

# 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 Bonsall, Tel: 0742 748688  
 2 & 4 Tues. Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Attercliffe, Shefld.

## 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 Barrau, 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

Mark Snoddy, 091 386 0749  
 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

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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,  
 Victoria Road, Blackheath



# TRAIL

AUGUST 1992

No. 169

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



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Picture by D. Loney,  
 West Yorkshire  
 T.R.F.

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 from High Nun  
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*(I know this is a tad longer than usual,*

*but the lad is going to Australia - & anyway, where are all the other ads this month? SCG.)*

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.....Tel: 0332 704748

**EDITOR:** .....Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Clitheroe BB7 4JF

.....Tel: 0200 445657

## EDITOR

**"MINISTER DASHES HOPES OF RAMBLERS"** (Independent) - a headline sure to gladden the heart of any Trail Rider, until you read on....

The Minister in question is one David Maclean (a former Agriculture Minister). First he dashed any Ramblers hopes of the 1987 Tory Partypledge of the right to roam over all the 1.5 million acres of common land". (The buzz-word now is Appreciation not "enjoyment" of the countryside).

Then he was "appalled at the damage to certain stretches of the Pennine Way describing it as a "14 lane motorway knee deep in mud".

Hey Ramblers you have just been "tarred with the TRF brush"- chastised for merely pursuing your rights and enjoying your hobby. How does it feel? Not good obviously as the Assistant Director of the RA, Mr David Beskine attempted to blame such damage on "Subsidised" sheep (whatever they are). Thanks Dave - it makes a change from blaming trail riders.

But there's more - Maclean then promised "urgent consideration of the use of bridleways by all-terrain vehicles". Funny, I thought a law to this effect already existed or is the term 'Bridleway' being used loosely to make vehicular use of legal ROW's look worse than it is?

I couldn't really argue with his remark that "Our countryside is not a giant green Alton Towers or a sports stadium to be used for our titillation - If we cannot accept its needs, its constraints and its demands then we should scurry back to our cities and leave it alone" - so that planners can build motorways, rail links, reservoirs and shopping centres in the countryside without anyone being there to see them?

I've always thought it rather strange that many people object to the sight of a few trail-riders on a little used track, but widen it, pave it, put up signs and paint white and yellow lines and add a few thousand cars and that's OK unless you live on it - then perhaps the odd bike didn't seem so bad.

**NETTLEBED.**



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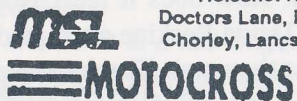
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# LETTERS

### Memories

We arrived at a car park on the outskirts of Dorchester where the run was to start. We John Gibbs, Paul Langdon and myself, had been invited over by Peter Boyce to taste a few lanes, and I do mean taste. After a Cup of coffee and a mars bar we fired up and set off.

One of the group was on a converted combination, the rider had never been on a run before and his passenger had never rode in a chair, they had some fun I can tell you.

Well, there were plenty of lanes and tracks, one of which was all of three miles long, and I was last on every one. I had a Metzeler Enduro on the driving end of my XT, which wasn't giving me much push on the wet chalk or anything else. I dropped it in a swamp which must have been ninety per cent cow muck, but it only came up to my elbows. Paul lost a welly and had to walk back for it, and John's fire went out in the middle of a river, didn't know he could speak Russian.

A good bunch of chaps and we all had a good time, and at the end of the day Pete asked us, John and I, for Paul had returned home early, back to his place. By this time it was dark, and if one loses one's car keys, one has a hell of a job finding them.

Now the best cup of tea I have ever had was the cup my mother gave me after spending two year's in Cyprus on National Service. The second best was the one Pete gave me, hot and sweet, and smelling like something out of a dung spreader, followed by a hot meal and a glass of beer.

I have never had the chance to thank Peter, so this is a big thank you buddy.

*M.Troake. Devon.*

### Coming To Terms With The Facts

"He stood on the open trail, his mind fixed firmly on how things should be and how things ought to be. Nobody would tell him different.

A typical Rambler or upset farmer you might think! Well possibly. But in this case a certain percentage of the TRF Membership. I read most of the Articles in the Bulletin every month, and they keep cropping up!

Somebody telling us the correct and right way to ride and now DRESS.

