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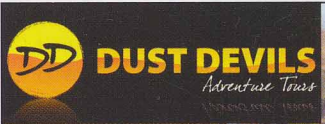
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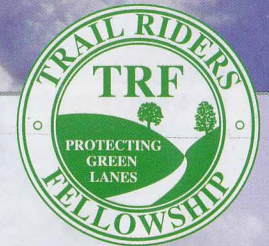
5 Off roading 5 KTM bikes 5 Accommodation

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TRAIL



The magazine of the TRF, the National Club for all who wish to ride Legal Motorcycles on Legal Carriageways
DECEMBER 2009 No. 376 EDITOR: FRED ELLISON

Patron: Lord Fairfax

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Keepers of Stationery:	Debbie Hutchinson	Leaflets & Membership Forms
	Fred Ellison	Letterheads & Compliments Slips
Display Equipment:	Leo Crone	01325 463815 (7a.m. - 5p.m.) Display boards held at Ut 10, Red Barnes Way, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 2RR

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TRAIL MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

Display Ads: For Advertising Rates please contact Fred Ellison editor@trf.org.uk 01254 823893
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ALL Commercial Advertising to be paid for - £1 per line, £5 minimum.
Please send all classifieds with payment if applicable to THE EDITOR.

EDITOR

Merry Christmas
and a TRFIC
New Year.

Thanks to all who have
contributed over the past year
and in anticipation of those who
intend to contribute in the
coming year.



TRF EXECUTIVE MEETING

Sunday 31st January 10.00 am

Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road,
Gaydon, Warwick CV35 0BJ.

Tel: 01926 641188

There will be 45 free passes to the museum.
Tea and coffee will be served in the morning
and the afternoon.

Please bring your TRF membership card with
you and book in at the start of the meeting.

CONTENTS

NOTICE BOARD	2
ROW NEWS	3
THE PERFECT TRAIL BIKE	4
MIDNIGHT SPANNERING	7
RIDING KIT	9
FLATLANDERS	12
OLD BIKES: WHY?	15
TO THE LAND...	17
TRAILBLAZERS	24
APPEAL	26

WANTED:

- Product Reviews • Bike Tests
- Long Term Reviews • Cover Pictures

COVER PHOTO: from John
Robinson. Glaisdaleside. The views
were amazing in sunshine and clear
blue skies.

All contributions to THE EDITOR
Fred Ellison, Sheepcote Farm
Moor Lane, Wiswell, Clitheroe
BB7 9DG editor@trf.org.uk

COPY DEADLINE:
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NOTICE BOARD

MANCHESTER TRF AGM 14th DECEMBER 2009

The AGM will be held at the usual venue on Monday 14th December at 9pm.

Arden Arms Pub (on the A6017 at Bredbury), Ashton Road,
Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2RY.

If you are a member of our group but can't make it to the meetings then please stay in touch via the Manchester section on the National TRF forum.

If you would like to book onto a ride then please contact our diary man John on 07706 655427.

Thank you www.manchestertf.com

PETITION RE MX PRACTICE TRACKS

This was mentioned in TMX on 20th November. Whilst we may not all be involved with MX we are all affected by current attitudes to motorcycle off road activities. Please encourage your m/c contacts to sign at the link below:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/savemotocross>

Dave Loney

STOLEN: YAMAHA WR250 FX 2008 MODEL

Blue and White WR250, DX58FHZ, this bike was fitted with Acerbis white handguards, heated grips, Yamaha - alloy bash plate and frame guards and a Wolfman tank bag. It was stolen from the Teesside area but could be anywhere. No doubt the bag will have been removed by now.

Any sightings of alloy frame WR250 Yams, while you are out and about, would be appreciated. Email to yamhontoy@live.co.uk

John Robinson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Trail Rides in Wales

Near Aberystwyth 2nd January. Ride into the night! Ride meet at 12 midday, break for tea at 4ish, ride until about 8 pm. Two course meal provided after ride with option of bunk house accommodation included in price which is £50.

All fees will need to be paid in advance (sorry - in the past I have had people say they will come but not turn up, leaving me having to pay for meals booked in the pub etc).

Contact Marianne Tel: 01686 430522 www.trailrides-wales.com

Devon TRF Teign to Tamar Spring 2010 17th & 18th April 2010 see page 10.

MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS LISTED

Send any details to The Editor (see contact details inside front cover)

RoW NEWS

NORFOLK

Norfolk County Council have come up with a novel solution to a problem that threatened to deprive the public of the use of a fairly long byway in the south of the county.

The byway which runs through the parishes of Brettenham and Bridgeham close to a non vehicular (footpath) section of the historic Peddars Way is due to be closed indefinitely for environmental reasons.

The problem is protected ground nesting birds who have carelessly decided to take up residence in the middle of the road. The land surrounding the byway is an SSSI and a nature reserve with seasonally limited public access. Ironically from our point of view it was the use of the route by walkers that was considered to pose the greatest threat to the wildlife. Especially those walkers who like the company of dogs!

This could have simply led to the route being closed to all users but, to their credit, Norfolk County Council appear to have worked quite hard to broker a compromise solution.

The lane will close indefinitely under the TRO as proposed but in its place will be an alternative "permissive byway" diversion.

The original plan and the one that was favoured by the TRF was for a permanent diversion that would have stopped up the old road and provided an entirely new byway. Unfortunately of the seven routes considered, none met with the necessary agreement from landowner and users to proceed unopposed so the authority have gone with the permissive option along the route favoured by the landowner.

On the face of it this may not look like a very good deal for trail rider and I must confess to having being sceptical initially but having seen and ridden the alternative route I can assure members that it is very nice. Of course it is

"only" permissive but the authority have taken the very unusual step of linking the continuation of the TRO with the continued public access to the permissive route.

This and the fact that the route chosen is favoured by the landowner appear to bode well for the future of our access here. We will of course continue to monitor the situation closely but for the time being at least trail riders in Norfolk have a new and interesting lane to ride which has the added benefit of providing a link around a section of Peddars Way that was previously out of bounds to bikes.

Although I have been involved in this process as Eastern Area RoW Advisor the bulk of the credit for securing vehicular access to the alternative route should go to John Trout, Norwich Group RoW Officer. Thanks John.

So there you have it, a TRO story that doesn't have an unhappy ending for a change!

Richard Sugden, Eastern Area RoW Advisor

IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT TRAIL BIKE!

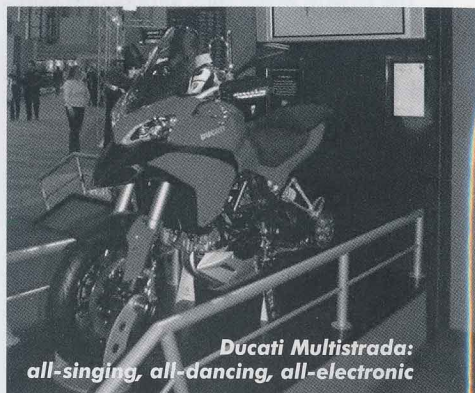
Richard Simpson goes tyre-kicking at the 2009 International Motorcycle and Scooter Show.

That no-one makes trail bikes any more is a common lament among some 'old-school' TRF-ers, as they bemoan the rise of the orange tide and the decline of the XL185.

So, your brave correspondent set out the Motorcycle Show at the NEC to see if there was any truth in this oft-exposed opinion.

The show itself is clearly feeling the impact of the recession: with Harley and Honda absent, along with Aprilia, MV, Morini and many other of the big Italian names. Even Ducati had just two bikes on display: although one was the model they hope will steal the crown of the big GS from BMW; the new Multistrada trail tourer which features what is claimed to be the most sophisticated electronic system to be found on any bike. Engine output, suspension settings, braking power and just about anything else you can think of are all controlled by an adaptive 'brain' with or without intervention by the rider. And, unlike some of its kind (Triumph Tiger for instance), the Ducati claims genuine off-road capability with MCN having already published carefully 'leaked' shots of a prototype being thrashed around an MX track.

Likely to appeal more to the typical TRF member is the Kawasaki KLX 250. Older readers may remember the first appearance of this bike as an 'off-road only' enduro in the 1990s. Back then, its 'Ninja x 1/4' engine, featuring chain-driven



Ducati Multistrada:
all-singing, all-dancing, all-electronic



Kawasaki KLX 250:
'90s enduro turned trail bike



Kawasaki KLX 125:
short legs, nice face

double-overhead cams and liquid cooling, was far more sophisticated than its competitors: now of course many 250cc enduro four-bangers sport twin-cams and radiators and the Kwakker has been reborn as a street/trail machine aimed primarily at the urban commuter. But, its chassis is still based on that of the old enduro bike (which grew to 300cc before disappearing from the market), and with some of the fripperies removed it could make a useful tool for the trail rider who wanted a bike that was legal 'straight from the box'. List price is just under four grand, although you should be able to get one on the road for about £3,500.

For the short-legged or provisionally licensed, there's an air-cooled 125 cc version too, with a 19"/17" wheel combination.

Over at the Yamaha stand, there really was a bike for all seasons. The WR250R shares design similarities with the off-road only WR250F enduro, but is fully road-legal and has long service intervals that are the envy of many a KTM owner: in comparison to its Kawasaki rival it looks a lot more modern, and less like a 1990s motocrosser!

Tracing their lineage back to the original XT500 of the late '70s are the XT660 and Tenere models. While the low-slung bog-standard XT appears more an exercise in styling and nostalgia than a usable trail bike, the Tenere is clearly aimed at the adventure touring market. It pays a price for being ruggedly over-built though: in terms of weight it's not far short of the mighty KTM 990 Adventure.

And speaking of KTM, there was no sign of the long-awaited Adventure version of the 690 single. In its 'Enduro' (actually, nothing of the sort) form though, it might actually make a useful heavyweight trail bike: with the fuel under the seat it could be less of a handful than some.

Husqvarna, which now being owned by BMW rather than Cagiva/MV should have addressed the quality control issues that led your author to part with his own Husky some years ago, has two offerings of particular interest to the trail rider.



Yamaha XT250R:
practical and sophisticated



Yamaha Tenere:
climb every mountain



Husqvarna TE310:
lightweight with punch



Rieju Marathon 250:
Spanish bike, Japanese engine

What was the TE610IE 570cc electric-start trail bike this year will in 2010 be replaced by the 600cc TE630. If it's anything like its predecessors it will be a fine handling road-orientated single that's just a little too low and heavy for use on demanding winter byways. Still a good bike, but perhaps the SM supermoto version is better at doing what it does best!

