac.

We then proceeded along the road toward Stanhope to tackle what was to be the last lane of the day, Middleton Lane. A few days before the run I had phoned Dave Vaughan to see if he had any useful tips with regard to this lane in view of his spot of bother last year which has since been favourably resolved. His comment that it is marked in places with stone cairns should have been clue enough. The beginning of the lane is not easy to find from the West if you haven't ridden it before as I hadn't. But after a false start we did locate the track. The early part is not very suitable two up, just as well Mary doesn't dislike walking as she was not very comfortable riding over the beginning of the lane and actually walked for the first mile or so before we reached a better trail. Dave also was in trouble spending as much time off the trail as on it. So having pressed on to see what the rest of the trail looked like I returned and we swapped bikes. The XL185 is easier to start

after you have stalled it and being lighter also easier to handle in such going. Actually although heavier I found the XT ok and with its better suspension and performance I was glad of the chance to try it over this kind of terrain. As others have commented the standard gearing on the XT350 is a little high for the more fiddly going, needs a couple of teeth off the gearbox sprocket, although I believe such a sprocket with the standard 428 chain is not available. Having ridden the 4 miles or so to where Middleton Lane joins the Wear Dale Way we returned to Stanhope along the Way for another cuppa. In total we had done 130 miles including somewhere between 30 and 40 miles of green lanes. In general it had been a good day, Mary had really enjoyed herself, Dave had also found it very interesting and enjoyable.

Two up trail riding can be good fun, you've got someone to open the gates as well. Last year Mary and I spent a couple of days in the Yorkshire Dales. We rode down taking in some interesting lanes en.route, and rode well known routes like Highway, near Hawes, (an interesting ascent two up, and we made it although the front wheel spent some time trying to get off the ground) and the enclosure road in Deepdale. Stopped a night in B&B, rode some more lanes the next day, including Mastiles Gate at Malham, and home again revisiting some of the lanes we rode going down. Mileage for the two days was over 300. As an aside, parts of both the enclosure road at Deepdale and Mastiles Gate were a real mess, like something from the Somme, due to several somethings much heavier than a bike using them. *TO BE CONTINUED*

*Malcolm Watson Burtley. Durham.*

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