

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*

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

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

DORSET 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*

EAST YORKSHIRE
Howard Wadsworth, Tel: 01405 860904
1st Tues, *Boot & Shoe, Gowdall, Nr. Snaith*

ESSEX
Dave Anderson, Tel: 01277 657783
2nd Wed, *The Swan Public House, Great Eastern, Nr. Dunmow*

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

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

HERTFORDSHIRE Dave West, Tel: 07768 402424
2nd Thurs, *The Old Guinea, Ridge, Near Potters Bar*

HIGH PEAK & POTTERIES
Simon Lowe, Tel: 01298 70680
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ISLE OF WIGHT Andrew Hawkins, Tel: 01983 617232
1st Wed, *The Eight Bells Inn, Carisbrooke, Newport, IOW*

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

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

LINCOLNSHIRE 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 0860 302001 (mobile)
1st Tues, 8pm, *The Swan Inn, Heddon on the Wall*

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

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

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

SOUTHERN Russ McDermid, Tel: 02380 812371
3rd Tues, *The Phoenix, Twyford, Nr. Winchester*

SOUTH LONDON & SURREY
Steve Sharp, 0208 773 4204
9pm 1st Wed, *Ewell Sports & Social Club, Banstead Road, Ewell, Surrey*

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

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

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

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

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

TEESSIDE & NORTH YORKS
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3rd Wed, 8.30p.m., *Blacksmiths Arms, Swainby*

THAMES VALLEY Julian Ogle, Tel: 020 8579 9778
3rd Mon, *District Arms, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex*

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

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

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

WILTSHIRE
Alan Yandell, Tel: 01225 864187 Mob: 07813 503012
1st Tues, *The Bell On The Common, Broughton Gifford*

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



Patron: Lord Strathcarron

TRAIL

JANUARY, 2002

No. 281

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

EDITOR: Fred Ellison.



Emerging From The Undergrowth.

Photo by John Robinson. See John's article on page 22.

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

EDITORIAL

Had your bike stolen over Christmas? Well possibly, because all the policeman are far too involved with more important things such as serious crime and thieving. Your £5000 bike wouldn't appear to fall into that category. Now if someone were to steal £5000 from one of the High Street banks that would probably get them 10 years in one of Her Majesty's Hotels.

The BMF are going into DIY Crime Solutions and are setting up a web site to record and counter bike theft - www.bmf.co.uk - and please make sure that your garage is nice and tidy 'cause if thief falls in untidy garage and breaks leg, or hopefully neck, then YOU will no doubt be deemed to have committed one of those serious crimes.

If you live in Kent and haven't had your bike stolen, Kent TRF are having a map marking evening on Wednesday 13th February at 8.30 p.m. at the Pied Bull, Farningham near Brands Hatch (members only). Tim G and Steve N will also discuss RoW issues so remember to take your copies of the Blue Book.

Fred Ellison

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

A Happy New Year to all TRF members for 2002.

The year has got off to a good start with the announcement that as at 1st January 2002 there has been no reported new outbreak of Foot and Mouth for three months. Hopefully this episode can be put behind us and those in the countryside can be more optimistic about the prospects for 2002.

This means that those areas, which are still restricted, will shortly be 'liberated'. If this applies to you, again a big thank you for respecting the voluntary restraint and shortly you too will be able to enjoy trail riding.

As you probably know, I live down south where 'us sissies play at trail riding' (according to some northern group members). The recent cold snap has made trail riding just that little bit more testing. I was out at the weekend in the region of the 'Hogs Back' and south of this. Two points came out of the ride, which I believe it is worth sharing.

Lane clearing is important and its not for the other guy to do. With the reduced amount of riding which has gone on in 2001 a number of lanes have become overgrown to the point of being almost impassable. Lane Clearing Day is your way of putting something back. You don't have to wait for an official day. As a group you can organise your own day. Or when encountering an obstacle on a trail ride take half an hour to do the job there and then. So remember the tools.

Secondly, encounters with the public. We approached one lane from the metalled road end. The member of public was in his car and coming in the opposite direction. He slowed to enquire what we were doing and did we know that motorcycles were not allowed etc. We established a dialogue and explained what we were about and the nature of the TRF and most importantly that our riding was legitimate. It soon became clear that, as a local resident, his negative attitude was spawned out of an irritation caused by a 'hooligan element of bikers' who displayed no regard for other users or landowners. It was evident that valuable PR was achieved by explaining the TRF, its objectives and codes of conduct. So whenever possible take time to explain about the TRF.

Therefore each of us is an ambassador and its down to us to behave properly and be ready to promote the benefits of the TRF to others. Thoughtless and irresponsible riding can blight the situation for all of us. Naturally, some whom we meet are totally disinterested in hearing any explanation of our pastime and so the best I would ask is for you to display, even under severe antagonism, patience and courtesy and, above all, be dispassionate.

Happy trail riding 2002.

André Confavreux, National Chairman

P.S. The day went well apart from finding one lane which, because of deep rutting and a steep mud step, made progress impossible. As a consequence we had to man handle the two bikes out of the mud and retreat. Had we been greater in numbers it may well have been possible to surmount the obstacle. (You southerners, excuses, excuses...)

Ed.

André, are you admitting what we northerners always suspected?

NOTICE BOARD

READERS UNION OF NEWTON ABBOT

are publishing what they describe as
"Victorian Ordnance Survey Maps".

They are copies of the original 1st edition, published in 1805.
There are 97 maps available, covering all of England & Wales.
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GROUP NEWS

'Writes of Way' News from the West Yorkshire TRF Group

The West Yorkshire group recently held it's Regional AGM at the Bankfoot Cricket Club, in Bradford.