If the big trail Husky doesn't light your fire, then there's a smaller one that almost certainly will in the enduro range. Described as 'a winner on the road as well as the track' the TE310 is road-legal from the box, and features an oversize version of last year's 250cc competition engine. The extra cubes give an added spread of power and make for a more civilised ride than the quarter-litre, while in terms of weight and size the bike is just as easy to handle. Three-fifty cee-cees or thereabout often seems like the ideal size for a four-stroke trail bike: big enough not to be an utter pain on the road, but light and gentle enough to be civilised on the trail. The only bad thing about the electric-start Husky middleweight would seem to be its £5895 price: although if that sounds expensive it's worth remembering that it's actually cheaper than any of Husky's other four-stroke enduros, which are all now the wrong side of six grand!

Price is something which Spanish manufacturer Rieju (pronounced Ryewho) hopes will get it established in the British market. As a manufacturer it can trace its roots back to before the Second World War, and in its domestic market it churns out over 22,000 50cc and 125cc bikes a year.

But now it's growing up: realising that loyal customers had no choice but to defect to rival marques if they wanted something bigger than a tiddler.

If you fancied everything about Scorpa's T-

Ride except the price and the liquid-cooled Yamaha enduro engine, then there's the amusingly-named Tango 250cc trials/stunt/trail bike which features a Chinese-made, air-cooled four-stroke engine in what can only be described as a high-rise trials frame. It looks a bit left-field, but worth a punt at less than three grand on the road.

Rather more mainstream, but using the aforementioned dohc Yamaha enduro engines are the Marathon enduro bikes, which utilise a high-quality and well-equipped Gas-Gas-manufactured chassis. Again fully road-legal straight from the crate, the Marathons are priced at £5999 for the 250 and £6349 for the 450, which is rather cheaper than putting one of the Yamaha donor bikes on the road.

There are currently 60 Rieju dealers in the UK (mostly selling 125 cc machines with engines made to Yamaha design by Minarelli in Italy), but the importer reckons that around 12 of them will be appointed to handle the Marathon range.

While mainstream manufacturers Kawasaki and Yamaha are definitely keeping the trail bike flame alight, Suzuki appear to be missing a trick by only offering the long-serving DR-Z 400 in non-legal 'enduro' form.

But with specialists like Husqvarna and newcomers like Rieju clearly going for the road-legal enduro market, it's fair to say there are still some interesting bikes out there to choose from. While the truth of the matter is no-one markets trail bikes as such any more, many of the 'enduro' models are trail bikes in everything but name.

Richard Simpson

EDITOR - if you are fortunate enough to have bought one of these bikes and would like to share the experience we would all be interested in a picture and a few words.

MIDNIGHT SPANNERING

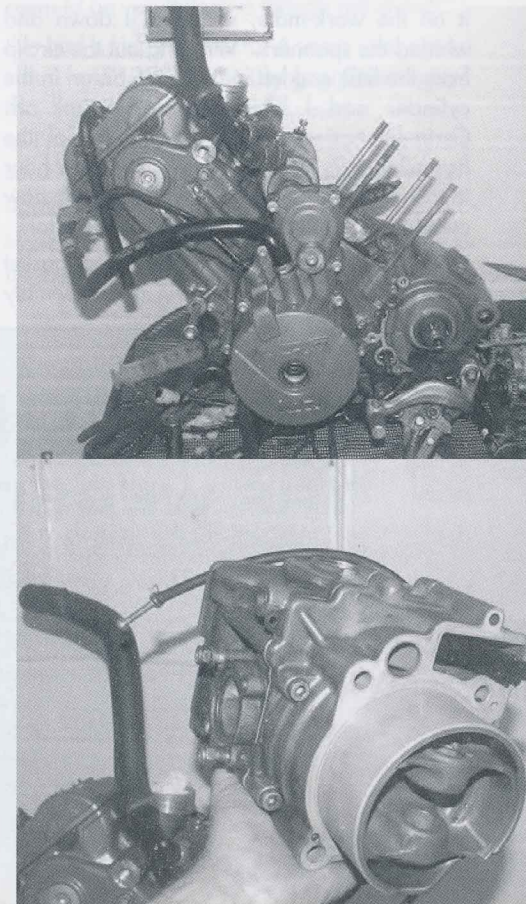
It doesn't seem to matter what time I start tinkering with a bike, I always seem to finish putting it back together at midnight! And what's the next thing that invariably happens...well, you've got to fire it up to see if it works right, much to the disdain of my wife (and neighbours)!? Well, one such occasion concluded last night but the tinkering had started a month ago, when I had spotted that the usually golden oil through the sight-screen had turned the colour of milk...really bad milk!

A quick perusal of the many adventure bike websites confirmed that the 950 KTM sometimes has the habit of blowing a head gasket. Many had done 40,000 miles plus though and hadn't had such a thing go but that's just the way it is I suppose. The now Yamaha owning Alan somewhat proudly popped round with the latest issue of RIDE magazine whereby he had highlighted, post-it noted and underlined the section on blown headgaskets on the V twin LC8!

With the parts ordered up I got to work with the spanners and within a few hours the tank, rad, carbs and engine was stripped off to the piston. The online manual is superb, very clear and thankfully simple to use. The parts quickly arrived that week but I was a little concerned that the new gasket was faulty. You mechanics out there see stuff like this everyday but to me the Teflon coated steel gasket was in two parts and crimped together in just three places. It looked like a recipe for another leak and with no one to ask at 10 o'clock at night, it stopped me in my tracks...until I had a brain wave.

KTM keep telling me I'm 'part of the family' so I thought I'd put this to the test. Who would be open at this time of night... California KTM

USA would be. So I despatched an email to them introducing myself, told them that the gasket is all flappy and not crimped and before I put it all together some confirmation either way would be greatly received. Within minutes these chaps confirmed that they're all like that and I needn't worry, just bolt it on! And after a couple of hours of midnight spannering, the front 'V' was completed. I couldn't help myself and I started it up to make sure that it didn't mash itself to pieces (I'm



overflowing with confidence you can tell!).

Next day was Saturday so I popped out for a quick ride. On returning, I inspected my work and I saw, with horror, a weep of oil from the head that I had just fixed. I couldn't believe it but I kept wiping the oil away until I noticed it was coming out of the oil pressure switch. Not just where the switch screws into the head but actually out of the switch, where the copper contact exits the unit. A quick call to my local KTM dealer this time confirmed he had one on the shelf. As I handed him my £4 he said "we sell lots of these!" Not what you want to hear. I must say in the two years I've had this bike it has run faultlessly, not even blown a bulb so I'm not too miffed.

Now, the rear 'V' was to be tackled. I'm not too sure whether this can be done with the engine in the frame like the front half so with a deep breath I removed the engine and plonked it on the work-mate, strapped it down and whirled the spanners. Winkling out the circlip from the little end left me with the piston in the cylinder and I lifted the whole pot off. Certainly easier with the engine out of the frame for sure, it may have taken another hour to take it out but the ease of which this job now could be done was certainly worth the effort.

With a new base gasket and head gasket fitted it was all torqued down and assembly

could now start. I'm not kidding you but by the time I had fitted the chain drive for the cams, timed it up, fitted the plugs and put the cam covers on...it was midnight! I had run out of hours and it was time to turn it in for the night.

With the engine now in, all I wanted to do was 'fire it up' but there was the small matter of pipes, tubes, clips and wires to be all plumbed together and correctly routed and oil and coolant to be added before I could press the red button. But, with time approaching, you've guessed it, midnight, the bike burst back into life. I kicked open the garage door to stop myself from choking only to catch my wife's silhouette in the window. I was expecting a flurry of hand signals spelling out my impending ASBO but was met with two thumbs up. I cut the engine and basked in a job well done. I hope I won't have to do this again for a while but my only concern is that with a brother and two mates with the same bike, I may be called upon sooner than I think to repeat this task. I can only hope that I receive a letter from the noise abatement society, it'll give me the much needed excuse I need to go to bed early for once!

Glenn Vieira

RIDING KIT

The Honda is an XR 250R (I think) which is a roady version of the standard XR - its electric start only, lower and lighter and easier to ride than the TTR. For a diehard TTR enthusiast like myself it was a revelation. The only problem is they aren't common.

Having tried many different bits of kit over the years I've got an idea of what works and what doesn't:

I've used Sinisalo Jacket and Trousers for the last 3 years, which is about 3000 miles of hard use. They are strong, pretty waterproof (though the liner feels damp around the knees and more generally in very wet conditions - though I have machine washed without re-proofing so could be my fault...). Quality is very good though, I've worn the knees a bit by kneeling to do tyres etc. Because of this they work out as good value despite the relatively hefty price tag.

The only thing I would change about mine is to get ones with zippers for use in the summer.

Sinisalo winter gloves are too bulky for me. I discovered that they are not hugely waterproof and are not as effective as neoprene eg Scotts winter enduro which are a much better bet (still serviceable after 5 years). Also when wet it is easy to pull the liners out - which are nigh on impossible to replace.

Sidi Courier Boots are brilliant. Easy to put on or take off, comfy (enough to walk in), grippy trials type sole, finish below the knee so less protection than an MX boot - but its arguably better to have a broken bone than a broken knee. They are also the most waterproof boots I've used, and I don't bother with my gortex sox anymore. And not too pricey.

I've recently tried the Acerbis body armour

suit, but can't get on with it as it constricts my forearms underneath my jacket - I'm planning to use it outside a shirt next summer which should work a lot better - I'll keep you posted. In the meantime I've fitted my jacket with some Heine Gericke pads over my vital bits which seem to be very effective though not cheap.....

I've had a Hebo helmet for 6 years - very good value for £130. My Oakley goggles are good too, though I replace the lens every 1-2 years as I'm not good at looking after them. They are secured with the easy on/off goggle strap - again brilliant.

Hope this may be useful. Friendly abuse is to be expected, so don't hold back!!!

Pat Bullen



WWW.TRF.ORG.UK

TRF WEBSITE & FORUM

PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AND SEE WHAT YOU THINK
AND SAY HELLO ON THE FORUM.

WE WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR FROM MEMBERS WITH ANY
FEEDBACK OR IDEAS FOR CONTENT THAT YOU MAY HAVE.

