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# MOTORCYCLE RIDER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1979

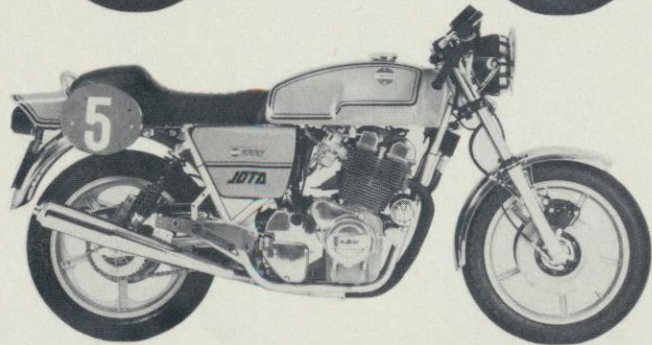
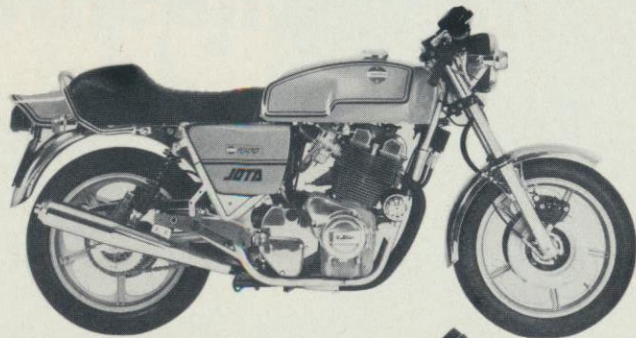
No. 44



BMF

20p

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# MOTORCYCLE RIDER

No. 44

THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH MOTORCYCLISTS FEDERATION ISSN 0306-1647

## OUR VIEW

### GREAT WORK IMC!

Professionalism is hard to ignore in any field. One has to admire the sheer skill of Björn Borg on the centre court at Wimbledon, just as one is left in awe at the sight of Kenny Roberts drifting around Assen with a trace of opposite lock in a 120-mph bend. Each is well and truly at the top of his own profession, and it shows.

It means all the more to those of us involved in the sport or activity concerned. So it is with no small measure of admiration that I now acclaim the success of the 'May is Moped Month' campaign run by the Institute of Motorcycling. The IMC is the public relations arm of the motorcycle industry in Britain, and as a journalist working for the world's largest public relations consultancy I can appreciate better than most just how successful the moped campaign has been.

Basically the idea was to bring the economy and convenience of mopeds to as wide a non-motorcycling audience as possible. So in May the IMC concentrated on getting the maximum coverage in the provincial press and on getting dealers to participate by including their names on promotional leaflets—two million of which were distributed door-to-door!

The results are astounding. Feature stories and news items put out by the IMC brought 12,000 column centimetres of coverage in May alone, and a total of 22,000 in the period January to May. This was spread over 75 national and provincial daily papers and 150 weekly newspaper groups' papers and specialist magazines.

In addition, there was 95 minutes of airtime on national radio, including several news items on Radio 4's 'PM' programme and Radio 1's 'Newsbeat'. And a real coup was 5½ minutes on ITN, broadcast nationally in three bulletins on 15 June.

Those figures may seem meaningless and of little relevance to motorcycling, but nothing could be farther from the truth. The real impact hits you when you hold in your hand the impressive file of clippings from newspapers throughout the country—it's three quarters of an inch thick! And these are the clippings spotted by the IMC's cuttings agency; it is generally reckoned that only a little over half the coverage is picked up even by the most efficient clippings agencies, so the true coverage was probably double that indicated above.

All this press activity was backed up by displays in over 2,000 newsagents, with actual mopeds featuring in 130 shops. It all dovetailed neatly with the increase in motoring costs brought by the Budget and the subsequent oil price hike by the

(continued on page 36)

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### FRONT COVER

What summer motorcycling should be all about: bikes, girls, and sunshine. Most of us can arrange the first two ingredients, but the third is proving rather elusive this year. Peter Thoeming captured this sunny and peaceful interlude in Scotland, of all places, but you'll find him roaming much farther afield on page 12 where he offers helpful advice for anyone contemplating a tour of Asia. The lady on the cover is Peter's girl friend and the bike is a GS750 Suzuki.

2 'NO JUSTIFICATION FOR ARBITRARY LIMITS': DOT

The Department of Transport has reaffirmed its intention of not interfering with the power outputs of 100 bhp-plus motorcycles. This welcome news is contained in a letter from the DoT to Bob Cant MP, whose call for a ban on the import of over-750cc machines from Japan was reported in MCR 41. At that time *Motorcycle Rider* interviewed Mr Cant and found that a strong reaction from motorcyclists had caused him to withdraw his plea for such a ban.

Mr Cant has sent *Motorcycle Rider* a copy of the DoT letter, which says: 'At the meeting of the Working Party of the United Nations/Economical Commission for Europe, held in April, none of the delegates presented accident evidence to support imposing a ban on motorcycles having a power in excess of 100 bhp. The motorcycle industry representatives made a strong plea to governments no to impose any such arbitrary ban. They argued that collaboration between industry and governments on rider training schemes and the development of meaningful safety standards would be a more fruitful way of reducing motorcycle accidents. The UK delegate generally supported this approach.'

'An offer by the industry to set up a small meeting to consider priorities for future safety requirements for motorcycles was accepted by government delegates. Our delegate to this meeting will be briefed to press for international work to be concentrated on the formulation of objective standards to improve the safety of motorcycles in general rather than setting arbitrary limits which have no justification in terms of safety.'

So common sense prevails—for now. Our thanks to Bob Cant for passing on the information.

**BMF MEETS NEW MINISTER**

BMF chairman Bruce Preston visited the Department of Transport in July to meet Kenneth Clarke, the new Minister with responsibility for motorcycling affairs. He asked the Minister to consider amending current legislation to permit solo motorcycles to tow trailers, and to scrap plans for a ban on right-hand sidecars. Other topics include the helmet law, conspicuity and the TRRL's work in this area, rider training, and sleeping policemen—Bruce made it clear that the BMF would like to see what little money is available used to fill in some of the holes in our roads rather than create bumps!

**BMF INSURANCE SCHEME**  
FULL DETAILS PAGES 18/19



**PAGE-THREE GIRL HELPS BMF**

*Enterprising John Davis of the BMF Legislative and Technical Sub-Committee brought crowds of visitors to the BMF stand at the Spring Motorcycle Show at the Bingley Halls, Birmingham, in May. He talked Sun Page 3 girl Kim Suzanne into posing on our stand-wearing BMF Tee-shirt, no less, and she must have played no small part in the BMF recruiting 77 new members during the show's six days. John and 18 other individual members of the Federation manned the stand and reported lively interest in the BMF's work—even after Kim had gone!*

**SEALINK DEAL FOR BIKES**

A summer Random Holiday Break scheme has been introduced by Sealink, offering low-cost holidays for motorcyclists in the Channel Islands. The Break entitles riders over 17 to a free gift of spirits and two litres of wine. Low-cost out-of-season holidays include the free gift entitlement and a simple add-on supplement of £6 return for a solo motorcycle.

Further good news is the 'sea beds for bikers' scheme in Guernsey which offers a special return fare of £7 for the bike from Weymouth or Portsmouth in high summer. Sealink can arrange accommodation for riders at the same time as booking the ferry crossing.

Sealink is also offering camping, farmhouse, static caravan and self-catering flat holidays for motorcyclists in the La Manche region of Normandy, as well as touring holidays based on the Logis Hotels Guide.

It makes a very pleasant change to see a car ferry operator striving to attract our business. The least we can do is encourage them further.

**DAYTIME LIGHTS NOT THE ANSWER: TRRL**

The preliminary findings of the Transport and Road Research Laboratory on conspicuity of motorcyclists tie in with the new evidence from America to support the BMF's long-held contention that daytime use of headlights is not the answer to motorcycle accident prevention.

The results of the TRRL's two-year study have yet to be published, but *Motorcycle Rider* understands that the Laboratory's evidence comes down firmly on the side of the BMF view.

Among the findings is that it takes a 12-volt 40-watt headlight to equal the conspicuity value of a simple fluorescent jacket. Given that the vast majority of mopeds and motorcycles on British roads have less powerful headlights than this, it is quite clear that motorcyclists in general will get no benefit from ill-advised calls by central and local government officers for riders to switch on in daylight.

Peter Watson, who headed the TRRL research team, told *Motorcycle Rider*: 'The best that riders can do to improve their conspicuity is to wear fluorescent jackets.'

Another key finding by the TRRL is that purpose-designed daytime riding lights—such as that marketed by Lucas—are not as effective as the makers claim. The study found that one of these lights equals a motorcycle headlight in conspicuity value, but it takes two of them to better a headlight. This is a direct contradiction of Lucas advertising which claims that one of these lights has more conspicuity value than a headlight.

When the TRRL report is finally published—hopefully in the near future—we can expect to see it calling for a general improvement in the standard of motorcycle lighting in the long term. We expect that anyone reading the report will be forced to conclude that daytime headlights use will have no effect in reducing the accident rate.

The same conclusion is inevitable from new American evidence, published in the May 1979 issue of *Road Rider*. The magazine points out that a fall in the accident rate in Indiana—one of the first states to enact a compulsory headlight law for motorcycles—between 1966 and 1968 was attributed by safety advocates to the use of headlights in daylight.

But what the safety pundits failed to notice—or chose to ignore—was the fact that this trend was mirrored almost exactly in the neighbouring state of Illinois, which did not enact a lights-on law until 1970. Therefore, the drop in accidents in Illinois could not be attributed to daytime use of headlights in Illinois, and certainly not to the lights-on law in Indiana. So the magazine concludes, quite correctly, that the reduction appears to be due to other variables present in both states.

The *Road Rider* article, by H. A. Kendall PhD, goes on to point out that in other states—such as

Montana, Oregon, and Wisconsin—where the fall in accidents was attributed to the use of daytime headlights, in fact the lights-on laws had been enacted when the rate of increase in motorcycle registrations was declining and hence the accident rate should have been expected to decline anyway. But factors such as these are so often brushed under the carpet by safety 'experts' trying to prove that their ideas really work. In fact, during this period virtually every American state noted similar downward trends in accidents although only relatively few passed lights-on laws.

Dr Kendall lays bare the shortcomings and statistical bias in several other American studies which purport to show that lights-on laws reduce accidents. He quotes the notoriously anti-motorcycle National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as admitting that 'there is no significant difference in the percentage of a state's daytime head-on motorcycle accidents among those states that have headlight laws and those that do not'.

So there is still no conclusive proof that using a motorcycle headlight in daytime reduces the accident rate. Even the Australian study that claims that using *main* beam in daylight improves conspicuity has been criticised for suspect methodology.

The May issue of *Road Rider* also quotes a number of American studies on motorcycle conspicuity. Among them is the Greensboro Traffic Enforcement Vehicle Experiment in which police in North Carolina tried to find out which police vehicle had the most noticeable effect on road behaviour: a marked car, unmarked car, and a police motorcycle. Guess which was noticed the soonest and altered driver behaviour most significantly? That's right: the bike!

As *Road Rider* points out, the experiment seems to show that motorists' have no difficulty in spotting a motorcycle as long as it is in plain view (as opposed to a blind spot) and they *want* to see it (i.e., possible penalties result from failure to observe the motorcycle). So it really does look as if the BMF's oft-repeated view that the real need is to educate car drivers to look for motorcycles would pay off in fewer accidents. Clever, 'common sense' solutions like daytime use of headlights are no more than a desire by ill-informed people to seek out the soft option.

**BMF AGM DATE**

The annual general meeting of the British Motorcyclists Federation will be held at the Manor Hotel, Meriden, at 12 noon on Sunday 14 October 1979. A general discussion will follow if time permits.

## 4 MORE DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS

Apologies for not including the full address of B.B. Accessories in the discounts list in *MCR* 43. The address is: PO 89, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5LW. The latest additions to the list are:

- Gander & Gray, 592-594 Romford Road, Manor Park, London E12 5AF, which offers 10% off spares and accessories and is a well-known specialist in Royal Enfield spares;
- Tony Hepworth Leisure, 45A Chapletown, Pudsey, West Yorkshire LS28 7RZ (tel: 0532 560199) which offers 10% off all goods;
- Wodham Insurance Group, 3 Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7PX, which offers 5% off motorcycle insurance.

All these discounts are available to BMF members on providing proof of membership.

## 'END MOPED TAX' CALL

A call for Government to drop road tax for mopeds has come from Peter Bolton, managing director of Steyr-Daimler-Puch (GB) Ltd, one of the largest suppliers of mopeds in Britain.

## BMF REPLIES TO POST OFFICE

Chairman Bruce Preston has written to the editor of the Post Office staff newspaper strongly criticising an article by Dennis Milsom which highlights the accident rate of telegram boys on their mopeds. The article describes how the Post Office is experimenting in switching from mopeds to vans in the interests of safety, and asks whether this 'could point the way to a change in national policy to cut the substantial toll to our young people from the growing use of two-wheeled machines'. Bruce put 'em straight.

