

GROUPS

BLACK COUNTRY

John Chilton, Tel: 01902 659009
1 & 3 Thurs, 8.30pm, The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton

BRISTOL

David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652
2nd Mon, Warmley Community Centre, Deanery Road, (A420), Kingswood

CAMBRIDGE

Richard Palmer, Tel: 01353 88344
1st Thur, Golden Ball, Boxworth

CHESHIRE

Nigel Hockin, Tel: 0161 456 8270
2 & 4 Mon, The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport

CORNWALL

Sally A. Madgwick, Tel: 01208 74411
Ring Secretary for details

CUMBRIA

Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198
2nd Wednesday, Duke of Cumberland, Kendal

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 237910
2 & 4 Tue., Enfield Arms, Broughton Lane, Altercliffe, Sheffield

DEVON

Richard Arscott, Tel: 01803 612950
2nd Tue, The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott

DORSET

Tony Summers, Tel: 01202 894419
1st Tue, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, (Nr. Bere Regis)

EAST MIDLANDS

Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433
2nd Wed, The Chequers Inn, Main St, Breaston, South Derbyshire, J25 on M1

EAST SCOTLAND

Les Mollison, Tel: 01382 738530
2nd Wed, Glencarse Hotel, A85, Perth to Dundee Rd.

EAST YORKS

Dave Barratt, Tel: 01977 794143
2nd Wed, Kellingley Social Centre, Knottingley

GLOUCESTER

Charlie Morriss, Tel: 01453 885323
1st Tue, Painswick Institute, Painswick, Glos.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Colin Adlam, Tel: 0181 445 5203
1st Wed, Coach & Horses, Newgate St, Nr Cuffly

ISLE OF WIGHT

Mick Holbrook, Tel: 01983 866361
Last Thur, Liberal Club, Landguard Rd, Shanklin, IOW

KENT

Jeff Hayward, Tel: 01322 863521
2nd Tue, Pied Bull, Farningham, Nr Brands Hatch

LANCASHIRE

Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Tue, Hindhead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard

LINCOLNSHIRE

Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 60793
4th Thur, The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford

LODDON VALE

Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 50289
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTH MIDLANDS

Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 24388
1st Tue, Stafford Arms, Bagnall & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton

NORTHUMBERLAND

Mark Snoddy, Tel: 0191 386 0749
1st Tue, The Beamish Mary, No Place, Co. Durham

NORTH WALES

John Mills, Tel: 01477 534425
1st Wed, Hope & Anchor, Ewloe Place, Buckley

OXFORDSHIRE

Pat McGuire, Tel: 01844 238414
3rd Thursday, Duke of Marlborough (A44), 1.5 miles North of Woodstock

RIBBLE VALLEY

Anthony Dinsdale, Tel: 01200 28507
2nd Tue, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

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Mr. C. Ball, Tel: 01952 598092
2nd & last Wed, Cound Lodge Hotel, Shrewsbury Rd, Shrewsbury

SOMERSET

Peter Banks, Tel: 01749 860396
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Euan Harrison, Tel: 01962 733781
3rd Wed, The Ship Inn, Owolesbury, Nr. Winchester

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Trevor Gardiner, Tel: 01788 815927
2nd Mon, The Spencer Arms, Chapel Brampton

SOUTH WALES

Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851
1st Thur, Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm

SUFFOLK

John Green, Tel: 01473 730493
Last Wed, Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.

SWINDON

Pete Owen, Tel: 01793 750557
1st Wed, Jacobs Ladder, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon

SUSSEX

Bevis Billingham, Tel: 01243 585128
Last Thurs, Ashing on Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing

TEESIDE & NORTH YORKS

Leo Crone, Tel: 01325 380117
1st & 3rd Wed, Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby

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Don Hoaglin, Tel: 01474 813977
3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex

WEST ANGLIA

David Knight, Tel: 01933 313816
1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Clubhouse, Opp. Parish Church, Woolaston, Wellingborough

WEST MIDLANDS

Dennis Hayter, Tel: 01527 23550
1st & 3rd Tue, Willmote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon

WEST SOMERSET

David Dyer, Tel: 01643 841139
2nd Wed, Anchor Inn, Exbridge

WEST YORKSHIRE

Gordon Carr, Tel: 01535 644568
1st & 3rd Thur, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE

Bill Riley, Tel/Fax: 01225 863811
1st Tue, The Toll Gate, Holt, Trowbridge

WYVERN

Steve Pighills, Tel: 01902 672479
Every Thur, 10pm, Potter's Rose & Crown, Colley Lane, Halesowen