There was an Article in last months issue (or the month before) which stated that people

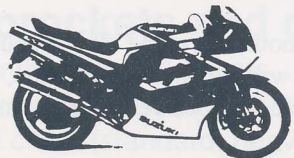
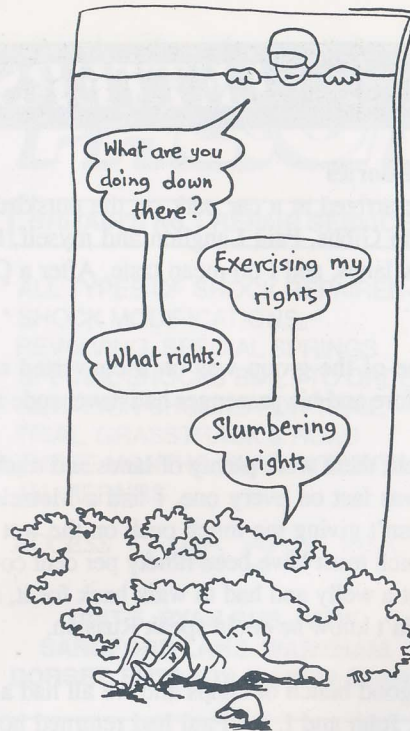
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48 MILNROW ROAD. ROCHDALE**

were wearing "circus" clothing, and we should all wear low key apparel, black and green etc. The argument being that bright colours give a high profile to Trail Riders. For those who have been out in the countryside recently, 99% of the population is wearing 'circus' clothing, I think it is called fashion. Many times when I have been out riding people have commented on how nice and bright our clothing is.

The point I am trying to make is that everybody in their own way is concerned with our image, nothing wrong with that you might say but, there are a few things we must all understand.

Firstly: The moment you sling your leg over your bike and go for a trail ride you are in trouble, because it doesn't matter what clothing you wear, black or bright pink the fact is YOU ARE ON A MOTORCYCLE! The single biggest complaint you get. When where you last stopped and someone said "Hey you can't come down here wearing that jacket".

Another Article said that "It had been reported to the Police that trail riders were on open country illegally". In fact it was the farmers lad on a motorcross bike.

The point here is, they couldn't tell the difference and I don't think they ever will. The general public is unaware of the different types of motorcycling activities and they are NOT interested, to them we are all "Scramblers" and they don't want to know. We must accept these facts and stop kidding ourselves that the colour of our jackets and pants make a difference.

We must concentrate our efforts on public awareness and R.O.W. work.

Secondly: Modern Motorcycle clothing is designed to protect as well as look good, "A two bob Helmet for a two bob head". I think you get the point.

I say let's maintain a high profile and be seen, let everybody know the T.R.F. is a serious organisation and is here to stay, never mind sneaking along lanes and hiding behind walls, after all these lanes are legal and it is our right to ride them.

Stand up and be counted whatever you wear.

*David Bentley. Cheshire Group.*

### LAKES WEEKEND - WYVERN TRF - DAY TWO

On Sunday we assembled bright and early - well, not so early since the pub breakfast system was a little upset due to the landlord's wife choosing that weekend to have a baby. There was a majority decision not to re-ascend Gatesgarth so we went over the Longsleddale Pass, down the valley, took the little shortcut trail above Garnett Bridge to arrive on the Shap Road and follow the remaining sections of the old route over to the top.

Didn't see any stragglers from Bonnie Prince Charlie's Tartan Army of 1745 but up on the very top were some boggy bits which they might have found worse than fighting the English; though the drains were probably better in those days.

It's the demise of the drains which were maintained by the old fashioned roadmen right up to the late fifties which have left so many green roads as washouts and bogs, not over use by trail riders.

Doubling back we made our way through Borrowdale where we took photos remarkably resembling one with which we are all familiar. I had a word with the farmer as we passed through his yard. Despite my memory of a report that hostility had been experienced here, this guy was friendly, and had no objection to gate shutting, sheep respecting riders. The TRF should have no problem with the former, and hopefully most members can control themselves regarding the latter.

Due to time constraints we made a longish road ride to Ravenstonedale via Tebay, with only the not very exciting track at Fawcett Mill for variety. Lunch was taken at the Kings Head Inn in Ravenstonedale. The recently arrived landlord made us very welcome, took our picture by the river, told us of his wonderful and inexpensive accomodation plus camping facilities and bike parking. All this whilst serving good beer and an excellent bacon and cheeseburger. Phone is 05396 23284. No, he isn't my brother, and yes, he may have regrets when he is inundated by hairy-bottomed trail riders.

Travelling south east we made the worthwhile link over Wharton Fell to Pendragon Castle before tackling Highway towards Hawes. Long and not difficult in such dry weather, but I seem to remember it can be a bit more challenging on a wet winter's day when darkness is coming on.

It must have been quite something for Lady Anne Clifford, her retinue of 300 with their litters, coaches and carts and all their baggage back towards the end of the Seventeenth Century as she travelled her estates in the north. Still, at least there was a pub on the top then.

Time was running out, so a lengthy road ride back via Sedbergh to Tebay and up Bretherdale was necessary. Not the ordeal it might have been on a wet day in December, though.

