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TRAIL

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

AUGUST 2002 No. 288

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

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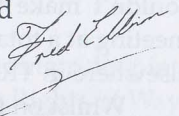
The views expressed in 'Trail' are those of its correspondents and not necessarily of the editor or the T.R.F.

EDITOR

At last we've done it! In case you haven't already noticed, this month's TRAIL features our first full colour cover as will next month and the month after - photos and advertisers permitting. So, get snapping and send your photos in to me. Turning the camera on end usually gives a more suitable picture format. And remember, nice and glossy!

The TRF has passed a milestone. We now rank alongside film stars and Manchester United - we've had a baby named after us! Marc Ford from the East Midlands got the birth of his second son registered this week,

Timothy Robert Ford, and the wife never suspected a thing!! Well done Marc, we're proud of you.



RoW APPEAL - Gorbeck Road/Langcliffe

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority are at it again.

About two months ago they sent out a proposed order to make a UCR called GORBECK ROAD (often referred to as Langcliffe) into a BOAT. I submitted a survey done by vehicular users to show that the road is now used by vehicles, not mainly walkers and horse riders.

They have now postponed the order going to committee because it cannot be shown to be used as a footpath or bridleway would be used.

Now they have sent out a questionnaire asking landowners, walkers and other groups to give an estimate of the balance of users.

If you have driven or ridden this road, details below, in the last few years and can form some idea of what you consider the balance of user, then write to: Yorkshire Dales National park Authority, FREEPOST BD625, Colvend, Hebden Road, Grassington, Skipton, BD23 1BR.

Details of Road Starting just above Langcliffe near Settle and running North North East to the road near Malham Scar, the entrance to this road is alongside a cattle grid. There are a number of bad sections out of repair, but it is useable. map references are 38290465302 to 388803464885 or SD 82970 65303 to SD 88803 64885.

PLEASE SEND IN ANY USE OF THIS ROAD IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

Brian Lewis

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COVER PHOTO

Denbigh Moor, Pentre Faelas, N. Wales. From left to right, Lawrence Hamperl (Herts TRF), Richard Clare (North Wales TRF), Ian Alder (Herts TRF). Photograph by 'Brother Pronto'.

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

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Member

The holiday season is in full swing so I hope when you read this note you have enjoyed a good holiday or are about to do so.

You may have noticed that the date for the September Executive has been changed and is now on Saturday 28 September. I hope this change hasn't caused too much disruption but the original date would mean a number of Officers couldn't make the meeting so it seemed sensible to move it. Also we will be meeting at a totally new venue so please note the venue from the agenda, which is elsewhere in TRAIL.

Whilst on the subject of meetings and venues, at the last AGM a request, nay a plea verily, was made that we should arrange to hold the meeting at an alternative location. To show that we respond positively to such requests, we are holding the meeting at the National Water Sports Centre at Nottingham. A more light and airy venue. So please put it in your diary now, Sunday 27th October 2002.

Since last writing I have taken part in the Sidcup Trial. This was through the generosity of Graham Smith who kindly thought of me when he couldn't participate, due to a broken collarbone. The day was great, no rain and well organised with good directions. There were plenty of trails between each section. Thanks go to all those involved in any way in putting on this event.

It has been brought to my attention that many individuals and/or groups make contributions to the fighting fund without there being any public acknowledgement. I want all those who make such gestures to know that such generosity is appreciated. It has not been our practice to acknowledge such generosity publicly but please be sure in the knowledge that your generosity is not taken for granted.

During the latter part of July there was an exercise undertaken to gather information in anticipation of making representation to have the threatened TRO on the Ridgeway stopped. By the time you read this note all three meetings will have taken place and there may be some positive outcome to report.

I hope groups are progressing their claims for a byway. To remind you I am looking for at least one claim filed by each group by the date of this year's AGM, no excuses!

Finally, I am looking for volunteers to take over the Chairmanship at the end of this calendar year. Yes it's the old chestnut but please lets avoid the problems of two years ago. You have my contact details so please give me a call.

Safe and Enjoyable Riding.

André Confavreux
National Chairman

NOTICE BOARD

PLEASE NOTE: CHANGE OF TRF EXECUTIVE MEETING

The September Executive Meeting has been changed and is now on Saturday 28th September. 10 for 10.30am at Tollgate Hotel and Leisure, Ripon Road, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent

MAJOR SUCCESS

The Southern Group fun day was a major success. 130 people came on the day, one of those was a professional photographer who took 200 pictures.