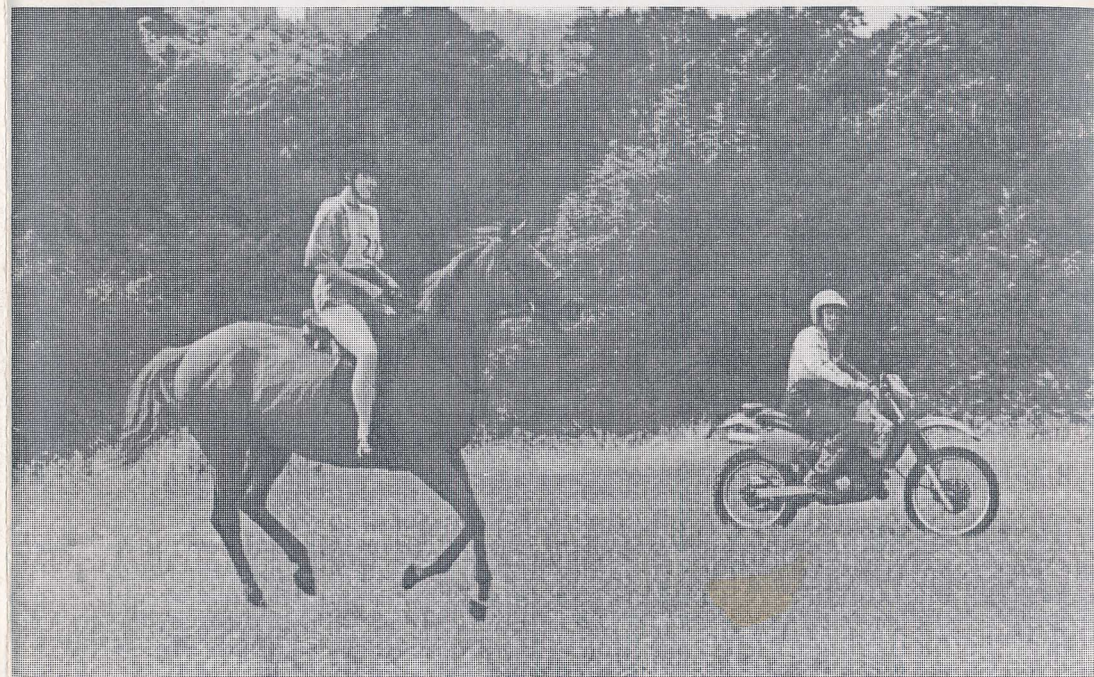
TRAIL

SEPTEMBER, 1995

No. 205

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

EDITOR: Mike "Nettlebed" Pedley.



Steve Neville marshalling at the Glassenbury Long Distance Horse Trial, Cranbrook, Kent. 29th July 1995.

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All Contributions to the Editor Please keep it short and sweet!
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CLASSIFIED

XT350 REAR WHEEL, As new. Gold anodised alloy rim, mint. c/w 4.60 x 18 Metzler "Enduro 1" (just the job to get your m/c through the MOT). Perfect sprocket, brgs and linings, etc. Sensible offers. Buyer collects outside Avon. Dave Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Nr. Bristol).

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SECRETARY Garry Watson, 6 Tennyson Place, Cleckheaton, W. Yorkshire, BD19 3DJ.
Tel: 01274 870162

TREASURER Tim Ley, 17 Heigham Close, Shelton Lock, Derby DE2 9QF Tel: 01332 704748

EDITOR Mike Pedley, Nettlebed, Newsholme, Gisburn, Clitheroe, Lancs. BB7 4JF
Tel: 01200 445657

RoW COORDINATOR . Steve Neville, 19 Henley Deane, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 8SU.
Tel: 01474 332785.

The views expressed in 'Trail' are those of its correspondents and not necessarily of the editor or the T.R.F.

EDITOR

My apologies for a rather short Editorial this month but I've just this hour arrived home from a week on the Irish Safari and Fred the printer is already on the phone reminding me that I'm late with my piece!

Incidentally, for those not familiar with the aforementioned 'Safari' let me briefly explain. I'm ashamed to say that I haven't a clue who originally came up with the idea but basically what's on offer is perhaps the best riding in GB combined with some fabulous scenery, the famous southern Irish hospitality and of course ample time to sample the real Guinness! The venue varies, this time it was Donegal, but the riding is always first class. Locals and farmers are friendly to trail riders and even the weather was kind to us this year. And please don't think you need the latest Enduro tackle. This year I took the DT175 and had no problems. Sound good? Write to me for further details if you are genuinely interested.

I also missed the last Exec. meeting so maybe I'm a little out of touch but one bit of disturbing news caught my eye in Motorcycle News concerning a couple of lads who were actually prosecuted for riding on a lane which the

local Council had recently downgraded to Bridleway status. There was a quote from Garry Watson but perhaps someone can fill us in with the full details especially if the lads were TRF members.

Finally, as I have a little space left, it's AGM time again or at least it will be on October 22nd. Venue will be the National Motorcycle Museum start at 11.00am prompt. Please, each Group make sure you have a representative even if you have to pay petrol money and buy him a lunch! Remember it's YOUR Club!

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NATIONAL SYSTEM

It's good to see we now have a national RoW system, that will be based on fact and not the guesswork we use now.

Lancs and Ribbles Valley as part of the Northern region have been using this system for over a year and whilst not being the first to finish a county will hopefully be in the top 3. The only problem I see is the lack of time. I worked out I have spent over 500 hours doing research in the past 3 years (unemployed most of the time) and whilst I enjoy it it can be disheartening to find very little interest from the membership at large (Apart from giving your telephone number out to landowners to sort out problems they've caused, but that's another story). I often find most members don't give RoW a second thought.

A typical example is the current debate over Roman Roads. It is often said a little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing and to use the term "once a highway" on a Roman road to justify riding it is the best excuse yet. It should be noted that the terms "highway" and "road" do not confer carriageway status to a route. It should also be noted that nobody should be riding any lane that has not got evidence to back it up. As previously stated in trail - research, ride, record in that order!

P. Knagg, Lancs. RoW Officer



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Enduro tyres are NOT embossed with "Not for Highway Use" or "NHS".

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EAST MIDLANDS TRF MEMBER

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MODIFICATION?

It now seems that even when good documentary evidence is presented the inspector is at liberty to interpret the evidence using his own personal slant on life.

The outcome of a recent PI for a byway claim in Borwick, Lancashire, where the title showed a "public road" and the 1910 Finance Act showed the same was the inspector asking for a modification to the order to bridleway. His reason for insufficient evidence was that landowners put down "public road" to avoid paying tithes and taxes.

With inspectors like these why bother putting in byway claims. It would be interesting to know what he regards public carriage road as meaning on an inclosure award.

P. Knagg, Lancs Group

EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL MEETINGS

The first East Midlands Regional Meeting was held at Rutland Sailing Club on Saturday 4th March, under the chairmanship of Richard Marshall.

