

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, *Hindhead Pub on A49, Charnock Richard*

LINCOLNSHIRE Alan Wilkinson, Tel: 01529 460793
4th Thurs, *The Queens Head, Kirby-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 McDerimid, 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, Woolston, Wellingborough*

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 Tuesday, *The Fox at Bransford, Worcs.*



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

TRAIL

SEPTEMBER, 2000

No. 265

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



Members of Cumbria Group on Parka Moor, Grizedale Forest, Cumbria.
Newly repaired section. *Piccy by Stephen Brass.*

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

EDITORS

No trail riding for two weeks - sounds like a very severe sentence to me. Hopefully we will be getting petrol in our tanks before long and hopefully it will come down to a more realistic price, i.e. one which you might expect to pay in a progressive society. One which accepted the need for, and even saw the benefits of, the internal combustion engine whose development has brought freedom of movement to the masses, door to door, as and when required. A freedom which our Government seeks to curtail not only on green lanes but also on the black stuff. All in the name of conservation and of course for your own good. After all, the politicians and bureaucrats know best, don't they?

But do you want to pay homage to the "Green God" sensible use of our resources whether that be a trip to see your relations in Ross on Wye or pootling down a green lane which even if it's cut up a little was probably a whole lot worse in the 1800s. Our freedom is worth fighting for so do it. (When the petrol gets through).

Don't forget the Exec. this Saturday (23rd September) and if you can't make that then I'll see you at the forthcoming AGM.

Fred Ellison

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Sharing

The term of this Executive is until the end of the year but we must be preparing now for the AGM and the election of the officers that are to continue the progress of our Fellowship into the future. As members can see from the published agenda for the Exec meeting on the 23rd September the whole afternoon is allocated to representatives exchanging their thoughts on this. However, poor representation will reduce the effectiveness of the workshop and its influence on the AGM so I hope that Groups recognise this and ensure that their representatives or substitutes attend.

Over the last 2 years the highlights and disappointments for me have been: the toughness of the TRF Executive in backing its members and standing up to the high powered legal opposition with, in one case in particular, the most extraordinary financial posturing and threats. But we withstood it and through the good sound sense and expertise of those concerned beat off the attacks, to live to fight another day. Of the disappointments I would say without a shadow of doubt the lack of support by the membership for the democratic process on which the Fellowship is founded. Democracy demands responsible representation and it has been noticeable by its absence: consistently groups do not send representatives to your Executive Meetings which are so clearly the heart of the promotion and defence of Trail Riding nationwide.

It has been said, and I can see the sense of it, that voluntary organisations have perhaps a 30 year life span. By which time those who founded the organisation, or nurtured it through its growing years, will have by the nature of things moved on. Those who come after will be of a different generation, will have grown up in a different world, will see things differently and maybe that's how it is now with the TRF - we shall see.

The reputation of the TRF has always been based on its reasonable and responsible stance in how it uses the green lane network. The key to this has been a foundation of rights of way knowledge and perceptive participation in good management practice. So I commend to you the LARA "Training Workshop 2000" which will be held in Derby at the end of September.

Whatever the outcome of the present Countryside Bill I think there is a need for the membership and its Groups to become more self-reliant:

**THEY MUST PLAN AS IF THEY ARE ALONE -
BUT ACT TOGETHER WITH OTHERS.**

To do this successfully presupposes a level of knowledge and skill within each group to maintain vehicular rights of way within its area of responsibility. Neither members nor groups can conduct themselves in a cavalier manner and

then expect a further body of volunteers within the TRF (the Exec) to bail them out. Much is said about the value of bringing interested individuals into the membership of the TRF so that they might be influenced to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. But there is little evidence of there being many/any groups who go about this in a systematic way. There is very little in the way of specific beginners runs, map reading, local orientation, to keep beginners out of trouble let alone gain an appreciation of rights of highway law and the issues of sustainable motoring in the countryside. A lot is said by motorcyclists about their love of independence and individuality, but in reality most TRF groups breed dependence based on ignorance, and this needs to change.

See you on the Trail.