If anybody is interested, they are available to buy. Please ring Mark Povey on 01730 302993 or 07971 855545

ISLE OF MAN

Any groups or individuals intending riding in the Isle of Man please contact the Rights of Way Officer for the latest information:
Mr. S. H. Woodward 01624 878234.

This is especially important in winter months when some RoW may be closed. Up to date maps are available from the Department of Transportation, The Sea Terminal & Douglas. 2 maps - North & South - buy when you get off the boat.

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Meeting of the TRF Executive

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01782 313029

Leave M6 at Junction 15 and take the A500 heading towards Stoke on Trent. At the Junction with the A34 turn Right (South) to Trentham Gardens where Left onto the A5035. Tollgate is on the LHS in Blurton.

AGENDA

Chairman's Welcome Apologies

Approval of Minutes of 22.06.02 Meeting

Matters Arising

Substantive Issues:

Officer Succession & Awarding of Honorariums (AGC)

Legal Opinion Sought (DT)

Disclaimer

Statement when stopped by police

Claiming Byways/Byway Bonus (AGC/DT/SM/JG)

Ridgeway (TS)

Elected Officers Reports

Finance (JG)

Membership (JP)

Public Relations (RD)

Rights of Way (Acting) (DT)

Trail Magazine Front Cover Review (FE)

Norfolk Group – Approve formation (if Rep Present)

Subordinate Issues:

Website (DT)

Status Reports:

Lost Ways Project – Co Ag Funding (TS)

Byways and Bridleways Trust Council (DT)

Database (DT)

Map Romers (TS)

Welsh Assembly (Richard Stiling)

Any Other Business

Whilst every effort is made to accommodate AOB it is often difficult to give sufficient time at the end of a meeting to do justice to topics. You are asked therefore to restrict AOB to a minimum. However should there be something of sufficient importance to merit time for discussion in the body of the meeting you must advise the secretary well in advance with any supporting papers.

Readers confused by the initials are referred to the officer list on the inside cover of TRAIL.

RoW NEWS

KENT NEWS

The Pilgrim's Way at Boxley is now closed to all users for 6 months while the council have a clear up. Need to keep an eye on this as Maidstone Council would like this lane to have a permanent TRO.

RuPP NS196a at Cobham is up for reclassification. Unfortunately its for a bridleway. Due to the amount of objections a public enquiry was held on Wednesday 7th August at Shorne Village Hall.

Richard Colquhoun

Good Moaning

It is now almost the end of July - where is the time ... **again** going to.

In June, we had a visit from Hazel's daughter, her partner John and the two grandchildren Hannah & Daniel. Staying in our apartment on the coast, the holiday was mainly a beach holiday, but one day when it was overcast John and I went trailriding.

Again I was on the 600; John on the 125. We covered my usual route across La Clape without incident until we arrived at a place where someone had dumped hundreds of tons of refrigerator sized rocks over a wide area, including the track we were following. After checking that it would be extremely difficult to get through, I led John off cross country knowing that we wouldn't have to go too far to find another track. After half a mile of forcing our way through an aromatic mixture of wild thyme, sage and rosemary we found another track and continued on our way.

I shall try to find out who authorised this blocking of the lane but I do not think it will do any good even if I am successful. I will make sure that the alternative route which we found is clearly defined for other travellers to use. John enjoyed the run very much although I am sure he would rather have been on his XR600.

My brother Jeff, a Manx resident, was next to visit. He was looking to try out French trailriding too. However, the weather was so hot while he was with us we kept putting it off and putting it off, until finally he had to go home

without sampling the joys of dry trailriding.

I had promised Florian, the young son of our neighbour that when he had time (he works all hours on his family's vineyard) I would take him out trailriding.

Unlike most youngsters he had chosen a DR125 Suzuki, a nice quiet 4 stroke instead of the more usual noisy 2 stroke that are so common here. He finally found the time - 6 o'clock one Monday evening. It was still 28° but I had to go - I had promised. I opted to take the XT125 and as little extra weight with me as possible. The camelback in the rucksack was essential as was the mobile phone, and the camera. I am making an effort to take more photos so that I can illustrate my stories.

I was going round the usual route so maps, compass, GPS etc., were left behind. Mistake No.1.

Despite the heat, I put on my 'Hood' jeans and motorcycle boots, but decided my ex-army fatigue jacket seemed a better bet than my Cordura jacket. Off we went. Florian was cautious but learned very quickly. A couple of very steep descents and ascents were made without any offs, so that when we arrived at the blocked track I decided to try another alternative route instead of the one John and I had found. Mistake No.2.