It's a good pull up out of Bretherdale onto Breast High, but nothing we couldn't handle With our usual poise and finely honed skill.

Back towards Kendal then up Longsleddale, over Sadgill to Kentmere and a nice cup of tea.

Another weekend of riding completed. No hassle, excellent weather, superb views, challenging roads; what more could you ask for; not a lot, but then I organised it, so I'm prejudiced!

*Steve Pighills, Wyvern*

### **Life With A KDX200**

It is fashionable for certain schools of thought in trail riding to berate two stroke enduro bikes as not suitable for trail riding. In some cases I would agree. A KTM or Maico is a bit OTT for a gentle chug down the local lanes. With the KDX200 though I think Kawasaki have managed to build a good enduro bike that is still a practical trail bike.

Ever since 1980 when I bought a Yamaha IT175H I have used enduro bikes for trail riding. After the suspension and performance of a trail bike (KE125) the IT was a revelation. I owned the IT for 3 years and when it became a bit worn out I sold it and bought two unreliable XR250s, one after another. I've reported my unfortunate experience with their fragile engines in a previous Bulletin so I won't expand on it here.

I bought my Kawasaki KDX200 A2 from a friend in the TRF in 1988. It had not been used for a while and needed road legalising. This was a little complicated since the KDX has no speedo/stoplight/reflector/ electric horn neither had it a main/dip headlight control. It also has a plastic tank and usually wears motocross tyres. All this seemed a little daunting but not insurmountable. The digital odometer was junked and replaced with a rectangular speedo from a breakers. The electric front wheel pickup was replaced with a speedo drive from a KDX250 and a speedo cable from a KDX175 added.

The reflector was easy but the electrics needed extensive rewiring. An aftermarket dipswitch was added and wired into the headlight. The headlight had a twin filament bulb already fitted but full beam was not connected. With the help of a soldering iron it soon was though.

A bulb horn is no good for an MoT so an electric horn (castrated duck type) was fitted to a battery clipped to the frame. A twin filament tail/stoplight was also supplied as OE, the rear brake lever was fitted with a switch and connected directly to the battery. I have not to date fitted a charging system but it is a simple matter to charge the battery using a mains charger every so often.

To pass an MoT according to the book the tyres must not have NHS on them, so mine don't. Enough said!

Plastic tanks are no longer a problem it seems and I've had no hassle in that respect. Besides they are much safer than metal ones in off road situations, viz metal ones split.

So what has the bike been like? After the short wheelbase of the Honda XRs the handling

seemed much more forgiving. Many a time I've found the bike going sideways and thought.....

"This is it, natterjack spotting time'."

....only to find the bike snap straight and carry merrily on. It has a most forgiving chassis. Suspension is compliant and still very reasonable by today's high standards. However, it lacks some of the plushness compared to the most recent bikes that have appeared.

Power is good and it will chug slowly past horses and ramblers without having to drop down several gears. Top end power is easily adequate for green laning and it's only in enduro's that more is needed.

The noise level is reasonable to my mind but there is always room for improvement. People at horse enduros have commented that it is not noisy when I have mentioned this and the horses don't seem to get upset when I ride past either.

Where this bike really gets into its element is when the riding conditions are difficult. Forget all of the "plonking through bogs in a high gear" drivel that old fogeys rabbit on about, the KDX likes to be used enthusiastically. This doesn't quite mean remove the brain but the bike seems to know when you are on form and a rhythm can be set up which the KDX seems to detect. There is a feeling of immense satisfaction when a difficult lane has been ridden well, when you know a trail bike would have had you reaching nervously for the Navy Cuts and hip flask (metaphorically!) at the end of the lane.

To counter this the KDX is an absolute pig on dual carriageways. It is uncomfortable above 60mph, surges in and out of its power band and screams its head off as though telling you it wants to dive off through a hedge and across a field. The piston can also nip up if held at 70+ on low gearing for any time. That's why the car takes the KDX to runs on the trailer. If I have to do a lot of road miles I deliberately choose the most contorted route via yellow roads/byways to avoid this trauma.

Brakes are not too brilliant and are hopeless when filled with mud. It would be nice to have the disc brake(s) of the later C and E models.

Reliability is very good. The bike has only had 4 sets of rings and 2 replacement pistons in its life plus various seals and gaskets. Spares are easy to obtain via Cradley Heath Kawasaki. Of course the beauty of a two stroke is that they are dead simple to work on and having fewer moving parts and are less prone to being over revved and having parts like valves go pow! (See my XR tests, readers reports and XR250 owners for further details). I recall an insulted XR250 owner putting a letter in the Bulletin to the effect that I should stick to Lego if I could not put an XR engine together (I did actually). At least

Lego is properly designed and does what it was designed to do.