Dave Giles, National Chairman

NOTICE BOARD

To all Lincolnshire TRF Members

At the end of this month I am resigning from my post as Chairman of our Group.

With very little spare time (own business and three small children) I feel that it is only fair to the rest of our Group that I should step down and give one of you the chance to take our group forward.

So please come along to our club night on 28th September at The Queens Head, Kirby La Thorpe, near Sleaford at 8.30 p.m. or phone me on 01522 811503 between 8 - 9 p.m. It could be you!!

Those wishing to go trail riding in the Brecon area should note that

Powys County Council have just issued a temporary TRO notice

(found in the 3/8/00 issue of the Brecon and Radnor Express) regarding the closure of Powys UCR 557 at the southern end of Talybont Reservoir from 15/8/00 for up to 6 months for tree-felling.

Grid Refs.

SO 080 174 to 101 176.

Just in case anyone plans to use this route to get to or from the John Ebbrell Memorial Seat above Talybont Reservoir.

Charlie Morriss

RoW NEWS

COUNTRYSIDE & RIGHTS OF WAY BILL 2000

The timetable for the Bill has slipped and is currently waiting to be read in the House of Lords. The problem for the government is that there is a backlog of legislation waiting to go through the 'other house', with too little time left in the current session to deal with them all. The current speculation is that the Government will have to drop one major Bill in order to clear the logjam and the most likely candidate is the Countryside Bill. About 300 amendments are currently tabled for discussion in the Lords, and these could take weeks to discuss, and throw out the timetable for the other Bills. The difficulty is that the 'Right to Roam' was a key part of the Government's election manifesto, also Part 3 of the Bill is concerned with incorporating EC environmental directives into English Law and have to go onto the statute books. My view is the government may well drop Part 1 Right to Roam and Part 2 Rights of Way and just proceed with Part 3, which will go through almost on the nod.

One good pointer to come out of the lobbying and consultation is that the Government seems to understand that if the Definitive rights of way maps are to become just that, then extra resources will be required. Indications are that the additional funds will be made available to Highway Authorities and Users. This is an opportunity for us, through our partners in LARA, to assist directly in this process.

Thanks to everyone who has contacted their MP. We cannot afford to be complacent though. We need to keep putting our balanced views over, and counter the biased and distorted lobbying of GLEAM. So keep up the good work.

PROSECUTIONS IN DERBYSHIRE

Four members of the Peak Group were prosecuted at Alfreton Magistrates Court on the 19/20th July for riding on Lumb Lane, Hazelwood, which is a Bridleway on the Definitive Rights of Way Map. This was despite our previous success in defending members from prosecution over Grimsell Lane, Holmesfield, reported previously. We thought after this the Crown Prosecution Service, supported by Derbyshire County Council would think twice before proceeding with this second prosecution.

Although Lumb Lane is listed as a Bridleway, motorcyclists have used it since the early 1930s and I lodged a Byway claim back in 1978. With support again of the Fighting Fund, Michael Orlik, a leading highway solicitor was engaged to

defend our members. The Crown Prosecution Service also again wheeled out top highway barrister David Braham QC to put the case for the prosecution. A significant part of our case was evidence of use by motorcycle trials between 1934 and 1952 found through contacting local ACU clubs. To support this we managed to get Ivan Rhodes, the local Velocette exponent and past president of the Vintage Motorcycle Club to appear as a witness. He was able to corroborate the documentary evidence with his own recollection, particularly as we had his name on the trials results for an event that used Lumb Lane in 1949!

Well the result was an acquittal for our members and thanks to all who contributed to this success.

We carried out fairly detailed research into the history of Lumb Lane and turned up significant evidence for a number of other lanes in this and neighbouring parishes. Consequently the East Midlands Group will be submitting another Byway claim for Lumb Lane and five other lanes.

As a result of this second trial we will be lodging complaints with the CPS and Derbyshire CC about these prosecutions and the waste of public funds. Two trials taking over five days of court time to conduct, plus the Barristers costs, and time spent by the Derbys RoW Officer researching the case must have cost the public at least £50,000. All that for a level 3 non-endorsable traffic offence, the equivalent of parking without lights!