TRF members need to be aware that in order to access the
Members' Only Areas, you will need to ensure that the email you
use to register your account on the website is the same one
that we have for you on the TRF database. If you have any queries
or difficulties please contact it@trf.org.uk or web@trf.org.uk



In conjunction with

FARM
Wheeldon

DEVON TRF

Teign to Tamar Spring 2010

17th & 18th April 2010

Now an annual fund raising event, the Devon Group are happy to announce and invite you to their 4th Teign to Tamar event in April 2010. A weekend of guided trailriding in South Devon, where you will ride some of the very best trails in the area between the Rivers' Teign and Tamar and to the south of Dartmoor.

Riding will take place on Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th April 2010.

Once again, Wheeldon Farm will be hosting the event. It is the perfect base, as not only is it a nationally recognised off-road motorcycle training centre with excellent self catering accommodation, its set in the heart of the South Hams, with its array of local trails leading out from the Farm, it also has a fantastic indoor track available for us to have an evening session (on Wheeldon machinery, and of course if you have the energy).

Also included in the price is an evening meal for all participants at Wheeldon, to ensure a sociable Saturday evening. To check their facilities available go to - <http://www.wheeldontwo.co.uk/index.htm>

Riding will cater for two different levels of ability (**average** day - slower paced day with several stops along the way, **fuller** day - quicker paced day stopping for lunch), all groups starting and finishing at Wheeldon Farm, where overnight security will ensure your bike and kit is well cared for.

There is a maximum entry of 35 riders and Wheeldon Farm can accommodate up to 19 people (26 if some are couples), cost will be based on Bed and Breakfast and will be confirmed by Wheeldon at the time of booking, more local B&B 'overflow' is available, along with limited camping pitches.

Two days' guided riding and an evening meal for Saturday will cost £60 per rider (price held for 3rd year). Accommodation, evening riding sessions in the indoor arena and drinks are extra.

Bookings are being taken by Wheeldon & they can be contacted by phone on 01548 821784, after 5th January 2010 (**please don't call before this date**).

DTRF contact - Debbie Hutchinson - 07966 438907 or debbiehutchy@btinternet.com

All entries are dealt with on a strict 1st come 1st served basis and numbers are limited to 35.

ALL MOTORCYCLES AND RIDERS MUST BE ROAD LEGAL

Before you ride, you will be asked to declare that: -

- You are physically and mentally fit to participate and are competent to do so.
- You understand the nature and type of event and the risks involved and agree to accept these risks even if such risk may involve negligence on the part of the organisers/officials.
- You will not seek to claim against the TRF, their organisers or officials, the landowners, or other bodies or individuals connected with the event in respect of any damage to your property regardless of the cause, including any damage caused by the negligence or breach of said bodies or persons.
- Your motorcycle is road legal and effectively silenced.

RIDERS OF NOISY MOTORCYCLES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE

FUNDS RAISED GO DIRECTLY TO ENSURING THAT AS MANY DEVON GREEN LANES REMAIN OPEN AS POSSIBLE

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DD Graphics bring you the latest designs created to spruce up that tired trail bike.

Most companies cater for MX and some enduro designs but we are unique, as we specialise in designs for Trail bikes as well as some Enduro and MX. Make your trail bike gleam again with our varied designs and kits from just £25 inc. shipping.

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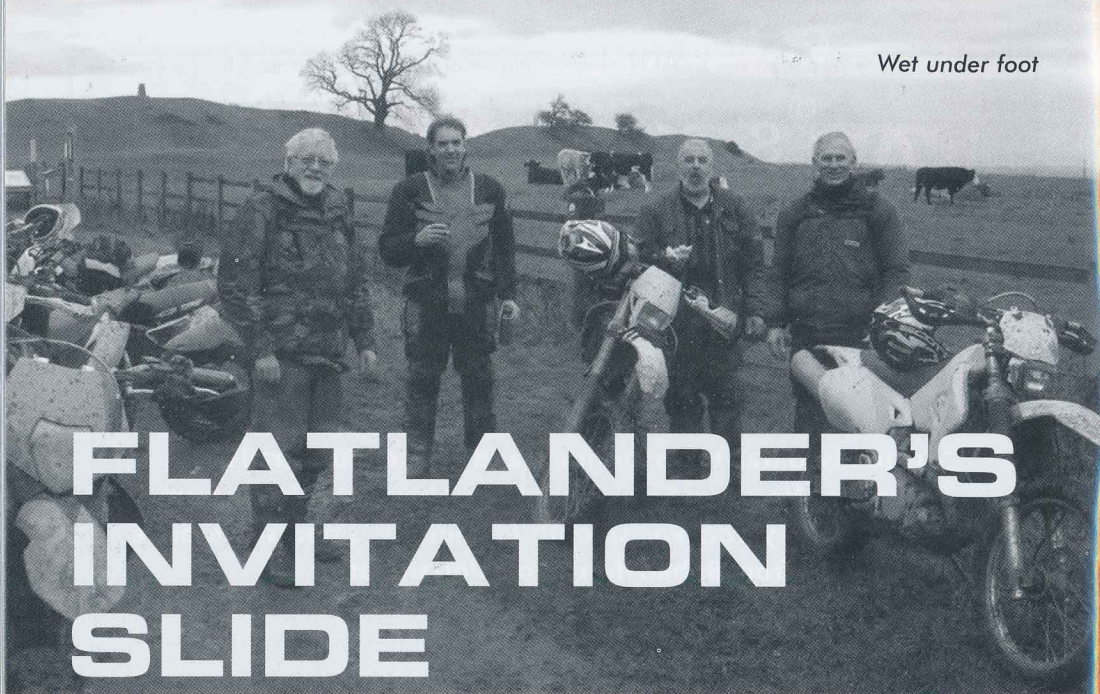
DISPLAY ADVERTISING

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1/4 PAGE	£36
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1/4 PAGE	£72
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FLATLANDER'S INVITATION SLIDE

Paul Vernon, of the Lincolnshire TRF group, organised an exchange visit for myself and the newly appointed Chair of the T&NYTRF group, Harry Nicolson. (He of the poison chalice).

I picked Harry up at six o'clock and we motored down to Grantham where a full complement of riders awaited us.

I had ridden with most of them, on several occasions, during their visits to our North Yorkshire Camping weekends but never on their home territory.

A grand set of lads they are too.

I immediately felt at home when I found someone with less tread on his rear tyre than I had on my front.

The heavy rain in the previous few days had made the lanes interesting but it was at least warm, for this time of the year.

The coefficient of sliding friction, with respect to the surfaces, was approaching zero. Thank goodness the lanes were flat. The technique was called the Magic Carpet Ride or an act of faith. You just relaxed your grip and allowed

the bike to do the work, ticking over, in a higher than normal gear.

That was the theory. In reality great skill was needed to stay on board.

Very few lanes had stoney or gravel surfaces, most resembled boulder clay but a large proportion were virgin grass fields and muddy lanes.

You have some beautiful lanes down here I said. Yes and we are the only ones to use them. There are very few 4X4s, horses or walkers.

In fact this was a Saturday and apart from one or two lanes next to towns we did not encounter any other users.

We did come across a Hunt near Melton Mowbray. There must have been a hundred spectators along one side road and at least forty horse boxes.

Giving the groups of spectator horse riders a wide berth brought waves of approval. Everyone seemed to be enjoying the day.

The hounds and hunters were three fields

away so we were fortunate not to be held up for too long.

First stop was the Fishing Ponds where a sign at the Cafe read "All welcome".

Sausage and bacon sandwiches all round, sent the chef into a spin. Time for a chat and for some, a fag.

Fed and watered we headed off toward the Leicester area. Low and behold some bumps. We entered an area along a ridge which resembled the Vale of York. The uphill section was challenging. On the downhill section, it was impossible to find any grip and the brakes were useless. We resorted to skiing down, legs akimbo!!

That was hairy I remarked. Sure is! Was the response. That track never dries out, even in summer, no-one tries to go up it.

There were some lovely UCRs over pristine grassland. Twice we had the gate opened for us at farms by the owners.

At one particular Farm/Nursery, we passed through a concrete courtyard (between two sets of gates), which stank to high Heaven.

The yard was full of Geese, Turkeys, Chickens and Ducks, all of which had contributed to a treacherous, two inch depth, deposit of bodily fluids.

The guard dog, thankfully, was caged, a massive (200 kilo), Dogue de Bordeaux. An animal renowned for its strength and patience.

I am sure its patience and strength of character would have been sorely tested in that environment. He kept on barking his head off until we all exited the premises.

There must have been a lot of Roman activity in this area in the past. It was particularly noticeable that on the road sections, between lanes, the tarmac was as straight as a dye, sometimes for miles.

We were stopped by one farmer who blocked the lane with his tractor and trailer. I thought here we go. Just when you thought you were having a hassle free day.

It turned out that the farmer asked if the leader knew the lane that passed close by his property. They said No!

Well, said the farmer, that other farmer took down the "Unsuitable for Motors" sign some years ago. It is a UCR and he preceded to mark it up on the run's leaders map.

Please feel free to use it, I never did like that "fellow".

Well that is a first, I thought.

I was just getting used to the slippery lanes when we started to lose the light.

Harry was coping well although he was disappointed to have binned his bike in front of the assembled group, as they waited at the end of a lane.

Then on the very last lane I tried to "Switch Horses in Mid-stream". I was stuck in a rut that was leading me perilously close to a ditch. As I jumped the front end across, the back end decided not to follow and I ended up headfirst, upside down. Hovering above the ditchwater I was hanging on to the bike, with grime determination, until I was rescued.

A hundred mile slide, full of smiles. A thoroughly enjoyable day's ride, with good company. What more could a chap ask for?

We said our goodbyes, with an open invitation to visit anytime.

Harry and I loaded up our bikes and headed home. It started to rain. That should wash some of the gunge off exclaimed Harry, ever the optimist.

November's issue of Trail was waiting at home and I was reading about the bikes stolen from Mike Extance, little knowing that thieves had followed me home and were stealing my WR 250F from my garage.

There was a knock on the door next morning. One of my neighbours said "Your garage door it half open". When I went to close it, I noticed the bikestand was empty. Expletives!!

I assumed that electric, roller, garage doors

were locked down when closed but the supplier said it depends how strong you are.

I said what about the lock. He said "Locks are to keep honest people out". If they want it they will steal it. You can only deter the opportunist thieves.

