

## GROUPS

**AXE VALE** Malcolm Preece, Tel: 01275 844757  
2nd Mon, *The Star, Star (A38), Nr. Shipham, Somerset*

**BLACK COUNTRY** Nick Hammond, Tel: 01384 221520  
1 & 3 Tues, 9pm, *The Mitre, Church Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton*

**BRISTOL** Paul Andrews, Tel: 01179 659255  
4th Mon, *Keynsham Rugby Club, Bristol Road, Keynsham*

**CAMBRIDGE** John Brooker, Tel: 01767 692805  
1st Thurs, *Golden Ball, Boxworth*

**CHESHIRE** John Stansfield, Tel: 07899 844872  
2 & 4 Mon, *The Robin Hood, Buxton Road, High Lane, Hazel Grove, Stockport*

**CORNWALL** Tony Stuart, Tel: 01208 862960  
3rd Thurs, *The Ship, Wadebridge*

**CUMBRIA** Richard Smith, Tel: 015394 33470  
2nd Tues, *Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal*

**DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE**  
Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 811949  
2 & 4 Tuesdays, *The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire*

**DEVON** Rob Williams, Tel: 01626 364564  
2nd Tues, *The Welcome Stranger, Bickington, Nr. Newton Abbott*

**DORSET** Paul Jackson, Tel: 01305 772208  
1st Tues, *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 YORKSHIRE**  
Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904  
1st Tues, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

**ESSEX**  
John Lay, Tel: 01206 263912, Mobile: 0831 886032  
2nd Wed, *The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow*

**EXMOOR** Ron Rickarby, Tel: 01271 326653  
2nd Wed, *The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton*

**GLOUCESTER** Wayne Little, Tel: 01452 611735  
1st Wed, *The Winget Social Club, Tuffley Avenue, Glos.*

**HERTFORDSHIRE** Colin Adlam, Tel: 01727 768055  
2nd Thurs, *The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar*

**HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES**  
Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 70680  
1st Tues, *Black Horse at Endon (A53, about 3 miles West of Leek, Staffordshire) & 3rd Tue, Cheshire Cheese, Buxton*

**ISLE OF WIGHT** Andrew Hawkins, Tel: 01983 617232  
1st Wed, *The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW*

**KENT** Gary Westbrook, Tel: 01843 590184  
2nd Wed, *Pied Bull, Farningham, Off A20, Nr Brands Hatch*

**LANCASHIRE** Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215  
1st Tues, *Hindshead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard*

**LINCOLNSHIRE** Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 460793  
4th Thurs, *The Queens Head, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford*

**LODDON VALE** Bernard Green, Tel: 01344 450289  
2nd Thurs, *Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading*

**NORTHUMBERLAND** Chris Moody,  
Tel: 0191 387 3507 6-10pm or 0860 302001 (mobile)  
1st Tues, 8pm, *The Swan Inn, Heddon on the Wall*

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

**OXFORDSHIRE** Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 841179  
3rd Thurs, *The Red Lion, 127 Cassington Road, Yarnton*

**PEAK DISTRICT** Neil Walker, Tel: 01788 811919  
1st Thurs, 8pm, *Travellers Rest, Ashbourne Road, Derby*

**RIBBLE VALLEY** John Hargreaves, Tel: 01254 721897  
2nd Tues, *Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)*

**SHROPSHIRE** Rob Latham, Tel: 01952 592324  
2nd & last Wed, *White Horse, Shrewsbury*

**SOMERSET** Steve Hounsell, Tel: 01460 66452  
2nd Thurs, *The Bell Hotel, Currey Rivel, Nr. Taunton*

**SOUTHERN** Russ McDermid, Tel: 01703 812371  
3rd Tues, *The Phoenix, Twyford, Nr. Winchester*

**SOUTH LONDON & SURREY**  
Steve Sharp, 0181 773 4204  
9pm every Wed, *Ewell Sports & Social Club, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey*

**SOUTH NORTHANTS**  
Trevor Gardiner, Tel: 01788 815927  
2nd Mon, *The Live & Let Live Pub, Harpole, nr. Northampton*

**SOUTH WALES** Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851  
1st Thurs, *Welsh Institute of Sport, Cardiff, 8pm*

**SUFFOLK** Richard May, Tel: 01787 374073  
Last Wed, *Manger Pub, A134 Sudbury Rd, Bury-St-Ed.*

**SWINDON** Keith Owen-Bines, Tel: 01793 751129  
1st Wed, *The Carrier's Arms at South Marston, Swindon*

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

**TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS**  
Mark Bieganski, Tel: 01904 656469  
3rd Wed, 8.30p.m., *Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby*

**THAMES VALLEY** Laurence John, Tel: 01784 470438  
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, Wellesborough*

**WEST MIDLANDS** Colin Bott, Tel: 01386 834105  
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon*

**WEST YORKSHIRE** Gordon Carr, Tel: 01729 830569  
1st & 3rd Thurs, *Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford*

**WILTSHIRE**  
Alan Yandell, Tel/Fax: 01225 864187 Mob: 07989 127093  
1st Tues, *The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford*

**WORCESTERSHIRE**  
David Gunster, Tel: 01905 452742 Mobile: 07970 919790  
3rd Tuesdays, *The Fox at Bransford, Worcs.*



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

# TRAIL

AUGUST, 2000

No. 264

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



Starbotton, Yorkshire Dales. May 1999. Photo by Cliff Wharton.