Gordon Thackray Chaired the event, and was deservedly re-elected as West Yorkshire Group Chairman for another term. Gordon spoke about the ongoing evolution of the TRF and our desire to create a better understanding between our Group and other official bodies who have influence over Rights of Way issues.

This sentiment was enthusiastically supported by Steve Thoma, who now heads up a three man 'Rights of Way' committee. Steve and his team are keen to hear from anyone in the Region who come across issues of Rights of Way, and requested pro-active support from all members on the matter.

Gordon Carr gave an excellent insight into trail riding in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, where he now resides...(lucky chap!!). With the horror of FAM now behind us, let us hope for more rides in this great area in 2002.

The large group of members who attended the meeting also benefited from a prize draw, where no less than ten gift vouchers were up for grabs (you had to be there to win the lucky dip!), thanks go to Colin Appleyard Motorcycles - Keighley and Leeds, for their support and generosity. The evening was rounded off with a buffet supper - thanks to our hosts at the cricket club.

There are still an active group of hardy souls who brave the Northern winter chill and ride out most Sundays! If you're not riding right now,...but would like to....then attend the meetings, held on the first and third Thursday of each month at the Bankfoot Cricket Club in Bradford, (easy access from M62 / M606). Call me on 07720 265 400 if you need directions.

That's it for now.

John McKay, PR Sec, WY TRF Group
E Mail john.mckay@brighthousecomputers.co.uk

RuPP RECLASSIFICATIONS

The good news first. You may remember me reporting that following a proposal I made at the County Council's Rights of Way Liaison Group Meeting, the Council agreed to make reclassification orders for five RuPPs suggested by me before Christmas, with more to follow according to priority. As mentioned in the October Newsletter, one of them, Netherhampton RuPP 3, was confirmed as a byway almost immediately when the landowner was persuaded to withdraw the objection. Now the Council has made Orders to reclassify Ebbesborne Wake RuPP 3 and Downton RuPPs 13, 14 and 14A as byways. Again at my suggestion, Bulford Bridleway 7 was moved from the reserve list to the priority list for upgrading to replace Netherhampton 3. However, following a meeting with the MoD who own the lane, it has been decided to include this with the Larkhill Ranges proposals as an upgrade to byway. Wiltshire seems to be the only county prepared to reclassify RuPPs, other authorities are content to do nothing and allow them all to become restricted byways.

Bill Riley, Wiltshire

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RoW NEWS

The following letter has been taken from West Somerset Free Press 21 Dec 2001

Paths are a right - not a threat

It isn't very often that footpath news reaches the front page of any paper. The problem at Williton (Free Press December 14) is just one of the many others in West Somerset.

Knowing a public inquiry is the most likely outcome of the options being considered, it is peculiar that the district council does not intend to follow the criteria of Somerset County Council when considering path diversions.

It says the path should be open and usable as the law requires. When this criteria is followed, the need for most expensive diversions is removed.

Miss Norris says that if the law is applied in this case there will be stress to landowners. Somerset County Council diverts more than one path a week, mostly for the benefit of landowners. Do the owners of the paths, the public, (you and me), have the same consideration?

Paths are not a threat to security; removing a path does not remove a criminal mind, just peoples right to walk peacefully in the countryside.

How can anyone sue the council because their gardens have been extended over a public right of way? The council has a duty to protect the public right.

At Tripp Farm a 40-year problem is to be solved by moving several paths (for the benefit of the landowner). The law applying to paths should be applied first. **I am the only objector.**

Exmoor National Park Authority cannot be relied on to protect the public right as seen at a public inquiry recently held at Brompton Regis.



A common has been fenced on the Quantocks and not challenged. Clatworthy Reservoir has unsolved path problems, and so it goes on.

Foot & Mouth demonstrated how important paths are to our economy - this should be reflected by the way they are looked after. At the moment they seem to be treated as an irritant not an asset and it is left to amateurs to do what they can to protect them.

Brenda Prentice

Open Spaces Society

Sent in by Julian Bruford

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**RE:
PUBLIC RELATIONS – T.R.F.**

While I see the activities of the TRF as relating to 'Pony-trekking on bikes', there are many different views, interests and approaches within the membership. We ought to celebrate diversity.

Riding bikes is essentially an exciting and enjoyable pastime, which we have every right to pursue. Let us try to promote the 'fun' side of trail riding.

Although we have had negative experiences with associating ourselves with the motorcycle trade, perhaps it is time to examine this approach again. Is sponsorship a dirty word?

Judging by the success of history programmes such as 'Time Team' and 'House Detectives', we ought to be moving towards making films celebrating the travel/history/companionship aspects of trail riding. 'Ridge Riders' had a wide appeal and showed us in a positive light, as well as being entertaining.

Members are being "turned off" by the doom and gloom of anti-motorcyclist legislation. While the threat caused by the CroW bill is very real,

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we exist through a shared love of riding bikes in the countryside. We ought to be stressing, where possible, a more up-beat message.

Apathy is a growing problem within the membership. We need to devolve tasks and responsibilities. Good practice in achieving this must be shared.

We need to have more articles in other magazines, not just motorcycle mags. 'Lancashire Life' recently featured an article on the motorcyclists of Rivington Barn. This raises the question as to whether motorcycling is becoming perceived as more of a mainstream activity.

Alternative activities. I feel there is a lot to be gained by developing other activities as well organised trail rides, in order to develop the social side of our pastime. The relative lack of social events could restrict the type of members we enrol. For instance, there would appear to be fewer women T.R.F. members now, than previously, even though there is an increase in the overall number of women motorcyclists. Why?

We need to communicate with other motorcycle groups to share experiences and work together to share common problems. Organising events for charity should be encouraged, because this shows that we are not just a narrowly focused self interest group.