I would ask riders to exercise restraint over the use of Lumb Lane. We may have demonstrated our rights, but with rights come responsibilities.

P.S. I had a telephone call last night to say a member has received a 'ticket' for riding on the infamous Piper Lane, Brampton. Here we go again.

NATIONAL RIGHTS OF WAY OFFICER

Just to remind you, I indicated at last year's AGM, I will not be seeking re-election this year. We will therefore need a replacement to take up the position from Jan 1. If anyone is considering volunteering for this vital position then please let me know. I am not giving up my interest in rights of way, so I am prepared to provide support to my successor.

COUNTRYSIDE & RIGHTS OF WAY BILL 2000 continued

The action of members in lobbying MPs has certainly brought responses to the questions raised, and the promise of additional resources to sort out the definitive map problems is certainly welcome. The Government has certainly wished to allay our fears that the redesignation of all RUPPs as Restricted Byways is not going to take away our rights. However it does mean we will have to research each one ourselves and lodge Byway claims. One thing we can be sure of is that we will be subject to more challenges by landowners.

However the proposal misses a fundamental point, namely that it is not based on any research by the DETR or the Countryside Agency.

The research we alone have carried out shows that in six sampled counties over 80% of RUPPs reclassified under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act have been made into Byways. See Table 1.

Table 1

Highway Authority	(1) RuPPs Reclassified Under s54 1981 Act	(2) Resulting Byways
Bath & NE Somerset	91	72
Derbyshire	10	3
Hampshire	349	292
Isle of Wight	49	48
Nottinghamshire	23	10
Wiltshire	25	15
TOTAL	547	440 (80%)

On this basis the governments proposal is clearly unjust and they should be urged to reconsider. I urge you all to raise this point with your MP, as it is still possible through logical reasoning to get this proposal modified.

Richard Marshall, National RoW Officer

GOOD NEWS IN SCOTTISH BORDERS REGARDING DERE STREET

Dere Street Public Inquiry was held on 13th June 2000 at Cross Keyes Hotel, Kelso.

The Inspector, known in Scotland as the Reporter 'Alexander Graham Bell' would you believe it! who seemed a reasonable chap, conducted what I thought a very fair inquiry giving all concerned parties a good innings with plenty of scope to cross examine all evidence and statements. Alan Kind was absolutely brilliant just like Perry Mason in stating LARA's case and promoting the TRF.

However, there was so much pressure from Historic Scotland, Scottish Ancient Monuments Department, Countryside Rangers, Council Technical Services, etc., all incidently funded by tax payers money, Roger and I left the hotel

rather depressed feeling very much like just having left a Scotland versus England football match. The TRF and LARA being the away team with no supporters.

The good news is, the Closure Order has now been denied with suggestions of a Temporary Order until the damaged - approximately 400 yards - section is repaired, coupled to a Management Scheme.

Following is a copy of the Reporters recommendations.

Ray Smith, Northumberland Group

CHAPTER 6

REASONING AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Order is made with the aim of improving the amenity of the area. There is clearly a need for some restriction on the use of the road to improve amenity and I consider the determining issue is whether confirmation of the Order is likely to deliver that improvement.

6.2 If the restrictions on vehicular use, consequent on conversion to a footpath and bridleway, are enforceable, local residents, walkers and horse riders should have a quieter enjoyment of the road. However, having regard to my earlier findings, I regard it as improbable that the restrictions could be enforced against scrambler bikers, who are the greatest cause of complaint. Roads open to horse riders remain accessible to scrambler bikers. This weakness in the Order is virtually conceded in Mrs. Thorn's closing submission (para 2.10) by saying "It is up to the council to provide a means of enforcement". No such means was put before the inquiry for coping with unregistered motorbikes.

6.3 The alternative solution is for temporary closure of the road to allow necessary repair work, with a management scheme which could impose seasonal closure and restrictions in the interests of amenity and road maintenance. Restriction at lambing season is an obvious example. Such a solution would not deny the amenity of right of passage over the road to law abiding off-road drivers who have volunteered labour to assist in road repair.