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**All Contributions to the Editor .... Please keep it short and sweet!  
COPY DEADLINE: FIRST POST, 1ST TUESDAY OF MONTH**

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TRF Website <http://www.trf.org.uk>

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

## EDITORIAL

First of all I would like to bring to your attention the result that one of our members, Simon Gilbert MRSH, has obtained. Simon is most concerned about the proposals to re-classify all RuPPs as byways that will exclude the use of motorised vehicles. His dedication and persistent reasoned argument in a series of letters to his MP, Nick Gibb of Bognor Regis & Littlehampton constituency, resulted in the reply shown over the page. Much of his argument revolves around the following paragraph that he wrote in one of his letters to Mr. Gibb:

*'The very day that the Department of Transport and the Regions published the results of their Consultation Paper into 'Improving Rights of Way', they published the 'Countryside & Rights of Way Bill'. The Consultation Paper showed that of the 1504 responses to the proposals that Roads Used as Public Paths (RuPPs) should be re-classified as Bridleways (no vehicular access). 77% were against. The favoured option by almost 80% of respondents was re-classification as Byways (with vehicular access). So what does the Bill do? Ignore it completely. Sections 43 & 44 say that all RuPPs shall be known as 'Restricted Byways', over which there will be no vehicular rights. In other words the Secretary of State has asked the questions and ignored the answers.'*

Note however that this means that we will have to do more research, make more claims, etc. All this when you could be out enjoying the countryside. The onus of proof of vehicular rights will become our problem.

More on the subject of enjoying trail riding - yours truly has had a busy month of riding and socialising. The Ribble Valley TRF Group has recently held its Annual Barbecue which was wet but still enjoyed by everyone. We made a sizeable profit which has been donated to the TRF Fighting Fund. All in all a very worthwhile event.

I have also had a 2 day ride with an overnight stay in Alston, North Yorkshire and a couple of weeks later I went on a 'Stag Trail Riding Weekend' in North Wales. This was for Gordon Dickinson, affectionately known as 'The Sheriff' (he's a traffic cop when he's not trail riding). Gordon is getting married on Saturday 19th August. We hope you and Jane have an enjoyable Wedding Day Gordon and good luck to you both. We had a great weekend with two run leaders who were organised through the group contact shown on the back page of TRAIL. Many thanks to John Mills and his friend Neil for guiding us over some marvellous scenery and some interesting lanes.

*Fred Ellison*

FROM CHRIS MULLIN MP  
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE



Nick Gibb Esq MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

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TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS

ELAND HOUSE  
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OUR REF: M/CM/10983/00

Dear Mr Gibb,

Thank you for your letter of 7 April to Michael Meacher enclosing one from your constituent, Mr S Gilbert of 2 St Mary's Mews, Felpham Road, Felpham, about the Countryside and Rights of Way Bill. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

I note your constituent's concern about the use of motor cycles on roads used as public paths (RUPPs) and byways open to all traffic (BOATs). We recognise that motorists have a right to use byways which have been classified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being open to all traffic. We reviewed a number of options for protecting byways, including banning motorised vehicles from them completely. We found no compelling evidence to support an overall ban on the recreational use of byways by motor vehicles, but we acknowledged that they can cause considerable localised damage and recognised the need for better management of byways at a local level - including the use where appropriate of traffic regulation orders, as suggested by Mr Gilbert. We published *Making the Best of Byways* - a practical guide for highway authorities on managing vehicles on byways. I enclose a copy for your information. We are also continuing to encourage motor vehicle user groups to develop and implement codes of conduct.

The proposed new legislation provides for the reclassification of all remaining RUPPs as a new category of highway - Restricted Byway (RB). The public will have a right of way over RBs on foot, horse, bicycle and in horse drawn carriages. This reclassification of RUPPs to Restricted Byway does not in any way change the rights of vehicular users. Currently RUPPs should only be used by vehicles if there is evidence of pre-existing vehicular rights. Use of a RUPP by a vehicle where such evidence does not exist may constitute an offence under current legislation. This is because a RUPP should (under section 54 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) be reclassified according to the rights which exist over it, usually as a BOAT or a bridleway. If there is no evidence of vehicular rights, the RUPP could be a bridleway and it is an offence to drive a motor vehicle on a bridleway.