Please write in to 'Trail' and/or write to me about any 'different' TRF related activity you have been involved with.

John Hargreaves of the Ribble Valley club organises a trail ride and barbecue on the top of Salter Fell, every year, just after Christmas. This shows courage, fortitude and the lengths northern trail riders will go for food.

The TRF provided 20 marshals for a combined junior Moto-cross meeting and senior enduro at 'Trax' moto park. A good day out, watching lots of people doing silly things on bikes.

Next on the calendar is a social evening, being entertained by the 'M6 Breakdown Band'(and you thought 'skiffle' was dead)! We have not done much social stuff before, how about you?

Your turn. What is happening in other TRF groups? We need to know.

Please send me any motorcycling related cuttings for my files. Also send me details of any activities or schemes, run in conjunction with any other organisations.

Rodger Davies, Public Relations Officer



Good Moaning

As some of you may remember, my wife & I moved to the South of France in April 2001, and I had to sell my beloved Serow. By the time we had moved into our new home, decorated it to my wife's satisfaction and assembled all the flat pack furniture, it was June and the first of our friends were on their way to visit us.

We were advised to sell all our vehicles before we left England due to the difficulty of registering British vehicles in France. A car was reasonably easy to locate but a bike proved to be more difficult as a lot of trail bikes are converted to super motards (even the 50's). There is no MOT here for bikes at the moment and some of the bikes offered for sale were in a deplorable state even in the dealers, but I finally found an XT600E '98 model, with 10,000 kilometres on the clock and never been off road for the equivalent of £2,200. I was quite pleased.

I ordered a bash-plate (CRD is quite near here) and rode around on the road until it arrived. The weather was getting warmer although the wind kept things sensible until one day while I was out on the bike, the wind dropped and the temperature rose to 35° centigrade! As I cannot emulate the local habit of riding in shorts & flip-flops (they say it makes them ride safe, but I don't believe them) I was seriously hot by the time I arrived home. I had to strip off and stand under a cold shower for twenty minutes to cool down again.

I now have a pair of Hood armoured jeans and a lightweight armoured jacket, a ventilated crash helmet with a removable, washable liner and of course a camel-back type water dispenser in my knapsack and I cope much better with the heat.

I seem to be the only one here interested in trail riding as such, though I am trying to interest (infect?) a couple of French friends as there are miles and miles (or should that be kilometres and kilometres) of mainly gravel roads with wonderful scenery and the occasional demanding climb or descent.

Over the winter I intend to explore as many of these roads as I can. The local areas on Le Clappe (mainly limestone) Mont d'Aleric and Les Montagnes Noire but the southern Pyrannees are only 47 miles away.

There are no rights of way here but a well silenced, carefully ridden motorcycle can go virtually anywhere without problems as long as you remember that Thursday and Saturday mornings are when the hunters are about and shoot everything that moves, and July and August are so dry that off-roading is discouraged due to the risk of brush-fires. The brush-fire we had this year in August took 28 hours to put out and ranged over a huge area.

Not all tracks are through routes and as I ride alone at the moment I have bought an old XT125 which is light enough to manhandle. I take my G.P.S, a

mobile phone, maps of course, water and high energy snacks to try to make a solo exploration as safe as possible. I thought I had found a short cut recently which cut about 2kms of roadwork off a route I am working on. I needed to find a track across the Auto-Route and on the map I thought I had found one. When I actually got there, it was just a floodwater pipe under the Auto-Route, but big enough just to ride through. So I did. I decided to come back the same route and found that getting out of the ditch was a lot more difficult than dropping into it. I decided to follow the ditch along until it got shallower but bamboo growing in the bottom of the ditch made the going extremely difficult. Nowhere in the TRF trail manual is there advice on how to deal with bamboo. After a real struggle, I managed to get out but was very glad it was close to home as I was exhausted.

Insurance is expensive here. It costs £300+ for my XT600E. When I explained about the Norwich Union Premium Policy that I had in England with up to four bikes on one policy, the French insurers were astonished. You have to pay for each bike, and the third party only cover for friends bikes we enjoy in England is not included here or available.

However, I think that anyone having a bike policy in the U.K should be able to ride my 125 in France. If anyone thinks otherwise, please let me know.

A friend of mine in the village runs superbike tours in the summer. He has two adjacent three storey townhouses with a large secure garage and when I have sorted out a few circular routes, he reckons he can offer the same deal to groups of trail riders, £50.00 per day covers bed, breakfast and evening meal and guided tours (with a couple of days free for touristy things). I will write more about this later on.

We have bought an apartment on the coast overlooking the Mediterranean. If anyone fancies a family beach holiday with a couple of days trail riding included, contact me and we will see what we can arrange. There are cheap flights from Stansted to this area, otherwise if you drive, it is two days on the road. Anyway, email me on mhcarefree.2@aol or ring on 0033 468 33 89 72 for details.

We have had a cold snap here in the South of France, which is unusual (worst for 15 years) but it has gone back to normal now - with temperatures of 13° - 15° during the day and with bright sunshine.

The Paris-Dakar Rally hit Narbonne on Saturday night. They had come from a special stage in Arras where it was cold, wet and very muddy, and then driven to Narbonne and seemed quite surprised when they arrived to see crowds waiting for them in the warm 10° evening.

We walked through the parc ferme as the riders peeled off layers of wet clothing, changed tyres etc. One young girl was fettling her bike (number 125) and my wife remarked that she did not seem big enough to reach the ground. We watched as she started the bike easily enough, then wheeled it out of the parc ferme perhaps looking for a kerb. Failing to find one, she hooked her leg half-way across the saddle, let the clutch out and scrambled into the saddle as she went. I

suppose she will have to do that in the desert too - very few kerbs.