On the credit side, it's good to see the *Streatham News* on 13 July giving motorcycling very favourable coverage. The paper featured the Prestedge family whose son Matthew figures prominently in the new series of Talking Bikes on ITV, and the Wimbledon and DMCC gets a good look-in also. Nice to see.

## BMF POLICY ON TRAINING

The BMF has published its policy on rider training. The document has been sent to the Department of Transport, the national and motorcycle press, and other interested bodies.

The main points are that the BMF does not feel compulsory basic training is the way to make riders into better road users. Incentives to train—such as higher testing standards, driving licences being issued after tests linked to training, training as part of the school curriculum—must be explored before compulsion is considered.

The Federation would like to see a higher level of training for all road users to enhance their awareness of others, and to see police activity

extended to include training in preference to punitive measures. The BMF will not entertain any training legislation based purely on the strength of assumptions. Training must be proved to work before legislation is considered.

## BMF 'L&amp;T' GOES NORTH

The Legislative and Technical Sub-Committee is now 18-strong following the recent appeal by its chairman Alan Bridgman for new members. With its members scattered from Folkestone to Sheffield, it has been decided to split the committee into Northern and Southern sections, both responsible to Alan. The Northern group will be chaired by Tim Wilkinson (featured in *MCR* last year sporting a BMF sticker on his machine in the Arctic!) who will now sit on the Executive Committee of the BMF. Each group will consider both national and local topics, and Alan Bridgman will be responsible for liaison between the two sections.

The current work of the sub-committee includes preparing a case for the repeal of the Construction and Use Regulation banning trailers being towed by solo motorcycles; researching the legality of motorcycles using parking meters; monitoring the Oscar London project; tackling the problem of spilt diesel; and recently the sub-committee was instrumental in the preparation of a BMF submission to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, suggesting ways of rationalising the law as it applies to road users.

*In MCR 39 we reported that the TRRL and Dunlop had come up with new sintered pads for motorcycle disc brakes which cured the wet braking problem completely. Now Dunlop has made the first replacement pads commercially available for most Kawasaki and Yamaha models, at £9.59 and £7.57 respectively. Honda and Suzuki should be covered by the end of the year. See the pads on stand 48 at Earls Court.*



## DISC WIPER CUTS WET DELAY

A motorcycle enthusiast and former dealer in Wales has come up with a simple but ingenious idea for improving wet-weather braking on disc-braked machines. The device consists of two polypropylene blades attached to a simple caliper rather like a bicycle brake. A Bowden cable connects the caliper to a choke-type lever on the handlebar, enabling the rider to place the wipers in contact with the disc surface at will.



The wiper has been tested independently by the Motor Industries Research Association, which states: 'The device is effective in improving disc brake performance in wet conditions.' In tests the wiper cut 9 feet off the stopping distance of a motorcycle at 30 mph, and 24 feet from 50 mph—just 5% longer than in the dry. This is because the brake pads are coming into contact with virtually a dry disc.

Inventor Jim Norris is now producing the wiper from a factory in Powys through the help of the Development Board for Rural Wales. The device is available through dealers at £12 plus VAT to suit various models—mainly those with the caliper mounted in front of the fork leg. Fitting takes between 10 minutes and one hour depending on the model. Wheel removal is not necessary in most cases. Replacement wipers cost 30p a pair.

At present the following machines are catered for: all Hondas pre-1978; all Kawasakis from 250 to 1000cc pre-1978 and current KH400 and Z750 models; Yamaha RD250 and RD350 A and B models, RD250DX, RD400DX, TZ350, TZ750, and XS650; all Suzuki GT models from 125 to 750cc with front-mounted calipers; and Norton Commando. Development is continuing and wipers should be available shortly for other models. For further information contact your dealer or Jim Norris at Newtown Motorcycle Services, 21 Vastre Estate, Newtown, Powys, Wales.

## 5 BMF ASSAULTS THE AIRWAVES

The second week in July was one of particular activity for the BMF on the airwaves. Jeff Stone, the BMF Midlands representative, put up a spirited defence of trail riding on BBC Radio Birmingham as a follow-up to the excellent story on green lanes in the *Daily Mail* of 12 July. Jeff argued the toss with a representative of the Ramblers Association, easily countering all her accusations and staunchly defending the motorcyclists' rights.

Editor Peter Rae was heard around the world and at home four times in the week on BBC World Service as he discussed the details of the new disc brake wiper recently introduced by Newtown Motorcycle Services (see page 5).

Chairman Bruce Preston was heard on BBC Radio 1 on Newsbeat when he was called upon at short notice to give the rider's view on the threatened Meriden closure. He borrowed a friend's Tiger 110 for the interview, which was conducted in Regents Park with interviewer Peter Maye having his first-ever ride on a motorcycle.

All these interviews were arranged at short notice, and BMF Executive members are always available to put across the rider's viewpoint on radio and television. You'll see Bruce on television shortly in the last programme in the new series of Talking Bikes, which started on the ITV network on 21 July. The final programme is due to go out on 1 September, and Bruce will be seen testing the Z1300 Kawasaki. You can get a sneak preview of his findings on page 26 of this issue.

## INJURY INSURANCE FOR RIDERS

A new road injuries insurance plan for motorcyclists is available through RAC insurance brokers Beddall Bradford for RAC members. For an annual premium of £20 the policy pays £5,000 if the holder is killed while riding any motorcycle, killed by any vehicle while he is a pedestrian, or if any such accident results in the permanent total loss of use of both hands, both feet, irrecoverable loss of sight in both eyes, or any combination of these injuries.

It pays £2,500 for permanent total loss of use of one hand, foot, or eye in any such accident, and also provides £100 per month while you are in hospital from any such accident for up to 365 days.

The scheme is restricted to RAC members over the 20 years of age who hold a full licence with 12 months' accident-free experience (two years if under 25). You must not have more than one speeding conviction nor convictions for any offence other than parking. That might well rule a lot of us out(!) but at least it is a major step in the right direction. With the BMF insurance scheme (see page 18 for full details) now underway, it looks like the whole motorcycle insurance scene has taken a turn for the better.

Don't play around.  
Get to know a real superbike.  
Honda CB900FZ.  
Our thundering street bike, bred  
directly from the all-conquering  
RCB Endurance machine.

And now a winner in its own  
right. 1st in the Formula 1 and  
1st in the TT Classic on the Isle  
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Its tough 16-valve DOHC  
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The Honda CB900FZ.

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CB900FZ Specification: Air cooled, four cylinder In-Line DOHC. Bore and Stroke: 64.5 x 69.0 mm (901 cc). Torque: 7.9 kg-m at 8,000 rpm. Power: 95 ps (DIN) at 9,000 rpm. Fully transistorised ignition with mechanical advance. 41 speed. 17m Front Disc, 16m Rear Disc. R.R.P. £7,099, inc. VAT.



# THE HONDA 900. IT SEPARATES THE BIKES FROM THE TOYS.



## NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS

### FRIENDS IN THE WHITE HOUSE

A neat little anecdote comes from BMF member Jim Steadman, who is off in August on a six-week tour of the United States with IMTC stalwart Jim Kentish and several other groups of British motorcyclists.

Worried about the petrol situation in America, Jim telexed President Carter in the White House for up-to-date information, explaining that 24 IMTC members would be flying their bikes across the Atlantic for a touring holiday. Nothing like going straight to the top!

Back came the reply that the riders should have no petrol supply problems in the areas they planned to visit. The telex wished them well on their trip, and finished off: 'As the owner of a BMW R69S for the past ten years I sure wish I was coming with you!' The message was signed not by Jimmy (do you believe in fairy tales?) but by one of his personal aides. The information has since been relayed to the AMA and *Road Rider* who will now be bombarding the poor guy with all sorts of motorcycling propaganda. Great stuff!

Incidentally, Jim (Steadman, not Carter) tells us that the owner of Kieth's Touring Specialities in New York, who is a good friend of his, has had no fewer than four enquires for accessories from our readers since his mail order service was mentioned in the last issue of *Motorcycle Rider*. People really do read it, you know!

### GLC PLANS CAR LEVY

The Greater London Council is to consider in October a proposal to charge motorists 50p a day to bring their cars into the city centre. The plan calls for 80 checkpoints around the city, and all private cars entering between 8 am and 6 pm would have to pay up. The GLC estimates that the scheme would cost each motorist £130 extra a year, and would bring in a whopping £7 million in revenue for the Council.

The RAC has already protested against the plan on the justifiable grounds that motorists are already taxed up to the hilt, but think of the benefits if motorcycles were exempt from the toll. It would certainly boost the number of bikes on London's streets, force the provision of better parking facilities, ease traffic congestion, and possibly reduce accidents overall. If the GLC tries to push the plan through, the BMF will work hard to ensure that bikes receive due recognition for their economy of fuel and road space.

### NEW LAW FOR LEARNERS?

Learner riders could be in for a surprise if the legislation hinted at by STEP chief executive Mike Williams becomes reality. Mr Williams is a promi-

7  
nent member of the Department of Transport Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Training (on which the BMF is represented by Dr Alf Minter). Writing in the STEP staff newspaper for June, Mr Williams said this committee has 'almost agreed a package of changes to induce new riders to take training'.

He said the committee envisages closer links between training and testing. 'We may see a two-tier test, with the first part connected to the training course and the second part being the existing DoT test,' said Mr Williams. 'Also, if a learner were restricted to a 150cc machine there would be more incentive for him to pass the test and so be able to ride the machines of 250cc and over.'

He said that training is probably reaching 16% of riders (that's better than the 10% banded about for so long) but doubts that publicity alone would ever bring in the necessary number of trainees. 'If the legislation we want is introduced it would mean more than 90% of all new riders would take training,' Mr Williams claims.

### ARCHITECTS SHOW BIAS

A leader in the *Architects Journal* recently was devoted to the efforts of the Byways and Bridleways Trust, the new body set up to preserve vehicular rights of way on threatened green roads. But the last paragraph asked:

'Will the new Trust fight as fiercely against the right of maniacs to use motorbikes on byways? All over the country fanatics on two motorised wheels are turning byways into mud canals and making the welkin roar. They must be stopped.'

It's good to know who your friends are. Fortunately, the *Journal* published a suitably pointed reply from Mrs Braham of the Trust in strong defence of motorcyclists. Right on!

### MORE HELMET RESEARCH

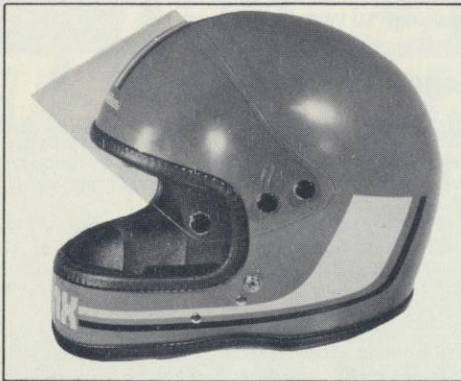
A two-year research project to increase the safety of motorcycle helmets, which began in April, has just received financial backing from helmet manufacturers. The research team is led by Dr Phillip Marshall, who heads the Polymer Engineering Research Group at Manchester Polytechnic and is a leading specialist in the field of fracture mechanics.

Funding the research is a newly formed Helmet Research Group established by Kangol Helmets Ltd, Stadium Ltd, and Thetford Moulded Products Ltd (which makes Centurion helmets), while polymer suppliers are represented by Bayer UK Ltd, DSM Ltd, and Engineering 0 Polymers Ltd.

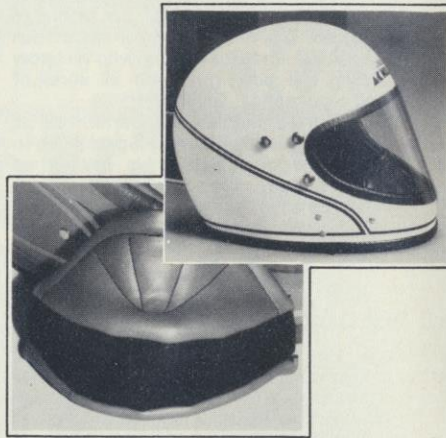
Research of this kind must be of benefit to motorcyclists, but we could hardly stifle a smile when we saw the name of the contact at Bayer UK — Neil Skull!

**Stadium**  
accessories

# helmets

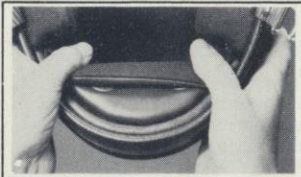


Lynx  
British standard 5361

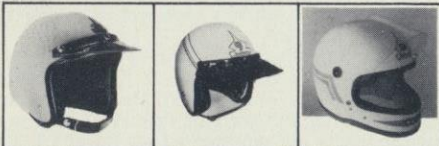


The 'Achilles' is Stadiums latest glass-fibre helmet. The Anti-Mist face mask covers the nose and mouth, forces warm exhaled air away from the visor keeping the visor clear of mist. Stadium helmets are known throughout the world for comfort and quality and are worn by many leading sports riders, including Neil Hudson and Graham Noyce.