The redesignation of RUPPs to Restricted Byways would not change this, it would simply confirm that Restricted Byways have at least bridleway plus horse and carriage rights. If there is evidence of pre-existing vehicular rights on a Restricted Byway it is open to any person to request the local authority to make a definitive map modification order to reclassify the way as a BOAT.

Yours sincerely,

Mr CHRIS MULLIN

Approved by the Minister  
and signed in his absence

## NOTICE BOARD



### PICOS TRIP

I am arranging a trip to the Picos Mountains in Northern Spain and am looking for additional riders. We are trailering the bikes and using the ferry to Santander near Bilbao. Accommodation is in a very good hotel at the foot of the mountains. The cost is approximately £250 including B&B and ferry crossing. The date is provisionally 20th to 28th September 2000.

You are guaranteed a great week trail riding with very few ramblers to be seen.

If you are interested please ring me on 01476 402447 or e-mail [andrewchilds@netscapeonline.co.uk](mailto:andrewchilds@netscapeonline.co.uk)

Andrew Childs, East Mids Group

## RoW NEWS

### ENCOURAGING REPLY FROM M.P.

I think all Green Laners will be interested in the following letter I have just received from John Burnett, M.P., in reply to my numerous enquiries:

"My colleague, David Heath, M.P., has advised me that nothing in the proposed Countryside and Rights of Way Bill reduces the current level of access for any activities which are currently legally performed.

You will be aware that the Countryside and Rights of Way Bill has now passed out of the House of Commons, but your concerns have been made known to our Liberal Democrat Spokesperson in the House of Lords."

This is indeed good news, if it is adhered to.

Incidentally I will print your appeal for the TRF Fighting Fund in the next issue of our magazine.

John Chilcott, North Devonshire

**NATIONAL RALLY WINS THROUGH**

Living up to its reputation of a true test of rider and machine, the weather played its full part in testing out competitors on this year's National Rally.

Run over the weekend of 1st/2nd July, 1200 competitors, starting from control points in counties as far afield as Wiltshire, Cheshire, Lincolnshire and Berkshire, had to contend with mixed weather from sunshine to driving rain to complete their specified mileage.

The mileage range spanned from 100 to 540 miles, but the top Gold awards required, in addition, visits to at least 24 controls during the 20 hour marathon and for a platinum award, a special test also had to be undertaken.

Top honours this year went to Steve Thomas on his Honda VFR, with second place going to Roy Alcock on his Triumph Sprint and third to Mick Morris on another Honda.

Best combined age of rider and machine went to renowned frame builder, 73 year old Ken Sprayson on his 1948 Norton 500.

A full list of results is held by the ACU and copies will be sent to all competitors.

**BETA ALP**

Many of you have been very patient awaiting the arrival of the  
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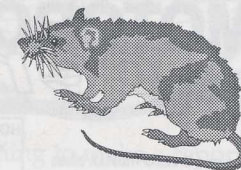
**September 30th - October 1st, Derby**

*Day 1: Coping with the Countryside and RoW Bill.  
General Principles and New Training Needs*

*Day 2: Benefiting from the Countryside and RoW Bill.  
Detailed Workshop - What the Bill means and How to Meet these Needs.*

- All TRF members are invited - Group, Region and National Officers, anyone wishing to help more effectively and anyone needing to claim rights before they are lost for ever (i.e. you!).
- You may attend one day or two.
- The venue has all you need for an overnight stay, including a bar.
- Costs will be moderate - Groups and Regions should support their volunteers.

DETAILS FROM TIM STEVENS,  
e-mail: timLARA@aol.com or Tel: 01630 657627,  
P.O. Box 20, Market Drayton, TF9 1WR.

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# TRAIL RIDING HEAVEN

You may like to know that trail riding can be made that extra bit special in this country, if you can find a company prepared to put in enough money, commitment and enthusiasm. KTM Adventure Tours certainly have and probably offer the most delightful green-laning in England.

'Loads Off Road Fun' whether you're a complete novice or awesome expert. Basic tuition and practice is included on the Friday afternoon and runs are graded. Below are the 21 tips to staying upright, covered on the weekend. I wish I'd had those when I started out!!! many years and bruises ago.

Just outside Plymouth, you'll explore the hidden treasures of Devon and Cornwall's finest trails. The scenery is truly glorious. There is also the luxury of brand new KTM 400s, properly serviced and with electric start. All top spec riding kit is provided, plus full insurance.

Experience the eccentricities of staying in an inexpensive farmhouse hotel, with the farm animals treated as pets and guests in the bar. Visit the colourful and quirky Rocky at the world renowned 'Lick, Chew 'n Suck Shop' (he sells ice-creams, pasties and sweets on the beach!)