A couple of the riders and their support crew were staying at my friends Chambre d'hote. By the time they had clocked in at the rally control, fettled their bikes etc., etc., it was midnight. Wet clothing spread out to dry, they fell into bed exhausted.

Seven o'clock next morning, I arrived at the Chambre d'hote. The plan was to arrive at the Chateau de Lastours early in the Jeep so we could get out onto the special stage. The support crew was up and about, but the riders were still dead to the world and everyone was reluctant to wake them. By the time they had woken, had breakfast, collected up all their still damp clothing, we were late. We still thought it would be best to take the Jeep rather than go on the bikes, so off we went. Not far along the Auto-route, we came to the end of the queue to get off the slip road towards Lastours. It was stop-start traffic for about 5 kms, until we reached the Chateau where we were waved past by the police - all the car parks were full! We finally found somewhere to park the Jeep right out in the country, giving a brisk kilometre walk back to the Chateau.

The special stage started at the Chateau with a lap of a little motocross track which was very sandy, then out on a 35 kms loop through the vineyards. We watched the start for a time then walked across the vineyards to where the track looped back. We watched all the bikes ride through the corner we were on, except for one poor chap who dumped his bike with the spectators whistling and clapping. The cars followed, sliding round the corners making more noise than the bikes. Finally the support vehicles came past, bouncing over the bumpy track with teeth crunching leaps. We realised that they had to keep the hammer down because if they got stuck, there was no-one to pull them out!

By three o'clock it was all over and the Rally was on its way to Madrid, and we joined the queue on the Auto-route to go back home.

Next year, Martin and I will definitely be on our bikes and hopefully spend less time in traffic and more time watching the rally. Perhaps even travelling to the stage before they come to us here in the South and follow them down to Madrid if we can.

We watch the Rally each year on the t.v. but it's not until you watch them 'in the flesh', talk to the riders, and see the sort of terrain that they race over, that you realise how hard it is to keep on keeping-on with very little rest and sleep between stages.

Talking to the two riders we met (Eric - bike no. 17 and his friend on bike no. 83) I found out that it cost them £16,000 each, excluding the cost of the bike, but they have no other vices - so they say.

Anyway, back to reality. Martin and I are going trail riding on Friday - first of the New Year. Then it is back to our French lessons (don't ask!)

Happy New Year to you all.

Mike Kirby

TT TALES *continued*

January 2001 and its one of the more technically challenging trails in the Yorkshire Dales. Dandra Garth is difficult most of the year round but give it a light dusting of snow and 2" of frozen ground, yes I came off big style. Luckily I was leading a group of five riders who helped me to get the beast across the bog complex and stream. By the time we got to Hawes I was in so much pain I took the road home while the group continued back to Richmond off-road. It later turned out I had fractured a rib in my back. The next ride out was to have been late February but as the F&M crisis took hold the ride was cancelled.

The next off-road for the TT was Spain. The Picos mountains early June. Helen and myself decided to ride the TT down to Plymouth overnight Sunday to get to the dock early hours Monday for the ferry to Santander. With road bias tyres and the obligatory air bed on the seat the trip down was bearable. We covered 401 miles that night. At the Hotel Infantado, OJEPA road tyres were replaced with rear trials and front M/X. In the weeks riding we covered nearly 1000k 2-up with the only problem being a loose battery terminal (by about an eighth of a turn).

By now the entire North of England was a no go area so the Teesside group had a number of track days organised at a local MX track and it was here that my problems started. The chain had been on for 10000k and I should have known better but it still looked in reasonable condition.

As I launched the TT over another downed tree it jammed on the trunk at which point the chain snapped, end of track day. Washed, it looked a simple replace old with new until I started poking about with a screwdriver and it disappeared into the engine.

Front sprocket removed and the nightmare starts, a 2" hole in the back of the alternator cover. As I strip the TT down to find out the extent of the damage I find the starter gear on the crank blanks off the crank and there's a large drain hole from the alternator compartment back into the main gearbox. Dare I take the chance nothing has gone in? NO!! A visit to my local mechanic (works from his house, slightly quirky but always reliable and cheap) has me leaving with his Yamaha alternator puller, for me to do, as he has no time. Bearing in mind this piece of kit fits XT, SR, FJ, XJ, etc. I envisaged little difficulty. Wrong! The locating holes on the TT alternator are 3mm wider than standard and there's not enough plate on the puller to drill wider holes.

At this point a fellow motorcyclist in a unit near to my place of work offers some assistance. With a fully kitted engineer's workshop he measures up and I drill and tap a new TT alternator puller from an 8" piece of steel girder and it worked. Alternator, balancers, washers, bearings and starter gear stripped off I search the sump and find 2 x 1" pieces of alternator cover, bits of mud and grass I'd power washed in and odd fragments of useless alloy that had masqueraded as a chain guide. Cleaning the whole engine side revealed part of the webbing, which comes out from the crankcase to form the join with the alternator, had also smashed off as the chain punched through. Things were starting to look very expensive.

My engineer neighbour to the rescue once more. Dave Jones (for it is he) primarily etches and engraves tyre moulds and in the process has to occasionally repair holes in the moulds. He uses a plastic metal which can withstand heat and vibration. I purchased a tube of the magic elixir and Dave insisted on doing the job. He actually built up the webbing and alternator cover separately incorporating some steel tape in the repair and to date not a drop of oil has sneaked out.

New chains and sprockets were of course ordered and engine built up. I proceeded to fit the shiny new items. All was going well until I tried to remove the back sprocket. The four allen headed bolts would not budge. WD, Impactor, T-handle allen key, brute force, eventually resulted in me stripping 1 head useless. Down to Davey Jones and his locker of goodies. It eventually took 2 of us to get the swines out. Dave with a chisel knocking the side of the bolt and me with a T-bar turning the top. It revealed a steel bolt in an alloy carrier. Not a good combination but coupled with occasional immersion in acid water and a 10mm fine thread, a technically challenging combination.