6.4 A balance has to be struck on the competing claims for enjoyment of amenity by local farmers and by leisure users of the road. This aspect was not fully addressed by the council. It is understandable that they should respond to the proper concerns of affected farmers but permanent closure of a public road to vehicular traffic should not be the first option used to

address these concerns. In my view, the amenity of other road users has not been given adequate consideration in the anxiety to stop the illegal scrambler bike riders.

6.5 It is my conclusion that the Order is not the appropriate course to adopt. Instead, a temporary closure under the Roads (Scotland) Act, coupled with a management scheme seems more likely to achieve the aim of quiet enjoyment of the road, with a level of traffic which will not further damage the scheduled Ancient Monument.

6.6 **RECOMMENDATION I** therefore recommend that the Order should not be confirmed.

Yours faithfully

A G Bell
Reporter

BETA ALP

Many of you have been very patient awaiting the arrival of the
All New 4-stroke 200/125 Alp Trail Bike

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Drivers praised for path repairs

Brian Dooks

OFF-ROAD drivers and trail bike riders, who were blamed for causing damage to green lanes in the Yorkshire Dales, have been praised by North Yorkshire County Council officials for the voluntary effort they have put into restoring one badly-eroded route.

The unsurfaced track from Scar House Reservoir in Upper Nidderdale over Dead Man's Hill to Horsehouse in Coverdale was threatened with permanent closure until off-road enthusiasts volunteered to carry out repairs.

Now, a route over Pockstones Moor from Thruscross in the Washburn Valley to Skyreholme in Wharfedale, which has been closed to vehicles since February, may also be repaired by the volunteers - possibly with some materials supplied by the council.

So far the volunteers, organised by four-wheel-

drive clubs and the Trail Riders' Fellowship, have repaired the track along the north side of Scar House Reservoir and this month they plan to tackle the badly-eroded section over Dead Man's Hill.

Yorkshire Water, which owns the land crossed by the track, has provided help and the volunteers - supported by local quarries and a plant hire company - are now waiting for the most damaged section to drain before completing their work.

North Yorkshire's head of environmental manage-

ment Mike Masterman said: "The finished route will be capable of use by four-wheel-drive vehicles although not by normal family cars."

"Access will have been restored for all users, including pedestrians and equestrians, although only the 4x4 clubs and motorcyclists have provided any voluntary labour."

Mr Masterman, who originally estimated £250,000 as the cost of reopening the two routes for use by off-road vehicles, added: "The group is enthusiastic about extending the maintenance ini-

tiative to cover Pockstones Moor and then potentially other damaged green lanes across the county."

So far the council has only provided technical advice and arranged meetings for the volunteers because maintenance of green lanes is not covered by its budget, but Mr Masterman is encouraged by Scar House who dug ditches, installed culverts, filled potholes and repaired drystone walls.

When the area highways committee meets on Friday, Mr Masterman will

Conflict of interests: Malham, where the Ramblers' Association organised a walk at the weekend in protest at the use of green lanes by motor vehicles.

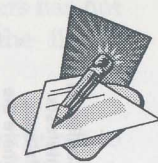


tell councillors: "In view of the assistance provided by the user groups it may be appropriate in future to provide some specialist materials, such as geotextiles, as a means of pump-priming the sponsorship process organised by the four-wheel-drive clubs."

At the weekend the Ramblers' Association organised a protest walk near Malham against the use of green lanes by off-road vehicles, but the volunteers involved in the repairs say the answer lies in co-operation rather than in confrontation.

Taken from The Yorkshire Post 9/5/00

letters



"WETBIKES" TO BE CONTROLLED?

Latest Labour 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

QUESTION FROM A YORKIE

I note another superb picture on the front of TRAIL of the marvellous riding we have in the North of England.

Does the TRF have any members below Birmingham with the ability to photograph their patch or is it true that its best up North and the South has nothing to brag about?

Yorkie

IN APPRECIATION FOR SERVICES RENDERED

This letter is in appreciation for services rendered by 3 members of the South Northants section of the TRF.