How can so much be such amazing value and smiles per mile? It's hard to believe, but true. I've been several times now and can't wait to get away again. It's the ultimate stress buster. Ten out of ten.

There may also be a couple of spaces left for Andorra in June/July and that scores twelve out of ten. Sensational riding.

To book, get in quick and call Jeff Phillips of KTM Adventure Tours Ltd. on 01752 486716 or give me a call for more detail.

Gregory Haddock  
Telephone 01454 238875

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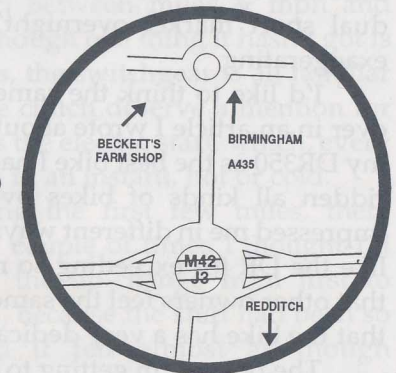
## TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP EXECUTIVE MEETING 23rd September 2000 at Beckett's Island, Birmingham

### AGENDA

- 10.30 Welcome & outline of the day  
Notification of any other business  
Approval of the Minutes of 3rd June in TRAIL 263  
Matters Arising: updates on the actions:
- Training. All Group Reps
  - Archive. KW
  - Insurance. JG & RM
  - Secure Communication All Groups. JP
  - Working Groups Progress. All concerned
  - Group & Regional Discussions on Regionalisation - feedback All Groups

### Reports:

- New Legislation TS
  - RoW Report RM
  - LARA Report DG
  - Finance & Fighting Fund JG
- 12.30 LUNCH (*items after lunch are for discussion*)  
13.30 Looking ahead for the TRF  
14.15 Vehicular User Needs 2001  
15.00 Preparation for the AGM  
15.45 AOB  
16.30 Close



It would be of considerable help to the Meeting if those wishing to make a report or brief factual statement did so in writing and duplicated it for circulation.  
Thanks. David Giles.

## STEVE WELCH Cornwall Group

It is with much sadness that we report the death of Cornwall TRF member, Steve Welch.

Steve was involved in a collision between his road bike and a tractor on the 10th of May.

During the time that Steve had been a Member of this Group he had made many friends who will long remember him for his enthusiasm, good nature and good humour.

He will be sadly missed.

Tony Stuart

# Diamond In The Rough

## THE NEW SUZUKI DR-Z400S

By  
Roger Wood

"When they come to write up the dirt bike history of the 1990's... I reckon the bike that'll come to be regarded as the most influential as far as trail riding goes will be the ubiquitous Suzuki DR350." So ran the leader to a DR350 buyer's guide in TBM - a magazine noted for its frankness - so when its Editor Si Melber went on to say that "...when the bike was first introduced into the UK back in Feb '91, it more or less revolutionised the dual sport market overnight", there was no reason to suppose he was exaggerating.

I'd like to think the same sort of matter-of-factness would have come over in an article I wrote about a year ago, for another club, in which I rated my DR350 as the best bike I had ever owned or ridden, bar none. I guess I've ridden all kinds of bikes over the years, including several which have impressed me in different ways, but there's not a single one which stands out like the DR for exceeding so many of my expectations. On the assumption that other owners feel the same way about theirs, I think it can safely be said that the bike has a very dedicated following.

The points I'm getting to, in terms of the DR-Z400, are twofold. On one hand the new bike comes with a proven heritage; on the other it has got a real tough act to follow. I'm sure Suzuki's design team must have been very well aware that, unless the DR-Z could be shown to be demonstrably better than its predecessor, it could have been off to a cold reception. They will also have needed to take account of the general competition, as well, given that a lot of good bikes have come along in the last few years: whereas the 350 stood out in '91 because nothing else came close, the new 400 would be up against Honda's XR400R and Yamaha's WR400F, and a whole score of bikes in the larger and smaller capacity classes, all fighting for a piece of the dual sport market.

I'd seen a DR-Z at the NEC and I knew there and then I liked what I saw. By the time I saw another one, at the show at the Ally Pally, I had already put down a deposit for one. On Thursday, March 9th, my waiting was over.

So what do I think of my new purchase? I like the overall design, which

has a similar silhouette to the RM250 motocrosser and which, therefore, gives it the appearance of a true modern dirt bike. Standing it alongside my 350 (a 1992 model, one of the early ones) to make a visual comparison, it seems the only features they have in common are their front brake master cylinders, their twistgrip assemblies and their Suzuki badges. Sure, there are some parts recognisable from other Suzuki off-roaders (eg wheels from the RM/RMX and headlight from the DR650) but the fact it shows so little of its original parentage just goes to illustrate how different they are, and how the DR-Z really is - with the above exceptions - all new from the ground up.