By now I was starting to regard the whole episode as some kind of test of my endurance. This feeling was heightened when on the night of completing the job, that is fit the rear sprocket and chain, I discover my usually reliable supplier had sent me the wrong rear sprocket. Old and new despatched back to them the correct beauty arrived three days later and was fitted that evening. The repair had cost me about £10 plus chain and sprockets.

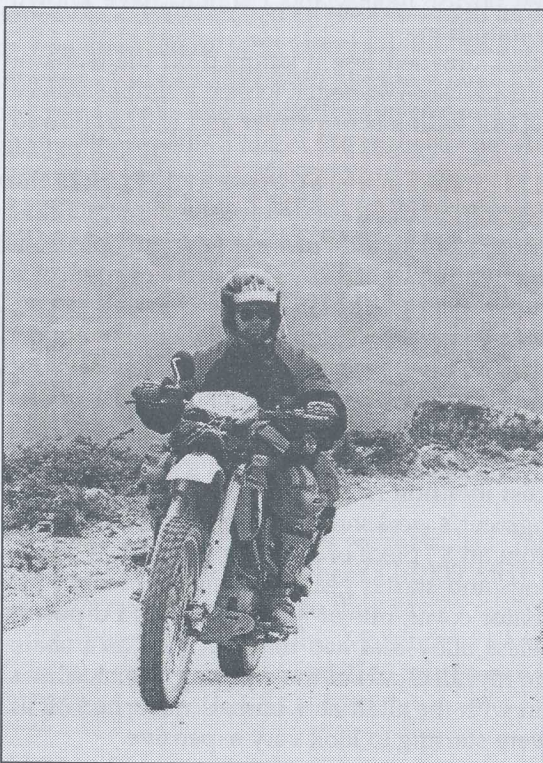
Other problems, well it will not start in gear (yes I have the clutch pulled in). The right had side panel falls off when the going gets tough (a bit like me, perhaps I should call it Leo). It fell off a trailer and cracked some plastics and the saddle bag melted a hole in the right hand side panel (Leo) The pillion foot pegs are way too small. Err, that's it.

I've got all sorts planned for the next 12 months including Spain again, two up-rides, horse trials and a number of shows which our group have stands at.

Yours back on two wheels.

Leo Crone

Photo: The hair pins at Cabana 2-up in Spain



Report from *Dave Tilbury*

With the season of gluttony, greed and conspicuous consumerism behind us, not to mention the absence of peace on earth and good will to all men, we will hopefully return to an atmosphere where we can progress with our aims and objectives. Here ends the Christmas message.

Since my last report we have made progress on all fronts. A set of training papers was prepared for the December Executive meeting. These are a reduced version of papers previously produced by Tim and by myself. The Executive saw merit in producing this brief training paper for the membership and so you will shortly be receiving notes on the methodology of claiming a byway. With the Countryside Agency's Discovering Lost Ways (DLW) project just around the corner it is essential reading for all members who are serious about protecting our rights. Make no mistake; this is not an issue for 'others'. This is the one and only opportunity we are going to get to retain our recreation (and in doing so retain the character of the ancient carriageways we love).

One point raised at the December Executive Meeting related to the condition of the TRF display boards. In dealing with this a number of other issues have come to light. We need to update the literature we disseminate as some, if not all, is over ten years old (judging from the picture of Gareth on the cover of one - J). Initial reports suggest that the display equipment is currently little used. Is this because we, as an organisation, have forgotten that it exists? Or is it that we are not interested in using it? Personally I think our presence at shows is positive PR and offers potential for recruitment.

If we are to update our promotional literature should we produce leaflets or should we produce a series of posters intended for single use at events? I would be interested to hear from groups or members who might have a view on this so that we can better tailor printed items to our need.

Some years ago we went through a lengthy Public Inquiry into proposals for traffic regulation on the Ridgeway. The upshot was that the Inspector decided there was no need for traffic management on the route but the Friends of the Ridgeway and a local MP, amongst others, are once again seeking to ban us from that long and useful route. Whilst dealing with this matter I made one of those serendipitous discoveries at the bottom of a filing cabinet draw - The Ridgeway National Trail Code of Respect. This was signed up to by all local authorities involved, along with the Ramblers Association, CPRE, CLA, NFU etc. We should note that one of the main tenets promoted in this document is "Be aware and considerate of the rights of others." This, being a bilateral

agreement, binds all parties in equal measure but it seems to have been forgotten by some who originally signed. This leaflet will be made available on the TRF web site in due course. It is currently available on www.hants-lanes.fsnet.co.uk from the 'News' page. Thus far three members have offered to undertake a photographic survey of the route to prepare for a defence should the Friends of the Ridgeway force the issue to another PI. I look forward to seeing the results.

The Trail Users Alliance (TUA), has moved forward, albeit ponderously. The Byways and Bridleways Trust have made considerable input on the formation of a body called the Byways and Bridleways Trust Advisory Committee (BBTAC) which is the TUA by another name. The BBT has sought to appoint a number of new Trustees to help breath fresh life into the original BBT and the sibling organisation, the BBTAC.

The TRF, LARA and the BBTAC hope to meet with those at DEFRA who are looking at the Statutory Instruments related to s.34a of the Road Traffic Act 88 and Restricted Byways. Be assured that the various representatives will be seeking the best outcome for the fellowship. It must be understood that the law has been passed and that all we can do is seek to minimise the impact on trail riding and other legitimate users of unmetalled carriageways via the drafting of the SIs. Have no doubt that those who would see us banned from the lanes will be working as hard as we are, but pushing in the opposite direction.