Fuel consumption is quite good for this type of bike giving about 40 mpg, plus or minus 10 mpg according to how it is used/abused. This gives a tank range of almost 100 miles with careful riding and if high gearing is used.

I recently replaced the original silencer with a Derek Elwell Products one. I can say that I am impressed with the low noise level, light weight and quality of construction. An added bonus is that the exhaust smokes less because there is no thick oily deposit in the silencer.

Other things I have fitted are an "O" ring chain which lasts for ages, with minimal maintenance. After 7 years of abuse a new seat cover and foam was fitted by Aye Gee M/cs in Welling for about £30. It looks smart and feels comfortable(ish).

To summarise I must say that I am impressed with this bike and if I could afford it I'd buy the watercooled E version when mine eventually needs replacing. But I don't think I'm keen to spend £2500 or so on a bike which gets the sort of treatment trail riding dishes out.... but then again....Hmmm!?

*Steve Neville.*

#### **Fear For Ancient Right of Way**

*This article appeared in the Western Gazette on the 23rd of July this year & was sent in by David Greenslade of the Dorset Group...*

"Dorset landowners fear ancient rights of way are being damaged beyond repair. The landowners want a full review of the rights of way in the county. The move follows a meeting the county branch of the Country Landowners Association and representatives of the ramblers' and horse riders' association.

They all worried about damage being done to drove roads, bridleways and Roman roads by motorcyclists and four wheel-drive vehicles. And they are concerned about the safety risk posed for other users by motor vehicles.

CLA branch chairman Edward Green said: "Many rights of way should be protected as ancient monuments but all are wholly inappropriate for motorised traffic and the environmental consequences of allowing them to be used by modern vehicles are horrendous."

The branch is writing to the Government calling for a review of the status of bridleways and other rights of way at risk."

# GROUP NEWS

## DORSET GROUP NEWS

### Run Dates

23rd August, run leader Dave Oickle, please phone Pete Boyce to book your place.

Please Note; Always check with the run leader by telephone at least one day previous to the run. This gives the run leader some idea of how many are likely to turn up on the day.

### Minutes of July's group meeting.

Present: Pete, Dave, Russ, Kim, 9 members and 1 guest. Apologies from Ruth Colyer.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and agreed.

### Matters arising:

1. Tarrant Gunville ongoing, awaiting reply.
2. Ombudsman - Dave has received another acknowledgement. He has also received a query from Chris Slade of DCC, asking for details of our complaint.
3. County Archives Visit - Peter and five members attended a very interesting and informative evening. The new building is a great improvement and is currently the most modern archive in the country.
4. Padlock gates in the Waterstone area - Dave received a reply from Miss Cullen of DCC re our dissatisfaction over replies on padlocked gates.
5. Wiltshire run - six went on the run, with three from the Wiltshire Group. Unfortunately, the six were soon reduced to five when Dick's XR 350 failed just north of Salisbury, apparently a victim of the very hot conditions. Because of the heat and previous dry period, dry dusty conditions were expected. However, the run leader managed to find enough mud to get the group stuck in one lane for an hour!

After lunch things changed completely to very rutted conditions on the Harrow Road. It was felt that the ruts are from 4WD damage which seems to be quite a problem in the area of the run. On a later heavily rutted lane Pete got crossed-up and fell, hurting his thumb. To add further to the merriment, Dave Wilmott fell off a bridge and ended up with his bike perched precariously through the parapet. However, the run was thoroughly enjoyed by all with the thanks being expressed to the Wilts Group.

6. Registering possible bye-ways claims - Dave has sent five. Two of the Puddletown lanes previously discussed and three others.

7. Lane at Grimstone - Dave has had contact with the Area Surveyors for DCC, John Wilkie and also his deputy. DCC Would not admit anything but Dave put our points to them, including statements such as "DCC being duty bound" etc. Awaiting developments.

8. John Booker visit (Cambridge) - Dave will lead six on the 19th July. Accommodation has been arranged in Winterbourne Abbas.

### NEW BUSINESS

9. A ROW meeting has been arranged by Peter Banks of the Somerset group for interested parties next Saturday to discuss facilities for motorsport in the S.W. It was felt that we are not a motorsports body, but that our invite has come from our past association with the Sports Council.

A number of questions to put to the meeting were discussed. Dave and Pete will attend the meeting and Pete will write beforehand with our questions.

10. The following letters have been received:

(i) From Tim Ley (National Group) re insurance for clubs and giving details of the Personal Accident Policy which covers National members.

(ii) From Ruth Colyer re various points from previous meetings which Dave will answer.