Groups represented were: Derbyshire & South Yorkshire, South Northamptonshire, East Midlands, Lincolnshire, and West Anglia.

It was agreed to hold two meetings per year, and the next meeting will take place at the same venue on Saturday 7th October, with invitations extended to TRF Groups from Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

10.30am for 11.00am, Saturday 7th October in the Commodore's Room, Rutland Sailing Club - South shore of Rutland Water, Gibbet Lane, Edith Weston, near North Luffenham, Rutland.

For further information contact Jeff Ward, Tel: 01536 267036 (work) or 01536 770990 (home).

NOTICE OF AUTUMN MEETING FOR SOUTH WEST REGION

TRF members are cordially invited to the next meeting of the South West Region of the Trail Riders Fellowship, to be held in the Village Hall, Cossington on Saturday the 4th November 1995 starting at 10.30am.

All will be welcome, particularly those not in regular contact with local groups and those from other parts of the country. Cossington provides an opportunity to meet fellow members in neighbouring groups; all who are working for the good of the TRF can compare notes and exchange ideas at an informal event. Following on a couple of weeks after the national AGM this meeting will be a useful opportunity for further discussion on topics raised. Each group in the S.W. and our national officials are usually represented. Expenses, including tea and coffee, but not lunch, will be covered by a donation from SW groups. I will reserve places at the Red Tile Inn for lunch so please let me know if you wish to join us.

Cossington, near Bridgwater, Somerset, grid ref ST360402, is approx. 4 miles east of M5 junc 23 (Nth Bridgwater); take the A39 towards Glastonbury and look out for the left turn. See you there or get in touch if you have any queries.

Peter Banks, Somerset Group Rep.

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL MEETING

There will be a meeting of the South Eastern Region on Saturday 18th November 1995 at The Crown Inn, Guildford Road (A25) Westcott, near Dorking, Surrey commencing at 10.30am. Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend.

Please let me have any items for the agenda by 10th November. For any further information please telephone Brian Read on 0181 660 9620.

Dave Dyer Weekend

on October 14th & 15th on Exmoor.

12 beds still available.

INTERESTED?

Phone 01643 841139.

AN ANNUAL DINNER ORGANISED BY WEST YORKSHIRE GROUP

Due to popular demand the West Yorkshire Group will be hosting an annual dinner/weekend based at Haworth Youth Hostel. The 1995 dinner was a cracker. Anybody who didn't come missed a feast of bike talk, wine and beer not to mention the superb food. The fun starts on Saturday 20th January at about 7.00pm with a five course meal, chat, and a topical quiz with superb prizes. Due to the wide variation in tastes/capacities, drink will be on a bring your own basis!! Sunday will see a gentle potter to blow away the cobwebs and purify the soul. Showers will be made available Sunday tea time to clean up before going home.

The cost of this do will be as follows: Saturday, evening meal only £12.00, or Saturday, evening meal, bed, breakfast, and packed lunch £25.00. Absolute bargains at twice the price.

If you want to be part of the fun, fill in the form below and send a cheque to Paul Hall, 6 Brook Street, Bradford, BD12 7HE or phone on 01274 691848 with Mastercard/VISA.

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Address

..... Meal Only Members

Postcode Weekend Members

I enclose a cheque for £ payable to "YHA" to cover the above booking. When booking for a group, please include a piece of paper with the names of your riders on it. Thanks. Upon receipt of your booking I'll send tickets and a map with directions.

MEMBERS FROM ALL GROUPS ARE MOST WELCOME

Special edition "T" shirts will be available to order on the night.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995

Mainly through our partners in LARA we have scored a significant success in getting this Bill amended at the Second Reading in Parliament. At one stage clause 61 (1b) stating the purposes of National Parks was that they were for... "promoting opportunities for the understanding and quiet enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public". We were concerned that the inclusion of 'quiet' would be used as a pretext to restrict all motorised recreation and sport in National Parks. Thanks to extensive lobbying "quiet" has been dropped.

We were not successful in obtaining an amendment to clause 62 (2) which refers to greater weight being attached to conservation where there are conflicts between recreation and conservation. Our concerns have been somewhat mollified as we have been advised that the DoE Circular, to be issued in connection with the Act, will advise National Parks to use this clause as a last resort only after extensive consultation. LARA have asked the DoE to consult with them over the draft circular to ensure it adequately covers this point.

Long overdue is clause 97 of the Act which enables regulations to be made to protect important hedgerows from destruction, providing they meet prescribed criteria. Although the hedges of carriageways are supposed to be protected from destruction, however their additional protection by Hedgerow Protection Orders would improve their chances of not being grubbed-up.

TRF EXECUTIVE - AGM

The TRF Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 22nd October at the National Motorcycle Museum at 11.00am. This is the opportunity for all of you, those who are members, to find out what the Executive has been doing and contribute to discussions on our policies for the future. As I indicated last year I am stepping down from the Chair, however we are fortunate to have a very suitable candidate. I hope to continue to provide some measure of support to the new Chairman and the TRF, for example by representing us on the LARA committee. Garry Watson has indicated that he will not be seeking re-election because he is going back to college. We will therefore be seeking a new Secretary, to organise executive committee meetings and AGM, ensure the minutes are recorded and circulated, and deal with general correspondence. This is a key but rewarding role. If there is anyone interested please get in touch before the AGM.

Richard Marshall, Chairman



EUROPEAN COMMISSION TAKES TO TWO WHEELS

An official of the European Commission has ridden a Honda CB 500 motorcycle for the last two weeks to experience for himself the benefits of two wheeled motorised transport. Mr Graeme Preston, who has responsibility for urban congestion at DG VII of the Euro civil service, has used it for daily commuter transport in Brussels. He gave his verdict

on two wheelers at a special photograph session at Brussels Atomium on 27th July, when FEM made him an official 'Friend of the FEM'.