My dealings with the BMF and MAG have ground to a halt due to Christmas. I do hope you can wait until the February issue for an update

Some groups produce marked maps for the benefit of members. This is what the TRF is all about – the use and preservation of 'forgotten' roads. With the changes in the law, combined with the turnover of members, this may expose the markers of maps to legal proceedings if there is not a cogent disclaimer issued in writing with the maps. We need to distance ourselves from past marking that cannot be substantiated under current conditions. It would be ill-advised to offer marked maps that include RUPPs for which there is no evidence gathered to suggest that vehicular rights exist. The same applies to those footpaths and bridleways we all ride in the belief that higher rights exist. No longer is it safe to base current use (or the inclusion on a marked map) of any route that has not been fully researched and a schedule 14 application prepared. As this is a process that has taken place at group level it may be that it is the group or individual that is exposed and this is a point that must be addressed. This in turn highlights concerns I have related to the independence of groups and the many different standards adopted throughout the fellowship.

I'm not sure how we can address the issue surrounding those maps that have been passed to those who are not now members – especially when those

maps were marked in the good old days of 'Inclosure or Tithe and two other maps'. I have suggested that this matter be an agenda item at the next Executive meeting, so do give it some thought – especially if your group provided a marked map service.

As mentioned in my previous report, I have been asked to look at the structure of the fellowship. I have given this some consideration, albeit with no input from the fellowship at this stage (hint), and working on the basis that change for the sake of change is not a good thing, my interim conclusion is that we are currently OK structure wise. That is to say that the region is probably the ideal unit but unless there is a hunger for it from the groups then things are best left as they are. There are, after all, many matters on which we can focus resources other than the TRF structure. There is, however, a need to regularise the activities of the groups so that certain activities, such as the previously mentioned map marking, are carried out within approved parameters.

There is also a desperate need to improve communication, bi-directionally – between the members and the executive. It may assist us to remember that the Executive Officers are members too. Rather than looking up to the Executive as 'leaders' consider them more as other members who are there to assist all other members to achieve their objectives. Facilitators might be another term that could be applied to the executive. From such a position YOU may feel more comfortable contributing. Even I used to think that the Executive Officers were beyond approach but that is not the case.

On the topic of communication I know that the secretary sends minutes and other information to the groups. I know also that the members of many groups do not get to hear of that information. This can, and must, be addressed at all levels. Let me offer an example. The DLW project elicited many responses from one user group but few from all the others. How did one user group outperform all others? Easily – with an accurate record of e-mail contacts. Many of us have access to e-mail but it is not currently being used to our best advantage. As an initial step to improving communication you could contact the Membership Secretary if you have changed your e-mail address, or have become 'connected'. [trfmemsec@aol.com] Give this topic some thought.

I am pleased to say that I have been contacted by some who are able to offer time to the TRF but sadly I have not been overwhelmed with the response. If you can help please contact me and I will see how I can help you to help the TRF. One suggestion put to me is that we form a Letter writing register. Believe me, I understand that this does not hold the same attraction as exploring a new lane but it is a task that must be done if lanes are to be explored at all.

Wishing you all a good 2002 – may we be riding at least as many lanes at the end of the year as we are now.

Dave Tilbury

MILESTONES/MILLSTONES OF MOTORCYCLING

PART 7b OUT WITH THE BAD

A question that has been perplexing me for some time now is, 'Why do we like the sound of a loud exhaust?' Not the most earth shattering of questions, granted, but one that has an effect on a growing accessory market, as well as having implications for environment.

Q: What is the adjective most commonly used with motorcycles?

- A. Smelly.
- B. Disgusting.
- C. Noisy.
- D. Crude.

Yes, the answer is C (it's always C)

Most of this noise comes from the exhaust, although other sources do contribute. Intake roar is, to me, quite an offensive noise, and so too is mechanical noise from valve gear and transmission. Perhaps the addition of a noisy exhaust covers up these other sounds? Noise is measured in decibels, strange units which work on a logarithmic scale. This is the equivalent of a ruler having every centimetre a different length from a millimetre to a metre. In effect it means that a couple of decibels increase in noise can make something twice as loud.

In earlier days, the way to improve performance in racing machinery was to ensure that there were no restrictions to the flow of exhaust gases. Open pipes gave way to megaphone exhausts, in the quest for power, but the downside was, as ever, noise. This was especially a problem with unsilenced two-strokes. Pre-war DKW's could be heard at Blackpool, from the Isle of Man. Villiers, an engine that needed more power in the same way that Ernie Wise needed Eric Morecambe, sported a short megaphone, at one time, that left your ears ringing after a days riding. It still, however, resulted in a dog slow machine.

The breakthrough came with the research done by Walter Kaaden in East Germany. This showed that getting rid of gases quickly was not enough, since a lot of the new charge escaped as well. By introducing an exhaust tuned for length, as well as shape, it was found that the effects of resonance could effectively increase performance and decrease fuel consumption, especially in two-strokes. Ernst Degner defected with the secret, like something out of a John le Carre novel and, subsequently, gained a World Championship for Suzuki. Since then the dominance of two strokes in G.P.s has become complete.

The strangest-looking silencer prize must go to the 'Brooklands Can', a device which ended in a curious fish tail arrangement. This was used because

Brooklands was so close to housing and noise was a problem even then. Velocette used the shape on a lot of their models, presumably to hint at a sporting pedigree. This purposeful type of styling exercise is very common today, and many motorcycle manufacturers seem to know, that the eye is generally drawn to the shape of the exhaust first. Ignoring any Freudian undertones, this fact has spawned a serious industry in after-market exhausts. Look at the first 20 pages of the M.&P. catalogue and you will see what I mean.