Off we went down this new track - it was brilliant. It went on and on with climbs, descents, splendid views and just when I was congratulating myself the track finished abruptly in a 10 metre sheer drop. No problem; we had passed another track a few metres back so back we went. This one also stopped in a similar fashion. We retraced our steps even further to yet another track. This looked hopeful and eventually led to a bit of a trials type climb to the top of a rocky little hill. I got to the top, looked back and saw Florian wedged solidly in a stony cleft. That will teach him to follow me and not to strike out on his own.

Of course I went down to help him and shortly after, the two of us were on top of the world and able to see that the track continued down the other side of the hill, although it was overgrown. On we went, pushing through the brush and at the bottom we came to a wire fence. The track went to the left and to the right. I decided to go to the right. Mistake No.3.

After a couple of hundred metres, this right hand track deteriorated so badly that I dropped into the irrigation ditch running alongside. This was fine for a while, but started to go off in the wrong direction and in trying to get out of the ditch, I managed to stall the bike. I needed a rest anyway so I took the chance to chat with Florian and have a drink. The water in the camelback was warm, plastic and tasted wonderful.

Back on the bikes, Florian thumbed his electric starter. I kicked and the kickstart snapped off. An examination of the offending item showed that it had broken at its weakest point where the spring and ballbearing to locate the kickstart fit. We pushed the bike till we came to a clear patch, then it

bumpstarted easily enough so after a brief discussion, we agreed to go on. Mistake No. 4.

The track opened out, got easier and we finally came out on the coast road between Narbonne and St Pierre. We headed towards St Pierre, knowing that from there it is only 15 kms on a tarmac road back home. As it was 9p.m by this time, this was probably the most sensible thing to do. However, the bikes were going well apart from my kickstart and when I recognised where a track I knew came out onto the road, we decided it would be more fun than on the tarmac, so off we went. Mistake No. 5.

This track is one of my favourites. A really stiff climb up from the road, then an open section over the top then down into a wooded section, then another open track then disaster - another huge pile of rocks across my favourite track! We should have turned back and returned home on the tarmac but I thought we could find our way past the barrier. Mistake No. 6.

We tried all directions. It didn't help of course that I didn't have any maps, or compass or GPS. We finally arrived at the top of a very steep wooded slope and in the distance we could see Coursan. However, the track we had been following reduced down to a narrow path winding down through the trees. We agreed to turn back but in trying to turn the bike around, it decided to stop. We were both tired and the thought of muscling the bike back up the slope then trying to bump start it on the loose surface didn't appeal very much. I volunteered to go down the track on foot and see where it came out. Mistake No. 7.

I followed the narrow path down and started thinking that as long as we could get out at the bottom, this way could get us home quickly. Almost at the bottom of the slope, the gradient increased rapidly and I slid out of control the last 10 metres of so. Worse, there was no sign of any track continuing.

Cursing softly, I turned round to go back up the slope and saw to my horror that the bushes I had fallen through had sprung back into place and there was no sign of the path. I reasoned that if I climbed straight up the slope, even if I missed the path I should come out somewhere near where the bikes and Florian were waiting. Without a path to follow, the undergrowth proved to be quite resilient and after ten minutes or so, I was quite tired, hot and er.... lost.

It seems ridiculous, but I had been climbing for some time, and still hadn't seen a path or a clear view at the top of the slope. Swallowing my pride, I called out to Florian. His answering call came from way over to my right. At least I knew the direction to go in, but it was really hard work. I was thankful that I had the padded jeans and the proper boots on. At least I wasn't being cut to pieces by the thorns.

Finally, I got back to the bikes and Florian and had another delicious drink from the camelback and after a rest, we pushed the XT to the top of the slope and I sat on the bike while Florian pushed me along until the blasted thing started. At this point, we decided we had had enough fun and luckily the next lane we

tried led straight back home, arriving just before 10.30p.m.

After some refreshments, Florian cheerfully jumped on his bike and went home. He had enjoyed himself immensely and after the months of July and August when offroading is discouraged here because of the risk of fire, he will come out as often as he can.

We have already had one brush fire this year. The thankfully, slight breeze was pushing it towards our town so we were very pleased to see a formation of five water bomber planes successfully deal with the blaze after normal appliances couldn't cope.

We had a visit from West Midlands TRF members, Pete Hemming, his wife Val and Dick (whose last name I have forgotten, sorry) They were touring France on their road bikes and staying for a few days at Martins Chambre d'Hote here in Coursan. It was great to see them and chat all evening to put the world to rights. I hope they enjoyed their holiday - we certainly enjoyed seeing them.