The past weekend 26-27-28 August, the AJS & Matchless OC of which I am a member held its big Rally "The Jam-pot" at Wellingborough, Northants. No matter what area we hold this rally in we like to have a green lane run. As this year's Rally was being held only 28 miles from my abode I agreed to organise the green lane run.

I am a member of the TRF so I contacted the South Northants section who agreed to lead us on Saturday 26th around their stamping ground. All went well, 2 lads had punctures, I ran out of petrol and to top it all we were riding through that storm that swept across the country. Nothing out of the norm, just the usual green lane session, but loved it all.

Now the names of our 3 stalwarts: our leader for most of the run was Nick Payne. Unfortunately he had to leave us three quarters of the way through to visit his wife in hospital. The lead was then taken over by Simon

Roberts and Patrick James kept a good watch on the rear end of things throughout. Well done lads. A good job done in rather unpleasant conditions.

As a gesture of our gratitude we have had a whip round and I sent off a cheque for £50.00 to the Fighting Fund today.

Ride Safe, Bill Redford, Cambs.

LEISURE TRAIL UK

As you may have noticed Leisure Trail UK is a regular advertiser in the TRF TRAIL and it is true to say a fair proportion of our sales are to the trail riding market.

In response to the recent appeal to increase the TRF's Fighting Fund we have just made a substantial donation to the fund and we would hope that other Off-road Dealers will follow suit. Its in all our interests to do so.

We are also all members of the East Midlands TRF Group and enjoy trail riding, so our contribution will hopefully go some way towards fighting the growing trend of legal cases and preserve the UK's network for the future.

Pete, Nick & Kev, Leisure Trail UK

RELATIVE NEWCOMER

I am a relative newcomer who rides an ageing R80G/S with road tyres and complete with Robbie (a Jack Russell Terrier) on board.

I use the G/S to ride to various lanes in Derbyshire and Lancashire, and home again. (I don't have the luxury of a trailer, or a second set of wheels specifically for 'off-road'). Due to my relative inexperience I stick (sic) to trails with a predominantly firm base, yet not too rocky. However I aim to be out at least once a week or so, and to achieve 5% of the trip 'off-road'. Regretfully my knowledge of trails is small and due to work commitments I cannot unfortunately make 'Group' meetings, usually evenings at an interesting sounding pub. Hence I tend to 'lose out' on the companionship and 'know thy trails fronts'. Sadly my 'ad' published in June Noticeboard has only drawn one response. A similar ad in BMW Club drew 3 replies. I will try again later once Summer has gone and serious riding can start again.

Despite being an 'armchair' member I appreciate the serious work the TRF is doing and the voluntary work the officers and members put in. Not all in vain, or thankless.

Re the Fighting Fund, I will be updating my will in the near future. This revision will include a share of the residuary to the TRF Fighting Fund. I'm sure other members may be only too happy to plough something back in this way.

I have found a number of the contributions to TRAIL interesting and thought provoking. "How not to fall off" in May was helpful and the follow-ups about Centre of Gravity amusing! As well as the "Counter Steering" issue.

On behalf of the 'silent majority' I hope I can say 'thankyou' to you and all the other officers and helpers for your efforts!

Yours sincerely and safe riding, sticky side down!

Nic Dulk, Warrington

WILL WE BE PAID FOR RESEARCH?

Further to August edition of TRAIL I note the response from Chris Mullin sent by my MP. Does this mean our Government are going to pay the TRF for research for RoWs?!

"We are also sympathetic to the case for funding to be made available to the organisations which are able to assist with the necessary research."

Aleck Coulson, Redditch

A RECENT ENCOUNTER WITH SOME TRF MEMBERS

I write concerning your appeal for donations to the TRF Fighting Fund and my recent encounter with some of our members.

I was invited by the Bexleyheath and District M.C.C. to participate in an organised Green Lane ride in the Devils Punch Bowl area of Surrey. There were three other riders in the group (none being TRF) who's behaviour throughout the ride was impeccable, showing consideration to other green lane users by keeping speed and noise to a minimum and generally acting in a responsible manner.