How much of the subject of after-market exhausts is hype? Motorcycle manufacturers spend a fortune on R.&D. and testing, using the most modern and expensive equipment, to produce an exhaust that works well in conjunction with the rest of the bike. The first thing that many of us do, is junk the original system for an after-market replacement. Granted O.E. replacement is expensive, in the same way that Georgie Best's drinks bill is not insignificant, and pattern bits are usually lighter but, is this the real reason for change?

I love those little graphs that show the power of the latest race can compared to the standard system. More power is better, right? Not always. Look at how smooth the line is first. Any dips in the graph point to annoying flat spots. An exhaust that gives good torque at low to medium engine revs, is better than one which gives more top end power, for anything other than racing. Let's face it, for most of us, an engine spends most of its life below 60% of its rev limit and smoothness at low speed is probably the most useable and desirable feature. This is not what you want to hear, though, is it?

I once spent a fascinating day at an exhaust design and testing centre, as the guest of Peter Ballard, a talented and experienced engineer. I was amazed at the lengths (no pun intended) companies go to in designing what, to most of us, is a piece of pipe with a can stuck on the end. Would you believe that car companies demand a particular exhaust sound, which has to fit their corporate image. For instance, Alfa Romeo require an exhaust with a 'sporty' note, which would not be acceptable for, say, a Mercedes saloon. The same thing happens in the motorcycle world. Ducatis don't just have silencers they have 'Contis' or 'Franconis' (or Marconis? How am I

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doing, Ducatistas?). Designer noise indeed.


In a nutshell what exhausts are about is sound. What makes a Vincent exhaust note a thing of beauty, yet a pair of 'Allspeeds', stuck on the back of an ageing RD 250, sound like a premonition of what Hell must be like? Yes, I know it is about the frequency and the quality of the sound, in the same way that a note from a cello is superior to the same note played on a Kazoo, but there is another factor. As ever, this is to do with style and image. The Vincent owner is comfortable with the idea that, this is a piece of classic machinery, so it must sound 'right', right? Q.E.D. The owner of a noisy two stroke is saying, 'Here I am, ignore me at your peril'. I am sure that riders of bikes with noisy exhausts are convinced that, because they like the sound, everybody else must. Its a bit like personalised number plates. Owners of such are obviously convinced that everybody else is really impressed by their drole humour, whereas in reality people are really thinking, 'What a plonker'. I just get so angry (pause for 5 minutes in a dark room, with a tape of waves lapping against a beach and whales singing to one another).

Another thing. Exotic materials. Where did all this come from? Just when you feel happy with an aluminium exhaust, instead of steel, people want to sell you things made out of some stuff called carbon fibre. Carbon is the stuff you get when you burn, well, virtually anything, paper, coal, plastic etc. So why is it so expensive? Yes, I know it starts out by burning a man-made fibre and bonding it

under heat and pressure but we are talking about a glorified can here, not bits for an F1 car. Anyway, how come carbon-fibre sticky-backed plastic is just as dear (and 10 times as expensive as pink gingham or mock marble design plastic covering). Go on, answer me that, Fablon.

Titanium, a metal that is lighter than Aluminium, yet nearly as strong as steel, has become very popular, since the price has come down (one of the benefits of the collapse of the Communist Bloc, I believe). Now, you are to be pitied, if you have not got bits of this exotic materials scattered about the bike. You can even get titanium exhausts for Honda 'Monkey' bikes. I give up. I shall wait until bits of bean cans, held on with 'Gun Gum' and pieces of wire, come back into fashion.

Rodger Davies



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TOUR DE MORVAN

It all started several months ago, whilst trying to decide what to do with my last three days leave. And it was whilst thumbing through an old copy of TBM that I came across the advert – Come trail riding in France with an experienced organisation, strictly not an enduro and no loud pipes allowed. Sounded right up my street, so a quick phone call to Paris and I had booked the last place on the last trip of the year – sorted.

Months of preparation followed. Chris Evans advised on the sort of spares and tools we should all carry, along with general bike preparation. So, out came the credit card and I went on a little shopping trip. Hundreds of pounds later I was laden down with a metal jerry can, spare levers, cables, inner tubes, bum back and a rather nice pair of enduro tyres – which the nice man said were road legal (yeah right!).

A return ferry crossing was booked from Portsmouth to Le Havre, my trailer had a thorough service (I kicked the tyres and replaced a couple of bulbs) and all I could do now was sit back and wait.

The fun started at 04:30 on the Wednesday morning, which is when the alarm went off. I'm not much of a morning person, so grabbed a quick shower and leapt into the car, remembering to check that the trailer was good and secure. The ferry departed on time at 07:45, and I put my first wheel on French soil at about 14:50 that afternoon. I then had a 280 mile drive down to Vezelay, to the rendezvous point.

Unfortunately I chose to go via Paris, and got caught up in their rush hour. At 21:00 I was unloading my bike and gear, and managed to grab a bite to eat and meet some of the other participants (note: not competitors).

Shortly after breakfast next day, Chris gave a briefing, introduced us to his two colleagues, John and Jasmine (both French, by the way), and explained the format for the next three days, as well as show us how to use the road book.

So, at about 10:30 that morning we all started moving out in small groups, having first loaded all our gear for the next three days into a large white van (which was driven by Jasmine). John was sent on ahead as Opener, and Chris followed on behind as Sweeper. It took a few kilometres to get used to the road book (which was very professionally presented, by the way), so for a while there were bikes chasing here, there and everywhere, but we all soon got the hang of it.

Before long we were at Check Point One (CP1), somewhere in the French countryside. We all refuelled, took a quick breather, before heading out again. Lunch consisted of a ham (jambon) sarnie and coca cola in a café, somewhere!