The XTE600 is up for sale and there has been some interest both in France and England. I mentioned in a letter to the BMW owners club, that I expect to get £1600 or equivalent in Euros for my '98 XTE and one chap is considering a cheap flight down to our nearby airport at Carcassonne, and then riding it back to England.

So now I am looking through the advertisements and I think my choice will be either a Pampera or a Beta Alp, so that come September I will be ready to get out there whenever Florian or Martin can spare the time.

I have also bought as a project, an '89 XLR125 with a seized engine. I will either get the engine going as it is, or fit a 185 engine if it is possible. Does anyone know any difficulties in doing this swap??

It is good to see that the TRF is doing something to fight the CroW, but shouldn't this be the subject of an appeal to the European Courts. It seems a gross infringement of civil liberties - is there anything being done in this direction? I hope so.

At the Dirtbike Show at Stoneleigh last year, I bought a pair of boots and somewhere in the undergrowth one of the fastenings went missing. Does anyone know who makes or stocks them? It is the 'Action' boot by Davos Camping. They are ideal for this area, not too heavy but with a good commando sole. If anyone knows, contact me at the usual address.

The French for goldfish is 'poisson rouge' (red fish) and if someone is big headed he is said to have 'swollen ankles'.

Do you know the French for tourniquet? Answer next time.
Ride safe.

Mike Kirby

Tel/fax 0033 468 33 89 72

e.mail: mhcarefree.2@aol.com

Deciding on a Route

When deciding on the route for a long and tiring day's trail riding - especially when its out of your usual area - a number of factors have to be considered. Examples are, where to park the car and trailer, where to find fuel, where to find food.

Also of some importance is the issue of in what order to cover the ground? Do you leave the really challenging lane until last - when you're absolutely knackered, or do you attempt it first thing, when the after effects of a night out tend to diminish performance somewhat?



Recently, a couple of us from the Axe Vale Group have attempted to gather some empirical evidence to the question raised above.

The first attempt saw us covering a large number of the byways in Bath and North East Somerset. Always interesting, a number of them do produce a good challenge; none more so than the one we finished the day with - or more exactly the one that totally finished us off. I won't bore you with map references - you

can contact our group via the magazine - but just remember the name Pipe House. I understand from something I heard years ago that it used to be regularly used in trials. Remember, trials and not trail!!

Anyway, the lane starts easily enough but becomes steep, stoney and extremely challenging. Years ago on my IT175 I used to enjoy it. Later on a DR350 I used to dread the inevitable stall, slide backwards and attempt at re-starting. On my electric start DR250, at least you know it'll go again before you collapse with kick start induced heart failure. My companion, Guy, rides a TS200R two stroke so he's oblivious to the character forming antics of starting a hot and dropped DR350 kick only model.

Anyway, I digress. We did, by our combined efforts, reach to top - just.



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When I got home, remember it was the last lane, I'd lost 6lbs. Such a weight loss would have got me an honourable mention in Weight Watchers Weekly.

So, following the above experience, and still in the name of objective scientific research, our next outing, to the area surrounding and including Salisbury Plain (which I think makes for a fascinating day's run) began with a byway described in TBM magazine as "a challenge". Again, I won't bore you with map references, again just remember the name, Gare Hill. It's not overly long, by Wiltshire standards, perhaps around a mile. Nor is it particularly steep or rocky. It is, however, extremely punishing on the body in a way only sticky rutted lanes can be. Don't ever do it on your own. Don't do it as I did, when the night before you were out socialising with a few pints of Stella. Perhaps at the age of 53 (*Ed. - you kids have no stamina!*) I shouldn't do it at all!

We did eventually emerge at the far end absolutely soaked in sweat - and the day wasn't very warm. At least having done the other lanes on a number of occasions we knew nothing similar awaited us. However, any reserves of energy we left home with were completely drained, which goes some way to explaining the number of, luckily low speed, get offs we both had throughout the day.

So, the question remains, start off or finish off with a challenge? How about just miss them out? Much thanks again to Bill Riley for assisting with the drawing up of the route and TBM for describing perfectly Gare Hill.

R. Stephens, Axe Vale Group

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INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY REPORT

The use of motorised vehicles on Byways Open to All Traffic and rural unclassified roads stirs the emotions of many whom are involved in countryside recreation. The issue is often hotly debated and parties involved are often entrenched in their views.

There are principally three categories of vehicular highways at issue here. Byways Open to All Traffic, Roads Used as Public Paths (although vehicular rights are not conclusive) and rural unclassified or unclassified county roads which are often unsurfaced and sometimes referred to as white roads. These roads are commonly known as green lanes, which as a term, has no legal standing. Vehicles on these roads have the same rights as vehicles on other roads with a tarmac or metalled surface.