The Lynx is another new Stadium helmet in thermoplastic superb comfort and style for below £20 mark.



THERMOPLASTIC



Project 7  
BS 5361  
ACU approved.

Project 9  
BS 5361  
ACU Stamped.

Cobra  
BS 2495  
ACU Stamped

GLASS FIBRE - all to BS 2495:77



Scorpion  
ACU Stamped.

Scorpion Cross  
ACU Stamped.

Phoenix  
RAC/ACU Stamped.

## HOOIGANS ON BMF CAMPSITE

In the last issue we carried a letter from Peter Cocker of Orpington, Kent, complaining about the behaviour of some riders on the campsite at the BMF Rally in May. We investigated Peter's complaints of noise, bad language, bike riding until the early hours, and rubbish bins being scattered and replied that as far as we could ascertain it was a quiet and peaceful evening.

Since then we have received a number of letters from members backing up Peter's allegations. Upon further investigation it transpired that we had been misinformed and that there had indeed been problems such as those described by our correspondents. We apologise sincerely to Peter Cocker and to any other campers at Peterborough who were inconvenienced by the behaviour of a minority group, and we are taking steps to ensure that next year's campers will have no such interruptions.

## ROAD USERS AS GUINEA PIGS

In response to several detailed enquires by BMF Executive member Alf Minter we have discovered that road users can so easily be used as guinea pigs—unpaid testers of the ideas dreamed up by traffic engineers. There's a roundabout in Canterbury, Kent, known as Wincheap Roundabout. During the summer of 1978 two alternative road layouts were tested there and the one with the greatest traffic capacity was left *in situ*. It incorporated a 'deflection island'—one of those nasty raised concrete lane dividers known and hated by riders familiar with Stoke Road Roundabout in Guildford, Surrey.

It turned out that this lane divider and the layout that went with it 'produced an unsatisfactory accident record', according to Kent County Council and has since been replaced this year by the other alternative layout, without a deflection island.

In plain English, this means that highways authorities lay down lumps of concrete in the roadway without any evidence of their safety for all road users. Then, if sufficient riders get killed or injured, they may have second thoughts and dig it all up again. What a dreadful waste of life, time, and public money. Surely the taxpayer and ratepayer deserves a higher standard of safety engineering from public servants than this?

## BMF AT EARLS COURT

Come and see the Earls Court Show from 25 August to 1 September. The BMF stand is number 137 and again incorporates Club Corner, where club notices and advertisements for members can be displayed. The new range of BMF badges and regalia, incorporating the new BMF logo, will be on sale along with a special show badge. Members of the BMF Executive will be available on the stand most days.

## REGIONAL MEETINGS SUCCESS

Success follows the BMF regional meetings wherever they occur. In the Midlands region in July BMF representative Jeff Stone chaired two highly successful gatherings of member and non-member clubs.

The first, at Coleford in Gloucestershire on 21 July, attracted 24 riders and the second, at Leek in Staffordshire, brought 33 the next day. One of the non-member clubs at each meeting joined the BMF: at Coleford the Silures MCC (named after an ancient tribe in the Forest of Dean, we understand) decided to affiliate while at Leek the Stafford Bikers joined on the spot and handed over a cheque for the affiliation of its 40 members.

Both meetings gave the BMF full backing in everything it has done—even on the still-controversial helmet issue. All riders present were very keen on the new insurance scheme (see page 18) and all but two were firmly against the idea of daytime headlights.

Among the useful feedback to the Federation was the strong feeling that discrimination against motorcyclists in pubs is on the increase, and that riders are finding increasing difficulty in parking in towns in the Midlands area. Bikes are not allowed to use parking meters there even when the limited solo bays are full. Jeff agreed to take up the matter with the relevant councils.

All the riders were glad of the chance of a little two-way communication and are looking forward to the next meeting in the spring.

Bob Osborne's two meetings for the Eastern region on 14 and 15 July recorded similar successes. Both meetings—at Sleaford and Cambridge—were very well attended and again a wide range of topics was discussed. The most notable were in the state of our roads, helmet compulsion (the majority firmly opposed it), rider training, the availability of foreign touring insurance, and the BMF Rally.

Regional meetings are advertised in advance of the weeklies. Individual BMF members as well as clubs are welcome to attend.

## IMAGE BOOST IN CANADA

We note from RoSPA's *Care on the Road* that a group of motorcycle instructors in Saskatchewan has asked the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for airtime to put across the positive side of motorcycling. They are concerned that riders often appear in films and on TV cast as villains, leather-jacketed chain-swinging hoodlums on choppers. This image problem seems to be universal. We wish the Canadians the best of luck in their endeavours. By the way, the July issue of *Care on the Road* was one of several publications drawing attention to the BMF's complaints about the Lucas Dayriding lamp advertisements.

## 10 BMF CAMPING IN NORFOLK

Those Individual Members who turned up early for the camping weekend at Muddesley on the Norfolk coast in June had the pleasure of meeting a group of the North Walsham Motorcycle Club (NWMC) who rode to the campsite on the Friday evening. The NWMC recently had a successful PR exercise with a 'Walsham-on-Wheels' exhibition. One member, Dave Rogerson, turned up on a Grindley Peerless two-stroke which he claims is the only one in existence. (All counter claims to the NWMC please).

The Individual Members group visited Dave Rogerson on the Saturday and were shown his sheds and barns full of motorcycle and car parts, vehicles awaiting restoration and vehicles partly restored. We were shown a beautiful set of girder forks for a Douglas which Dave made out of tubing cut, shaped and welded, and pieces of stainless steel.

Roger Wheeler, another NWMC member, was there with his Scott and borrowed one of Dave's Velocettes to run home to fetch his Silk for us to see. There was hardly enough time to view the boiler and steam engine assembled for a steam launch project Dave has in hand.

A visit to Cromer on the Saturday afternoon and a modest social evening in the Lifeboat and a visit to a windmill on Sunday morning completed a relaxing weekend.

On Saturday afternoon Clive and Mike from the British Motorbike Owners Club (BRIMBO) turned up on a Matchless with the largest tent you would want to carry on a motorcycle—even a Matchless.

Try this area for your next tour. There's plenty to see, a fine 'bracing' climate, and you have every chance of meeting some interesting people as motorcycling is very much alive and well in North Norfolk.

Bill Nicol

## FIGURE OF EIGHT DETAILS

Those members intending taking part in either or both of the loops making up the 'figure of eight' tours in Wales in September will be interested in knowing the meeting places which were not mentioned in the Individual Membership social programme previously published.

The tour of about 70 miles on Saturday, 15 September, is due to start at 10.30 a.m. from the narrow-gauge steam railway station at Llanfair Caereinion, eight miles west of Welshpool. Those wishing to be included in the Sunday run should assemble, also at 10.30. a.m. at the War Memorial, Llangurig village on the A44. More precise details, if required, can be obtained from tour leader Stephen O'Reilly, 4 Llwyn-yr-cos, Southgate, Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

## BIKES AT ROMSEY SHOW

Motorcycles will feature at the Romsey Show on 8 September, a horsey-type event at which the District Road Safety Committee will be taking a stand to put over a theme of motorcycle safety. Clothing and training will be the focus of attention, and the theme is reflected in the adjoining stands by local dealer Romsey Motorcycles. During the day there will be an experienced motorcyclist on hand, road safety officers to explain about the training schemes, plus continuous motorcycle safety films. If you're wondering what bikes are doing in such an unusual setting then it may have something to do with the fact that the District Road Safety Officer is a member of the Velo Owners Club and the vice-chairman a member of the BMF individual membership section! If you're in the area drop in and say hello.

## NEW LINES FROM NORTON

Andover Norton Ltd, which supplies spares for Nortons, Tridents, BSAs and certain other Triumph models, will be at the Earls Court show with four new lines from America.

The first of these is the IBCO range of high-quality gaskets from Long Beach in California; a 48-page catalogue is available at £1. Then there's the Lockhart oil cooler and thermostat kits for most superbikes, again from sunny California.

Andover Norton is also the distributor for the Manx range of American exhaust systems, and £1 gets you a 40-page catalogue. Last but not least will be a range of Goodyear street tyres, due for launch in August. Its all on stand 58 at Earls Court.

## PRIZES FOR KAWASAKI BUYERS

Buyers of Kawasaki Z1000, Z1000ST and Z1-R bikes this summer have a 1 in 35 chance of winning one of 20 Akai Pro 100 hi-fi systems valued at £500 each, in a special £120,000 promotion. Buyers of the KE100, KE125, KH125 and Z200 machines will be presented with a Kawasaki riding kit consisting of oversuit, overmitts and scarf.

In addition, a £750 Akai VHS video recorder and six runner-up prizes of Akai radio cassette recorders are offered in a second competition which is open to everyone. All you have to do is study eight detailed shots of Kawasakis and decide which model is depicted in each. The forms are available now at all Kawasaki dealers and the closing date for entries is 29 September 1979.

As an added bonus, all Kawasakis now carry a full 12 months/unlimited mileage warranty.

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Allow 14 days for delivery. Postage and packing £1.50 on all orders.

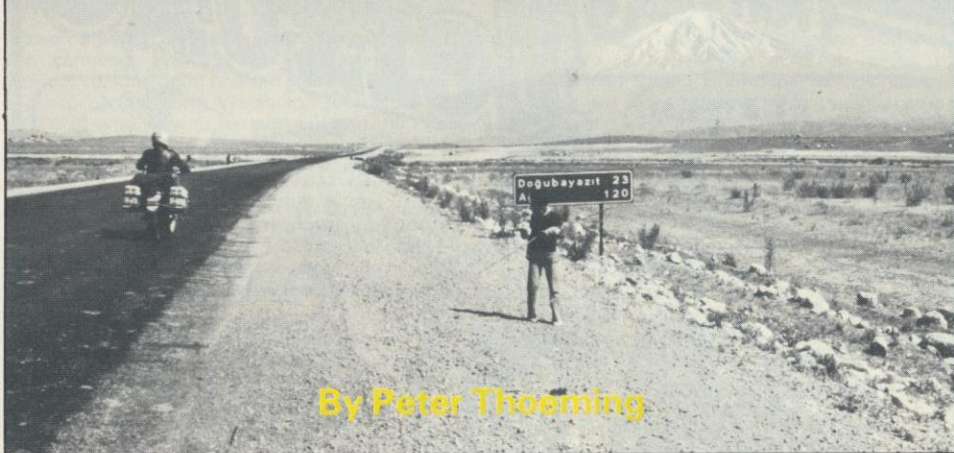
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MCR 9

Made to measure suits 10% extra. Catalogue/Price List 20p refundable on first order.

# TOURING IN ASIA

12



By Peter Thoeming

Despite the current problems in Iran and Afghanistan, the Trans-Asia Highway is still full of bikes—here are a few tips for those of you who may feel like joining them, or even just extending the summer trip to Turkey.

Bike touring in Asia is of course basically the same as anywhere else. The problems remain the same—road conditions, drivers, petrol, a place to sleep, food and repairs. Likewise the positive things—the touring 'buzz', the chance to see the country and the people, and the chance to try different food, drink and customs.

There are, however, differences in degree. Let's take the problems first.

Until you get to Pakistan, the only poor roads you'll see are those in central Turkey. It's wise to listen to lorry drivers or other tourers here and choose detours when necessary. Problems include deep gravel (generally on mountain roads where it's obviously too much trouble to surface them) soft tar which sprays up over you and your bike, and the nemesis of all long-distance tourers—roadworks.

Roads in Iran and Afghanistan are fine, as long as you stick to the main lines of communication. If you want to get off the beaten track, such as taking the central route through Afghanistan, be warned. Roads can disappear completely. Take a compass. I'm not kidding!

Pakistani and Indian roads are pretty bad and practically unusable in the wet season. They are also extremely crowded. Great care is required. Conditions pick up again in South East Asia. Some of the Thai roads especially are excellent.

Asian drivers are all worse than their European counterparts. That may seem like a pretty sweeping statement, but it's the only safe basis on which to think. They are at their worst in Iran, where 'homicidal maniacs' is not too strong a descrip-

tion, and probably at their best in Singapore. But wherever you are—never, never count on right of way, or even on basic road sense. I did, and I've got the scars.

Turkey is the only country where petrol is in seriously short supply. You may have trouble getting it in India as well, but only in Turkey can you wait for three weeks for a delivery to the petrol station you've reached with a dry tank. Take plenty of spare. The actual longest stretch between pumps is the Desert of Death, in Afghanistan, where the two hundred odd miles between Herat and Farrah are quite empty. But you should allow for three hundred at least. No telling when the gas is going to run out at the next town.