However, on reaching our lunch break venue, we encountered two riders who had passed us earlier and conversation revealed they were TRF members. Their subsequent departure could not possibly have been more counter productive to the aims of our Club.

Our lunch stopover was a small country Pub where locals and visitors were enjoying a quiet lunch in the gardens, their peace being shattered by two of our members, departing, with maximum revs and front wheels high, into the distance, leaving us with an icy atmosphere and comments of 'Bloody Bikers!'

I feel therefore, that until this undesirable element is ousted and redirected to a place where their talents would be appreciated, the TRF is saddled with a intolerable burden.

It also occurs to me there are a lot of riders out there benefitting from our club's efforts and associated expense in the fight to keep green lanes open,

who are contributing nothing. (Bexleyheath and District M.C.C. for one!).

Would it therefore, not be better to utilise the existing Fighting Fund to contact all interested clubs nationwide, set up an elected committee from these clubs to manage the fund. This would have the *double* benefit of bringing our aims to the attention of a greater number of people, and, less financial pressure on our members.

M. J. Collins

EVER ATTENDED A COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE?

The officers and members make resolutions which affect your interests. Did you know you may speak to your representatives via the Committee Chairman for up to five minutes on any agenda item, e.g. a byway order.

You have to fax or write in to the Programme Officer, alternatively called a Committee Services Officer by 12 noon on the day of that Committee giving you name, address and the subject matter.

Public rights of way issues are determined by the Committee, whether or not to make an Order. Sometimes the members decline to accept their own Officers' recommendation.

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and not bridleways or footpaths, get your name down to speak.
Committee agendas and dates/times are available at Town Hall or County Hall.

Your rights are at risk if you don't participate. Get a TRF member familiar with Committees at County Hall to take you along to get a feel of procedures if you've never been.

Your TRF needs you.

Gwyn Thomas

STEERING LEFT TO GO RIGHT?

Of course it works, most riders do it without thinking. By slightly turning the bars left by applying slight pressure only, causes the bike to start to fall to the right. As the bike falls right the steering geometry is such that the forks with the bars will now be forced to turn right into the turn with a torque (i.e. turning moment, oh no physics again!) that is actually greater than the torque the rider applied to the left. Thus the bike smoothly enters and maintains a right turn. To come out of the turn the rider can turn into the bend by again applying slight pressure to the bars in the opposite direction from before and up she comes.

This is obviously not the only way to make a bike turn - hence some riders can steer their bikes without even holding onto the bars, but I think we have covered some of the other methods in previous brief articles.

As also mentioned last month the dynamics of solo motorcycles is very complex, there are many books on this subject that make interesting reading. They probably will not stop you falling off as much but at least you might realise why you fell off.

Now remember if you have a sidecar attached (to the left for UK convention) then turning the bars left will make the outfit turn left, unless you close the throttle in which case you will go right, right. We won't mention the time Fred rode my LHD outfit up Mastiles Lane and he could not turn right and took out a dry stone wall. Oh, bother, I have mentioned it - sorry Fred, but you were walking OK the following week, more or less!

Peter J. Ballard

Ed I remember telling Peter that the last time I tried to ride an outfit (25 years ago) it wasn't a success and there was no reason to think things might have improved - but still he insisted!!

**THE GREAT BALDERSON - BALLARD DEBATE
FORGET CENTRES OF GRAVITY, LETS TALK STABILITY**

First, do you load your bike:

- a) a sack of potatoes perched on the saddle?
- or b) half a sack on each footrest?

Next, remove spuds; add rider:

as the bike gets twitchy, the rider's natural skill (blind panic) cuts in. The weight divided between two footrests is constantly varied left and right as needed. i.e. bike goes beserk, rider stays on top!