Walkers and riders meeting such vehicles often feel their presence in otherwise quiet rural areas is inappropriate and detrimental to their own enjoyment of the Countryside. Visible surface damage by vehicles often leads to calls for prevention of vehicular access.

Numerous surveys and projects have been undertaken relating to the issue which have shown that, apart from a small number of isolated areas, there is not

actually a problem. It is considered to be a perceived rather than actual problem. Lawful public vehicular use is confined to only 5 per cent of the rights of way network in addition many users belong to organisations which promote responsible use of green lanes and have codes of conduct which include voluntary restraint in the use of certain routes lanes.

Damage to the surface of lanes, as surveys show, is not always caused by recreational vehicular users. Much damage is as a result of use by agricultural or forestry vehicles and the damage would not be prevented by banning recreational vehicles. Much of the damage caused by vehicles has arisen, however, as a result of lack of maintenance by financially stretched Highway Authorities, and blame is not being apportioned to any party. Long gone are the days when lanes were let for grazing

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and the income used for maintenance, and when local councils employed a hacker, as they are known in some areas, who back-filled ruts.

The Institute believes that vehicular users should not be discriminated against and that local authorities should work within current legislative constraints. Unsurfaced vehicular highways should be accurately recorded in definitive maps and, this includes recording rural unclassified roads as Byways where the legal criterion is met - carrying public vehicular rights but which are principally used by pedestrians and equestrians.

When genuine conflict arises consideration should first be given to management solutions such as surface improvements, clearance or drainage works and this may include voluntary restraint whilst surface vegetation recovers. There may be a role for dissemination of advice to non-vehicular users of the rights of vehicular users and vice versa. If all else fails then careful consideration should be given to the use of Traffic Regulations Orders. Which vehicles need to be excluded and to what time of the year a closure should apply are factors that must be addressed together with the question of effective policing. Clearly those whose business relies on the use of the way should not be excluded. The Institute does not support the extinguishment of vehicular rights under section 116 of the Highways Act, 1980.

As a realistic solution the Institute endorses the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions practical guide 'Making the Best of Byways' and welcomes a positive approach. The Department of Environment/Department of Transport document, however, proposing a change to legislation, whereby public vehicles would be excluded from unmetalled vehicular highways, is not welcomed and should not be supported until such time as an actual problem is proven.

In summary the Institute's view is that:

- 1. Vehicular users have every right to use public vehicular rights of way.**
- 2. All public rights of way should be accurately recorded.**
- 3. Responsible use is welcomed by all parties to reduce any potential conflict.**
- 4. Highway Authorities should consider their maintenance responsibilities.**
- 5. Where problems arise, consideration should be given to management solutions.**
- 6. Traffic regulation orders should only be used as a last resort and after careful consideration.**
- 7. Concurrent Reclassifications and Traffic Regulation Orders should not form common practice and TRO's should only be implemented after full investigation.**

For further info, visit: www.iprow.co.uk

Taken from The Bristol TRF Gazette, August 2002

VIEWS FROM THE SADDLE



THE THOUGHTS & ISSUES OF TRAIL RIDING
Through the eyes of Richard Fordham

Areas of Non-Outstanding Beauty – ANOBs

In this month's Views from the Saddle, Richard Fordham talks about the green lane riding that can take place in some of the lesser attractive areas of Britain, such as South Yorkshire.

I've titled this article 'Areas of Non Outstanding Beauty – ANOBs' not because the area I'm going to describe is a dump, but because outside the National Parks and outside the designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) there are hundreds of miles of green lanes to ride, where you can often ride all day without seeing another soul.

South Yorkshire is probably not a prime tourist destination. To some extent this is a shame, the area boasts some splendid monuments, such as Conisbrough Castle, which has the finest and most complete Norman Keep in Britain, and once you are away from the industrial villages, the countryside is rather pleasant, with thick hedgerows and arable fields.

A South Yorkshire town like Doncaster carries images of coal pits, terrace houses and pit stacks, but before the industrial revolution, Doncaster was an important Medieval Market Town, along with neighbouring Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield, all being granted their Market Charters around 800 years ago. Had it not been destroyed by Cromwell, Rotherham would have been one of the great Universities along with Cambridge and Oxford! You can just imagine some boastful parent: "My son has got in at Rotherham, you know!" With the medieval trade came the need to transport goods and a comprehensive network of vehicular rights of way developed in the area. Doncaster has an advantage that it lies on the Roman Great North Road (where some of the original lengths are Byway Open to All Traffic). Doncaster, as a Roman town, actually means camp by the River Don, from the Latin *castra* (camp).