Mr. Preston said he did recognise the advantages of two-wheelers and that probably he will buy a motorcycle himself.

The Federation of European Motorcyclists (FEM) says the congestion beating qualities of two wheelers complement the other environmental advantages of motorcycle use over car use. These include less use of raw materials to build, better fuel consumption, less use of road and car park space, negligible production of wear and tear on roads, and high recyclability when worn out.

It is hoped that when Mr. Preston helps draft EU policy on urban congestion, he will consider some low cost measures to cut congestion. FEM says that two wheelers should be allowed to use bus, taxi and high occupancy vehicle lanes; there should be universal adoption of policies allowing riders to 'filter' through traffic; increases in secure inner city bike parking areas; and allowance to park on pavements where no pedestrian obstruction is caused. These measures are already in place in several cities around Europe. FEM also says motorcycles should be exempt from purchase, possession and use taxes, in line with the resolution of the European Parliament of April 1992.

REPLY FROM GRAEME PRESTON, ADMINISTRATOR:

Responsibility - Urban transport, urban collective transport.

NOT responsible for the multi directive on motorcycle construction standards - the Directorate General for Industry is the competent service.

The main modes of transport in urban areas are cars, motorbikes, public transport, bicycles and walking. In my normal weekly routine I am a car driver, a cyclist, a user of public transport and a pedestrian. This left the motorcycle as the only mode of which I did not have practical experience.

I was pleased, therefore, to accept the offer of the Federation of European Motorcyclists (FEM), to try out a motorbike for two weeks, from 14th to 31st July 1995.

Although two weeks is rather short, I feel I have gained an insight into the advantages and disadvantages of motorcycling in urban areas, and the experience will help me to take a balanced overview when dealing with questions of urban mobility.

RoW CO-ORDINATORS REPORT

Please refer to front cover picture

By now all of the local TRF Rights of Way Officers should have received a package from me. In it there was a list of all the current TRF Rights of Way Officers, a copy of the Strategy for Green Lanes and some statistics of rights of way. Also included was a questionnaire to be completed on trail riding in your area. To date I have only received half a dozen replies. I'd be grateful for the returns ASAP in the enclosed SAE.

The Strategy for Green Lanes is an important development. I hope that we will be able to agree the final form at the AGM. Then it will be a matter of "glossing it up" using a desktop publishing package and printing it. Then we can send it to the Highway Authorities, National Parks and other users and see what they think and more importantly, do about it.

I have spoken to the DoE about more revisions on Traffic Regulations. There is a draft discussion document under preparation of which I have been promised a copy. TROs are one of the biggest threats we have to deal with and any modifications made in our favour would be well received.

Computer buffs amongst you may have access to the Internet. For those that don't know this is a world wide linkup of computers containing a myriad of information of virtually every subject you can think of. Fetishes are well catered for. However a Netsearch for Green Lane and Trail Riding reveals surprisingly little. Maybe its time we purchased some web space and uploaded some pages on the TRF and what we are about? Eventually one could go http://www.trf/green_lane.html or something? If you want to Email me about trail riding (or pollution in London!) I'm at: steve@wceh.ftech.co.uk.

RUPP reclassifications at North Stoke, Avon have been the victim of a heavyweight barrister using his persuasive powers to show black is white and virtually conclusive historic and user evidence was rubbished.

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Consequently the local Public Inquiry Inspector was misdirected and recommended bridleway classifications. Local users have appealed and a second PI is to be held in September. Battle lines are now drawn. Unfortunately this has clashed with another PI in Somerset. We have asked for an adjournment. Watch this space.

I see that Brian Thompson has raised the old chestnut of clothing and tyres again. I would say that this is not an issue to worry about. Clothing these days is much more colourful and even Jo Rambler wears brightly coloured goretex. I saw a horse on the Ridgeway refuse to pass two rambler sitting on the ground who were wearing dayglo gear. Motocross/enduro type tyres don't cause significant surface damage worth mentioning. Even if they do cut the surface more than a trials tyre the difference is trivial compared with a 4WD or a tractor. Lets get some sensible perspective on this. I also find that the lack of noise of a bicycle is a real problem when passing walkers and horses, even when shouting a greeting. Not that this is an excuse to use a 100 dB (A) motocrosser but some noise is necessary and a safety feature.

I detect that the 4WD issue is coming up again. My feeling is still that we co-operate with all users of green lanes as long as their activities do not prejudice our own interests. What I find annoying is having to argue for vehicles when the problem on a specific lane is heavy surface wear caused by cars/tractors. Why are we threatened as well? To my mind a motorcycle is closer in concept to a bicycle because it has two wheels than a car because it also has an engine. I wish highway authorities would get this into their heads.

Don't forget those completed questionnaires...

Steve Neville

B M F N E W S

The BMF are concerned over the civil liberties aspects of electronic tagging. Not only will vehicle location be known but also speed will be easily recorded. "While the law abiding may not have anything to fear, the implications of a drivers or riders whereabouts being constantly monitored are worrying" said the BMF's Jeff Stone.

SNIPPET FROM FEM PRESS RELEASE:

London's 1000 Police motorcyclists say their new leather suits, produced to a highest proposed EU standard, say they are so heavy that they cannot raise their arms to direct traffic or defend themselves. One Scotland Yard officer said "The Yard has gone for the most protective suit they could find with a wearability factor of minus 100". Modifications are being made to the suits.

LETTERS

IN RESPONSE TO PAUL ATHERTON

I write in response to your correspondent Paul Atherton's letter in 'Trail' issue number 204.