Petrol quality is also poorest in Afghanistan, but even high-compression superbikes will run on it—just. We spoke to a chap whose Kawa 1000 was most reluctant to pull when fed with the Afghani cabbage water. Even our XL 250s were a little unhappy. The worst petrol of the trip is likely to be encountered in India or Nepal, however. They stretch it out with water or paraffin, something that the most forgiving bike engine can't handle. Make a point of watching when your tank is filled.

Hotels are your best bet for accommodation right across Asia. Stay away from the big, western-looking ones. The local places may be a bit rough and even dirty, but you'll meet people and live cheaply. There's never any problem finding a place. There'll be kids hanging around the railway or bus station who'll show you. There's no need to tip them, either, they get paid by the hotel.

The hotel will also take care of an absolutely vital point—security for your bike. Leave nothing on the bike at night, and make sure you lock it to something solid. But most hotels will provide inside parking. Our XLs spent time in lobbies,



13

*Facing page: Mount Ararat sits by itself at the eastern edge of the Anatolian highlands. The Turks, like the shepherd in the foreground, are keen cigarette-cadgers. Sometimes, when they don't get any, they get mad enough to start throwing rocks. (Photo: P. Thoeming)*

*Top: It can get very lonely and very dry out in the middle of the desert. Spare water containers are an absolute must. (Photo: P. Thoeming)*

*Below: Peter 'The Bear' Thoeming, looking very suave in his 'Singapore haircut'. It really is true, and not only in Singapore—short hair is better received by the powers-that-be. (Photo: A. P. Burfitt)*



kitchens, spare rooms, and once in Malaysia they spent the night in the hotel clerk's living room. No extra charge.

While we're on security—make sure *everything* locks onto the bike. Remember that you cannot count on leaving your bike in a public spot to deter thieves. Attitudes to theft from foreigners vary greatly. Where Singaporeans, for example, are almost painfully honest, Iranians are rather different. The chap I travelled with caught someone trying to undo his pack in the middle of a busy Teheran footpath—a sizeable crowd was watching, but made no attempt to warn him.

Some good news and some bad news where repairs are concerned. The bad news is that you will almost certainly not be able to buy spares. No foreign bikes at all are imported into India, so no spares. Other countries often get special models, so even if, say, a Honda 125 is available in Pakistan, and you've been insane enough to try the trip on a UK model, the bits may not fit. Don't laugh, by the way. We met a Japanese chap who'd done the trip on a Yamaha DT125.

Carry cables and electrical bits, as well as a chain. But you know best what is likely to go on your own bike. Don't trust in providence! There's nothing worse than sitting in some godforsaken hole, watching your money run out and waiting for that clutch cable to clear customs after being sent all the way from the UK at great cost.

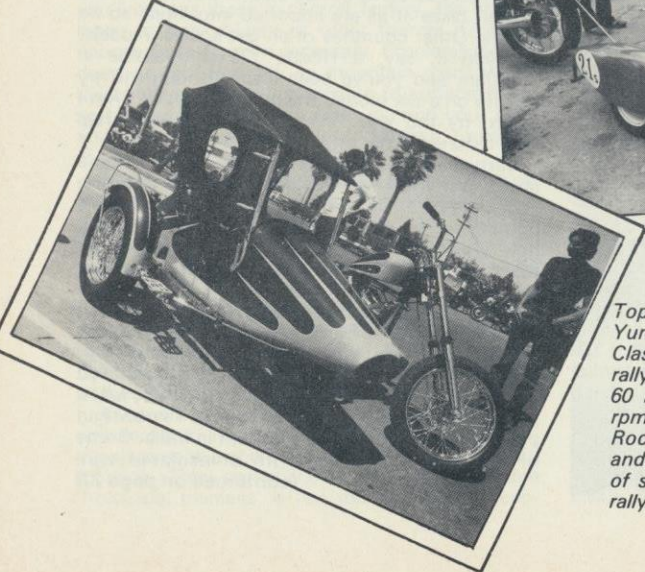
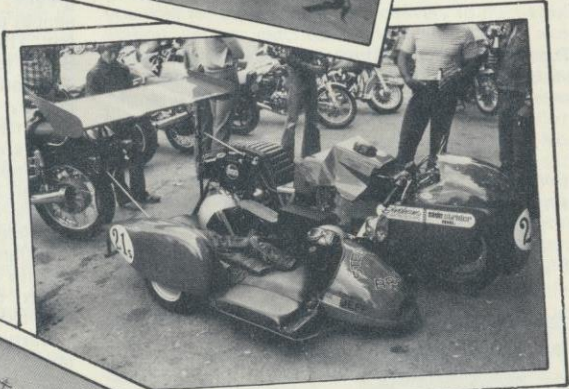
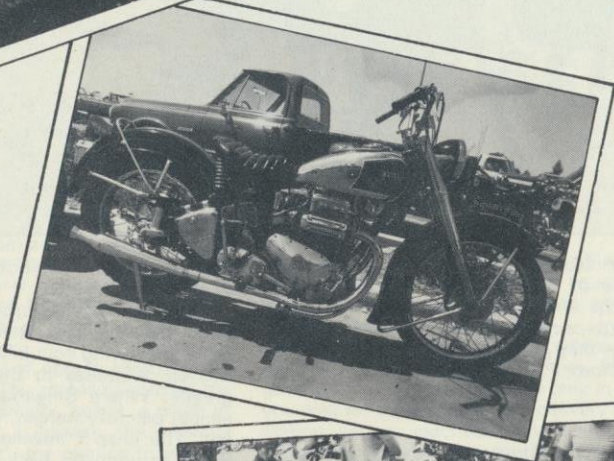
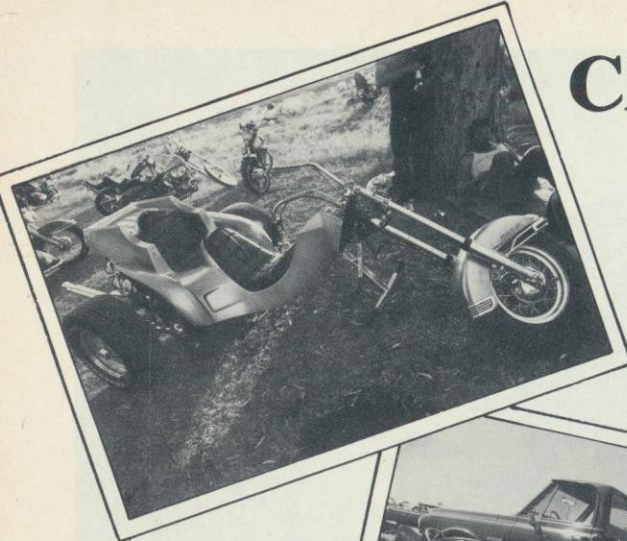
The good news is that Asian workshops, having had to 'make do' so much more than their Western counterparts, are true geniuses at improvising, and rates are very low. But watch the work. You never know when their improvising might be just a little bit too daring for you. Someone I know had their bike rewired after an accident in India. Some of the work was done with uninsulated wire

(continued on page 27)

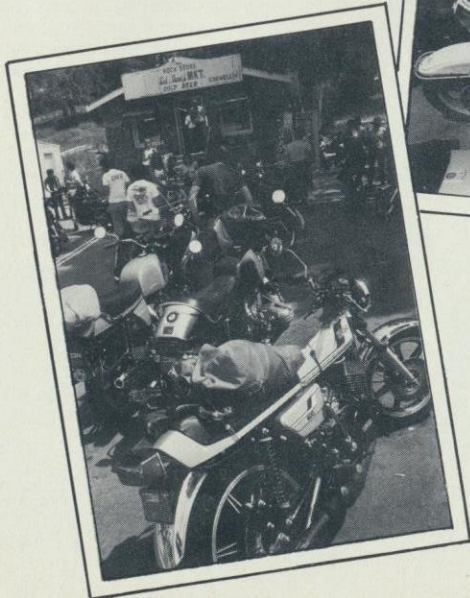
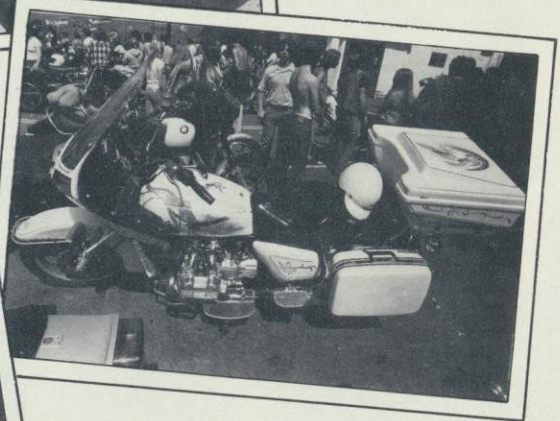
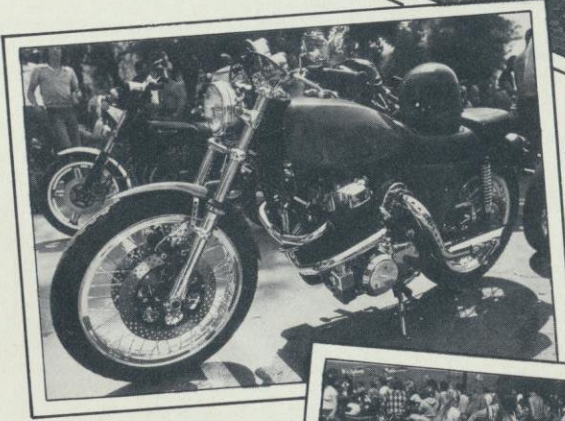
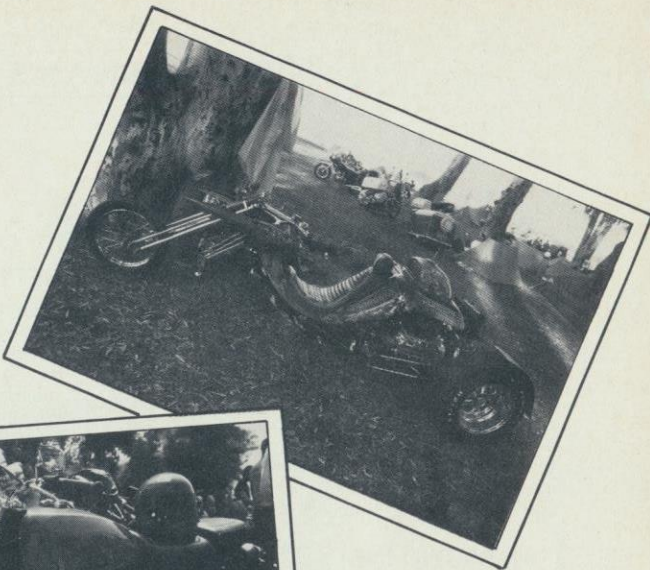


# CALIFORNIA CUSTOMS

Steve Boom in California spent a month last Spring. Here is a small selection of what he found there...



Top to bottom: One of several trikes on the Yuma Prison Run; this Ariel Square 4 at the Classic and Antique Motorcycle Association rally in Reedley, California, pulls wheelies at 60 mph in second gear and revs to 7,000 rpm!; this 750cc Honda kneeler outfit at the Rock Store in the Hollywood Hills is owned and ridden on the street by two LA cops; one of several hand-built sidecars at the CAMA rally.



Top to bottom: Porsche-engined trike at Yuma; Steve tells us that this turbocharged Honda four stood head and shoulders above all the machines at the Rock Store. The black engine, red paintwork, and superb chrome plating were all faultless; when it comes to two-wheeled obscenities the Americans win hands down—look at that topbox!; the Rock Store attracts several hundred bikes every Sunday morning, and Steve reckons it's a must for visiting European riders.

# 16 YOU AIN'T SEEN NUTHIN' YET!

In the dozen or so years that I have been involved with the BMF there has been a steady, unspectacular growth. From a modest 25 clubs we are now knocking on the door of 200 and from less than 1,000 individual members we have progressed to well in excess of 2,000. Never has the BMF been better supported or better served. Yet I feel that we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg. In the next year or so we are poised to grow into the strong, healthy major organisation that motorcycling deserves. Okay, so we already qualify for these descriptions. You ain't seen nuthin' yet.

## FANTASTIC INSURANCE SCHEME

We are attacking motorcycling's problems on every front and at long last the motorcycling press has begun to realise that there is more to the BMF than merely running one of the biggest rallies in the world. As a result we are getting a better crack of the whip and, combined with greater advertising, members are really beginning to flow in. Once the insurance scheme is seen to be as good as we know that it is then that flow is going to turn into a torrent. Galling, in a way, for those who have been with us through the bad times that the only reason people join the BMF is to get a better insurance deal, but we need the strength that their numbers can give and once we have them in the fold we are half way to educating them about not only what they can get out of motorcycling but what they can put into it.

Yes, I am excited about the new insurance scheme and I'm entitled to be. Geoff Pedlar, our insurance adviser, has worked long and hard to win this one and if you see him at a club event then buy him a drink—you'll be able to afford it out of the money that you will have saved.