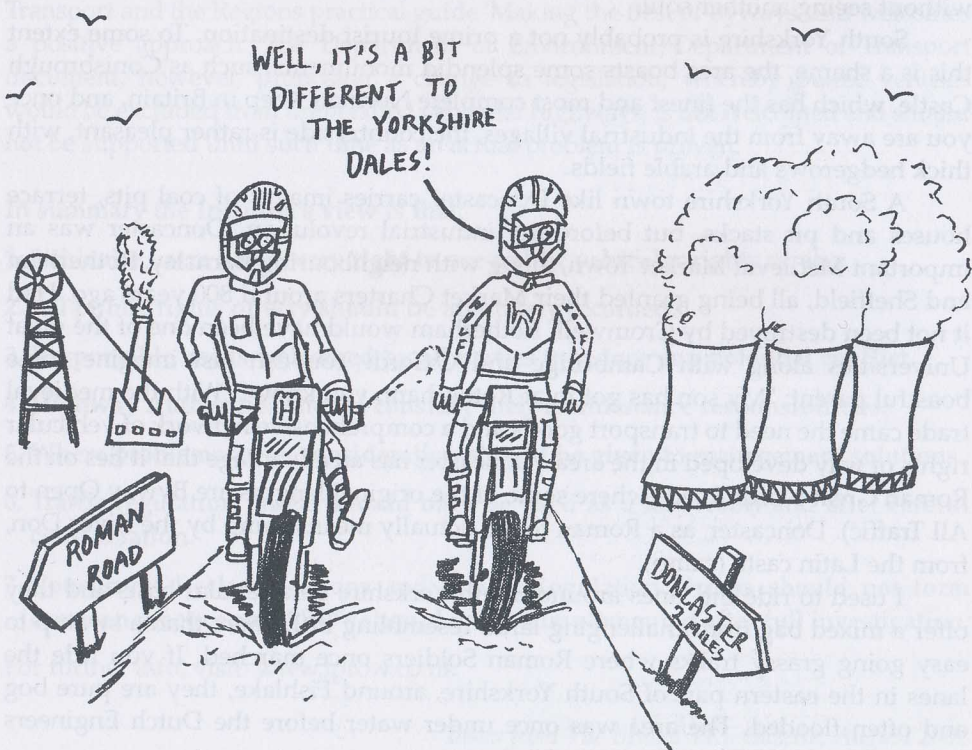
I used to ride the lanes around South Yorkshire on a regular basis and they offer a mixed bag from challenging lanes resembling little more than a swamp to easy going grassy tracks where Roman Soldiers once marched. If you ride the lanes in the eastern part of South Yorkshire, around Fishlake, they are pure bog and often flooded. The area was once under water before the Dutch Engineers

drained it in the 17th Century to produce arable land. The enclosures awarded a network of public carriage lanes soon after the area was drained.

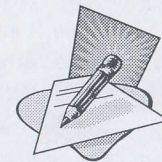
One thing I've found about South Yorkshire is that the people are not only friendly (but I would say that coming from Doncaster!) but they are bike friendly with it. Growing up in South Yorkshire, I lived in a culture where if you didn't own a CR250 by the age of 16, there was something considered appallingly wrong with you. It seems to me that the local folk accept bikes, particularly dirt bikes, as part of the South Yorkshire Scene. With that acceptance, the local pubs are happy to have muddy trail bikers eating and drinking there.

Many of these South Yorkshire Lanes are bridleways and footpaths and need researching and claiming. If you live in South Yorkshire, take a look at the enclosure awards - there are loads of lanes waiting to be claimed! Nip into the archives in Balby near Doncaster and open up the Brodsworth enclosure awards map - there is a public road right opposite Brodsworth Hall crossing the present A1(M)!

So next time you think about riding, consider some of the local lanes near to where you live. They are often under used, overgrown, quiet and free of other people. By riding in these areas, it releases the pressure on National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



LETTERS



THANKS FOR A GOOD EVENT

Having been a competitor in the recent 'On Your Bike in North Yorkshire' event, run by the Teesside and North Yorkshire Group, I would like to thank Frank Kitching, Paul Suggit and all their helpers for a very enjoyable event. They obviously put in a lot of work and hit bullseye first time.

I think the entry was about 40 or so, which was OK, but I imagined it would be more.

Hopefully it will be repeated next year, in which case I will be happy to help with the workload, and to those who were not there this time, you missed a great day's on/off road riding, so try to support it next time.