Regarding his vitriolic attack against Mr. John Toothill, Lake District National Park Officer, unfortunately I have not read the newspaper article to which he refers, so cannot comment on this, except to suggest to Mr. Atherton that perhaps he should not pay over much attention to what he reads in newspapers.

I have been corresponding with Mr. Toothill at great length over many months regarding trail riding within the National Park in general, and the Lake District Traffic Management Initiative's Proposals for the Little Langdale/Tilberthwaite tracks in particular.

Apart from some initial prejudice, Mr. Toothill now seems to have a much more open mind on the matter, and has recently made some very encouraging comments to me regarding future 'off road' motorcycling within the National Park. It is too soon to say what the outcome will be but I am guardedly optimistic.

In his recent 'off road' driving report, the Head of Park Management came out in favour of this activity being allowed to continue on suitable routes. To this end a working party has been formed, (chaired by Geoff Wilson) to develop a hierarchy of recreational 'off road' routes for particular types of vehicle. This is being done under the aegis of the LDNP with meetings taking place in their offices.

This is a major step forward, and far from being a closed book, as Mr. Atherton would have you believe, the LDNP has not closed it's mind to ideas.

This all goes to show how a little knowledge can be a bad thing, and instead of firing off indiscriminately with all guns blazing, and making his petty slights against officials and their organisations, Mr. Atherton would better employ his talents by doing his homework first and making a constructive contribution to the issue.

Richard Smith, Cumbria

WANTED!

Information and parts for fitting disc front brake to XR200R 1981 (MTX or XL125R bits?). Please telephone Chris on 01538 754170.

A THOUGHT FOR THE AGM

Recently I stood in the sun outside the offices of the BBT in Wiltshire and watched the TRF National Chairman, Treasurer and Rights of Way Co-ordinator in deep discussion. Five minutes later they returned to the multi organisational meeting and stated the Fellowships position, wishes and the finances that it was prepared to commit to make the undertaking happen.

In doing this they demonstrated one of the great strengths of the TRF in

representing its members, its ability to translate policy into appropriate swift and decisive action.

The effectiveness of the TRF in recent years I would submit is largely due to the TRF having forged a policy - a proactive approach - to the outside world as it affects us.

Firstly we reviewed and refurbished our Constitution and Code of Conduct. Then we set ourselves a Target: 'To ride as many lanes in the year 2000 as now'. Next we set about improving our ability 'To win friends and influence people'. Now we are looking inward to create a TRF that is sustainable - through strengthening the role of the Regions - and the application of the 4Rs to maintain the Green Lane network.

That's what I mean by 'having a policy'.

No-one affects that policy more than the National Chairman: which is why as he steps down this year we should approach the forthcoming AGM in thoughtful mood.

Dave Giles, East Midlands

BEWARE - INFO USED AGAINST US

May I point out, on behalf of the Devon Group, that many of the points made by Julian Bruford in his article in the July TRAIL entitled 'Pack Horse/ Bridge', have just been used against us by Devon County Council, at a recent public inquiry, where they succeeded in convincing the inspector, despite our efforts, that the lanes (UCRs) could only ever have been used by pack horses and never by wheeled vehicles and that therefore the correct status should be BRIDLEWAY.

Robin Cox, Devon

HORSES FOR COURSES

Does B. Thompson actually read his letters before sending them. Has he not heard of "horses for courses" and trials tyres are for just that. (Unless you enjoy being pelted with stones every time you are behind a bike shod with them).

I certainly know what tyres are suitable for all the muddy lanes I ride. Road bikes using public highways, green lanes out of repair, we are talking trail riding here? In Lancs., Cumbria and N. Yorks. the majority of lanes are B/W and FP and are deemed "suitable for the type of user", ie: not you or me. Any public highways out of repair usually receive maintenance in the form of a TRO

"Ramblers on wheels" - well if wearing red socks up to your knees and a brightly coloured bobble hat doesn't make you look like a clown nothing will.

Look like road users, but no full face helmets. Isn't that what road users wear?

Obviously B. McConnell is a drinking companion; indicators on trail bikes, why not also keep your mirrors on so that you can see the traffic behind you on a green lane.

Better still why don't we all keep a low profile on green lanes by buying road bikes and sticking to tarmac. We could also join the "Green wellies are OK for motorcycling party".

Whilst I do agree that body armour is OTT, you don't find walkers wearing pumps or many equestrians or cyclists without headgear, and I see no reason not to wear decent boots, elbow and knee protectors.

It doesn't matter what you ride or wear we will always offend someone, but perhaps if we stick to our Code of Conduct we will not offend everyone.

Peter Knagg, Current RoW Officer, Lancs. Group

EDITORIAL PS

Reference your "editorial PS" in TRAIL 204 and subsequent review of "Trail Bike Magazine".

Yes, I bought a copy - issue No. 1 - and agree with general comments and favourable review. But - three questions:

1. Why does a TT250 cost so much? I mean, £4000 for a single cylinder 250cc motorcycle? Surely the Yen isn't THAT valuable compared to our own currency? These machines cost about £2500 in the USA - why such a difference in price for the UK?
2. Why no TRF feature in their first issue? Have they never heard of us?
3. Where is issue No. 2? It was supposed to be on sale on August 1st. I have looked for it in many newsagents shops and no-one has even heard of it! Does anyone know if there IS an issue 2 - or has the mag. folded already?

On a more sombre note, I refer to the PUBLIC INQUIRY (SECOND BITE) article on page 5 of TRAIL 204. So - we were beaten by professionals who were paid £1000 per day or thereabouts. Who says money isn't important? We have here a classic case of people with enough money being able to buy what they want - in this case bridleways instead of byways.