*Bruce Preston, BMF chairman, being interviewed by Simon Bobin for Talking Bikes which goes out on 1 September on ITV. Matthew Prestige looks on.*



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Then there is our regional representation progress. Throughout the summer there has been a series of meetings around the country where clubs have had the opportunity to get to know the guy who speaks for them at Executive level. By the time meetings have been held in the North Midlands, South East, South West, and East Midlands something like 200 or more club officials will have quizzed the BMF about the way it is going. For our part we will have learned a great deal about the way you think we should be going. It is that old two-way communication thing again and it works. If you are a clubman then most likely your area representative will have asked your club along to put *your* views. If you didn't bother to come then it is no use moaning that the BMF is 'out of touch'. I can assure you that we are far from it.

We still have one or two gaps in our regional representation jig-saw. We are doing our best to fill them but it is no use to anyone to just put up a front man. Until we get someone who has the experience and ability to genuinely represent the clubs then we'll have to stretch the talent that we have a bit thinner. Give us time though, for we are really on the move and our kind of progress always attracts talented people.

## AGONISING DECISION

On a more personal note I am about to treat myself to a new bike for the first time in my life and, do you know, I am agonising over the decision just as I did over my first secondhand bike when I was 16. You would think that a chap who has ridden just about every bike on the market and who is 'on the inside' would be clear-cut in his choice, wouldn't you? Which is what makes it such a fascinating sport to be a part of. By the time you read this the decision will have been made. Now all I have to do is to find the time to ride it.

Bruce Preston



# Meisterschaft.



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## BMF INSURANCE: FULL DETAILS

18 It has been for many years our sincerely held belief that members of the BMF, whether individual or club, generally represented a better insurance risk than the motorcycling population in total; this we believe continues and will continue to be the case. This belief formed the basis on which we set forth into an insurance world cool to the idea of actually encouraging motorcycle business, certainly among those who were already active in this field.

We also required our policy to incorporate other features often not found in conventional policies, and certainly not combined together into one contract. These were all covered in our original specification, included no-claim discounts, all engine capacities, and agreed value. Persistence, has however, won us the day because, after several offerings that appeared initially to be encouraging but subsequently failed under close scrutiny, we were introduced to a Lloyds broker/underwriter combination (by a BMF member, of course!) that saw much merit in our original hypothesis.

The broker concerned has considerable experience of 'club', 'one-make', 'manufacturers' and similar schemes with which they have had worthwhile success—and let's not be altruistically naive: the underwriter is there to make money. It is, however, a compliment to us if he thinks he can do so with us and at the same time offer a general package that we also regard as favourable and attractive.

The main features of our new policy are outlined below. If you think you could be interested in a quotation complete the form opposite (or a photocopy if you wish) and send it to Direct Insurance Services as shown, preferably reasonably in advance of your renewal date. Only BMF members need apply, but do NOT send your membership card; this will be requested later.

The policy will be underwritten by The Beacon Motor Syndicate at Lloyds and will be available to BMF members through Direct Insurance Services Ltd. The main features of the policy are as follows.

**The Cover.** Comprehensive; Third Party, Fire and Theft; and Third Party only options will be available without restrictions on age of rider or make of capacity of machine, subject to normal underwriting requirements. A multi-bike facility will also be available at the cost of the highest-rated vehicle for the rider, plus a nominal premium raised against the total value of the schedule to cover fire and theft risks while the remainder are not in use.

A separate agreed value element at a fixed premium (currently £5) may be added for the machine or machines which are the subject of the policy. (Certification of the proposed value will be required.) Other riders in addition to the policyholder may also be named on the policy, but a multi-bike multi-rider policy combination may not be arranged. This is because the multi-bike feature assumes that the policyholder can only ride one machine at a time.

**The Premium.** Premium rates depend upon the make and size of machine in the conventional manner, but account is taken of those machines in each given capacity group that perform significantly differently to the average for the group. This amounts to identifying motorcycles that produce more or less horsepower than would generally be expected; thus, for example, riders with a less powerful 650 cc machine will benefit, but riders with a more powerful 250cc machine will pay a higher rate. A range of discounts much wider than is normally offered by insurers will also be available. These are:

1. No-claims Bonus (NCB) scale 15%, 20%, 30% and 40%
2. Proficiency certificate holders 15%
3. Motorcycle over 10 years old 10%
4. British manufactured motorcycle 10%
5. Sidecar permanently attached 50%
6. Acceptance of a voluntary £100 excess in lieu of the normal £25 15% (this applies only to comprehensive cover).

If this outline sounds attractive to you and you are a BMF member, then send for a quotation, but remember that in due course your membership card will be required.

## MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE SCHEME

### FOR MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH MOTORCYCLISTS FEDERATION

Name:  
Address:

Age:

Make & Model	c.c.	Year	Value	Sidecar YES/NO
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Length of riding:

Date test passed:

Convictions other than  
speeding/parking

Accidents past 5 years:

COVER: Comprehensive   
 Third Party Fire & Theft   
 Third Party Only

Number of years claim-free insurance

Policy contains £25 excess. Would you like to bear  
 additional voluntary £75 excess — 15% discount? YES/NO

Do you hold a proficiency certificate? YES/NO

If insurance to include any additional  
 driver, please supply information.

Send this form to: **BMF Insurance Scheme,**  
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**SEND FOR A QUOTE TODAY!**

# SW

## SUSPENSION

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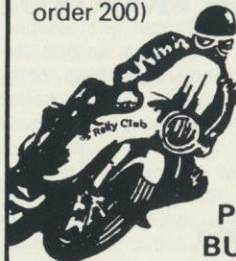
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# Clubroom

## SUZUKI OWNERS' AGM DATE

The annual general meeting of the Suzuki Owners Club will be held at the Cross Keys, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire, on 7 October at 11 a.m. Camping is available, and a cooked lunch can be provided if required. All members are requested to attend.

Meanwhile the club's 1979 Invader Rally takes place of 1/2 September at Hay-on-Wye, South Wales. Tickets cost £2 each from rally organiser Dave Cantrill, Greenbank, Newland, Coleford, Glos. Pre-booking is essential, and in addition to 250 badges being available on site, there will be a beer tent, disco, and the usual competitions.

We also learn from former SoC editor Ken Smith that the Magnificent 7 stunt team now belongs to the Club and as such they are also BMF members. Now we can boast of two display teams in the BMF, since the Imps have been affiliated for some time.

## ARIEL OWNERS IN BRISTOL

The Bristol branch of the Ariel Owners MCC now meets every second Friday in the month at 8 p.m. in The Star at Ashton Gate, opposite the City ground.

## PRE-BOOK DECCA RALLY

In MCR 43 we gave brief details of the first Deccalian Rally, organised by the Decca Motor Cycle Club. It takes place from 12 to 14 October at the Decca Sports and Social Club sports ground, Kingston Road, Tolworth, Surrey. Decca secretary Keith Vater tells us that prospective rallygoers must pre-book for camping and to take part in the 10-mile road-riding course, but no pre-booking is required for field events on the Saturday. For full details write to Keith at 22a De'arn Gardens, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3AY.

## AWARD FOR 7500-MILE TOUR

Each year the International Motorcyclists Tour Club makes an award at its AGM to the member or members who in the opinion of the club committee have made the most interesting, unusual or meritorious foreign tour in the previous season. This year the award—the Jock West Trophy—went to Duncan Anderson of Cavendish, Sudbury, Suffolk.

Duncan and girl friend Zully took a 1974 BMW R75/5 on a three-month, 7500-mile tour which was meant to be a circumnavigation of the Mediterranean Sea, but unfortunately Colonel Gaddafi had other ideas. Nevertheless the intrepid duo visited Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Cyprus and Egypt. During the

trip two tyres and two wheel rims were destroyed by percussion damage. Otherwise there were no problems—a really fine effort in difficult touring terrain.

Runner-up awards were presented to Tony Evans for an overland trip to India and to Colin Jermy who rode an elderly Bee Emm from South Africa through the bush to Mombassa. It all makes those idyllic summer holiday trips to France seem a little bit tame, doesn't it?

## CAMPITES FIGHT GOES ON

The BMF is still pursuing the problem of discrimination against motorcyclists on campsites. Geoff Wilson is still having talks with the National Federation of Site Operators and is confident of reaching an understanding on the matter. In the meantime, the British Tourist Authority has concluded that there is no real problem, claiming that motorcyclists should learn to accept life's restrictions! The RAC says it can do no more than insist that all its approved sites accept motorcyclists.

## GOT A BRITISH TRIPLE?

Tim Smithells of Crowborough in East Sussex is trying to start a club for owners of Tridents and Rocket 3s 'on the principle that a machine in a class by itself needs a club of its own'. This sounds like an excellent idea for those whose favourite tippie is the British triple. Interested? Then write to Tim at Garden Cottage, Bassetts, Mark Cross, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3PE enclosing an s.a.e. and he will send details of membership and what the club has to offer.

## CAR FERRY TO ULSTER

Thinking of a trip to Northern Ireland? Then you should know that Townsend Thoresen runs a car ferry from Cairnryan in Scotland to Larne. The fare is £3.10 for a bike and £3.55 for the rider, with a crossing time of two hours.

## WYVERN CLUB'S DEVON RALLY

The 1979 Devon Rally, organised by the Wyvern Motor Cycle Touring Club, takes place on 7, 8 and 9 September at Fullabrook Farm near Ilfracombe. The site is signposted off the A361 Barnstaple-to-Ilfracombe road. There will be a disco on the Saturday night, a bar and catering, all the usual awards and events, plus special prizes according to rallyists' ticket numbers. Pre-booking is preferable, so send £2 (price includes rally badge) and an s.a.e. to Dick Powell, Uplands, Down Lane, Braunton, Devon.

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# RALLY TIME IN

22 With the Isle of Man celebrating 1,000 years of parliamentary government, and Mike Hailwood saying that 1979 was definitely the last time he would be racing in the TT, this year just about the biggest crowd ever flocked to the Island for the TT racing fortnight.

Each year there seem to be more and more ancillary events taking place to keep the motorcycling visitor happy and contented and among these activities are the traditional rallies. With such a social whirl, we made a brave attempt to attend as many of these functions as possible and found that four per day was the maximum. So as usual that meant we could not get round to every one.

On 'Mad Sunday' we fought our way through incredible congestion at Niabyl Bay to visit the gatherings of Velocettes and Vincents organised by their respective clubs. Both these events were very well supported by the riders of these marques with at least 50 of each seen in the enclosures at any one time. Both events were informal preludes to more ambitious social events later in the week, so there were no prizes. Just the chance to have a



Sunshine at the Velo gathering.

natter and look around the bikes. And new for this year at Niabyl was the chance to buy spares from an autojumble stall which was well stocked with an attractive selection of bits and pieces for British bikes.

Further down the coast at Peel on the same day, Ariel owners were descending upon the promenade and assembling an interesting collection of machines. This gathering was an informal one made all the more pleasant by the warm sunshine. There were at least 50 machines standing in the enclosure when we left with more coming all the while. And the reason for leaving this event was to attend yet another—the Ducati Owners' rally at Glen Maye.

This club has recently joined the BMF, we are pleased to say, and organised a very pleasant gathering of riders in the somewhat crowded car park at Glen Maye. With so many Ducatis attending this event, a securely roped-off part of the car



V-twins in abundance at the Ducati Owners' rally.

park is needed now so that one's enjoyment at looking at Ducatis is not spoiled by other makes of machine getting in the way. However, despite the difficulties, there was a choose-for-yourself type *concours*, but it was not possible for the results to be announced on the day. All in all, the organisers were well pleased with their gathering which had an international appeal.

On Tuesday of race week, rallies and other events of one sort or the other take place all over the Island. In the morning, we went to the Yamaha Owners' Club gathering in the grounds of Rushen Abbey. These salubrious surroundings were a most convenient spot for the event which was made all the more successful thanks to Mitsui (who provided prizes) and the general enterprise of the club which even had its own control caravan. There were various reasons for giving away prizes such as a *concours*, Long Distance award, vote-for-your-favourite bike contest etc. About 400 riders supported this event which the club hope to hold again next year.

After spending an hour or so among some of the most modern machines on two wheels, we then stepped back in time and moved to a venue at Maughold, just north of Laxey to visit a gathering of AJS and Matchless machines. There were

Yamaha Owners' first Island gathering was a big success.



# THE ISLE OF MAN



About 50 impeccable machines graced the AJS/Matchless event.

about 50 specimens in the car park at the Glen Mona Hotel, some of which looked as good as the day they left Plumstead. Although the skies remained rather dark, rain did not fall on this nostalgic machinery which reminded one of days when life was not so complicated. And it was only 10 years back when the Isle of Man was so full of British machinery of this type that nostalgia never entered into the proceedings!