Keith Sleightholme

OPEN LETTER - DESERVES A REPLY

Dear Fred the Ed, I have just returned from a few days in the Dales having enjoyed the company and hospitality of genuine Yorkshire Folk.

My only sour note was struck when I picked up a copy of THE DALESMAN. Sure enough the editor was whingeing and whining again about off-road leisure vehicles and how they should be banned.

I have written to him personally on two occasions but to no avail. He will not publish any case for the defence.

I wonder if you could print this, as an open letter to him, and send him a copy. My point is: why has he replaced his Christian values i.e. Love thy Neighbour with one of pure vitriol. Yorkshire folk generally embrace the philosophy of; live and let live; one man's meat is another man's poison, all in an atmosphere of tolerance and

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This photo shows how the wettest July for years has affected the bracken. There is some monster stuff out there. I have seen nettles seven feet high this year down some lanes in North Yorkshire.

TRAIL FOR THOSE IN THE KNOW

I have to agree with H. Crosswood about TRAIL being for those in the 'know'.

A recent holiday took me to Northumberland with my family, so the KLX250 was left behind in favour of my mountain bike for a week. A trip to the local shop and the most recent Explorer map bought, which shows field outlines, etc. I picked local routes that had roads used as public paths (RuPPs) on them and set off. Some

understanding. Not our Ed at the Dalesman, he has misused his power to try and engender ill feeling where there is little if any real resentment.

I have been riding in the Dales for some years now and I can honestly say I have never experienced any animosity from walkers, equestrians or local farmers. In fact I often stop to have a word and most are glad to pass the time of day.

So Mr. Dalesman, stop pretending to defend the Countryside and it's people against off-riders when it is a personal grudge that you bear.

One final point "How do you sleep at night?" or are you, as I suspect, a man without conscience.

Happy Trail Riding.
John Robinson

were found (gated) not a problem on an MTB. One was so overgrown you could not even start it on foot, and one had loads of use from the farmer as it was freshly rutted, but on arrival at the other end of the lane, a notice posted to a fence said it had been downgraded to a bridleway as no one had objected to the Parish Council two years earlier.

If you can pick up the right area/most recent print map from the shop, and it be two years out of date, how can anyone relate to The DEFINITIVE MAP, for an area you are visiting???

I have ridden trails on my mountain bike for years, with no problems from the Ramblers, they always ask how/why the hell you can cycle up a mountain, but add a motor and people go nuts at you!!

One surprise I found when spotting another of these official looking posters, said this certain lane had been upgraded to a BOAT (which confused my Dad, not me as I read TRAIL), the reason being, it was now used as part of the National Cycle Route. Try and work that one out?

I thought it might have something to do with old timers croacking it while cycling in the wilderness and a 4x4 Paramedic vehicle required.

Marc Ford, fitter but not wiser after a visit to Northumberland
Ed. See Editor's letter for the snippet that Marc sent in!

SOUTHERN GROUP FUN DAY

OR

THE DAY I WAS EVEN PROUDER TO BE A TRF MEMBER

What a whopping success! Yes that was the Southern Group's 4th Annual Fun Day held on the 13th of July. Over 130 people attended.

This time the venue was Ham Lane Moto Cross track at Langrish, Hampshire, said to be ex world champion Dave Thorpe's practice and training school track.

The course was terrific with its hills and jumps and drop off's but at the same time being relatively smooth, unlike our previous MX venue at Lopcombe Corner, Wiltshire.

Only two thirds of the track was used, the other third allowed access to the trials area and also allowed riders to muck about on one of the unused big hills of the MX course.

As for the location, well it was slap-bang in the middle of some of Hampshire's finest green lanes.

The weather couldn't have been better with sunshine all day and a regular supply of good barbecue food in the afternoon.

Bouncy Castle, proper toilets, no sneaking off to the woods, that pleased the ladies especially.

Camping overnight amongst Hampshire's countryside, great!

We are trail riders I hear you say! Yes but where else can we try such an assortment of motorcycles from trailbikes to tiddler's to 600cc 4 strokes.

Apart from the MX track there were also 6 scheduled trail runs arranged at various times throughout the day, they all started around their allotted time complete with a good compliment of riders at all times, terrific.

As I am in a trail riding club it was these organized runs which for me personally as a TRF member helped to make the event such an overwhelming success.

Back to the track, riders had been asked to be careful because of the variation of users from the experienced to the trailriding beginner, so due praise must be given to the riders for their behaviour, it was courteous and tolerant.