Which reminded me of a friend of mine who lived in a quiet village next to a field. One night a lorry, with an articulated arm, drove into the field, punched a hole in the barn roof and extracted two trail bikes. At least there was no structural damage to my garage.

Fortunately, my neighbour has a CCTV camera scanning the street, where I live, which shows a Transit Van and the thieves looking in my window, then forcing the garage door. Although the footage is indistinct at least it pinpoints the time of the crime, nine o'clock in the evening.

Not that I have a cat in hell's chance of getting it back but you never know, ever the pessimist.

These cheeky bar stewards just carried the bike away to the van.

They had obviously targeted the Yamaha WR 250F because nothing else was missing from the garage, so just be careful out there.

Advice, double your security.

The price of off-road bikes has rocketed since the Pound took a hammering against the Euro. Consequently stealing is much more profitable.

I know dealers have been coming over from Europe to buy up our off-road stock for the last year. Now the new models are in the showrooms at plus two or three thousand pounds, losing a bike is very expensive because the compensation is based on the old prices and the new prices are too much (for me).

I wouldn't care but I had just fitted the bike with heated grips, last week, ready for the Winter.

The only good news is I did not have time to clean the bike.

Without a ride for a while:
John Robinson. T&NYTRFGroup.

The Stolen Bike

It will not be clean and the rear stop light has been changed to LED type. It carries a plastic flexi-number plate.

Annual General Meeting of the TRF

Sunday 11 October 2009

The Heritage Motor Centre, Banbury Road, Gaydon, CV35 0BJ

SUMMARY

1. Chairman's introduction and report
 - There was an excellent attendance at this year's AGM
 - Tim Stevens suggested that the TRF creates a Brian Thompson award which would be granted yearly to an ordinary member who has made an outstanding contribution to rights of way.
2. Apologies
3. Notice of any other urgent business (at Chairman's discretion)
 - The notifications were not considered urgent enough, so currently no AOB
4. The minutes of AGM on 19th October 2008 were signed off - see Trail No. 364 December 2008
5. Matters arising (not otherwise on the agenda) from previous AGM
 - Regarding the disappearance of the BMF's fighting fund, Anna Zee, chairman of the BMF, reported that the BMF does not consider there to be a separate fighting fund and that in her experience it has never been separately accounted for.
- 6 & 7. Principal officers', co-opted officers' and contractors reports
 - Check the TRF web-site for the individual officer's reports.
 - The TRF and LARA won its case against the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP).
 - DMMO claims made prior to the NERC cut-off date are made under the 1981 Countryside and Wildlife Act and are not governed by the NERC Act.
 - Legal action over TROs must be made to the local authority within 6 weeks of notification.
 - National Parks cannot change existing TROs.
 - National Parks do not have the authority to determine the status of a route and thus they cannot legally change the signs on RUPPs or dual status routes
 - Richard Sugden has been successful in negotiating motorcycle exemption from TROs in the eastern region.
 - A new TRF web-site was launched earlier in the year.
 - The TRF membership database was replaced with an online system and linked to the new TRF web-site
 - Membership is currently up at 3209, which is an increase in subscriptions of £10,000 compared to the end of last year.
 - An e-shop will be launched in mid-November.
 - All members are asked to check that their current email address is on their membership details and register on the web-site.
 - The web-site is the easiest and fastest means of communicating with members so please check it at least once per week.
 - Most new members join via the web-site but there are still around 5 postal subscriptions per month.
 - The TRF will co-opt a member to sell advertising for both the paper and pdf versions of Trail and the web-site.
 - The TRF will continue the affiliation to the BMF and thus be part of a wider community.
 - Andy Gerrard, TRF chairman, is a member of the new all party parliamentary motorcycle group.
 - The TRF is against the adoption of common traffic law across EU countries under the putative Lisbon Treaty.
 - LARA is struggling for survival since the Motorcycle Industries and the ACU gave notice that they wish to terminate their membership.
 - Horse events provide a significant income for the TRF groups supporting them.



- The CCPR's Bingo Lotto folded shortly after its launch so the TRF saw little benefit from this initiative.
 - The BBT (Byways and Bridleways Trust) Council has not met for some time because Alan Kind has been too busy on other issues. They are still producing a regular magazine which all TRF RoW officers should receive.
8. End of Year report (Arnold Brewer)
- Expenditure has increased this year due to the new website and the new card printer
 - The cost of printing the magazine has increased significantly due to increased number of members and therefore copies and postage charges. This is offset by advertising income which is significantly down. Fred has signed a contract with TNT for postal delivery and this will decrease costs.
 - Office expenses include the Streamline costs and Paypal commission
 - Despite the drop in interest rates on the TRF's savings, income has increased due to the new online membership subscription facility on the new web-site.
 - This year a small amount of the fighting fund has been paid out in the legal costs for the Yorkshire Dales case. When LARA has worked out how to apportion their costs the TRF will get a partial refund.
 - The TRF must maintain a significant fighting fund in order to make any legal challenge.
 - Arnold recommends maintaining the subscription fee at the current level
 - Moving to Charity status and keeping the fighting fund in the Charity will remove the corporation tax that TRF Ltd currently pays.
9. Matters Duly Submitted for Consideration not amending the Memorandum of Incorporation or Articles of Association.
- 9.1 Proposal to restructure the TRF in its entirety.
That this forum mandates the Rules Sub Group to proceed with the recommendations contained within the 'Rules Sub Group Final Report to the Executive' dated 9th August 2009 as detailed by the three proposals contained therein.
Proposed by:- A Gerrard. Seconded by:- S Bingham
Dave Giles and Tim Stevens objected to the use of the term "adopted" in the original proposal. They said that, even though the proposal clearly states that it would be "adopted" at the 2010 AGM this indicated that there would not be a vote on the, as yet unknown, changes at the 2010 AGM. This was not the intention of the proposers and they agreed an amendment to the proposal. Tim Stevens' proposal: seconded by Andy Gerrard
...that the new structure is to be formally **proposed...**
The members voted as follows: the majority voted for, 0 against, 2 abstentions and so the amendment was carried.
Vote on proposal 9.1 with Tim Stevens' amendment as above.
The members voted as follows: the majority voted for, 6 against, 0 abstentions and so the proposal was carried.
- 9.2 That this AGM has No Confidence in the Report issued in August 2009 of the RSG, who have taken nearly a year to deal with instructions from the last AGM, and have put no substantive proposals for the necessary changes to this AGM.
Tim Stevens said that he was glad to see the record attendance at this AGM because it showed that many of the members care about the TRF. Consequently, Tim withdrew the matter with the agreement of Dave Giles, his seconder.
- 9.3 The TRF Fighting Fund shall be finalised forthwith, and the surplus remaining shall be presented to the Byways and Bridleways Trust on condition that it be spent on BBT actions in support of the Objects of TRF as set out in paragraph 3 of their Memorandum of Association. In the event that the BBT decline to make such an assurance, the surplus is to be presented to the British Motorcyclists Federation.
Tim Stevens raised 9.3 to ensure that the TRF fighting fund was put in a known place should the membership agree 9.2 and consequently change the TRF. Tim now withdraws the motion.

- 9.4 The TRF Code of Conduct shall forthwith cease to apply.
- Authoritative bodies and they are impressed by the TRF Code of Conduct
 - Rejecting this motion broadcasts the message that the TRF Code of Conduct has value and should be adhered to.
 - Voting against the motion indicates that the voter endorses the TRF Code of Conduct.
- The members voted as follows: all against, 0 for, 0 abstentions and so the proposal was rejected.
- 9.5 That the Executive Committee be required to cease the affiliation of the TRF, on the next renewal date, to the British Motorcyclists Federation.
Withdrawn
- 9.6 That the Executive Committee be required to cease the affiliation of the TRF, on the next renewal date, to the Land Access and Recreation Association.
Withdrawn
- 9.7 That the Executive Committee be required to cease the affiliation of the TRF, on the next renewal date, to the Central Council of Physical Recreation.
Withdrawn
10. Proposals to amend the Memorandum & Articles of Association
- 10.1 The Objects of the TRF (Memorandum clause 3) be reworded as follows (new words underlined):
3. *Objects*
The objects for which the Company is established are to preserve and establish opportunities for motorcyclists to ride cross-country motorcycles as legitimate recreation and the doing of all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of that object.
[The original wording was:
3. *Objects*
The objects for which the Company is established are to preserve and protect the full status of vehicular Green Lanes and the rights of motorcyclists and others to use them as a legitimate part of the access network of the countryside and the doing of all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of that object including but not limited to acquiring or taking over all or any part of the assets, liabilities, activities or business of the present unincorporated body known as 'Trail Riders Fellowship' ('TRF') on such terms as the Company and TRF may agree.]
Proposed by:- Tim Stevens. Seconded by:- Dave Giles
- Jack Knight pointed out that a limited company does not need to state exactly what it does
 - Robin Hickin advised that the statement of intent is too tight and that when the TRF goes for charitable status it will need to show that it has public benefit.
- Tim proposed taking out the section referring to the old TRF because it has been done.
The members voted as follows: 2 abstentions, 0 against, the majority voted for the amendment.
The members then voted on the amended change to the Memorandum & Articles: 2 for the amended change, the majority against, with 6 abstentions so the change was rejected.
- 10.2 That the Articles be altered as follows:
Add a new clause -
Directors:
Directors of the limited company TRF shall be chosen from TRF members with at least two years TRF membership before the date of their election, and they shall be elected by simple majority at the AGM each year. Nominations may be made in the same manner as those for TRF Officers, and should a vacancy arise between AGMs, the TRF Executive at an Executive Meeting may co-opt a replacement Director to serve until the next AGM. Each director shall serve for two years, and at any AGM, each existing Director may be a candidate for re-election.
There shall be a minimum of five (5) Directors, and a maximum of eight (8)
- The current Memoranda & Articles do not have a clear succession plan in the event that an officer is no longer able to continue in post.
- Robin Hickin proposed an amendment to this change: ...a minimum of 3 directors and a maximum of 5...

The members voted as follows: the majority for, 0 against, 3 abstentions so the amendment was carried.

The members voted on the amended change as follows: the majority for, 0 against, 5 abstentions so the change was carried subject to the companies act.

10.3 In Article 2.3, remove the words 'except for the Membership Secretary,' so that this clause reads thus:

2.3 *The Principal Officers shall each be elected annually by a show of hands and a simple majority at the annual general meeting ('AGM') of the Fellowship, and will hold office for one year. Each Principal Officer shall at the end of their year of office be eligible for reelection.*

- Tim noted that this change corrects an error made by the solicitors when the TRF moved to limited status.