The glitter of AJS and Matchless was followed by a visit to the Honda Rally at Laxey that same afternoon by way of yet further contrast. Needless to say, this event was well supported by some 500 machines and riders, although most seemed to be dispersed along the promenade. The weather was now fine and sunny and the Honda Club seemed well pleased with its supporters even though they had hoped that Honda UK could have provided some special items for display. However, there was ample opportunity to give away some prizes for the best bikes in the *concours*, furthest distances travelled etc; in fact there were six activities taking place that carried a prize. The prizes were presented by the Chairman of the

The BSA Owners' rally was one of the best on the Island.



Laxey Village Commissioners who spent some while at the rally looking at the machines on display. 23

In the evening we made our way to Glen Helen to visit the BMW Club's social gathering. This year, the usual crowds were back and we are tempted to add that Fred Secker was back as the organiser as well, so perhaps the two are related. As before you couldn't move in the car park for BMWs, and equally crowded conditions prevailed inside the ballroom. Entertainment was provided by a pop group and there was also a popular raffle. Outside, the well known gnats were biting all those who preferred to sip beer in the open and natter to their friends.

All this socialising was interrupted by racing on Wednesday, (damned inconsiderate, really!—Ed) but rallies resumed on Thursday. We went off to Peel in the morning to see the Vintage Club's event develop, with entrants assembling on the promenade before going for a spin round the original TT course and back to Douglas.

There were over 100 machines lined up in the bright sunshine amid throngs of interested visitors.



Vintage Club members assembled over 100 machines at Peel.

Among the entrants was the rider of an Ariel combination of the late 1920s whose appearance was so befitting his machine that it seemed as if time had stood still. But as far as vintage machines are concerned, during TT week one sees them in everyday use once more, thus adding to the general atmosphere of the proceedings.

On Thursday afternoon we paid a visit to the BSA Club's rally at Mooragh Park, Ramsey. This was a well supported event organised by the Birmingham branch of the club. There was a dazzling array of machines on display, some of which had come from abroad. Included in the afternoon's proceedings was the usual *concours* and a raffle, but by way of a change, visiting BSA riders could also have a free pen and a meal in the Park cafe. Once again, the BSA Club succeeded in running a very pleasant event in ideal surroundings and fortunately blessed with fine weather. A.E.



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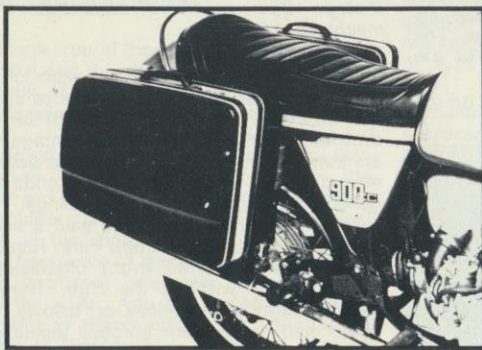
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## FOG LAMPS: ARE WE LOSING OUT?

Geoff Wilson investigates

On 28 September 1978 a new law within the Road Traffic Act, entitled 'The Road Vehicles (Rear Fog Lamps) Regulations 1978', came into operation. Little reference has been made to the regulations in these pages because it is stipulated that 'the requirements specified in paragraph 1 of these regulations shall not apply to vehicles having less than four wheels and having an overall width which does not exceed 1.3 metres'.

Hence there is no doubt that motorcycles are excluded from the requirements of this regulation, though sidecar outfits exceeding 1.3 metres in width are included. This we have explained previously, but since 1 October this year is the date after which all vehicles within the regulations must be manufactured with a high-intensity rear light or lights (in a matched pair), it is now time we took a longer, harder look at the implications of the regulations.

Rear fog lamps have not been commonplace accessories for very many years, yet today the majority of new vehicles coming onto our roads are legally bound to have them fitted. We have been pushed from one extreme to the other in a matter of years, assisted by the strong safety lobby which in its wisdom has deduced that a high-intensity light can be seen at a greater distance in 'fog' than can a standard tail lamp, and no doubt by the manufacturers of lighting accessories who for obvious reasons find it advantageous to manufacture equipment to meet legal requirements rather than simply to satisfy the gadget-minded.

I don't think the voting, vehicle-driving public ever demanded the introduction of this law but we have not noticed a great outcry against it either. The extra £20 or so it will add to the price of a vehicle is neither here nor there. The majority of them will not have realised yet that the law even exists, much less the extra responsibility it places on them to use the lamps, along with dipped headlamps, in bad visibility. They may just happen to use those 'brighter' lights fitted to their new cars after 1 October, and there again they may not, because so many drivers never progress beyond the stage of thinking that lights are for 'seeing by', not for 'being seen by', as well.

I further query exactly what the attachment of higher intensity rear lights achieves. Granted, they can be seen at a greater distance in bad visibility than can normal tail lamps, but does that simply mean that traffic has a licence to travel faster in fog, snow, or spray because vehicles up front will be seen sooner, so allowing a greater slowing-down distance? Or does government in its naivety assume that traffic will travel at the same speed as it did before rear fog lamps became universal (well almost) and so get a real advantage from these lamps. I don't think drivers are like that and have seen no proof that rear fog lamps prevent accidents.

The regulation is not retrospective, hence for

some years there will be vehicles on our roads which legally need not display high-intensity rear lamps, and that includes all motorcycles, including new ones to be manufactured in the foreseeable future. So we have been legislated into a situation of non-uniformity on the road which may well lead to more accidents because:

- a driver or rider may be tempted to travel faster because he is seeing other traffic sooner, so requiring a stopping distance which increases disproportionately with speed;
- a driver or rider will be faced with having to decide if the lights ahead are high intensities at 100 yards or normal tail lamps at 50 yards. A wrong decision could be fatal;
- the law will be as unenforceable as that requiring dipped headlights in bad visibility. There is no sharp division between good and bad visibility, and in fact a commonly used maxim is that if you need to use windscreen wipers then switch on your dipped headlights—and now presumably rear fog lamps as well. Do we expect any police officer to be sufficiently certain that even on wet days visibility may still be too good for rear fog lamp use, and indeed that their use in such circumstances may cause danger from dazzle, especially to motorcyclists with wet visors or goggles. We suspect that road users will be allowed to err on the side of 'safety' and that means using high-intensity rear lamps when visibility is getting bad (but is technically still good) rather than the other way round. So dazzle could be a constant danger from now on.

Daytime headlight use by motorcycle riders is a means of taking responsibility from the other road user at whom the light is directed, likewise with high-intensity rear lights: Standard-size clean lights are visible at reasonable distances if speeds are adjusted accordingly and there seems no doubt that when the majority of vehicles show high-intensity lamps in bad visibility speeds will be increased and the drivers not using high-intensity units will be the losers, though legally so.

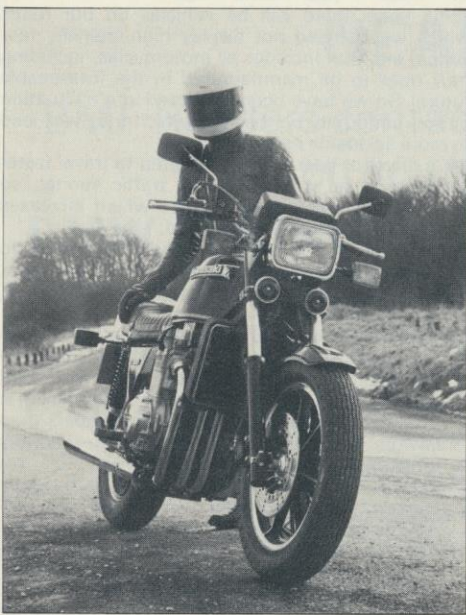
When questioned as to the reason for excluding motorcycles from the new legislation some of the country's most 'respected' figures in road safety have assumed that it is because of the inability of some motorcycles to generate the electricity to power so many lights. Very thoughtful of them isn't it? But if the law makes us more vulnerable can we afford to accept it. If the regulation causes a 2% decrease in car and HGV accidents in fog, and a 1% increase in motorcycle accidents, then overall the authorities will be happy, but motorcyclists will appear to be the 'outlaws' again and there will be another excuse to legislate us off the roads completely. Having said that, I must reiterate that I have yet to see proof that high-intensity rear lamps reduce accidents anyway.

(continued on page 27)

# THE THOUSANDS

Bruce Preston rides the Kawasaki Z1300

26



The Kawasaki 1300 was, you may recall, along with the Honda CBX, the bike that started the furore last year. The Germans unaccountably decided that any motorcycle over 100 bhp was just too much and 'persuaded' the world's manufacturers that a voluntary agreement to limit the power output of motorcycles to 100 bhp would be a good idea. In consequence if you buy a Big K in Germany it will have slightly smaller carburettors and no really noticeable drop in performance.

You see, the Kawasaki 1300 as available in the UK is the real McCoy but in practical terms it is as manageable and docile as any superbike that I have ever tried. To imagine that by imposing a daft 100 bhp restriction it somehow becomes a safer bike is to display a complete lack of understanding of the subject in the first place.

The weather couldn't have been worse when I first met the 1300. I had travelled down to the New Forest to ride the bike for Southern TV's Talking Bikes programme and it was as foul a day as we have had this year. If I recall rightly something like two-and-a-half inches of rain fell in the area and if the big Kawasaki was 'unmanageable' this was the place to find out. It was beautiful. The massive weight was a positive advantage in the circumstances, almost forcing the water from under the tyres, the triple disc brakes brushed aside the water with ease and the sheer solidity of the bike created its own air of confidence.

Power from those well-muted six cylinders came through with a silky flow rather than with a rush,

less than half the available revs being more than enough to cope with traffic conditions. As a rare treat the tachometer needle could be slid up to 6,000 rpm. Then it was really all happening. Oh yes, this was fast, incredibly fast but the bike did it with safety, its power coming in manageable and enjoyable surges. The exhaust note rarely rose above a subdued gurgle, the traditional six-cylinder howl being well silenced until the full potential of the engine was used. The times when this is going to be possible can be counted on one hand, though.

As we would expect from a six-cylinder water-cooled motorcycle it was bristling with clever ideas: self-cancelling indicators, fuel gauge, really good mirrors, superb brakes, a massive six-gallon fuel tank, a centre stand that was still usable despite the bike's 700lb plus bulk, and an array of warning lights that tell the experienced rider a multitude of things he probably knows already! Top speed of the bike, one of the largest in the world, was a hypothetical 130-or-more mph but its real asset was its effortless ability to cruise at whatever speed its rider asked of it.

Of course, in this day and age it really is like taking a sledge-hammer to crack a nut but as long as people want to buy a bike of this calibre then why should it be a problem? It seems that the days are gone for ever when motorcycling was something simple and uncomplicated but if they *must* be complicated then the Kawasaki 1300 certainly points the way it can be done.

It was really a very pleasant motorcycle to ride, far better than its bulk suggests it should be and, returning a low of 41 mpg and a high of 48, it was no more thirsty than many similar bikes around. It was not perfect of course, but any criticism that I would make has more to do with concept than execution. It *is* too heavy. Agreed that the weight disappears once the mass is rolling, but I think I would hesitate to manoeuvre a bike of this weight plus a passenger and holiday luggage for both aboard some of the cross-channel ferries of my acquaintance. Surely that is the real strength of a bike like this and its weight detracts from that strength?

That apart I really liked it, it handled well for a tourer (only a fool would play racers on a bike like this) it was comfortable, exciting, imposing and, above all safe. I still do not understand how I could enjoy a bike of this nature so much but enjoy it I did.

As an added bonus, come the winter you will own the biggest hot water bottle in the world! I am not sure that I would buy a Kawasaki 1300 but as long as manufacturers have the imagination to create such machines then I think that they should do so without interference. The market will decide whether it is a good buy, not our legislators or safety freaks.



## Fog lamps

(continued from page 25)

I see it as something of an anomaly that on the one hand we are being advised to use dipped headlights at all times, even in good visibility, yet on the other we are legally excluded from this recent piece of conspicuity dictatorship. It just does not add up. It is as if motorists need to be told that we might run into them, but we are expendable enough to not have the reverse compliment paid.

If you think that the answer to the problem is to join the majority (as eventually it will be) and fit a rear fog lamp yourself, then remember that although motorcycles are exempt from the general regulations they *are* required to meet the requirements of the 'provisions as to the fitting of rear fog lamps on all vehicles' (Regulation 7), stating that no part of the illuminating area of a rear fog lamp must be within 100mm (4 inches) of any part of the illuminating area of a stop lamp; and that no rear fog lamp must be fitted so that it can be illuminated by the application of the vehicle's braking system.

The lack of generator capacity on smaller machines is a very real problem and must be considered before attaching any electrically powered accessories.

Furthermore, having fitted the lamps we are then bound by the provisions as to the use of rear fog lamps, themselves rather dubious but stated as follows: 'No rear fog lamp with which a motor vehicle or trailer is equipped shall be used on the road except during such conditions adversely affecting visibility (whether consisting of or including fog, smoke, heavy rain, or spray, snow, dense cloud, or any similar condition) as to seriously reduce the ability of the driver (after appropriate use by him of any windscreen wiper and washer) to see other vehicles or persons on the road, or the ability of other users of the road to see the vehicle; and when the vehicle is in motion, or during an enforced stoppage of the vehicle.' Now you are as wise as the police officers.