(iii) From Tim Stevens re proposed stopping-up of part of the Ridgeway.

(iv) From DCC re rights of way on Forestry Commission Land. An agreement has apparently been reached between them based on the definitive map.

(v) From DCC re two new bridleways being created, at Horton and Canford Heath. Also two new diversions at Corsicombe.

(iv) From Norman re various proposed stopping-up orders.

Meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

*Dave Greenslade*

Last weekend I was helping at a horse event in the North Yorks Moors, with my wife and a couple of Lancashire lads. Wonderful country, full of heather, and dotted with shooting butts, so no prizes for working out how the landowners feel about us. There were several routes to be marked, ranging from a twenty mile pleasure ride, to a fifty mile race-ride, on terrain varying from smooth turf to mother-rock, and rights from unclassified roads to private-keep-off-this-is-mine. Obviously races are not pleasure, but I didn't notice anyone needing their arm twisted. The object is to win a 'bronze buckle', or a 'silver stirrup', no doubt to go with the 'golden horseshoe' from the other end of the country. Perhaps there could be awards like this for excellence in course marking: the steel staple, the wooden stake, and the plastic ribbon, perhaps? Not forgetting, of course, for the last to finish, the galvanised bucket.

But what good does it do, traipsing round the countryside for the BHS? Well, for one thing, it does just as much good as most trail riding, as well you know. (I need not detail the ways in which we all let ourselves and our cause down, but if you need a reminder, look in your shed.) The good it does, which trail riding doesn't always do, is this:

- It shows other users, and landowners, how easy it is for horses and motorcycles to get on together. No conflict.
- It gives us a chance to demonstrate that trail-bikes are not noisy, smelly, or dangerous. And their riders, for that matter.
- It shows how little damage we do to the tracks compared with horses.
- It allows us into unexplored areas of the countryside, where we might find a 'footpath' forty feet wide, so research can be directed usefully.
- It allows the horses themselves, as well as their riders, to get used to the presence of motorcycles.
- It allows motorcyclists to gain a better idea of the way in which horses, and riders, react, and the problems they face.
- It gives us a chance to practice mapreading and navigation in strange country, and under pressure.
- It gives us a chance to demonstrate to others that we are not brainless hooligans intent only on chewing up the ground as we race around.
- They need a go-anywhere service. By offering our quiet riders we avoid them falling back on others whose behaviour might only confirm prejudice against motorcyclists.
- It gives us the chance to say, for instance, 'We helped you out at your event, so might you support our needs at this Public Inquiry?'

There are also those who feel that this activity is not really to our advantage. They make the following points:

- All that is happening is that we are being taken advantage of. Try getting a horse-rider to support what we do and you will see.
- The tracks are all used with permission, so neither their use nor ours is any use

as evidence, in fact it can be used against us. 'The BHS ask for permission, so it can't be public, can it?'

- The BHS organisers go along with landowners who want them to use a diversion rather than a proper bridleway or road, further weakening any claim.
- The routes they should use are sometimes illegally blocked, but the horse riders will not help clear them for fear of offending the landowner, and losing permissive sections.
- So what if we do find a hidden road, and try to prove it? Which side would the horse people be on? Ours, or the landowners?
- We are a non-competitive club, so what are we doing supporting those who want to race on green roads? Would we do the same for a motorcycle enduro?
- Have the BHS objected to the **Ridgeway TRO**? Our time would be better spent doing what we joined for, proper trail riding, by right.

All these statements, both for and against, are more or less true. What is also true is that this could be a very useful public relations exercise, and a very useful foot-in-the-door for all sorts of co-operative ventures. Do we always get a proper credit in the programme, or in press reports? Do they sing our praises over the public address? Has any horse rider ever written to any of the countryside magazines in our support? Or are we being conned, with the nice feeling of a few quid in the fighting fund, into supporting events that tend to deprive us of rights?

Let me make one thing quite clear. Horse events are being run with the support of TRF members. We even have a couple of excellent lads, in Rod Butterworth and Colin Patient, who co-ordinate things. I have every confidence that they, and all the others involved, are doing a good job. I am just a little nervous that we should all think this through very carefully. Either it is a **Good Thing**, and we all should support it properly, not just by being there, but with the wholehearted backup provided by co-operation with the BHS at all levels. We certainly need the support they could offer, but support doesn't mean saying nice things to us, it means saying them to the Countryside Commission, to Magistrates and Inspectors, and to MPs and Ministers. And if it is a **Bad Thing**, we should all say so, and all stop doing it.

Come to the AGM and help us decide.

Tim Stevens

## COMPETITION

**PHOTOGRAPH REQUIRED FOR TRAIL 1993 CALENDAR.**

Let us see your best photographs, we will display them all at the A.G.M.