The members voted on the change as follows: all in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions so the change is carried.

11. Election of Principal Officers

- Mark Holland proposed that the Standing Order which stops the AGM at 4 pm be suspended, seconded by Charlie Moriss and the majority were in favour.

- No officers stepped down

- No nominations for officer roles were received prior to the AGM.

- Don Oakley was proposed as vice-chairman by David Flippance and seconded by Simon Roberts. Don agreed to stand.

- John Garner proposed that the other officers be elected on block, seconded by John Williamson and the majority were in favour.

- Don gave a presentation and answered members' questions. He has been a TRF member for 5 years and he is chairman of the Wiltshire group. He is also a member of his local LAF. His primary objective is to find out where to ride and influence the local authorities to keep the routes open.

- Tim Stevens recognized that new blood amongst the principal officers would be good for the TRF and so he offered to withdraw from the role of vice-chairman. However, the rules do not allow for this situation and demand that there is a vote.

- The members recognize Tim's knowledge and support on rights of way. They hope that he will continue to support them in this way.

The members voted on Don Oakley replacing Tim Stevens as vice-chairman: the majority were for, 3 against with 15 abstentions so Don Oakley was duly elected to the principal officer post of vice-chairman.

Chris Hurworth proposed a vote of thanks to Tim, seconded by Andy Gerrard, and unanimously agreed by the members.

The meeting voted in favour of retaining the existing co-opted officers.

12. Meeting Dates 2010

31st January, 11th April subject to confirmation, 25th July, AGM 17th October

13. AOB (At Chairman's discretion)

13.1 The TRF's 40th anniversary is in 2010

The TRF's 40th anniversary is an extraordinary sign of the dedication of the members. 2010 is also the BMF's 50th anniversary. The TRF would like to organise a large display at the BMF rally in Peterborough next. Any other celebratory ideas would be welcome.

13.2 Proxy voting

Proxy voting would allow members to give their proxy vote to another member. As a limited company, the TRF is obliged to enable proxy voting and there is a prescribed form for doing this. However, the proxy cannot vote on amendments made on the day of the meeting. Adam Hedley (Cornwall) is concerned because members would miss out on the discussion and all information would need to be available well in advance of the meeting.

Andy closed the AGM and thanked everyone for attending.

OLD BIKES: WHY?

(PART ONE OF A TWIN SHOCK TRILOGY)

They're old, slow, noisy, unreliable, vibrate, have lousy suspension, and worst of all, these days, they're expensive! So what the hell is the appeal?

Okay, so one point at a time.

1, They're old.

Well, dur! Surely that's the point of having an old bike, not a lot of use having a 2009 reg old bike (unless you're Royal Oilfield) is there? Old is not necessarily bad in itself; Look at me – I'm old and I'm wonderful! Bikes that have survived this long (and we are talking late 70's early 80's) have been looked after well enough through a succession of teenage spanner monkeys to keep running for the last 30 years, in spite of our best efforts to kill them off – unless we are looking at restoration bikes, but that's a different kettle of clunker altogether...

Also, the age of the bike determines its appeal: the bikes that you (the potential owner) lusted after when you were a spotty yooof are the ones you lust after today, and with your relative affluence (?) of middle age, the ones you are going out and buying now.

2, Slow.

N'ah. Engine development in the era we're looking at, was rampant: 2 strokes were all the rage, and the usual recipe for power was to

just pour in petrol, get it ignited, chuck it out the exhaust and try and hook up all that grunt, while making as much noise as possible. No water-cooling, so finned engines that ring and zizzle, air cooling meant wide tolerances on pistons (to stop 'em seizing) which added more noise, exhaust systems that were designed to give power but not be quiet. A much simpler age.

Four strokes of the time did seem to appeal to different people, they were slower, less frantic, quieter, more reliable old warhorses that seemed to just plod on forever – but weren't very quick. Small capacity bikes had to be 2 stroke for power, or 4 stroke for longevity. But the big 2 strokes (400-500 cc) were so b****

vicious that few people could ride them to within a tenth of their capabilities – so large displacement 4 strokes were the “thing”; they could plod or rev, go anywhere, and while having enough grunt to get you into lots of trouble, were gentle enough to keep you out of it!

3, Noisy.

Yup. No argument here. 2 strokes that ring-a-ding-ring, exhausts that crackle and fart, manic power bands that made you keep them singing and making even more noise. 4 strokes of the day boom and bellow, big bore exhausts that let the engine breathe and rudimentary silencing – great!

4, Unreliable.

Hmmm. Italian bikes of the day were (possibly) the worst for living with, dodgy electrics are a legend in Italian automotive design, but otherwise were (and are) great bikes. The Japanese bikes of the age, were on the whole, only unreliable when ham fist teenagers with a bent Phillips screwdriver, Mole grips, and a big hammer attempted “maintenance”. There were a few “lemons” made, sure, but in the main, the Jap bikes made up for the lack of spark in the design, with a constant spark in the ignition – yes they kept going, and still do! Once CDI ignition came in, there was less for our teenaged friend (which was us - remember?) to mess up, and the bikes just kept going, and going, and.....

5, Vibrate.

Sure do. No balancer shafts in those days. 2 strokes have high frequency vibes that buzz your fingers to a mushy, bloodless pulp within 20 miles, solidly mounted pegs that did the same to your feet, and what the tanks did to your teenage “tackle” cannot be explained here!

4 stokes just have low frequency vibes, that are much more powerful: your hands are gonna be white within the hour, your bum will have gone to sleep long before you can hear it snore, and the location of the gear/brake levers is a total mystery after 15 minutes at high revs. However, your girlfriend will LOVE riding pillion...

6, Have lousy suspension?

Hmmm, hard one to defend here. Not lousy, just different. No long travel super smooth Ohlins cack here. Nope 4 inches at the back was a good deal, and 6 at the front was something you raved to all your mates about while trying to massage some life back into your hands. Nah, suspension was definitely lacking in the 70/80's, but on the plus side, so was seat height. Get this: even people with a normal inside leg measurement could flat foot with an old bike! No super long travel suspension meant low bikes – yippee!!!!!!

7, Expensive.

Yes they are getting that way – but it's your fault! Us middle aged old gits all want the bikes we could only dream about back then, the ones in the full colour ads in MCN that we lusted after while sat on the throne, the ones that fuelled our fantasies about long legged girls with blonde hair astride our powerful dirt thumpers, and what we hoped to get up to later...

So, the appeal of old bikes is many, they are different to look at, and very different to ride, sure, they're heavy, but they feel planted on the ground, and stuff that knocks modern tackle off line just gets barged out of the way with old heavy bikes. Ruts are just an inconvenience not an obstacle – you just plough your own if you don't like the one you're in!

Extract from the Devon Group Newsletter

TO THE LAND of the BURNING RING

Continued

Riding day five:

Big day we are told. Must take everything we need for overnight with us as we might get through the road slip but the van with our bags, might not. Up at 06.30 and dress for the cold as we are going high today. The early start turned out to be 09.15 but it did give us time to go for a walk and take a few photos.

Two stops for tea on the best ride yet. It just keeps getting better and better. At one stage we stopped under a great overhang of rock and stood around taking photos, when I thought, “where are we”. So I got my map out and went and asked. Oh! we are just 3k from the Tibetan boarder. What! Why have you not told anybody. Hey! Chaps, did you know that if we go back down to the bridge and look to the left, Tibet is just 3k up the river. Mass rush back to the bridge and a lot more photos. If I had not asked we would never have known.

Second stop is reached at 13.30 and is overlooking the village of Narko. The views are stunning and there is a heli pad behind the cafe which we are told is the Dalai Lama's as he likes this place and calls in on his way to Tabo where he intends to retire. Not knowing any difference, after about half an

hour we all start to fidget thinking that we are going to move on. Wrong. Dan came to the rescue when he found out and told us that we were now as far as we could go due to the mega landslide which Suzie told us about two days ago. Ok the sun was out, the scenery fantastic, and there was nothing we could do about it anyway, but please tell us what is going on.

Two and a half hours later Suzie and Damon get on a bike and go up the road to see if there is any chance of getting through tonight. Two hours later, Dan goes after them to see what is going on. Eventually they come back with the news that we will have to stay in Nako tonight but we should get through at about 09.00 in the morning. So that will be 12.00 then. They find us digs for the night, which under the circumstances are not too bad. Dinner that night was down to us to find and this we did in a place that I find really hard to describe. It was an L shaped room with two petrol pressure stoves along one wall, one of which had a hot plate on top. Next to it was a low work top with a cutting board and two mixing bowls. All the food was cooked while we watched and was delicious.

Oh! Did I mention that the walls and ceiling



a bit more. Suzie and Damon appear just before 10.00, get on their bikes and off we go. We follow up to the landslip. Wow! Approx 200m of the mountain side had just slid away taking the `road` with it. Word had it that the army had been there digging it out to start with, but by the time we got there it was the local road men who were at it. What a task! We were now close enough to not only hear but see as well, the next blast. Finally at 11.45 we got through. This riding just keeps getting better and better. Mostly dirt but just a tiny bit of tarmac going down Spiti Valley. At least I think it was Spiti Valley as we were not told, we guessed. I got told off by Damon for taking pictures. I had found that by getting to the front of the group I could keep stopping and grabbing a shot, but this time I had got too far back and I got nabbed. Still by then the scenery was so spectacular unless you had days to spend, you could never do justice to it. So, sit back, enjoy and roll gently down hairpin after hairpin after hairpin, in the sun, amongst what must be some of the most spectacular scenery on the planet. Beats the hell out of the Alps.

Once we got to the bottom of the valley I set off and passed the slower ones so that I could get some more photos. Stopped in Tabo for food and drink and a pep talk from Damon. We are far too spread out. There is nearly an hour between front and back and we are already set to do the last bit in the dark. Cor! Should be good. He asks for three volunteers to ride in the jeep and have their bikes loaded on to a truck they will hire. The right three volunteer and off we go. The 90k to Losar will stay with me forever. The last 45 mins were in total darkness except for our head lights. Good job they were good. On entering the `accommodation` for the night, it was big grins and high fives all round. The photos show that we were all covered in thick dust. What a ride and what an education the

were black with years of soot and what paint there was, was peeling off? But the cooks and the plates were clean. A pair of prayer wheels were by the door. Were they trying to tell us something? Back to the hotel for a drink with the others and a calf walks into the hotel, has a look around and walks out again. Don't get that in Worthing. Be at the bikes at 08.30. 109k today.