The track was wet in a couple of places but dried out during the day but the rain from earlier on in the week did initially make the going a bit tricky. The bottom of one of the hills was a sticky problem for a few but they persevered and got to the top and were soon rattling round. Did they learn something or what? You bet they did!

To see the variety of bikes using the track was extraordinary. There were 2 and 4 stroke of all types from trail bikes, moto crosser's, enduro machines, a pre-65' 4 stroke scrambler, 2 and 4 stroke trials and home brewed specials.

Have I missed any out?

It was great to see the majority of the bikes going round were wearing numberplates.

What about First Aid I hear you say! Oh dear you would bring that up, just one person needed attention, a plaster for a burnt finger. Not bad considering there was over 80 riders and another 50 or more enjoying the day?

Lee Wildsmith must take most of the credit for this fantastic day, he put in a lot of hard work before and during the event. The success of the day was also due to the hard working team of helpers who supported him, club members, friends and relatives.

Well done everybody! Plenty of varied riding and a great social event as well, all in all a splendid day.

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HELP PLEASE!

Anybody out there with an understanding of cartridge type front forks? The ones fitted to my DR250R (DOHC) are a little short on travel and what I want to know is, whether or not I can extend the rod which seems to secure the fork caps (on the top of the fork tubes) to the fork sliders (bottom part of the forks) then add, say DR350 springs which appear somewhat longer than the DR250R's? Thus gaining me more fork travel. Oh so simple, but will they snap?

Certainly, externally, the DR250R's forks look very similar to late model DR350s only a little shorter. Could this be that the average height of a Japanese trail bike rider is less than that of a Brit one? The bike is a grey import. Any other ideas?

Any answers please to Rob Stephens (Axe Vale Group so quite poor) at 22 Ashcombe Gardens, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2XB. Tel: 01934 419702, I do have an answerphone.

Rob Stephens, Axe Vale Group

FULL MARKS FOR HAVING THE COURAGE

Full marks for having the courage to print a new member's mildly critical letter which is basically about certain individuals (usually attributed to civil serpents and that ilk) who delight in the over use of acronyms, sometimes even making up fiendishly clever little words, and generally managing to confuse the whole issue by doing so. Now, the big question is, will these constructive comments make any difference to future reading matter or will it continue to be only the 'Old guard' that fully understands the text?

Let's face it, TRAIL magazine isn't exactly so big in content that there is a need to save space by eliminating the essential words that make an article understandable to new members such as H. Crosswood, myself and no doubt many others like us, who, if confusion and frustration continues to reign, will most likely 'switch off' and not bother to renew their membership when the time comes... WSS*

C. Winter, Dorset

* We shall see!

Ed We of the old guard tend to forget, but point taken - others please take note.

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GROUPS

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

BLACK COUNTRY Nick Hammond, Tel: 01902 700749
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

CORNWALL Sally Madgwick, Tel: 01208 74411
3rd Thurs, The Ship Inn, Wadebridge, 8pm

CUMBRIA Anthony Hayhurst, Tel: 01539 721115
2nd Tues, Derby Arms Hotel, Witherslack, Nr. Kendal

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Kevin Marsh, Tel: 01246 811949
2 & 4 Tuesdays, The Angel Hotel, Sprinckhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire

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

DORSET Martin Diamond, Tel: 01202 571325
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

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Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904
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1st Wed, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW

KENT Richard Colquhoun, Tel: 01634 575090
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 Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079
4th Thurs, The Dog & Bone, John Street, Lincoln

LODDON VALE David Cook, Tel: 0118 901 4481
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading

NORTHUMBERLAND Chris Moody
Tel 0191 387 3507 6-10pm or 07860 302001 (mobile)
1st Tues, 8pm, Ravensdene Lodge, Lobley Hill, Gateshead

NORTH WALES Richard Hughes, Tel: 01244 533855
1st Wed, Capenhurst Social Club, OS 116 371 740

OXFORDSHIRE Kevin Lindsey, Tel: 01993 823865
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 Brian Crabtree, Tel: 01200 426824
2nd Tues, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59)

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

SOMERSET Kevin Parfitt, Tel: 01935 427858
2nd Thurs, The Bell Hotel, Curry Rivel, Nr. Taunton

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WEST MIDLANDS Colin Bott, Tel: 01386 834105
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WEST YORKSHIRE Gordon Carr, Tel: 01729 830569
1st & 3rd Thurs, Bankfoot Cricket Club, Wickets Close, (off Cleckheaton Rd), Odsal, Bradford

WILTSHIRE
Alan Yandell, Tel: 01225 704888
1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford

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