Slinging my leg over it for the first time, my first impression was that there's more to the MXer resemblance than looks, in that it actually feels like one, too. Turn the ignition key and on comes the digital display for the speedometer, the two (adjustable) trip meters, and clock/timer/stopwatch. It's pretty trick inasmuch as you can select between miles & mph and kilometres & kmh at the press of a button, although one thing it hasn't got is a rev counter. Moving over the other controls, the switchgear is all familiar Suzuki equipment, and the twistgrip and the clutch deserve a mention for their lightness. All that's left to comment on is the electric start, which, every time I've used it, has fired the engine into life in an instant, hot or cold.

During the first few miles, there were a couple of times I thought I'd fluffed the up-change from first to second, because the shift had been so smooth it felt almost as though nothing had happened. Both times, I gave the lever an extra stroke with the result that I actually double-shifted into third; however, far from reacting like it was labouring - the worst thing you can do with a brand new engine - the bike just picked up the revs and carried on accelerating without a hint of hesitation. I'd take that as a sign of the engine's low-end torque rather than an indication that the ratios are particularly close: the 400, in fact, runs a 5 speed box compared to the six of the 350.

The plain fact is, though, that the

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new engine does give every impression of having the extra power and flexibility to make the sixth gear unnecessary. Even at running in speeds the bike felt quicker and more responsive and I wouldn't be surprised, once it is run in, to see it capable of doing about 95mph\*. While I'm on the subject of speed, the bike remained perfectly stable during a quick spurt up to 80-85, revealing none of my 350's occasional tendency to get into a bit of a weave, particularly if it got into 'dirty air'.

In a test report I saw just days before mine was ready to collect, I'd read that for a supposedly lightweight bike, it felt surprisingly heavy to move about at walking pace: I thought the same the first few times I had to wheel mine around but it soon left my mind so maybe it was just a case of getting used to the taller stance of the bike. Being pretty tall myself I'm not troubled by the seat height (36.8 inches) and the only change I've made to the suspension settings has been to make the front a little softer, by backing off the preload. However, although there is plenty of adjustment available on the 49mm front forks and the progressive linkage rear unit, both in terms of spring preload and compression damping, it'd be wrong to assume that simply fiddling with a couple of screws and lock-rings would provide a suitable way of altering the ride height by any significant amount.

The quality which has impressed me most, so far, is the handling: it really is pin sharp. The 400 comes equipped with a pair of Bridgestone TrailWings which are dual sport tyres with a bias towards tarmac and which, on the road, are well up to letting you enjoy the bike to the full and scythe through bends with confidence.

As for the brakes, you can set up the front brake lever exactly as you like by means of a screw and locknut adjuster. Both brakes - a two piston caliper operating a 250mm disc at the front and single piston caliper working a 220mm disc at the rear - give good feel and feedback, and it's good to note the rear caliper has been designed to accept extra thick pads.

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So far, a bad shoulder and the need to get the bike run in have kept all my riding to tarmac. No matter - there have probably been quite enough reports on the bike's off-road prowess, already, following its press launch in Fuerteventura, for there to be little that I could add; having said that, what I would like to do, if possible, is get along to one of the DR-Z Sensation tour dates, to hear what other riders - who may never have ridden a dirt bike before - have to say about the bike.

If there was one question that started to form in my mind, it was whether the bike was maybe a bit too 'full on' - a little too sexy - to appeal to riders looking to do no more than gentle green-laning. With my 350, for example, I'd think nothing of riding to Wiltshire, doing 50 miles of trail riding, and riding it home again at the end of the day. Just looking at the skinny little seat of the 400, it'd be easy to assume that it wouldn't offer the same sort of comfort, but I made a point of spending a whole day with the bike and didn't tire of it at all. No particular vibration comes to mind: the thing I have noticed, and think is great, is that as soon as you wind on the throttle, there's an almost animal-like tension that seems to run through the bike, like the flexed reaction of a cat to seeing a bird. I like the exhaust note, too: it's not loud - I wouldn't want it to be - but there's enough of a rasp that

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you're never led to think that it's damping the performance.

To my mind, there are a couple of things that could have been better: I'm a bit puzzled why Suzuki have spoiled a perfectly good pair of mirrors by chopping about an inch off their stalks, and have given the ignition switch such an exposed mounting that it seems to be begging the attention of any pondlife with a screwdriver. However, in terms of differences between the old model and the new, the only things that I miss from the 350 are the full-width bash plate and the pair of rear grab handles which were just right for lifting the bike, for pillions to hold on to, and as strapping points to carry a week-end bag. I just know you're waiting for me to add the lack of a rev counter to my list of gripes but I can't say I've been bothered by its absence at all: then again, maybe us dirt bike riders just never ride fast enough to need one (ho-hum).