**The winner will receive A T.R.F. SWEATER or SWEATSHIRT and your name on the calendar.**

Closing Date 20th October, 1992.

Please enclose S.A.E. if you want your pictures returned.

All entries to: **F. Ellison, Sheepcote Farm, Wiswell, Blackburn BB6 9DG**



# SHARING

I have been asked before I step down from office at the Autumn AGM to share my thinking about the current situation, how we might move forward, and what the role of the Chairman entails, so here goes.

After four years as National Chairman I still believe the TRF has a sustainable future and the target of *'Riding as many lanes in the year 2000 as we are now'* if we work at it!

If we don't, then forget it, because nobody is going to give it to us!

On the contrary there are some who would take it away if they could and we must be ever vigilant to see that we give them no opportunity to do so by either our behaviour or our lack of understanding of the situation.

As we move into the 90s there is little inherent sympathy for the vehicle off-tarmac in the countryside and there are many influential people who want a shortcut solution to making the definitive map - 'Definitive'. Resolving that problem in a way acceptable to us is, I believe, the challenge of the decade for the TRF. Now that isn't the Executive's job, it's everyone's job as a TRF member. The TRF is the only lifeboat for Trail Riding, so take a turn at the tiller, or at bailing, or on the oars to keep us afloat and on course - or get off the boat!

The name of the game currently is 'Manage the Countryside' and to play successfully in that game we have to run the TRF as effectively as if it were a small business. By that I don't mean that we become an employer, but I do mean that regardless of being volunteers we have to deploy our skills in a way that makes us superior to our competitors. My observations of the membership of the TRF is that we do have the talent, we just haven't as yet found a way to release it. Currently there are too few members whose activities add to the stature of the TRF and to its capability to survive.

Releasing and focusing that talent is the immediate task. Over the last five years, in fact since the Derby RoW conference in April '87, we have followed the advice given us by our VIP speakers at that time *'to win friends and influence people'*. In large measure we have done this, now we have to make the lifeboat we have created really unsinkable.

If in the recent past we have focused our attention outwards, now we must look towards building our strength within. Only a fully participative membership will enable us to withstand the competition & survive.

Let's review the TRF. This is what I think....

**About the National Body:** Current practice is inadequate, relying as it does on a small number of general meetings (currently 4) per year and the individual and independent efforts of the elected officers all the rest of the time.

**About the Local Groups:** They vary considerably in what they achieve; some serve their members well in maintaining and defending RoW and in providing a good runs calendar; others are stagnant. The majority do not contribute to the national movement to any significant extent.

**About the Regional Groups:** They were intended to provide a more useful platform for constructive TRF activity somewhere between the extremes of nation-wide and the parochial. They hardly function at all.

So what do we *need*? Naturally an organisation that is effective if its purpose is to be attained, at both national and local level. This requires clarity about its goals and the creation of a working team or teams capable of delivering them.

That means a more generally active membership. Participation implies motivation, which in turn comes with commitment, from which comes participation. So how do we break into this positive cycle? I would suggest at the point of goal setting - at the AGM.

**How It Might Work:** Create an AGM which allows the body of the organisation to establish the agreed goals for the year to come. Scrap the traditional agenda and use a programme that runs something like this: Initially break up the meeting into manageable size groups (8-10) to discuss the issues (techniques like Brainstorming and SWOT analysis will help). Come together again as one body to amalgamate perceptions and draw up an agreed priority list. Rearrange the groups again and Brainstorm for solutions. Reconvene to agree tasks and roles which members are prepared to back. Align these with people and resources. Elect the task-management teams prepared to accept a limited commitment. Once we have created a team for each function, monitor progress monthly, (telephone-conference preferably). Report progress to the national membership through Trail, quarterly. It might turn out that we still need some overall co-ordination team taking a role similar to that of our current principal officers. But there would be no further need for Exec. meetings as such.

And if it works there is no reason it should not be used at all three levels of the TRF organisation so that every member becomes accustomed to participating in decision making and action.

Let's call it Radical Democracy

So where does **The Chairman**. fit in?

Against this background the Chairman would have a somewhat different role. Up to now he has been the Principal Officer; chairing meetings representing the Organisation, arbitrating, delegating, co-ordinating, seeking informed opinion, crystal ball gazing and generally being a leader (the buck stops here).

Now, however, he would no doubt continue to front the Organisation but be more of a facilitator than a main spring.

Well you did ask! I think these ideas are so different from the past that each and every one of you had better put pen to paper stating your opinion as to whether its rubbish or an idea worth experimenting with. Flood my mail box.