Charles Brett, S. Northants, GCSE Needlework (failed)

COUNTER STEERING

I have seen reams and reams of waffle on such highly technical topics but it seems to me:

1. Rider is travelling straight and level at constant speed. No side wind. Perfect conditions. i.e. rider and machine UPRIGHT.
2. Rider wishes to change course to the right. Two possibilities now exist:
 - Either
 - A. Rider leans body weight, and then machine to the right. The bars then follow turning the front wheel into a right turn

- or
- B. To induce the right lean necessary for the right turn. In theory the rider can turn the bars LEFT.

The left turn is momentary and if nothing else is done he will fall off to the right.

The brief left turn is therefore, and naturally, followed by the planned right turn.

This is something I dare not analyse at speed on tarmac. But on knobbles on dry grass I have pootled round slowly to test, and, I do believe it works. i.e. rider needs a sharp right turn to survive.

A quick LEFT flick of the bars is the neatest and fastest way to induce the right hand lean that will commit the sharp right turn needed.



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I have no engineering training but am interested to know if what I think is true.

Charles Brett

CENTRE OF GRAVITY

One of the first things I learnt when I started riding a dirt bike was that if the back wheel suddenly moves sideways, the seat goes with it and if you are using the seat at that moment, you end up on your ass in the muck.

That's your centre of gravity at rock bottom, no need for any slide rules. By standing on the pegs, you are giving the bike more flexibility. These things come natural to us old guys, like knowing exactly what your back wheel is going to do next (he says, taking the ice pack from his butt). Take care you all.

The Memory Man, Devon

STAND UP - SIT DOWN - KEEP MOVING

I have been reading the current debate on "Stand up / sit down - keep moving" with more than a little amusement. The very serious attempts by our more learned mechanically qualified members to explain the theoretical principles involved utterly confuse the mere mortal so perhaps it should fall (is this the right word?) to a retired electrical engineer with a lifetime's experience of falling off in trials to shed a little humorous light on the subject.

But firstly let me reassure all fledgling trail riders that it works. You don't have to understand why, just know that it does!

When ancient man first constructed the canoe he didn't have a degree in hydro-technology and had never met a bloke called Archi from Eureka near Bath. He just knew that a wooden log floated and if you pointed the front end and cut a seat in the middle it went through the water more easily AND he kept his feet dry. Remember these were the days before Gore-Tex socks.

For more up to date evidence look to the pre-war trials riders who incidentally were the original trail riders. Clad in long coats and spats (still no Gore-Tex socks) they soon discovered they could control their unsprung lumps more easily if they stood up on the more difficult bits called observed hills.

Most (but not all) previous correspondents came unstuck (is that a better word?) when they tried to give a simple explanation for what is really quite a complex and VARIABLE situation. The world record for balancing a *static* motorcycle was set by a bloke who sat down long enough to get piles yet the current 6 times World Champion always *rides* sections standing up. We all know that it is easier to ride a bike at 10mph than 1 mph - its probably

something to do with dynamic/gyrostatic forces and all that crap. The point is that a rider is (usually) attached to his machine through his hands, his feet and his arse but he controls it with his head. Sitting down is fine when stability is easily kept under control such as on the road but when the going gets tough the wise get up. They are then able to *quickly transfer* some or all of their weight to the front via the handlebars, to the rear via both footrests or side of the machine via one footrest. In addition the knees can flex to act as additional shock absorbers thereby giving another aid to traction control. As proof positive of my hypothesis have you not noticed how many riders with large beer bellies are brilliant riders. They have the visibly obvious advantage of being able to transfer a lot more weight more quickly than most.

So I suggest we all take a leaf from their book and spend more time in good company in good pubs debating the really important issues of the world like the price of a pint and whose round is it anyway?

The Welsh Beggar

THE HEIGHT OF THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY IS IRRELEVANT

Anyone who thinks that the Centre of Gravity of bike and rider moves down when the rider stands up had better go back to school before they say anything else. Our personal Centre of Gravity does not magically migrate to our feet when we stand up. If it did we would be like those wibbly wobbly toys that always stand up again when they are knocked over.

The detailed physics involved in balancing a moving bike and rider over difficult terrain is more a matter of 'moments of inertia' than Centre of Gravity position. Although the static Centre of Gravity is almost irrelevant, do remember that the Centre of Gravity is a three dimensional thing and, except on very steep slopes, lateral position of the Centre of Gravity is the most important factor. The height of the Centre of Gravity is of no great importance.