On balance, though, those few criticisms are well outweighed by all the good points, from the whole clean look of the bike, down to the neat little details like one of the snail cam chain adjusters being welded to the rear spindle, the easy access air filter, and the provision for fitting the brake pedal with a wire saver to prevent it getting bent.

From all I've seen so far, I'd say the bike has been well worth the wait, and it's not just my SE London accent that makes me say that the DR-Z puts the jewel in dual sport.

As for the vital question, of whether the DR-Z is a worthy successor to the 350, my answer has got to be yes. A very definite yes.

*Roger Wood*

\*I wasn't far wrong: on Mallory Park's Kirby Straight the bike was clocking 97mph. (For what little difference it might make - a couple of mph at the top end, maybe - I've actually noticed my bike has been fitted with a 44 tooth rear sprocket rather than the 43 noted in the specs.).

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# letters



## CONSIDER THE GREY AREA

Thank you for the Trail magazine. It is always a stimulating read.

Being particularly taken with Peter Ballard's letter regarding locally held funds, I reckon it's the 'grey area' nature of the accounts which makes it interesting to consider. I note that Peter plays Devil's Advocate in his own letter so that a balanced view can be had, but I do feel that he chops off one avenue which deserves a little more exploration. His paragraph headed '-TRF - who's money is it?' - states as fact that it is TRF members money paid into a TRF group for the benefit of the TRF group, and there's the debate. The money may or may not be from members, and it may or may not be for the benefit of the Group. If I or my wife give money or stamps or the loan of a bike to a colleague, then we expect the recipient in person to be answerable to us for the proper use of those assets according to our wishes when they were given, and we would have no wish for the national officers to take responsibility for them. Similarly, when I send in my TRF subscriptions and donations for particular purposes then I'd be disappointed if they were given over for some other use. I'm sure that the National Treasurer has no time to be issuing cheques for hire of the village pub's meeting room, buying the beer or stamping letters to Farmer Bulman etc. Locals, even if they are all members, must surely be permitted an economic existence outside the national club if they so desire. They are free to vote otherwise with cheques. To encapsulate; the title in the money is defined by the giver. No title, no interest. Ah well, so much for my idle thoughts.

P.S. the Nidderdale newspaper is prominently carrying the stories of the two lanes which North Yorks CC closed. Volunteer repair efforts have put them (and me) to shame. I really would have preferred my road fund license money to have paid for local road upkeep, but I was required to pay it to central funds and not enough of it has found its way back where it's needed. Tch, there was no need for that, now was there?

*Compo*

## AN INVITATION TO HELP A VALUED CUSTOMER

I learned with some interest of a letter in the June edition of TRAIL from a disgruntled owner of a KTM200EGS who had experienced a 'cold



seize' with his new purchase and the apparent lack of after sales attention he received from KTM UK in particular.

From motorcycles to microwaves, any product with a warranty agreement is obliged to honour that warranty period, and KTM are no different in this operation to any of our other Japanese or European colleagues for that matter.

Furthermore any technical information on adjustments that may be of benefit to the operation of any KTM motorcycle is delivered to us by the parent company in Austria. This information has to be routed to all our official dealers within the official KTM UK dealer network.

I personally have attempted to uncover the history of this particular case but unfortunately I have drawn a blank. The customer's name does not appear on any warranty registration forms (which are filled in by the official KTM dealer when the customer purchases the bike). We have asked our dealer network if they have indeed sold a 200EGS to this customer: the answer has been no. Contrary to the comments in the letter we at KTM have not been shown the offending stripped down barrel and piston.

Having been on both sides of the 'motorcycle counter' I endorse customer care as an essential part of the daily agenda in our industry. I would therefore like to invite the gentleman to contact me so that we can resolve the above confusion to his satisfaction.

*Kevin Burk, UK Sales Manager KTM Sportmotorcycle UK Ltd.*

## OLD MEMORIES OF PIONEERING DAYS OF LOST TRACKS

I started the Sheffield TRF Group in 1970, one of the first. Every weekend we were out in Derbyshire exploring new trails. Some had uncertain vehicular rights but I always had pre-1835 map evidence just in case.

The most difficult track I ever rode was Doctors Gate from Glossop to the top of the Snake Pass in 1971. The old track was washed out in many places and a lot of manhandling was needed. My Suzuki Trail Cat 120 was only 180lb. I'll never forget it.

Cut Gate Pass is another lost track that runs over 2000ft from the Derwent Reservoir to the Flouch Inn near Langsett. Hair raising! Worse than Highway. Far worse.

Finally another exciting early exploration was over Jacobs Ladder from Hayfield to Edale. The Manchester 17 Club used that one in the early 1970s.

All three are 'politically incorrect' or illegal now 30 years later, apart from inviting an instant TRO from the National Park! But I'll never forget them as long as I live.