Well, a few issues ago I proposed raising the annual subs to £75 in order to establish a fighting fund of £300,000 by the year 2000. I didn't half take some stick for that suggestion - how dare I suggest spending good beer money on legal fees!

Well, the experiences of the Bristol Group as Chronicled in TRAIL 204 would seem to suggest that a huge legal fighting fund would be A GOOD IDEA!

Imagine the outcome of the enquiry if the TRF had the financial muscle of our opposition. I think that to ensure our



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future freedom we need to start on that legal fund as soon as possible.

Money talks and remember a lot of money talks very loudly indeed.

Paul Atherton, Ribble Valley Group

TYRE DEBATE RE-OPENED!

The editor's urgings to re-open the tyre debate has had the desired effect, for I have been meaning to write for some while now.

I have been off road riding since my mid twenties, in the TRF since 1976 and aged 56, so unfortunately I am not some young upstart, just I suppose in some peoples eyes an old fogey although I don't feel like it as I still like to "chance my arm" sometimes when out trail riding on a particular snotty bit. My views however are radical (of course they'll never happen) but have been built up from years of experience and observations.

Over the last few years my tyre choice has been either the Pirelli enduro MT17 or the Trials MT43, the latter being the one currently fitted to my DR350S. As I see it there are 2 main criteria, surface damage and legality, the MT43 currently on my DR is illegal because its speed rating according to my Pirelli data sheet is 81mph and the DR is capable of more, (this is beside our practice of lowering our tyre pressures for grip and/or comfort probably making most of us law breakers anyhow). The other option to remain lawful therefore is an enduro

tyre with the appropriate speed rating to your bikes maximum speed. However after three years you'll need an MOT and this states with words to the effect of "the space between the knobs must be appreciably no greater than the knobs", reasonable I think. The current crop of enduro tyres in the majority are still much too aggressive and an acceptable FORMULA tyre would in my view have to have a tread pattern somewhat more open than a trials type with an appropriate speed rating. One has to remember that in the event of a serious road accident or serious misdemeanour within the law that the parties involved will leave no stone unturned to nail you and any tyre irregularity or grey area would be seized upon plus you can bet any previous court opinions and tyre rep statements will hold no water.

A really radical view of mine is that this FORMULA tyre should be of one tread type (as in trials) for all types of off

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road speed events, enduros, motocross, etc., this would reduce land erosion, speed and in theory tyre costs and skills would increase. There you are then, one tyre for all, oh! might as well reduce suspension travel as well.

Regarding the damage by tyres, a spinning motocross tyre or an aggressive enduro tyre will rotovate alarmingly, a trials tyre will not. I'm sure riders must have been behind an aggressive tyred bike at some time, on wet grass for instance and even with a non spinning wheel bits of earth will be thrown up. I recall with some embarrassment when attempting a very slight gradient across a wet field on my XL600 with an MT17 that even with the most gentle of throttle control in an attempt to get grip (ex trials rider), the result was a great plume of earth leaving a shallow groove across the field, a motocross tyre would have trenched it as indeed they did, a smoother tyre would have been hard work but undeniably more responsible. Motocross rear tyres should be banned from trail riding. I have never used them and deplore their use.

Tyres have always interested me and I have always gathered brochures and data sheets and make a point of looking at any new tyre that might be available and from my observations there are to my knowledge at least three tyres that might just be acceptable, these are the Pirelli MT21, Metzeler MCE Safari and the Bridgestone ED02, the latter being the least aggressive and all are road legal.

Motorcycles over the years have improved or should that be changed, more suspension, more power and refinement etc. Once upon a time, no its not a fairy

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story, most of us used either DT175s or XL185s but now with XRs, DRs, KDXs etc. I have found the amount of mileage now on trail runs has gone up about 20% for about the same hours, this can only be put down to the bikes are easier to ride and unwittingly we ride faster because of it. The enjoyment factor is no different now than it was years ago therefore why don't we encourage the use of less aggressive tyres and get the speeds down, get more skillful and use a more friendly tyre.

A gripe of mine is enduro bikes used ONLY for trail riding, particularly 2 strokes. These are racing machines of questionable legality, get a trail bike and get skillful, don't take the easy option.

Finally that picture on the cover of the magazine. I realise the person in question might have had to dress like that for his foreign excursion but unfortunately people dress like that in this country, no identity, so anonymous that even their own mother wouldn't know them, not exactly the best image to create on our lanes, surely enough to scare the living daylight out of some people.

I find Bob McConnell's indicators idea interesting, it goes some way to ensure bikes used for trail riding are legal. I have always taken mine off to reduce weight and damage but it must be said that the ones fitted nowadays are very light and tucked away. One of the main reasons for removal for me was because I used to use my bike for work in a heavy urban area and I could never remember to cancel them. Because of that I felt safer without them. I still worry alarmingly when I see a motorcyclist who hasn't cancelled his indicators and hope his journey continues without incident.

Pete Wildsmith, Southern Group Hampshire

TRAIL RIDERS MOST WELCOME

As the Winter months just approach many of you will be planning outings. May I suggest the Derbyshire Peak District Meeting at Ashbourne Swimming Baths Car Park (Ordnance Survey 119). Plenty of lanes for the novice and more experienced rider. Whilst in the area Trail Riders are always made most welcome at "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese" at Longnor (Map ref: 093 648) no need to remove muddy clothing, good car parking, drinks, food (good size portions) and easy going atmosphere with a roaring log fire.

Call when passing or if planning a trip with a group phone Kate with an ETA on 01298 83218.

PS No big puddings if you don't eat all your chips.

Mark Phillips, East Mids

PS Mark, are you in business with Kate? - Ed.