At this point things were going really well for me and my trusty Husky, but all that was about to change as, upon returning to my bike, I noticed that something was dripping from the bike, and on closer inspection it revealed itself to be engine oil – what a disaster, I had holed the left hand engine casing. I thought my tour was over before it had even really had a chance to get going!

Chris inspected the lame bike, and quite casually explained that we should load it into the already full van, and attempt a repair later that night using some chemical metal. Which is exactly what we did. And do you know, it actually worked. So, I spent

the afternoon in a warm van with Jasmine (yummy yummy), whilst the remainder of the riders chased about in the now torrential rain. I knew where I'd rather be!!

On day two, the rain had been replaced by clear blue skies and frost. I'm glad I took my thermals, as some of the riders suffered with cold fingers and toes, but I was OK. By now, riders had sorted out who was riding with who, and I had teamed up with three guys from Norfolk, on a couple of DRZ400s and a WR426. This partnership worked well for the rest of the tour, as the quick pair lead the way, leaving myself and Mr. DRZ no. 2 to bring up the rear.

At this point, let me explain the sort of riders that were on this tour. Basically there were 17 guys who all compete in The British Enduro Championship, took part at the Weston Beach Race etc, AND ME. But having said that, every one of them made me feel most welcome, and the riding was very much a situation of the "tortoise and the hare". Incidentally, one of the guys from Oxford was Tim Harvey of British Touring Car Championship fame – or the taxi driver as we called him!

Day two finished at about 17:00, with yet another casualty. This time one of the DRZ pilots had smashed off his water pump housing, which didn't look good. But, with a piece of domestic radiator pipe and lashings of chemical metal, a satisfactory repair had been made. Even some of the KTMs were starting to show the pace, with several guys replacing brake pads, and even a set of wheel bearings.

So, out we all went on day three, and enjoyed yet another fine (but cold) days trail riding, before eventually returning to Vezelay, from where we had started. I loaded up doubly quick as I wanted to try and catch the 23:00 ferry, and spent most of the journey in the outside lane, foot flat to the floor. As it happened I arrived at Le Havre with about 45 minutes to spare, so could have taken it a bit steadier.

I had booked a cabin for the return crossing, so at least managed to take a shower and get a decent nights sleep. I pulled onto the drive at just after 08:00 Sunday morning, and reflected on probably one of the best three days green-laning I've done in a long time.

So, would I go back? Too right, but next time with some of you lot, so start saving your pennies and earning those brownie points. Now, where did I put that Husqvarna parts catalogue? How much for an engine casing??????

Reuben Alcock, Wiltshire



HOW GREEN ARE OUR LANES?

What a wonderful experience to be back on the trail after such a depressing interval. Yes, some lanes have Greened over, more ammunition for the anti-Trail riding lobby but let us not be downhearted, there is much work to be done out there.

This year's neglect has choked many lanes with vegetation, brambles, blackthorn, in particular and we all know the damage to clothing that can do.

As a new member of the T.R.F. I was surprised there was only one Green Lane Day. Now I realise riders carry short saws, croppers, secateurs, etc. to tackle immediate problems en-route.

I have adopted a local, double walled lane in need of help and I am systematically cropping the vegetation, enough to allow motorbikes, beasts and walkers easy passage. Sad to say it is so overgrown as to not allow the passage of any 4x4's anymore. (Shame Eh!)

The danger is if we don't do anything about these lanes they will be lost forever, even without CRow.

So maybe an addition to the T.R.F.'s code of conduct could be:

Thou shalt spend fifteen minutes of each ride helping to improve a lane on your route.

The locals do appreciate the effort, the councils have little interest or resources. Think about it: You love riding lanes: Now is your chance to put something back.

Happy Trail Riding

John Robinson, North Yorkshire Group

CLASSIFIED

BRENDAN CHASE B & B Lake Windermere from £15.00 each x 4 sharing. Bike lock-up, parking, all rooms c/h, CTV, H & C, pub and grub handy, CCTV surveillance. Tel: 01539 445638.

HONDA XR280 1998, SRC Wiesco kit, Renthals, Acerbis extras, tank cover, etc. 2200kms., just serviced, very good condition. £2200 ono. Tel: 01271 860375 or 07810 124241.

BRING YOUR BIKES to mid Wales, Powys and ride on some of the most stunning trails. Stay on our farm, very competitive rates, pressure washers available. Please call Liz Powell on 01597 810241.

YAMAHA DT200WR 1991. 18000 miles. Legal for Cambrian rally. Suspension mods, manual override for electronic power valve, new unused seat. Renthals bars, bore re-plated, runs pre-mix 45:1, minimal smoke. V. quiet, dead easy starter. Have had for 6 years, meticulously maintained. £1500. Tel for details: 01829 733519.

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SUZUKI DR200J Yellow, 3000 miles, ready to go, £980. **Honda CB125 T2** 1986, unrestricted,

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TRIALS OUTFIT classic long distance, 750 Bonneville engined Metisse, ex Gagg and Morewood, very competitive. Sell or exchange for other bikes. Tel: 01726 67198 (Cornwall).

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HONDA XR400 Dec. '97. 3000 miles, trail ridden only. MOT to November. £2250. Tel: 07958 907301 (Sunderland).

KAWASAKI KLX300 Feb 2000. Green lane use only. Excellent starter/condition. £2395. Tel: 01538 304521 or 07971 121146.

SUZUKI DR350SN in need of TLC £500 or may break. Tel: 01493 700957 after 6pm (Norfolk).

1990 "G" KLR650 trail bike. No off-road use, new tyre, chain, sprockets, elects, etc. Only £895 ono. Tel: Adrian 01723 354222 or 07715 444522.