Riding day six

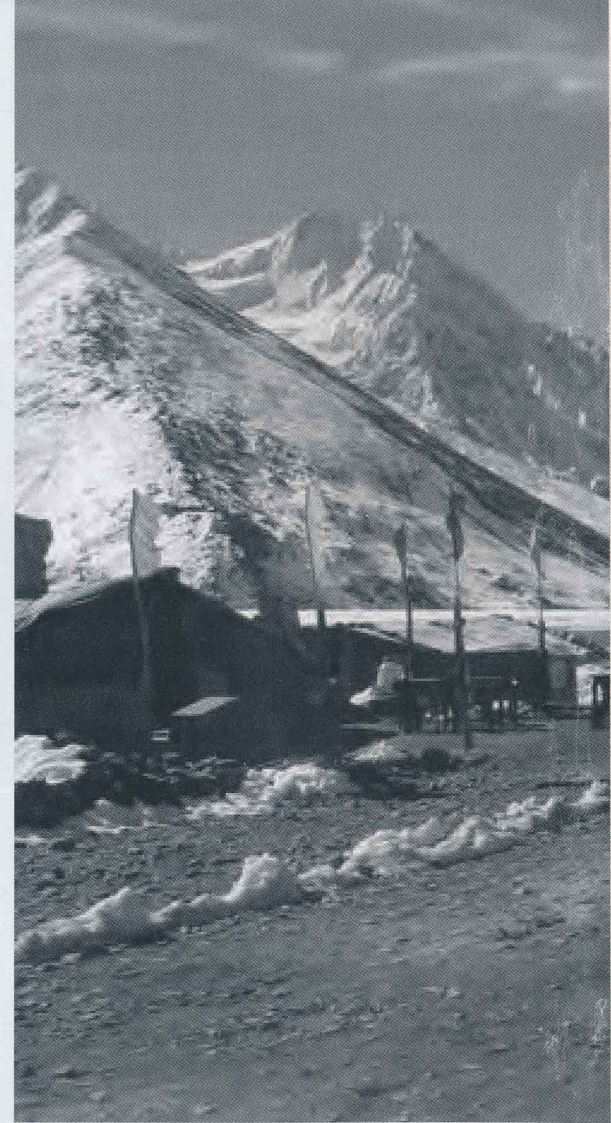
Ok 09.10 then. This time it's the Doc's turn to tell us what is happening. They have to blast

accommodation was. Just a hill family house. They made us very welcome and fed and watered us till we were full. The loo left a lot to be desired and we did not even dare to think about washing. Never mind, not the first time and won't be the last. Alan came in very excited and told us to go out and look at the sky. Wowwowwow. As there is no light pollution, come to that, no light at all, the Milky Way was as clear as clear and I have never seen, and did not know, that there were so many stars in the sky. A truly memorable day. Be at the bikes at 07.00 in the morning.

None of us slept very well, as I think that this is the highest we have been so far at 4079m. That's 13382 feet. 128k today.

Riding day seven

So all at the bikes at 06.50. They appear at 07.15 and we got a good morning. What happened? Well Oil Rig Chris is what happened. He had a word with Suzie last night. First stop is the Buddhist Temple at the top of Kunzum pass which is 15,000ft up and 40k away. How can this keep getting better? At the top we are in the snow and the sun. How good is this? After lots of photos we start the descent down the snow lined, icy, muddy, water covered, very bendy and full of ruts, washed out track. Or as they know it in these parts, the main road. All this is the official `Road 22`. Down and down to our next tea/omelette stop in a small cafe/shop in the middle of nowhere. The only other dwelling is another even smaller cafe and that is it. Because it is a shop, the area is known as a town. Last winter 103 people were stranded here due to heavy rain washing out the roads



and causing 97 land slips. This little cafe/shop looked after all of them for a week, until they were all air lifted out by helicopter.

On to a valley where we stop, presumably for a photo stop. Suzie and Damon just wander off and sit on a big rock by the side of the river, without as much as a word. Me, well, as both my boots are full of water, I take them off, wring my socks out and put them on a rock to dry in the sun. Half an hour later when

they are dry and everybody is now bored, we start putting our gear on to indicate we want to move on. Only then do they get off their rock, come back to the bikes and off we go without a word. Chris's word didn't last long then. On to the lunch stop and then up and up to go over the Rohtang Pass. There are bumpy bits and there is this bit. B---y hell! Had a short wait for yet another land slip to be cleared and then all the old trials skills had to be called up to get through the next half mile or so. Wow! Then down and down to Manali and our hotel for the next two days. We did 155k today and 150 were on the rough and all in the sun. Brill. Clouded over a bit in the evening. Had dinner and got my bottle of scotch out and drank it with Suzie and Damon and various others. As a result Suzie and Damon are now a bit more informed. Oops!

Non riding day 8

Free day in Manali and the weather is very good again but a bit humid. Kevin and I went walkabout. I bought a chess set from a street seller, mainly because Ian was crowing about knocking this bloke down from 1500r to 1350r and I got it for 200r, that's £2.54p. We then got lost in the back streets and what an eye opener that was. Talk about the haves and the have not's. But, and for me it is a big but, all, or most of the people are clean, and well dressed, particularly the women despite the accommodation in which they live. On the way back to the hotel for lunch we witnessed a big fight between monkeys who were being urged on by a pack of dogs. Even the locals were stopping to watch. Lunch for me was a bottle of water as I had over done it at breakfast and then it was back down town. Oil rig Chris came with us this time as he wanted to buy some presents



and I wanted a new holdall as the one that I had brought with me was very hard to pull along. I also bought an Arafat scarf. Bag was 1800r and the scarf was 80. That's £22.90p and £1.01p. What a fascinating place. Health and safety, what's that? Street sellers, beggars, and so many people just walking about. Back to the hotel for a beer and dinner. Just after dinner we were presented with a bill for last night's dinner which we thought we had already paid. Neither me or Irish Mike could remember as by that time we were well into the scotch, but Kevin and Steve felt sure we had paid. After much chin wagging we realised that it came to a tenner and they were probably right anyway so we paid up. That done, camera John came rushing in and told us of a play thing that was going on down the road. Off we went to see what he was on about. Well, it would seem that India was just coming to the end of Ramadan and this was just one of many plays to celebrate. Did not stay long as it was beyond us. Suzie had spoken of a party that we were going to have that night, but that was just another thing that didn't happen. 11.00 clock start then. And so to bed.

Riding day nine:

That will be 11.20 then.

All tarmac today, or so the book says. Fortunately that was not so, in fact it was far from it. When we stopped for lunch Suzie had a phone call from plod saying that they had impounded our baggage van and Farooq the driver. Plod claimed that it was not taxed correctly. Suzie had to ride back some 20k and sort it out. It cost her 2000r, £25. Brill day's riding with plenty of food and drink stops in fantastic weather. We stopped to buy beer in a tiny tiny village, as tonight's hotel does not have a licence. The final climb of the day was up to Shoja, just one long, long trials

section. Our accommodation tonight is another of the government's refuges but totally different from the tents. This was hanging to the top lip of a huge valley 8802ft up, but as the only way in was from the top it meant we had 132 steps to come down to the hotel itself. Not bad going down and the really good news was that the bags were brought down by the porters. Chips and chai were waiting for us which took a right hiding from us lot. Dinner was very good, washed down with the beer. A perfect end to a perfect day. 125k today.

Riding day ten.

As we have not had any info from Suzie, Dan suggests we are at the bottom of the steps at about 09.00. We set off at about 10.00. The good news is that the porters take our bags up, two at a time. It's as much as we can do to get ourselves up. I had to take five stops and I was just carrying my tank bag. Off up the dirt road for another 1500ft to the top of Jalori Pass and our first chai stop of the day. Then down and down for a long long time. The drop off never got any less as we went down which seemed very odd.

At one stage Suzie stopped, I was right behind her, and we watched Black Kites soaring right alongside us on the thermals coming up the cliff face. What a sight. At the next tea stop we watched the chai being made on an outside cooker with wood being fed in from the bottom. There were two women and a small boy there and I wrongly thought that they were mother, daughter and grandson. Wrong says Suzie, they are both the wives of the same man who died some four years ago. The little boy was not four years old and Suzie did not seem to approve. Off again, but not very far as there was yet another land slide to wait for. Just after this I had a plug soot up which Jamal changed.

The traffic is now getting heavier as we are starting to get close to Shimla. After lunch I had the rear bracket on the chain guard break. Jamal and Ramji removed it and I carried on, catching up as many as I could safely with the now heavy traffic. Finally we reached La Royal Hotel in Shimla. What a trip. 1005k - 625 miles in ten days. Doesn't seem much when you say it like that, but what a ten days. I don't think that we ever went over 60kph - 37 mph, we went over just about every surface you can think of with very little tarmac in between. We had fabulous weather throughout, we saw some of the most spectacular scenery on the planet, stayed in a varied selection of accommodation, all good, and I could not have wished for 17 better playmates. It was just such a shame that we all felt our hosts could have been more informative. However, it would have been a much sadder trip if it had not been for Dan, our hero. Thanks mate.

So all we have to do now is get back home. Wander about Shimla in the morning, have lunch and at 16.00 we all set off for the station to get the train down to Kalka. Sadly we only have about 30mins of daylight so we never did see the glory of the 'toy train'. As Alan was sitting by a window, I asked him to take a photo for me of the train going round the bend. This he did, just as I stood up to get to my bag in the overhead rack. It was only when I sat down that I realised that not only had he left the camera on, but he had put it, lens up, on my seat. The action of me sitting down on it, crushed the lens back into the body. Ho! Hum! Good job the trip was as good as over. On to the sleeper train to find that whilst it is very old, it was in good condition and comfortable. A good night's sleep and dawn saw us coming in to the horror that is Delhi station.

Somehow we all kept together to get the bus

to the airport, except big Kevin, Dave and Roy who were staying on to visit Johor. They will be coming home in a weeks time. In Delhi airport I changed my last remaining Rupees back in to Sterling and got £10 so I had spent just £190 in two weeks on fuel for both me and the bike, a new holdall, a chess set, some booze and a scarf. Not bad at all. In the airport I went into the duty free shop and bought a model 'tuk 'tuk. This cost £4 but I got change in dollars. Bugger. Into the cafe for coffee and a cake and I get change for my dollars in Rupees. I give up. Emirates charity benefitted by about a fiver. The rest of the trip was just sitting, either on a plane or in an airport.