A LOOK AT THE RIDGEWAY

Further to my letter of the 26th, I had the opportunity to ride the Ridgeway yesterday and I took this chance to get a few mileage figures and to look at the "repairs". This is the result.

The total mileage west of the Thames and North of the Bath Road (A4) which is accessible to wheeled vehicles is 38 miles. Of this distance 7 miles is either

metalled 'main road' or surfaced farm road. 21 miles is hard surface, usually packed gravel and not a natural surface. The remaining 10 miles only is grass or chalk.

The repair consisted, as I estimated, in about 350 yards of the track being scraped off to a depth of about 9 inches over a width of 12 feet and backfilled with limestone ballast. This ballast was rather larger than I first thought, some pieces being up to 10 to 12 inches across, but over most of the repair this coarse ballast had been covered with a thin layer of sandy gravel.

I am puzzled why they bothered to repair this bit of the track as it is not in such bad shape and there are other places, mainly on the chalk where the ruts caused by cars are much deeper and which certainly make motorcycling more difficult.

I did take a series of photographs of the repair. I will send you copies when I finish the film.

As a newcomer to the TRF I find myself at a disadvantage in reading your reports in that I do not understand the shorthand, what is a BOAT or CoCo etc.

R. Combley, Oxford

As a new member you should have received a copy of the TRF Handbook which explains everything. If you have not received your copy contact the membership secretary and he will forward it immediately - Ed.

A PLEASANT INTRODUCTION

I joined the TRF in June and was directed to the Loddon Vale Group together with another hitherto 'tarmac only' motorcyclist.

On the 8th July the two newcomers were taken on an introductory ride along some of the trails around Newbury and Wantage.

Our Guide for the day was Richard Mott, aboard his trusty CB250RS since the XT is in bits, with Neil as 'tail end charlie'.

The gentleman on the pristine Africa Twin found the going not to his liking and returned home early. He missed out on an excellent days ride of about 80 miles over varied lanes.

The next time I have the pleasure of following Richard I will bring a machete to deal with the exuberance of the undergrowth.

Can I take this opportunity to thank Richard Mott for giving up the whole of his Saturday to give me a taste of trail riding (I owe you a pint) and thanks to the Loddon Vale group for making me feel so welcome. Finally, a plug for Karl and Steph at Derbyshire Dirt Bikes - thoroughly recommended for their instruction and tours of the Peak District.

Henry Butterfield, Berkshire

LIAISON WITH OTHER COUNTRYSIDE USERS

The Cornwall Group have for several years been having meetings with the other main countryside user groups, namely the Ramblers Association, the British Horse Society, the British Driving Society (carriage drivers), the Cornwall & Devon

Land Rover Club & the Cyclists Touring Club.

These meetings have in the past been of a very relaxed and informal nature making them very pleasant as well as a useful idea and information exchange.

Nevertheless it was decided that we should form ourselves into a more organised and formal body with the intention of achieving more through positive action to help ourselves and each other. There were no dissenters from the general idea, although up to present we have no committee or elected officers relying on a "rolling Chairman" who is elected to chair just that one meeting. We have no funds so far, so therefore do not need a Treasurer!

We call ourselves the Cornwall Rights of Way Action Group. It was felt that the words "Rights of Way" should appear in our title and also that if we were to be an "action group" we should say so!

It is my belief that if other TRF Groups were to take the initiative and form groups like this in their own areas it could only be good for the general RoW cause and would indicate to others that the TRF adopted an unselfish attitude to countryside access.

I have already seen signs that our County Council regards the user groups with more respect, presumably because they now realise that we down here are united to defend our rights and take any necessary actions to preserve Rights of Way and therefore our recreation.

I firmly believe that the TRF must make efforts to make "the public" more aware of our existence and the fact that we are prepared to do a lot not only to help ourselves but also anyone wanting access to the countryside.

By the formation of County Rights of Way Action Groups we are going some way to achieving both those aims.

The proof of the pudding seems apparent in that Cornwall County Council, Countryside Access Section, has asked us (Cornwall Rights of Way Action Group) to go into a partnership with them on the National "Make a Difference" Scheme. This scheme seeks to make use of the apparent vast National resource of

volunteers.

We, understandably, would be involved with the clearing - and keeping clear - of RoWs in Cornwall. If the plans that our partnership puts forward to the Home Office are approved, major grants are available. If this all goes ahead not only are all users getting their routes cleared and at least getting expenses, but I consider very importantly we will be getting an enormous Public Relations boost!
A SECRET SOCIETY?

I still meet people who - even if they have heard of us - find us difficult to contact. Unless any of the motorbike shops etc. know of us they do not necessarily have a contact name or phone number.

One solution to this problem could be for Groups to have an entry in their local telephone directory.

BT would require the name and address of an existing subscriber to whom the account would be sent. The entry would read The Trail Riders Fellowship, followed by a three word description (motor cycle club?) then the subscribers address and telephone number. The entry would then appear in the next directory to be printed, but until that time would be listed with Directory Enquiries.

The cost? £3 per quarter - or just over 23p per week - sounds good value to me - are we doing it - anybody else?

HORSE EVENTS

Having assisted at several BHS and EHPS long distance horse rides over the last few years I am most surprised at the difficulty they have in getting sufficient numbers of volunteers to help at some events.

My experience is that we get a jolly good weekend away riding areas and routes normally inaccessible to us - and with our accommodation and food and drink paid for. Additionally at every event the TRF is becoming more widely known - and I hope respected.

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Entries to Mr. Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm, Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe,
Lancashire, BB7 9DG. Please enclose a SAE if you want your entry returned.

I have spoken to Mark Holland who agrees with me that the PR aspect of our presence is most valuable to us and gives us a unique opportunity to fly the TRF flag.