In 1970-5 the National Parks didn't understand the complex vehicular rights of way issues and turned a blind eye! 'Go on then take us to court' I said to the bemused and gob smacked wardens. They never did. We skated on thin legal ice in those days, but like now the TRF is not afraid. Only the opposition is much stronger nowadays with cases brought in Derbys against the TRF which the District Auditor might be interested in.

The TRF should not hesitate in using the proper complaints procedures i.e. local ombudsman. Forms obtainable from all Council Offices!

*Brian G. Thompson*

## TOWING BIKES QUESTION

I have read with interest the subject of towing bikes in the TRF magazine. It should be remembered that if the engine is a dry sump oil system like the XR400, then the chain should be removed or disconnected. The result otherwise will be a seized gearbox without a pressurised oil supply.

*Tim Gooderson, Kent Group*

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## TOWING MOTORBIKES

If you try to hold a tow rope with your right foot as suggested by a previous correspondent, foot brake operation will be hampered. Bear in mind that it is essential that the towed rider does most of the braking.

Most trail bike foot rests are far too grippy to expect a grippy to slide away safely. Putting the rope through the forks and holding it on to the grip with the left hand is better IF there is room but there rarely is on modern bikes.

Any method of towing a motorbike is potentially dangerous. Do

remember that it only costs about £20 to hire a trailer for the day and that is not a lot if it saves even minor injury or damage. Leave the bike there, go and get a trailer, live to tell the tale.

*Martin Brown, Hampshire*

## WET AND DRY

Latest Government bike restrictions come from MP Helen Brinton (Peterborough) who wants 'wetbikes' controlled. Wetbikes are not XR Hondas in Strata Florida but jet-skis. Climbing on the bandwagon are conservationist groups - you know those who fill car parks with their cars - will GLEAM follow? There must be some ponds down Maperton way. MP Helen invites people to write to her.

*Gwyn Thomas, Tel: 01749 675294*

## CENTRES OF GRAVITY AND MATTERS ARISING

I did not realise that Rob was writing an April 1st article late in the year - it had me fooled for a few moments with the second article, it was as funny as the spaghetti harvest in Italy! Brilliant! I suspect a few TRF members were also fooled for a while.

For those still confused, the position of attachment points of one object (rider) to another (motorcycle) very simply will not affect the position of the combined centre of gravity, only their relative positions and mass determine the position of the centre of gravity - a chap called Newton (amongst others) worked this out a few years ago. To be really pedantic, centre of gravity is of course related to mass and not weight anyway as Rob states.

Seriously though, I know what Rob is trying to get at and he is basically right, but he is using mathematical and engineering terminology incorrectly to try to describe the effect we all know and use whilst trying not to fall off. The hammer and broom demo is very valid, it is similar to the problem of front engined cars and rear engine cars compared with the ultimate for low yaw inertia a mid engined car - it is all to do with the mass moment of inertia in the horizontal plane.

If any member is interested in taking the subject of motorcycle and indeed vehicle dynamics further, then there are many technical papers published by the I.Mech.E., NAFEMS BenchMark and other European Engineering institutions that discuss the work currently underway by major companies such as BMW and Aprilia to predict and optimise motorcycle

dynamics using advanced computer based techniques. These predictive techniques (using codes such as ADAMS) are currently used to optimise the dynamics of all sorts of serious vehicles like tanks, earth movers, snowmobiles, quads, road cars, F1 cars, speed record breaking cars, etc. ... I do not intend to write to them all saying that attachment points of one mass to the other will affect the combined centre of gravity of the individual masses, I have a sneaky feeling that they would not believe me!

Interestingly it may be the increased reliance on calculations by manufacturers that result in bikes such as the new Suzuki 400 having maybe too narrow a gear ratio range between 1st and top. It takes final subjective assessment of the machine to fine tune the design to make it really useable.

*Keep upright, Peter J. Ballard, C.Eng. M.I.Mech.E.*

## CENTRE OF GRAVITY - THE ONGOING SAGA

Without wishing to get involved in a private punch up (Ed. of course not!) may I put forward a few thoughts for consideration.

Firstly Rob Balderson's definition of 'The Centre of Gravity of a Motorcycle' is completely wrong, as any first year Maths student will tell him. Sorry Rob. Secondly if the machine and rider are considered as one body then obviously when the rider is standing the centre of gravity will be higher, ask the student.

We must consider the rider and machine as separate bodies with one having some influence on the other (in my case the bike has more influence than the rider). Now if we consider the rider's centre of gravity is somewhere just above his belly button we can see that with the rider standing he can move his centre of gravity (relative to the machine) far more to the right and left of even fore and aft than when in a sitting position. It follows, therefore, that he will have a greater influence on the balance of the machine.