As motorcyclists we are now in a quandary. We have been legislated into a disadvantageous position with respect to other road users, yet left with the means to make ourselves equal by fitting rear fog lamps if the design of our machine allows it.

It has been suggested that for the BMF to push for equality with the vehicles on this issue would be to jeopardise our arguments against full-time headlamp use. In this unreasonable world that may be so, but personally I am happy to ride without a headlight on in daytime, just like most other road users, but I doubt if I will be happy to ride without a rear fog lamp in bad visibility when the majority of other road users will be using them and be expected to be using them. And I will be rather agitated that I will have to fit my own when other road user groups will have them fitted for them at the factories. Although if the factory fitted them no doubt it would be in a position which would hinder the fitting of a rear carrier or pannier.

## Touring Asia

(continued from page 13)

wrapped in paper. Need I explain what happened in the next shower?

All the previous rambling might sound a little off-putting, but don't be dismayed. It's all well worth it. Being invited over by an Iranian family for tea and melons, talking to a grave old Afghani shepherd over a cup of chai in a dingy teahouse, or getting drunk with Thai soldiers on the beach at Songkhla are all irreplaceable experiences. And there are so many more.

There's also the countryside. Surely the Kabul Gorge is the most impressive bit of road I've ever seen, and the Himalayas on a clear morning have to be seen to be believed.

Food is especially good in Turkey and Malaysia. You can buy Guinness in the latter place, too! One word of warning. Tummy bugs are almost inevitable. Our bodies are too thoroughly protected to have the ability to fight some of the bugs they encounter in Asia. So go to your doctor before you leave and get him to prescribe a few things for you.

Vital among the contents of your first aid kit will be the following:

- A diahorroea cure. You'll get the runs, sure as death and taxes, and they make bike riding difficult at best;
- A constipation cure. Being blocked up is not as potentially embarrassing as the runs, but just as uncomfortable;
- Water purifying tablets. For every bit of water you drink;
- A *good* antiseptic cream. Untreated cuts or scrapes can become seriously infected within hours;
- A course of a broad-spectrum antibiotic. You never know what you'll pick up.

I hope I haven't put anyone off the trip, but then it isn't always fun, or even safe. But it's one adventure I wouldn't have missed for all the tea in China. In fact, I'm going to North Africa this winter—I'll let you know how that goes!

Filling up in the Khyber Pass.



27



28 Stop the bickering

I belong to both the BMF and MAG and I'm sick to death of the continuing 'them and us' campaign. One of the charms of motorcycling is the individuality of the members of the movement—let us not forget this. You don't have to like the people, or their style, only the machines and the riding thereof.

If it hadn't been for the helmet law I don't suppose any motorcycling organisation would have grown to the size of either MAG or BMF and for these 'giants' to bicker, especially in public, must give the 'anti'-brigade the laugh of a lifetime.

The aim is to further motorcycling and to gain acceptance as responsible citizens and road-users, an aim which is not helped by the Press which only publishes pictures of the morons in either organisation. Educate these (or degenerate them?) and accept that sometimes different views on different actions are inevitable and it will help to convince us members that we are really fighting for motorcycling, and not for 'them or us'.

Nicky Heming, Somersham, Suffolk.

*I agree with you, Nicky, but it's not quite that simple. The BMF had been fighting the idea of helmet compulsion for 11 years before it became law in 1973. At that time the Federation was some 20,000 strong and while we now number more than 30,000 you will see that the BMF was a sizeable organisation before the helmet law was introduced. Immediately before the Parliamentary vote on the issue, a BMF member, Dennis Howard, and John Ebbrell (now deceased but at that time a staffman on Motor Cycle) asked the BMF to help organise a protest meeting in London's Aldwych, which we did. Parliament paid no real notice to the storm of protest and passed the helmet law on to the statute books. Subsequently, some of those at the rally formed the Motorcycle Action Group to attempt to repeal the helmet law. MAG chose to go its own way and that is its prerogative. It puts an awful lot of effort into helmet repeal with little success. The BMF, while still opposed most vehemently to the helmet law on principle, has taken the advice of its members in annual general meeting and concentrated on what we see as more relevant problems: insurance, type approval, green roads, discrimination at campsites and pubs, rider training, power limits, and a whole host of threats to motorcycling. I think it's only fair to claim enormous success in this, and we will continue to act in the best interests of motorcycling wherever it is threatened. In practical terms the helmet law is less of a threat to motorcycling than to the freedom of every individual in Britain, and if MAG wishes to spend the next five years fighting it then we wish them luck. No doubt both groups will continue to exist and go about defending motorcycling in their own separate ways. —P.R.*

Holiday insurance pitfalls

I have just joined the BMF and this morning received my copy of MCR 43. The work of the BMF appeals to me and it was encouraging to see the positive efforts being made in respect of motorcycle insurance.

What prompts me to write, however, is another aspect of insurance. Last year, well before leaving for a motorcycling holiday in France, I applied for an 'all-in-one' holiday policy with General Accident through my insurance broker who also arranged my motorcycle green card. The certificate of insurance arrived about a week before departure.

I read the small print and was surprised to discover that the policy excluded any liability for injuries caused as a result of a motorcycle accident. My broker apologised for the omission and advised that I could obtain a policy without the above exclusion through Lloyds, but because of the time involved the certificate could not be sent to me before departure.

I duly went on holiday with the assurance of my broker that I was fully covered. After an accident-free holiday I returned to find that the Lloyds policy also excluded some liability in respect of motorcycling accidents. I enclose the Lloyds policy for your reference and hope that you can bring this pitfall to the attention of members who may be contemplating similar insurance.

R. B. Jeavons,  
London N16.

*Thanks for the advice. It looks as if the RAC personal accident policy (see page 5) is worth considering for riders who want this type of cover. —P.R.*

European noise levels

A member sometimes passes your magazine to me, and news about noise levels and the Community Council in MCR 41 has prompted this letter.

So my old 500 would have to emit not more than 85 dBA from its single pot if it were built today, but four pots each would be given the advantage of the decreased back pressure. But we are talking about noise and that surely should be related to cylinder size or to swept volume, thus relating all engines to some sort of equality.

Certainly you will not hear my motorcycle alongside a farm tractor or a heavy diesel lorry or an outboard speedboat or chain—saws or, dare I say it, the mass of aeroplanes that pass overhead taking important politicians to their international talk sessions. I suppose the position from which the decibel count is taken has been determined? I love silence in machinery and I wish my MSS Velo could be as quiet as the LE, though pedestrians may not hear me coming then.

In the matter of powerbikes, I presume the

legislators ride in Minis. If you think you have some power to improve their doubtful knowledge of both power and noise emission, I hope you will spare no exertion to accomplish this. Meantime I regret my inability to meet your deadline for inclusion of this letter in your next issue, but the reason is obvious from the opening sentence, and having passed my three score years and ten I am disinclined to extend my membership of organisations, though my interest in activity remains as indeed I hope it may for some years yet.

Edward M. Blundell,  
Ferry-side, Dyfed.

*Many thanks for your letter, Mr Blundell. I'm afraid I have had to hang on to it—and others—for some time due to the tremendous pressure on space in the letters pages, and I'm still some way off my one score and ten! You'll note from the news story on page 2 that we have made our point on powerbikes quite successfully to the legislators. —P.R.*

No science in underwriting?

I had always believed that insurance underwriting was a very scientific procedure but have been sadly disillusioned recently. I had a home and personal insurance policy which contained a personal accident section, but riding two-wheeled vehicles was excluded in this section.

I recently changed my policy to another company. This time the personal accident covered the riding of motorcycles of less than 125cc. I thought that this was at least a slight improvement, but feel sure that the accident figures would not bear out the contention that one is more likely to be injured when riding a larger capacity machine. Accordingly I wrote to the company to ask why this limit had been chosen and on what statistics it was based.

The reply was most unsatisfactory. They did not know why the underwriters had chosen this particular limit, but said that cover could be extended to larger capacity machines on payment of an additional premium which was not quoted.

While repairs to larger capacity machines may well be more expensive, resulting in higher fully comprehensive premiums, I can see no good reason why a personal accident policy should be so weighted. No account appears to be given to the age or experience of the rider. Surely all the figures point to the greatest personal accident rate among younger inexperienced riders on the smaller capacity machines.

Bernard L. Armitage,  
Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire.

*I would imagine so, but I reckon you're lucky to get any personal accident cover, considering the prejudice that permeates the insurance industry. Perhaps you should try the RAC personal accident scheme, details of which are on page 5. —P.R.*

Type approval in Germany

Having recently joined the BMF I feel I must start off on the right foot by emphasising the importance of the BMF's vigilance on type approval.

I used to live in West Germany and knew many people with motorcycles. On a few occasions I went with some of them to the TÜV—their equivalent of our MoT test. One of these people spent literally days getting his GT380 in tip-top condition. If he had gone to an English MoT he would have breezed through. But the German tester came out with his GT380 handbook (they have one for each model) and a tape measure!

My friend's confident grin soon turned to a scowl as he was failed for having non-approved bulbs in his indicators! In addition, the indicators were too far apart, the stoplight was too far off the ground, the steering lock (standard Suzuki) was non-approved, and so were the suppressed spark plug caps. The list was almost endless.

Other friends had a similar story to tell: failed for having a fairing fitted, panniers, non-standard handlebars. Almost unbelievable, isn't it? Hence the absence of any sort of cafe racers (there are some but they're as scarce as well-dressed MAG members), and choppers are almost non-existent.

Don't think that it couldn't happen here. It could, and the BMF's top type approval expert can only give us a warning. So when it rears its ugly head we'll have a fighting chance, and we'll need it.

B. Buckle,  
Runcorn, Cheshire.

Insurance in Germany

Many members of the BMF are in the armed forces and stationed in Germany at some time during their careers. Insurance is a problem here and expensive to boot. For example, only one company will insure British Forces in Germany. That company is Albingia. It costs nearly £90 a month to insure any machine over 50 bhp! And that's only for third party, fire and theft!

As far as I know the only company in the UK that will insure us is the Norwich Union, and for a year's cover with green card I pay £205, which is bloody good compared with Albingia! The only thing they request is that you have had at least six months' current policy with them.

I would appreciate it if you could possibly print the advice as I hate to see a fellow biker stuck here in barracks with a good machine he can't afford to insure!

Gdsm D. Belford,  
BFPO 17.

*Thanks for the information. You might try the BMF insurance scheme for a more favourable quote. —P.R.*



# Letters . . . Letters . . . Letters

## 30 Neat solution to diesel spills

I have just been re-reading the March/April issue of *Motorcycle Rider* and took particular note of a letter from Gordon Thornton of Edinburgh regarding diesel oil deposits on road surfaces.

During the summer of '78 I was the victim of a (fresh) diesel spill, on exit from a large roundabout, halfway between Corby and Kettering. I was down before I knew what had happened and up even quicker, unhurt. Somebody appeared from nowhere and pushed my bike to the roadside. The person in question was the pillion on a scooter that had just done the same thing; the rider was across the road tending a small hole in his elbow. I straightened the footrest with a well-aimed kick and went home via the local cop shop to report the spill. I half expected the desk sergeant to tell me I could keep it if it wasn't claimed in three months! But he didn't, he just said: 'Oh no, not another one!'

Anyway, I got to thinking about this and think that a simple device made from a spring clip and some skeleton foam would do the trick. I obtained a piece and put it in the neck of an empty coffee jar. The result was that water (just for testing) would go through uninterrupted under pressure (similar to delivery from a petrol pump) but would not escape when sloshed around.

A slug of this skeleton foam, fitted down petrol tank filler necks, would solve the problem. Obviously, the foam would have to be petrol and oil resistant—I'm not sure if the polyester foam I used would be. It was of 30 kg/m<sup>3</sup> density—10 ppi and 97% void volume—virtually nothing! Who do you approach with such an idea? TRRL? Give them a ring, I think you would carry a bit more weight than a failed MA industrial design student!

The other point regarding oil spill on roads was from normal traffic use, the lines down the middle of lanes, particularly at junctions and traffic lights. Well, they sweep out the gutters with little machines, why not adapt them to give particularly bad areas a good scrub every so often? A bloody good downpour does the job, but can't always be relied upon—even in this country!

Good magazine; keep up the good work.

Andy Ward,  
Corby, Northants.

*It seems an excellent idea, Andy. I've discussed it with an engineer and he reckons you're on to a winner. We have passed your suggestion on to Peter Watson at the TRRL. — P.R.*

## IAM subscription hassles

Thank you for another interesting edition of *Motorcycle Rider*, which I always look forward to receiving. I was particularly interested to read about the BMF executive on page 10.

My experience of being a member of the BMF is much more pleasant than it is of being a member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists, as a motorcycling member I hasten to add.