My conclusions:

Would I use Blazing trails again? Probably as the devil you know, and all that.

Always carry your own loo roll.

Never eat the meat.

Drink the Chai but only drink bottled water, making sure that the seal is sound.

Don't waste your money on expensive riding gear as you will get plastered in something, mud, dust, cow s**t etc, keep it light but waterproof.

An open face helmet and good goggles are the best option as an open face lets all the dust in. This can be six inches or more deep. At one time I was standing up on the foot rests and all I could see of Ian in front, who was also standing up, was the top of his helmet.

A neck tube is very good as a face mask against the dust.

Use sun screen, especially on the nose.

Take tummy tablets with you and hope to never use them.

Don't even think about taking a pillion.

John Grew

in chains

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TRAILBLAZERS RIDE REPORT



It all started back in the early 80's on a Kawasaki KX 80cc. This was when my urban moto-cross days started (inner city living if you get what I mean!), usually being chased by jimmy jam eye the local thug! He never did manage to get his hands on my bike, but I still find myself looking over my shoulder from time to time. It ended almost as quickly as it began when, a few years later I was caught by a policeman on a bicycle of all things. How embarrassing!

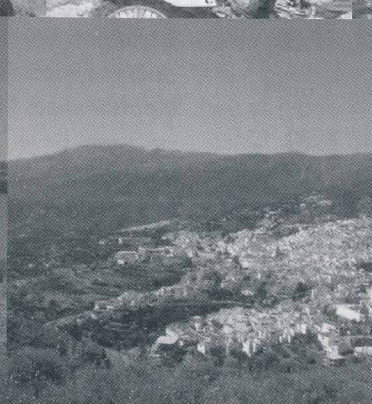
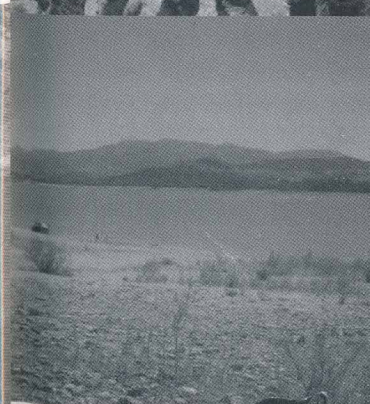
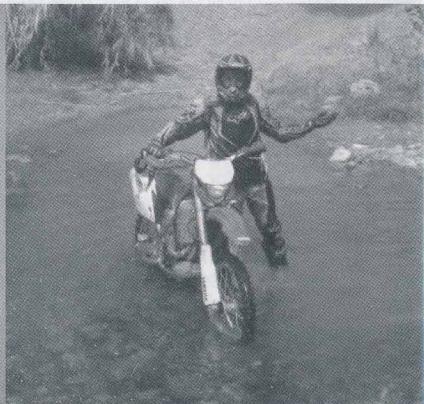
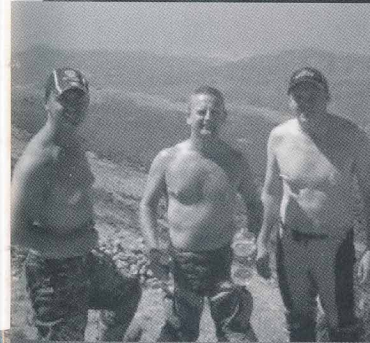
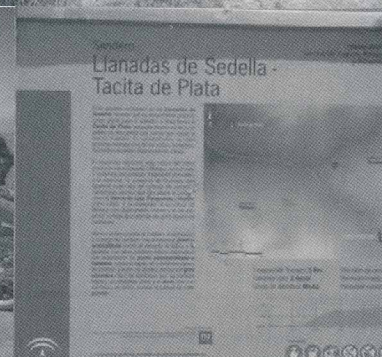
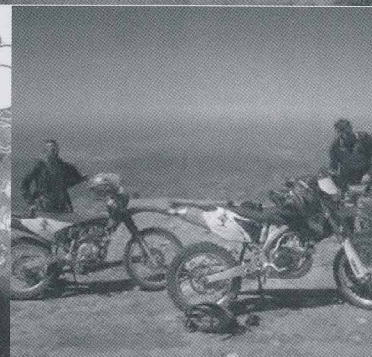
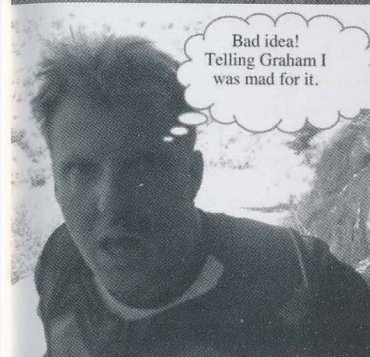
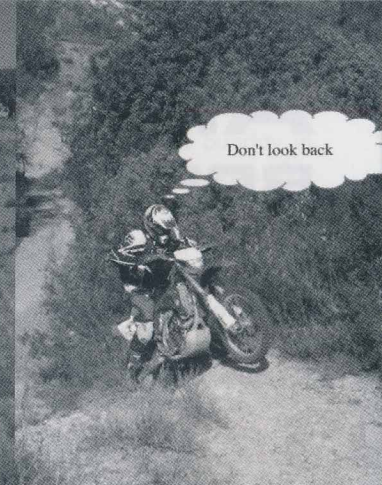
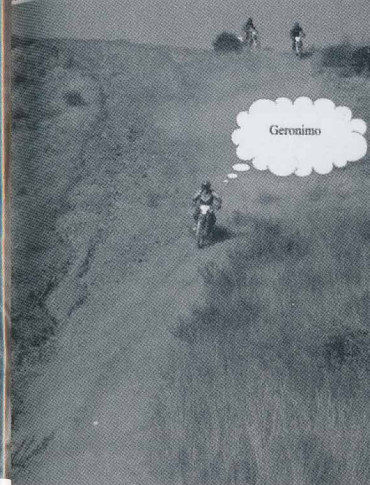
Almost 20 years on, there I was in southern Spain at Trailblazers Competa - living the dream..... doing what I enjoy best, trail riding with good friends. This wasn't just about going for a Sunday run this was the real deal - adrenaline pumping white knuckled stuff!!, rocks, river crossings, down hills, ruts, woodlands, sand and more. It has it all! The landscape is rugged and dramatic with mountain trails that seem to go on forever. This combined with good accommodation, great food, Liz at mission control whose attention to

detail and hospitable nature ensure everything runs seamlessly from start to finish and Graham's vast of knowledge of local trails and riding skills, all made for a fantastic adventure. It turned out to be the best lads weekend ever, just what we needed - a complete get away.

Our chosen weapons were a Yamaha WR 450cc and a Honda CRF 230cc which were both perfect for the job. Several hours later, hands blistered, monkey-arsed and broken and yet feeling totally alive, we realised that we shouldn't have told Graham that we were mad for it!

I have been back every year since 2004 and am planning a trip for 2010. Maybe we could make this an annual event, even do a fund raiser for a charity and raise the profile of TRF? It's about time we had some positive press! If anyone is interested or has any questions, contact me through the TRF forum or via the pages of TRAIL.

Michael Whittaker



APPEAL BREAST HIGH

Breast High is the pass between the A6 Shap road and Tebay, arguably the best high level route we have left, free to use at all times, in England.

We had reports from GLASS, the 4x4 boys before the recent rain related events in Cumbria. They declared it so eroded by the Autumn's rain that had become impassable for them.

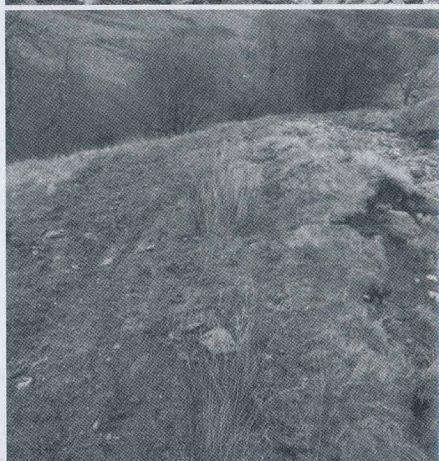
I must report that now it is in a terribly washed out state along several sections. I'd judge it just passable by a skilled and committed trail rider along the correct line, and certainly it would be difficult to cause further damage that way.

Unfortunately the thoughtless, wimpish and unskilled have already started to carve diversions alongside, on what is decreed an Environmentally Sensitive Area, which is just about the best way to get a TRO applied.

So, I'd recommend staying away if you can, but if you must ride it follow the obvious route at all times, and insist your fellow riders do also.

In general all of Cumbria's routes are in a very, very sensitive state, so if you do come to visit us, please tread very, very lightly.

Steve Pighills, ROW Officer Cumbria TRF



POSTBAG

BRIAN THOMPSON - A LATE TRIBUTE

It was a shock to learn of Brian's death via the pages of TRAIL.

My home in Cornwall is a long way from Brian's trail riding area, but I felt I knew him well. He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered.

I first met Brian at a TRF Executive

Committee meeting in the 1970s. Norman Smith had been the TRF rights of way man and seemed irreplaceable, but when Norman died, Brian stepped forward to do an even better job on behalf of "green roads" motorcycling.

No-one fought more tenaciously for our right to ride ancient vehicular routes. Forty years is a big chunk of your life to give to a cause. Brian deserved his MBE.

Brian pushed through the Code of Conduct against stiff opposition. I remember Howard Wadsworth's joke on the tear off reply at the bottom of the membership form. On the dotted line it read "Tear along here, at no more than 25 mph." Howard and Brian were best mates, both with a background in the East Yorkshire coalfields.

It was Brian who put us at the top table. He was the man on the Government's consultation committee. They did not pull the wool over Brian's eyes.

For a while we lost him to the "opposition", when he took a job as Rights of Way Officer for a local authority.

On reaching retiring age, he returned to us with, if possible, even more energy, organising runs, marking up maps, advising, consulting and chasing his old claims again and again.

Brian and I shared a view about bikes. Green roads are roads, so use a road bike. It is more challenging for the rider, looks less threatening to other users, and is great fun. This is still not mainstream TRF thinking, but then Brian always thought for himself.

What a great loss!

I shall always remember that skinny little figure sitting on a scooter in the mist on a high moor somewhere in his beloved Dales.