When riding on the road, we make small steering movements to adjust our balance. This moves the weight of the bike and rider relative to the Centre of Support (somewhere along the tyre contact line). As we get slower, these steering movements get progressively bigger and/or we supplement them with body movement. When riding off road, in ruts, sticky mud, rocks, etc., we can't necessarily make those steering movements so balance has to be achieved by moving only our body weight. If we are sitting down we can't move our weight much but if we stand up we quite naturally move our weight relative to the bike without even thinking about it. What we actually do is let the bike move but keep the combined Centre of Gravity of bike and rider over the Centre of Support (I will ignore a banked turn). Dynamic balance

is achieved by a highly complex series of movements ranging from a small movement of perhaps the knee or head to a major movement of as much body weight as you can - watch a trials rider.

It is a slightly different issue but standing up also allows us to effortlessly swerve the bike from side to side to miss rocks, etc. whilst keeping our own weight travelling in a reasonably straight line. Similarly, standing up whilst climbing or descending a bumpy slope allows the bike to move longitudinally and maintain better contact with the ground and therefore grip to get up the hill or brake coming down it. I can say with certainty that I have ridden up slopes that I would not have been able to climb sitting down.

I hesitate to say this (for fear of being picked up in this over simplification) but by standing up, we are also providing a steadying 'mass' (the rider) above the bike, which is able (often) to pull the bike upright again once it has leant over. The bigger, stronger and more agile that mass (rider) is, relative to the bike weight, the easier it will be. Big riders fall off less than small ones (every rule has its exceptions).

With experience you automatically move your weight about. The action of moving that weight is far more relevant than the position of the Centre of Gravity because you only need to move weight to re-balance when the Centre

of Gravity moves away from the Centre of Support. If my canoe leans over in rough water, I swivel my hips to allow the combined Centre of Gravity to remain approximately over the centre line of the boat knowing that it will usually right itself. If I simply allowed the boat to move my body weight, it would certainly turn over because the combined Centre of Gravity would move outside the range of hull stability. If my bike kicks sideways in a rut, I try not to fight it too rigidly but let it go a bit whilst moving my body weight the other way to keep the Centre of Gravity over the Centre of Support. More accurately what I am doing is counteracting a (say) clockwise rotational force or 'moment', with an

anticlockwise 'moment'. If I can't achieve that I will have to steer the way the bike is leaning. If the terrain stops me from steering that way - I fall off. If I were to ride along sitting down with my knees clamped to the tank I would definitely fall off the very first time the bike's direction was diverted by a rut.

I should emphasise that understanding the theory does not prevent me falling off. Maybe when I get a bit more experience I will learn the magic trick of making the Centre of Gravity move downwards. Do I wear lead boots or perhaps fit a lead sump shield? How about half filling the tyres with water/ Does filling my rucksack with Helium help? Perhaps I should just keep the engine spinning fast to act as a gyroscope? I obviously need to be careful; riding with tongue in cheek is a bit dangerous.

one last observation for anyone who still thinks standing up moves the Centre of Gravity down. Mongolian horsemanship, undoubtedly the best riders in the world, always ride difficult horses and difficult terrain standing up. There is no advantage to them in moving the Centre of Gravity down (even if that were possible) because the horse will balance itself regardless of the position of the man. The reason they stand up is to be better able to move their body weight about - exactly the same as us.

Martin Brown, Hampshire

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Information sent in by Alan Kind

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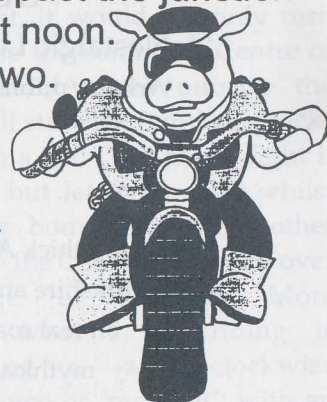
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