On 23 May this year I received a final reminder from the IAM that my subscription which was due on 30 Sept 78 had not been paid. This followed a previous reminder earlier in the year to which I replied giving details of the fact that I sent my cheque for £3 on 5 August last year. I also told them that I have in my possession my current membership card, which I received soon after I had sent my cheque.

Following the final reminder I wrote to a Mr R. Peters, the chief executive, enclosing a photocopy of my cheque and my membership card, and I said that I looked forward to hearing from him to let me know that the matter had been cleared up.

Having waited over two weeks for a reply I telephoned the Institute at Chiswick and was told that Mr Peters was not available. I was put through to the membership supervisor who told me that I was one of many members who had been sent the reminder which was due to a computer error. She said that she would send me on the Institute's magazine which had been withheld from me since the summer '78 issue. When I received the two outstanding issues, after a further telephone call, I read that the annual subscription had from last January gone up from £3 to £5. If my salary went up by the same percentage I would be a very happy man.

The whole affair of bad administration and lack of courtesy does not do much credit to the IAM. As the majority of members are car drivers I suppose I should not be surprised.

I wonder how many other members of the BMF who have passed the Advanced test had the same experience as me.

John P. Miles,  
London SW3.

## No trouble in pubs

With reference to the troubles experienced by some of your members in trying to use the facilities offered by various hostelries: How do they do it?

I have been frequenting pubs, etc on my motorcycle for a number of years now and only once have I come across any kind of prejudice, and this was from a publican who had allowed his premises to become a motorcyclists' haven, only to be repaid by needless violence, incessant noise and various other senseless acts. His regulars after putting up with the inconvenience for a number of months, complained and he had no choice but to ban the bikes. Even he now allows motorcyclists free access to his pub.

But the real point is, why don't even more licensees ban motorcyclists? Many behave in a



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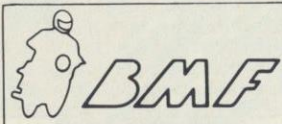
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# Letters . . . Letters . . . Letters

totally stupid manner and I am constantly surprised by the fact that I don't know of a single pub that has a ban on two-wheelers.

Sure, many have punitive rules such as leaving crash helmets with the barman or removing Barbour suits in the lounge. But in all motorcyclists are as more-or-less welcome as anybody. Do I live in a favoured area or am I going to all the wrong places?

I hope that this situation will continue as I grow older, and that when I am Jeff Stone's age I will still be able to go to my favourite restaurant on my bike, as I do now, instead of having to use the car.

While on the subject of Jeff Stone I would just like to say that I have met him on a couple of occasions and observed him on a few more at various happenings around the Midlands and I would just like to say that he is, to me at least, a model BMF regional man. He is always approachable and willing to help and must have done the BMF a power of good in the area.

One point though; I was visiting my mother a few months back when Jeff was doing his bit on BRMB. The subject was riding with lights on, and while I agree basically with his sentiments, the almost dictatorial manner in which he put forward the BMF's view was a little strong.

My mother objected, she being the archtypal absent-minded motorist. She said that onus-shifting was all very well, but it was of little consideration when you were lying bleeding to death in the kerb. A thorny problem that must be handled with great care when presented to the general public, it's not just motorcyclists that listen to you, Jeff.

One final point, when will we rid the world of that trite little annoyance, the habit we have of referring to ourselves as 'bikers'? What next? Footers for people who walk, wingers for people that fly? 'Motorcyclists' does have at least a certain dignity.

Anyway I rest my case, for the moment at least.

Ref. Norton book competition. Judging by the scars and wrinkled frowns, I would hazard a guess at around 297 years.

A. J. Collins,  
Kingsbury, North Warks.

*I don't know how you did it, but you've won the Norton book competition. The combined riding experience of the BMF Executive works out at an impressive 293 years (296 if you include my three years off-road before I was 16!). None of the other guesses submitted were far out, although most were just over 300 years. Thank you all for taking part, and thanks to Bruce Main-Smith for donating a copy of The First Double Knocker Scene which will be on its way to Mr Collins shortly. -P.R.*

## A TRAINED RIDER LOOKS BACK

I have just finished reading *MCR 38*, and in particular the article by Alf Minter on the Safety Summit. Although only 17 and still riding a moped, I am very keen on safety and was delighted to see a chance to express my views on training.

When I got my bike my parents insisted I go to a training course, but I learned to keep the bike upright very quickly and after a few days thought I was the best rider on the road! However, I was forced to go to the RAC/ACU course in Sittingbourne, Kent, so I reluctantly set off on the next Sunday with my parents' £7 in my pocket, still thinking I was the greatest and would soon be sent home, told I was too good for them.

How wrong could I be? Everything I did was wrong, and at first I refused to admit it was my fault, blaming everything on my very unreliable bike. However, I soon learned basic road safety such as right and left turns, correct rear observation, etc. It took me until a couple of weeks from the end of the course to get my slow riding through the cones correct, and it was only after one of the instructors proved that my bike could do it that I proved I could too.

It is obvious that the excellent instruction given on that 12-week course taught me more about riding than I could otherwise have learned in 12 months. Also, it was possible to get things at the course at much reduced prices—reflective strips at 10p each; the Castrol Book of Motorcycle Care at 25p (55p in the shops, I believe) are just two of the bargains.

The whole atmosphere is very friendly, just like every motorcycling activity, and it is a great deal easier to learn quickly from an instructor you can treat as a friend. I passed the course first time, scoring 100% on the road route, and I still ride the way I was taught then. I cannot say what STEP or other training schemes are like, but what I have seen on television seems to show them doing exactly the same things.

I can thoroughly recommend the RAC/ACU course to any beginner—it is a truly excellent course and well worth every penny of the initial cost. I hope to do the course again when I get a bigger bike, so that I can learn to handle it properly.

I am now a safe and competent road user, and this is due entirely to my training. The standard of my riding now, in my opinion, is the minimum with which anyone should be allowed on the road. To allow untrained riders on to the road is sheer lunacy. Certainly training schemes should be given more publicity and more funds, and it would not be a bad idea at all if some initial training for riders were made compulsory.

L. R. Pyall,  
Rainham, Kent.



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# RIGHTS OF WAY

BY BRIAN G. THOMPSON

35

**PRESS PUBLICITY.** On 12 July the *Daily Mail* devoted most of page 23 to the BMF fight to save green lanes. In typical sensational style the emphasis was on the conflict with the Ramblers Association. It was generally pro-trail riding and stressed the high cost of fighting for Byway claims at Public Enquiries.

As a result of this the *Sunday Observer* rang and said they were very interested and wanted to do a feature article. By the time you read this you should have seen the result. Expect the hostile Somerset County Council to come under heavy fire again. BBC Radio in Birmingham also featured Jeff Stone in a BMF versus RA item following the *Daily Mail* story. Credit for the article must go to freelance journalist Allan Robinson.

**GREEN LANE STUDY.** What has happened to this Government ordered survey? Costing £20,000 of public money as a result of questions in the House in 1977, it was carried out by DART—an independent research organisation for the Countryside Commission.

Due to be published last Christmas it appears to have been shelved or forgotten. It is rumoured that the report is favourable to trail riders, with *no evidence* of conflict between trail riders and ramblers. Is this just another example of bias and prejudice in the corridors of power? I suggest you ask your MP (as I will) to raise the matter in the Commons where the conflict was first discussed two years ago.

**VISIT TO THE SOUTH WEST.** I was pleased to be invited to speak at a meeting in Bristol on Sunday 15 July. I was surprised to face over 50 eager club representatives ready to spend a sunny day indoors to grapple with the increasing complexities of the law. My thanks to the TRF Bristol Group and Geoff Barfoot for putting me up for the weekend.

The last three years have seen a remarkable increase in awareness and involvement in rights of way. Sadly the northern clubs lag behind their southern fellow workers and I am now driven to cease all work in the Yorkshire Dales to concentrate on more pressing matters. We have no one now to look after this very popular area and I am hoping the Bradford RUPS club will be able to take over. I also visited Lancs clubs on 4 July at Rossendale, when 30 riders attended.

**THE RIDGEWAY.** Field officer Malcolm Wood has confirmed that in six months there is some conflict between different users but that most people use the Ridgeway without annoying others. Mr Wood has consulted every conceivable body, walked most of the 85-mile long-distance path, ridden part on a motorcycle, and plans to cover a section on horseback. Some physical work has already been done to restore deeply rutted

sections, and improve farm access and car parking.

Official Government figures quote 5,514 miles of green road (including RUPPs) compared with 99,825 miles of Bridleways and Footpaths—just 5% of the total unmetalled RoW available to vehicles!

**WEST YORKSHIRE.** At Moor Bottom Lane near Hebden Bridge a BMF Byway claim has been blocked for several years while County Hall drag their feet. The Byways and Bridleways Trust has briefed a solicitor to bring a Section 121 Highways Act 1959 prosecution for wilful obstruction. The lane has a wall erected over the whole width! Will any rider who has used this lane please see me as we need trail rider use witnesses. Plenty of horse riders also wish to use this lane. The BMF has been asked for help with legal costs.

**DALES.** Will riders who find themselves in arguments with farmers and ramblers please stop giving my name and phone number? I get frequent calls during office hours from irate village bobbies and others. This situation is a threat to my job with the NCB. I am *not* the highway authority. All complaints and queries should go to County Hall. This applies to Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District in particular.

**DERBYSHIRE.** The whole length of Jacobs Ladder (Edale to Hayfield) is now closed by a Traffic Order. On 7 July 15 riders from the TRF and Manchester 17 Club had a demonstration ride to the summit and had a little ceremony to mark the last (lawful) motorcycle to use this superb track. The only objection would be to High Court and we simply do not have the money to risk £2,000. We must save our limited resources for the better lanes.

**STAFFS.** Mike Rowley and Harry Ball attended Public Enquiries at Lichfield from 10 July into our 1973 Byway claims.

**WILTS.** More Public Enquiries are due in September/October and the Southern TRF Group is very grateful for the £50 from the ACU Southern Centre RoW Committee for expenses.

**BYWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS TRUST.** This has had a disappointing start with only 65 members. With three court actions proceeding and a monthly journal to issue, the Trust finds itself in financial trouble. To help it over this period the TRF has donated £250. The BMF and ACU have been asked to donate £100 each.

Brian G. Thompson, 39 Warren Road,  
Thorne, Doncaster DN8 5PP, S. Yorks.

## OUR VIEW

(continued from page 1)

36 OPEC barons, and according to IMC chief Mike Evans moped sales really took off in May and the boom continued through June as well. The signs are that it will continue for some time.

How all this affects you and I should be obvious. By and large the people buying all these mopeds are newcomers to powered two-wheelers, driven to mopeds by the rapidly rising cost of bus, rail, tube and car travel. So the IMC is playing an important role in expanding the two-wheel world, and many of these recruits to moped riding are likely to be riding motorcycles before too long.

Some riders hold the view that if motorcycling had remained an unpopular pastime enjoyed by a relatively small number of true enthusiasts we would be left to get on with it by the politicians. Maybe, but we're already a long long way past that point, so now the more people attracted to two wheels the greater the chances of motorcycles having to be regarded as a major and socially useful form of transport. Perhaps then we will stand more chance of being left to get on with it—especially if we can draw some of these newcomers into the BMF.

So take a bow, Mike Evans, Peter Fraser, Nick Harvey and Jonathan Zammett of the IMC. You deserve it. Keep up the good work.



### HAROLD BOOTY MOVES

BMF president Harold Booty has moved from his familiar address at Rothesay Court and now lives at 2 Monica Court, Lewin Road, Streatham, London SW16 6JS.

### NEW BMF DIRECTORY

The BMF Directory of Clubs 1979-80 will be published in mid-August and will be available at the Earls Court Show, price 50p. It will list the 195 member clubs and their branches, as well as including other useful information on such topics as hiring films for clubnight viewing.

The views published in *Motorcycle Rider* are those of its correspondents and not necessarily those of the Editor or of the British Motorcyclists Federation Ltd.

Copy for the next issue of *Motorcycle Rider* should reach the editor not later than 15 September 1979.

### Individual Membership section addresses

Individual Membership Secretary: Nigel Graves, 19 Farm Road, Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent. Telephone: Hamstreet 2194.  
Social Secretary and Breakdown Scheme organiser: Doug Baker, 11 Wiltshire Way, Fairfield Park, Bath BA1 6NW. Telephone: Bath 317138.

### BMF REGIONAL REPS

**South-East:** Bruce Clark, 51 Sunningdale Road, Cheam, Surrey (01-644 7106). He is assisted by Jim Harris, 2 Windmill Cottage, April Cottages, Hurst Lane, Weald, Kent (073 277 359).

**North and Scotland:** Geoff Wilson, 4 Scaur Close, Lazonby, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 1BT (Lazonby 584).

**East:** Bob Osborn, 75 Knightscliffe Way, Northampton NN5 (0604 51866).

**West Midlands:** Jeff Stone, 22 Kingswood Close, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 3ET. (021 744 8235). Also Mid- and South Wales.

**West:** Dick Powell, Uplands, Down Lane, Braunton, Devon.

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