Thank you, Brian, for the pleasure of your company, your unremitting support for our cause and for a life well lived.

Ian Thompson, Cornwall

TRAIL RIDING - EUROPE

The magazine arrived today, packed full of interesting stuff. It reminded me that I had not followed up one point from our recent phone conversation:

The big meeting in the Italian Alps is called the Stella Alpina Rally - an event over several days around the second Sunday in July. I had a look at the website www.stellaalpina.fsnet.co.uk or you can google "stella alpina rally" for a broader picture.

I rode my XT250 there from Cornwall in August some years ago when I was researching the Green Lanes of Europe book, which never got published. There are more long green lanes in the area than you have ever seen, and the tarmac roads are pretty good, too.

The book of Alpine passes, tarmac and dirt, is called the Grosser Alpen Strasse Fuhrer, edited by Eduard Denzel and published by Denzel-Verlag, Innsbruck. It has excellent photos and maps, and it helps if you can read some German. As its name suggests, it covers every pass in the Alps, describes and grades them for challenge, enjoyment and sightseeing. Ask Santa for a copy.

The November issue of TRAIL was just what the TRF should be about, in my opinion. Positive rights of way stuff, good writing by John Robinson and Roger Hart and excellent news about Ron Carter whom I rode with many times in the 70s and 80s.

Ian Thompson

HELP PLEASE!

I'm planning a change from my usual Michellin Comp 3/4 combination which is excellent in muddy conditions, but a bit bumpy on the road and slippery on rocks to a block type trials tyre such as the Pirelli MT43 which I'm hoping will be grippier and safer on roads+rocks. I would be pleased to hear any input from Trail readers on this thorny issue!!

Pat Bullen

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SUZUKI DR250 1995 MOT. Ran well over last 8 years. Time to move on. £850 ono. Tel: 07768 587458.

HONDA CRM MKII Serviced every 1000km. Now 18000km. Recent new c&s & fork seals. Good runner with usual scuffs. T&T. £1000. Tel: 01824 750659 (N.Wales/Cheshire).

YAMAHA TTR250 Feb 1999, sound condition throughout. Well maintained, rear swinging suspension rebushed parts cost of £300, new sprockets & chain. £950 ono. Iain on 07768 415311, picture & details on www.Dyche.biz/YahamaTTR250.htm

HONDA XR250 1992 Good condition. New tyres 15000km, tax, mot. £850 or nearest offer. Could help with transport. Derek Roberts 01789 720077 (Warwickshire).

WANTED for Serow 2004 model: hand guards (in black), bar risers, bash plate. Email: davidtrf@btinternet.com.

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LLANERCHINDDA FARM GUEST HOUSE & SELF CATERING - Llandovery, mid Wales. Ideal base for trail riding with local guide available, map room, secure lockup, spray wash & drying room. Contact: 01550 750274 or info@cambrianway.com or www.cambrianway.com.

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COPY DEADLINE:

The first Tuesday of the month.

COPY: Via email, typed or handwritten (please try to make it legible!)

PHOTOS: Digital via email on CD or DVD; scanned originals (high resolution 300dpi jpeg or tiff); or posted originals (please include an s.a.e for return). We prefer you not to include your photos in 'Word' documents, if possible please send images separately. If sending possible front cover images please do not send camera phone photos.

CAPTIONS:

Please caption your photos!

EMAILING: It is best not to place too many images on one email document.

WEBSITE: If you would like your article to appear on the website as well as in Trail, please forward to Simon Bingham (see contact details inside front cover).

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SPELLING? DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER? Don't let this put you off, send it in and we'll sort it out.

Photographs submitted for publication may also be used for other TRF purposes.

GROUPS

AXE VALE David Clegg, Tel: 01275 373652 (Home), Mob: 0793 1220895.

2nd Tues, 8pm, Windmill Inn, Nore Road, Portishead.

BLACK COUNTRY John Oseland, Tel: 01902 656011
1st Tues, 9pm, The Longford House, Watling Street, Cannock.

BRISTOL Glenn Summers, Tel: 01454 619246
4th Mon, 8pm, The Midland Spinner, Warmley, Bristol.

CAMBRIDGE Martin Pinion, Tel: 01353 776252
1st Thurs, 7.30 p.m., The White Swan, Elsworth Road, Conington, Cambridge CB23 4LN.

CORNWALL Adam Hedley, Tel: 01579 349217
3rd Thurs, 7.30 - 8.00 p.m., The Victoria Inn, Roche.

CUMBRIA Roger Harris, Tel: 01539 725198
2nd Tues, The Gilpin Bridge Inn, Levens, Nr. Kendal.

DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Mick Ellison, Tel: 07780 674192
2nd Tues, The Angel Hotel, Sprinkhill, Eckington, Nr. Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

DEVON John Heal, Tel: 01626 366860
2nd Tues, 8pm, The Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9AL.

DORSET W. John Williamson, Tel: 01929 553640, Mob: 07850 727873
1st Tues, 8pm, Greyhound Inn, Winterbourne, Kingston, Nr. Bere Regis.

EAST MIDLANDS Graham Chinnery, Tel: 01332 863433
2nd Wed, The Clock Warehouse, London Road, Shardlow, just off the A50.

EAST YORKSHIRE Jim Harrison, Tel: 07747 758323
2nd Tues, 8pm, Londesborough Arms, Market Weighton.

ESSEX Cliff Eves, Tel: 07515 330423
2nd Wed, The Wheatshaf Public House, Hatfield Peverel.

EXMOOR Andy Petherick, Tel: 01363 776293
2nd Wed, 8pm, The Hartnoll Hotel, Bolham, A396 1 mile north of Tiverton.

GLOUCESTER Richard Simpson, Tel: 07812 402021
1st Wed, 8pm, Wagonworks Club, Tuffley Ave., Gloucester.

HERTFORDSHIRE John Fox, Tel: 01462 811654
2nd Wed, 8.30pm, Shire Park Social Club, Shire Park, Central Drive, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AB.

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Graham Till, Tel: 01782 510533/07971 477024
2nd Tues, 8.30 - 9.00pm, The Stafford Arms, Bagnall. (2 miles out of Leek).

ISLE OF WIGHT Andy Hawkins, Tel: 01983 617232
1st Wed, 8pm, The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW.

KENT Steve Neville Tel: 01474 742705
2nd Tues, 8.30p.m. for 9pm,
The Moat Pub, Wrotham, near Brands Hatch.

LANCASHIRE Keith Westley, Tel: 01704 893215
1st Tues, Black Bull, Hall Lane, Mawdesley.

LINCOLNSHIRE Paul Vernon, Tel: 01522 889079
4th Thurs, 8pm, Lincolnshire Poacher, Bunkers Hill, Lincoln.

LODDON VALE Eddie Mace, Tel: 07973 721059
2nd Thurs, Inn in the Park, Woodley Centre, E. Reading.

MANCHESTER Phil Kinder, Tel: 07809 647293
2nd & 4th Mon, 9pm, Arden Arms, A6017 in Bredbury.

MID WALES Tony Rooney, Tel: 01239 698349
Last Thurs, 7.30pm, The Crown Inn, Rhayader except July & December.

NORTHUMBRIA Nic Gilbert, Tel: 07931 838587
1st Wed, 8pm, The Staffs Club, Blaydon, NE21 4JB.

NORTH WALES Richard Hughes, Tel: 01244 533855
1st Wed, 8pm, Cross Keys, Buckley, OS 117 290 637.

NORWICH Jeremy McNulty, Tel: 07786 426055
2nd Wed, 7.30pm, White Horse, Trowse, Norwich.

OXFORDSHIRE Peter Cole, Tel: 01844 214075
3rd Thurs, 8pm, The Gladiator Sport & Social Club, 263 Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1SJ, next to Motorworld VW Garage.

PEAK DISTRICT Steve Cartwright, Tel: 01782 848034
1st Thurs, 8pm, The Joiner's Arms, Church Road, Quarndon, Derby.

RIBBLE VALLEY John Noble, Tel: 01254 230347
2nd Tues, 8.30pm, Pendle Hotel, Chatburn, Clitheroe (off A59).

SOMERSET Mark Stride, Tel: 07815 062021
2nd Thurs, 8pm, The Crown Inn, Fivehead, Nr. Taunton.

SOUTHERN Colin Lindstrom Tel: 07818 404240
3rd Thurs, 8pm, Southampton & District MCC, Woodside Ave., Eastleigh, (opposite Halfords).

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204
8.30pm, 4th Wed, Nescot Centre for Sports Development, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey.

SOUTH NORTHANTS Graham Walker, Tel: 07841 158820
2nd Monday, 9pm, The Old Sun, 10 Middle Street, Nether Heyford, Northampton NN7 3LL.

SOUTH WALES Stuart Dodwell, Tel: 01446 710851
1st Tues, 8pm, Bedwas Rugby Club, Bedwas, Nr Caerphilly.

SOUTH WEST WALES Last Tues, Corner House Pub, Commercial Street, Ystalyfera, Swansea.

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

SUSSEX Julian Flack, Tel: 01306 740586
Last Thurs, Ashington Social Club, Rear of Red Lion, A24, 9 miles North of Worthing.

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS
Harry Nicholson, Tel: 01642 657063.
3rd Tues, The Ranch House, Thoraldby Farm, Nr Stokesley, map ref 93...493074.

THAMES VALLEY Julian Ogley, Tel: 0208 5799778
3rd Mon, District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex.

VIRTUAL PEAK GROUP
Paul King, kingy@virtualpeakstrf.co.uk Tel: 07966 289778.
This is a virtual group at www.virtualpeakstrf.co.uk

WEST ANGLIA Mark Andrew, Tel: 01933 413458
1st & 3rd Thurs, Scott Bader Social Club, opp. Parish Church, Wollaston, Wellingborough.

WEST MIDLANDS David Chamberlain, Tel: 0121 783 3438
1st & 3rd Wed, Wilmcote Mens Club, Stratford on Avon.

WEST YORKSHIRE Richard Hoyle, Tel: 07789 644461
1st Thurs, 8.00pm, Cue Gardens, Stadium Mills, Stadium Road, Bradford BD6 1BJ.

WILTSHIRE Vic Price, Tel: 01380 724651
1st Tues, The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford.

WORCESTERSHIRE
Dave Gunster, Tel: 01527 456095 Mob: 07960 422523
1st Tues, White Hart, Fernhill Heath, Worcs.