*David L. Giles*

## WANTED

1. WANTED IMMEDIATELY, Photographs showing the TRF in a good light.

i.e. with lots of horses, carriages, old folks, children, doing something good.

2. WANTED IMMEDIATELY, a response from every member. A skills / experience register of what members could / would do.

solicitor / a manager / a specialist / an Ad. man / a stamp lick.

We need you all!

*All replies to Dave Giles.*

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## Falling off in the Muddy Bits

OR  
My first Trail Weekend

OK, so it was my fault really. I just happened to mention that my club (the Wey Valley Advanced Motorcyclists) had a weekend booked with some "gentle trail riding in Derbyshire, down the odd farmers tracks, with the occasional ford thrown in for fun". Next time I will work out in the Gym before hand....

So the Three Amigos set out to meet the Terrible Twosome in that far off land, north of Watford, in that place made known to us all, Clay Cross. The biggest shop in town was the Kawasaki shop, pure heaven.

This year they have a farm house for us all to stay in. An ideal setting for the Famous Five, Ted & Tim, and Colin, Paul and Don (me!). Accommodation was... er 1 room with 2 beds and another with three (but the breakfast enormous, and needed!). I have vowed never to share a room with any one again, at night it sounded like a chainsaw demonstration... but that is between my friends and I! This first evening we went out with Karl (Coach) to eat supper at the local cinema. No, I am not joking, the Chinese restaurant is actually in the cinema!

We all ate like Kings and drank like Lords, then fell over when we saw the bill! How cheap it is up here (beer at £1.15 a pint!) And what country side. Off to bed in anticipation of the next days gentle riding.

*Saturday.*

All up early for breakfast; sausages, bacon, eggs, fried bread, tomatoes and toast followed by a heart attack. Cholesterol city, but we did not mind.

Then out to the bikes, KLE 250s, for a quick familiarisation; or walk round, start up and drive off!

After 1 minute we had split in to two groups and promptly went off in separate directions.... upon regrouping, and some gentle words from the author about looking out to see that the man behind is still there before turning off at junctions, off we set again.

It was just as I had been told; a gentle drive down little country lanes and up the odd farmers track until we stopped on this track going through the middle of a wood. Coach turned 90 degrees right and disappeared up the hill and into the trees. He was gone and we were going to follow him! For those of you who ride regularly, I guess this is normal. For us first timers this was going to be different.

Tim had some advantage because he had come the previous year and knew some off road

techniques. For the rest it was going to be fun trying to stay on, let alone ride up the hill. I have to say I got off to a fair start, and then began to get into trouble; a lot of it! I was on the floor with bike about 10 yards up the hill, upside down and in a tree! The only thing wrong was my technique.

So the first rule of off road riding, both up and down hill is:

i) Do not slip the clutch with lots of revs like on the road just let the engine do all the work and just plod on up on the throttle.

If I can explain; thinking it was about to stall, I grabbed a handful of throttle and at the same time slipped the clutch. The resulting acceleration took the bike out of the track rut and off course by a few degrees towards what looked like a small branch which I thought I could drive through. The small branch eventually turned into a tree trunk, which was approaching at 5 mph, with gravity eventually taking over. From then on it was clear what to do.....

After that it just got better and better. The trails and scenery were mind blowing. I would not have attempted to walk up or even down some of the tracks we went on, yet I rode the bike along them.

Coming down one particular steep and rocky path I learnt the second rule:

ii) Do not use the front brake, only the rear.

The hill down was quite steep, with boulders and high banks on either side with over hanging trees. Ted was about 15 yards ahead of me and I found myself approaching at a faster speed than desired, especially as he was negotiating a 90 degree right hander with "steps" dropping a foot or so every two feet. I tried the conventional road method of stopping, using the front break only to find myself with a locked front wheel out of control. The bank stopped me, along with the engine stalling, from a 30 ft drop over a barbed wire fence! But I did not fall off.

There was no way for me to re-start the bike so I just carried on down hill in neutral.

Onward we rode, some more on bikes than others, but we all knew that to fall off usually ment more hurt to pride than body. The country side was incredible. There are no other words to describe the Derbyshire Dales and Lakes. Most of the people we met, whether on foot, horse or mountain bike were very friendly, saying "Hello", and opening/closing gates for us as we went.

We rode on tarmac, grass, mud and through bogs. Which brings me to the third rule:

iii) Don't fight the bike, let it go its own way.

This is for two reasons: firstly so that you can conserve your energy, which you need to do and secondly so that you don't end up going off in a different direction. Up on the moors I found myself riding along a rut and heading for a large boggy bit full of foul smelling mud and other things. By pulling up on the bars and applying lots of throttle (note: no clutch!), I managed to ride out of the danger zone and onto the top of a dry stone wall which I traversed for 15 yards. At the start point it was only 2 feet high; by now it was 3 and narrowing. All I can say is that these bikes can take a lot of punishment, jumping of walls, and hitting rocks and things.