For those members that have not helped at a horse event I recommend that they give it a try at the next opportunity as I think they will find they have good fun in convivial company with both trail riders from their own and other Groups and with members of the horse riding fraternity.

Do yourself and the TRF a favour - give the next one a go!

Tony Stuart, Cornwall

AMBASSADORS TO OUR CLUB

The TRF should recommend nothing but a 25mph speed limit and that we should be ambassadors to our club.

I am not interested in what bike, what tyres and what trousers I should use, that is my choice and is dependant on my finances, my idea of style and my perception of correctness.

I have seen 'properly dressed' riders pulling wheelies in front of a hoard of 'conservationists' ripping out ancient hedgerows and planting euro-friendly new ones.

I have seen folk doing the same trick at horse trials. I have seen bikes with trials tyres dug up to the spindle for fun.

The objecting public would not know an enduro bike from a trail bike if their life depended on it, but do perceive the difference between a fast Serow and a soberly piloted XR600.

A grim faced be-Barboured XT250 rider is more likely to receive aggression than the polite Husaberg pilot who takes the time to communicate from his Darth Vader cocoon.

The TRF has too few members and an unfortunate 'anorak' image to the uninitiated. The wrong doers either become right-doers with firm but diplomatic leadership on a run or go away and do what they and 80% of off roaders do anyway, form the majority by which we are judged.

I have met some grand people since joining my local group and only a couple of total nerds... that's a far higher %age than my work place and my neighbourhood.

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Thank you, and in my own way, I'll try not to embarrass them or the Club even with my bumpy tyres and (borrowed) pink Tacklas. Please don't lose too much weight Steve, they really are very comfy.

Peter A. Lee, Towcester

PS And a heartfelt Thank You to those that 'do' for the TRF

TALY BONT (Not on usk) again

Once again, it was TALY BONT (Not on Usk) time. This Taly Bont near Aberystwyth location of the TRF friendly White Lion PH. There was that feeling of 'deja vous' as we hit the A44, wonderful bit of tarmac road if you've got a big road bike - like a DR350 (Ed?). Heading for the other Taly Bont on the Riber Lerie, and enough RUPPs to ride for a week without doing any twice - unless it's to get some you might have missed the first time!

In my previous existence with the Herts Group the "Easter Extravaganza" to the Doverly Valley / Afon Rheidol area has been an annual event for nearly 20 years, taking on almost the significance of a religious pilgrimage. (Well it was Easter after all).

So with five Herts Group members and two from Bristol we set off on Good Friday, and was it Good. The sun shone down on us making it warm enough for some of the group to ride in shirt sleeves only. But from Easter Sunday pm and

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Monday the weather came on us with a vengeance with driving rain and visibility down to 10-20 yards up on the hills. You needed to be hermetically sealed in a large plastic bag to stay dry in that sort of weather. Just one of the little pleasures of TRF'ing!

I won't go into a list of the unpronounceable Welsh names of the tracks we rode other than "Happy Valley" (actually sign posted as such from the A493) and, for you nature lovers in our midst, home of some buzzards, you know, big birds with hooked beaks. We have a few pet names for some of the tracks we use, such as the "Barmouth track" which doesn't actually go to Barmouth, it's just that you get such a beautiful view of Barmouth right across Barmouth Bay, the "Tooth Cleaner" now a "Downhill Only" route for all us ABOFs(?) and the "Green Desert", unfortunately now planted out by the "Forestry", so it's not so deserted. All this and without seeing another TRFer and only the occasional miserable walker. (I can't understand why they do it, walk, that is, as they always look so unhappy - should join the TRF and put a smile on their face!)

I can't resist mentioning the "Liquid Lunch" stops (what else?). Well, the bikes sometimes needed topping too! Machynlleth (twice), Abergnolwyn, near Dolgellau and Glan-geuffordd (on the A44) where we were privileged to sample the rare and delectable Aberystwyth Ale 4.4 ABV Premium Bitter. Made a change from Banks, Banks and more Banks!

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Covering 75 to 100 miles each day on a variety of going, without any "aggro" from the indigenous population and only one locked gate, which we were able to legally circumnavigate, presumably there to keep out the 4 x 4s. Not only that, and for the second year running, in four days of riding there was not a single puncture or breakdown - a broken back mudguard on the last lane of the last day doesn't really count - does it, Frank?

For any TRFer who hasn't ridden in that part of Wales I can highly recommend it - particularly the TRF friendly accommodation. The White Lion, at Taly Bont (on the A487) is a Banks' house and at £12 B & B for a room you could swing the proverbial cat in, plus an enormous breakfast that you can ride all day on, one can't complain. Especially not to John, the pub's governor, who can't do enough to make your stay pleasant. Also worth noting, the pub has got a large and secure back yard for overnight m/c parking (up to 12 m/cs and riders can be accommodated for all you mega-run members) plus plenty of space for both cars and trailers. So, give the alternative Taly Bont a go sometime, but not at Easter, because we've already booked until the year 2000.

Dave Clegg, Bristol

TRF AGM

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National Motorcycle Museum

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USEFUL NAMES AND ADDRESSES

BMF LIAISON OFFICER: Derrick Collins, 11 Grangewood Road, Wollaton, Nottingham, Notts. NG8 2SJ. Tel: 0115 9282806.

KEEPER OF STATIONERY: Tony Eyre, 8 Spencer Road, Belper, Derby, DE56 1JY. Tel: 01773 828311.

KEEPER OF DISPLAY BOARDS: Jeff Ward Ltd., Gretton Road, Weldon, Northamptonshire, NN17 3HY. Tel: 01536 267036 or Fax: 01536 408787.

TRF MERCHANTISER: Richard Tallon, 5 Danvers Road, Corsham, Wilts, SN13 9LP. Tel: 01249 715426.