*Neil Walker*

## CENTRE OF GRAVITY

I am sorry that I no longer have the June issue of TRAIL with which to compare Peter Ballard's point and the one raised by Rob Balderson in July. However, Rob quite categorically states that whatever Peter said regarding Centre of Gravity is wrong, and then goes on to try to prove so by himself making some seriously wrong statements.

Rob seems to overlook the fact that, no matter whether stood up or sat down on a trail bike, in most instances the feet and backside are not the only points of contact with the bike. The hands remain a common point of contact through the handlebars. Neither does Rob account for the fact that feet and hands are not rigid points of contact; they are like hinge points which permit the centre of gravity of the body and the centre of gravity of the bike to act quite independently as well as jointly to very swiftly move centre of gravity from one place to another.

Check this out with Doug Lampkin sometime. When Doug approaches a trials contest obstacle he normally does so stood up, in order that the centre of gravity of the body/bike combination is as high as possible in order to assist him heave and lever the bike over the obstacle, as well as ensuring that he remains in place on the bike. He can, of course, pretty swiftly sit down and lower his centre of gravity dramatically when things get more.

*Geoff Wilson, Lake District*

## SILENT MAJORITY

In the July issue of TRAIL Paul Bates asks if he has missed the point regarding certain aspects of trail route use management. I think that he has. Speaking at least on behalf of the Hierarchy of Trail Routes Group in the Lake District, I can say that there is certainly no wish to have only local people ride the trails of the Lake District. On the contrary, the area's economy relies on welcoming caring visitors. However, Paul's wish to be able to ride on the basis of '... riding for all in all areas' (presumably all of the time) is not sustainable. There are many forms of traffic management applied to us any time we ride or drive; ranging from driving licence restrictions to route use management by speed, weight of vehicle, etc., etc. Parts of the Lake District form a very busy and heavily used resource. Many different people with many different aspirations use Rights of Way in the National Park. It is no longer possible for everyone to be able to use every route whenever they want ...no matter what our original rights may be. There has to be some time and space management applied on the busy routes in order to ensure that all walkers, pedal cyclists, horse riders, trail riders, four wheelers (and flora and fauna!) may be able to use ALL of the routes at least MOST of the time.

*Geoff Wilson, Chairman, Hierarchy of Trails Routes in the Lake District Group*

## CENTRES OF GRAVITY

I had to smile at Rob Balderson's letter in Issue 263 where he accuses Peter Ballard of being wrong and proceeds to offer the 'correct' explanation.

In fact Peter's Point 4 is mainly correct. Yes, by standing up you raise the centre of gravity of the bike and rider combined, but this is not really relevant. The point is that you reduce the effect of bike movement on the rider by introducing flexibility.

Rob's letter, on the other hand, is the one which contains real errors. Firstly, his definition of centre of gravity is wrong, and rather than take up magazine space with the lengthy explanation, I suggest he reads a suitable textbook, or talks to a qualified mechanical engineer. He is also wrong to state that by standing up on the pegs you have 'thus lowered the centre of gravity'. You have not. What you have done is to apply the forces due to body weight at the lower (footpegs) level, thus creating an effect similar to lowering the centre of gravity of the bike only.

I don't usually use my qualifications, but will sign off as:

*Keith Sleightholme, B.Sc., M.I.Mech.E.*

## CENTRE OF GRAVITY - HOW NOT TO FALL OFF

I cannot let Rob Balderson's assertions in July TRAIL go unchallenged. I think that what he says only applies when the rider is standing up on the pegs, without holding the bars, or gripping the tank with his knees. Then all the weight is indeed applied through the pegs and the centre of gravity will be lowered.

However, as soon as he tried to corner, (assuming he could do so without holding the handlebars) he would have to counteract his weight being thrown outwards, by applying pressure to the outside peg. This would apply a 'lever' or over turning force to the bike, equal to, his weight times the height of his body's centre of gravity above the pegs. In other words his centre of gravity would be effectively higher than when he was sitting on the seat. The same applies when standing and holding the bars. The 'lever' is applied to the bike by his hands, through the bars, plus his feet through the pegs.

Apologies to all you non-techies, but the dynamics of a moving motorcycle are quite complex and very interesting.

*Ted Scott*

## 'COUNTER STEERING'

Now then! What about that really interesting phenomena of 'Counter Steering'. I have read several explanations, but none convince me. In case you haven't discovered the wonders of counter steering, it is the 'turn the bars left and bike turns to the right' syndrome. If you don't believe me, go and try it. It is addictive the way you can flick the bike from hard over one way to hard over the other by pressure on the bars the 'wrong way'. I don't accept the 'Gyroscope theory', because I believe the effect would be different turning left, to turning right, since the front wheel is obviously always turning the same way I don't detect a difference.

Theories step this way please.

*Ted Scott*

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