One thing about bogs and moors; do not at any time put your feet down on solid objects for support as most of the time they are figments of your tired imagination. Basically, humans don't float with bikes on top of them, but they get awfully muddy!

We were all glad to stop for elevesens and lunch to rest and take sustenance, not to mention tell whoppers about how high/far/quick we were doing it! Eventually it was time to return to base, and go out for some more cheap food and beer. We were all exhausted after a hard days fun.

#### *The Bikes*

Derbyshire Dirt Bikes (Ltd) have 5 kawasaki KLE 250s and 2 DT125 Yamaha's, which are unrestricted. They all have a simple but effective hand protector system, which at the same time stops clutch and brake leavers from being damaged when the bikes are thrown down the trail.

On the road I found that the KLE250 made an excellent road bike, even on knobbely tyres, with sharpish handling, but a lot of dive under breaking as one would expect with such long forks (previously I had been riding ZXR750 crutch rockets..). With no mirrors or indicator fitted, it was back to hand signals and lots of rear observation.

Off road the only real gripe I had was the weight and the fact that the kick-start was far too high to start a stalled bike easily. All I could do was try to get the prop-stand down and climb up onto the bike precariously kicking it over. At least it started first time in most cases.

The Yamaha was driven by Coach. It was light, powerful, easy to use and we didn't have one. It did however carry all the spares we needed, which actually turned out to be not that many.

The only maintenance required was to repair a flat tyre on Colin's bike ( I have never seen so many "repairs" to an inner tube), and adjust Ted's chain after it came off on the Sunday.

We saw a strange sight whilst Coach made good Colin's rear tyre; a Honda CX500 converted to a trail bike! An off road plastic maggot...

### Sunday

Funny, but everyone was not up so early today, I wonder why? Big breakfast again to get us all going. The cat joined in with some bacon and then it was off once again.

This time we knew what to expect. After a pleasant ride and a few more unexpected trips into the undergrowth, the occasional wrong turn because Coach was videoing us and not in a position to lead and the odd bit of getting stuck in ruts on hills, we stopped for tea at a little place by a river. Today we were going to be crossing fords.

Karl has enough trails for about three days riding and they are all fairly demanding. Riding in a group gives you confidence and if you get stuck, there is always someone else to help you.

The video was going to look good when finished. Coach would dash off up a trail and say "Just ride up and I'll catch you at the top". Half way up, he would leap out of the bushes and catch you in difficulty of some sort, stalling, falling off, getting stuck in a rut or what ever.

In fact I found myself close to the front of the group at one point on a narrow track going up a hill with the back wheel stuck on a tree root. With both feet just on the ground all that I could do was dig a hole with back wheel and block most of the track. Ted had a better idea. He came up behind me and decided to "give it some stick". All I saw was a bike wheelieing past with Ted on it. Then he wasn't and the bike came crashing down on rocks about 3 yards in front of me. It was at this point we realised why they all had handle bar protectors!

He was not hurt, although the machine kept losing its chain for the next few minutes until Coach could find a level enough spot to offer it first aid. The problem now was that the track was blocked and the others had nowhere to go. My only way forward was to lift the rear up out of the "hole" I had just dug, and reverse back down the hill so that I could restart. Needless to say at the top we were all knackered and needed some sustenance; lunch time.

All too soon we were heading back to base. The bikes were hosed down and we were again telling tails of heroism and bravado. The weekend was so good that we have all booked up to go again the same time next year. In fact the Thg2 ree Amigos hope to go back again later in the year when the conditions are really muddy. Me? I've joined the Trail Riders Fellowship and I'm off to buy a dirt bike!

*Don Hoaglin. Surrey.*

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## A. G. M.

NOVEMBER 1ST, NATIONAL WATER SPORTS CENTRE, HOLME PIERREPONT, NOTTINGHAM. (MAP REF. SK 62 39). 11.00AM START.

*URGENT: ALL NOMINATIONS ETC.  
TO BE RECEIVED BY LAST DAY OF AUGUST*

Nominations will be required for a new Chairman, Secretary & Membership Secretary, by the **LAST DAY OF AUGUST** to Peter Clark, The Membership Secretary, at 34 Oak Rd, Barton -U-Needwood, Burton on Trent DE13 8LR.

## WANTED

Somebody to look after the magazine advertising after this year's AGM,  
PREFERABLY FROM THE MIDLANDS OR THE SOUTH.  
Please apply to the Editor.