



**Southern Sporting
Motor Cycle Club**

CONTACT

November

2020



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Your Committee

President..... John Mason
Vice President..... Ian Slater, Mick Wallace, Richard Barnett
Chairman..... Christian Gorth
Club Secretary..... Ian Slater
Treasurer..... Chris Booker
PRO..... Steve Pearce
Club Captain..... Mick Wallace
Social Secretary..... Heather Wallace
Editor..... Sharon Roberts
Auditor – Club..... Rob Wood
Centre Board Delegate (2)

BMF Liaison Officer Ian Slater
Minutes Secretary Heather Wallace

Dates for your diary

No Dates this Month

Editor's Comments

Welcome to November's edition of Contact.

As I sit here in Wales in the middle of the second lockdown of the year, I am wondering what I can write. It has been difficult with no events anywhere to report on (except one), either club news, around the UK or even the world.

We are still having lots of rain and high winds here. I suppose it goes without saying being Wales. It does mean getting trips out on the bike have been non-existent and that was before the lockdown.

I was watching Rugby today and quite bizarrely listening to shouts and cheers from non-existent spectators. The stadium was empty. I don't know if the sound was to benefit the players or make us believe it was a normal game.

I am also wondering what will happen at Christmas. Will we be able to spend it with friends or family? I hope so. Will there be a club Christmas dinner? I somehow doubt it which is a shame. The hospitality industry is really suffering, (along with others). Let's hope we can have a get together!

The Welsh Assembly have promised the lockdown will end on the 9th November. We'll see. As our lockdown ends, England will enter its second. I feel for you.

There will be no events for the next four weeks at least. Luckily one club member managed to get a road trip in before the weather changed, and the lockdown arrived. See page 6. There are a couple of articles, a poem and an anecdote this month and I have included a schedule for the TT in May next year, this of course is changeable. Enjoy!



Presidents Piece

Hi all, I do hope you are all staying well and away from the virus. We are here in Sunbury, well and staying in most of the time. I have been going out in my bubble to Sam's cafe, on Saturday morning not knowing anyone there of course! You do find some odd souls in there. But keep my distance. Not sure if I have had my last ride out on my motor bike. The weather is not looking good at this point in time. If it dries up, it will then get colder. Still we will see.

I understand the committee will not charge next year's membership fees to those who were members this year. I think that would be good. There should be enough money in the coffers. With nowhere to go and just one or two things to pay for it should be fine. At least Sharon is keeping us going with Contact. THANKS.

Clearly, I do not think the situation is going to get any better. So a Zoom Christmas and a Zoom A.G.M. Lovely. We are all doooooommed!

On a lighter note, Ian Slater has moved to Hampshire. He is very happy as a grumpy person is not knocking on his door twice a week after coffee and cake! (ME). It was said he moved because Amoret worked in Winchester, but no it was to get away from Mr Mason. (I Shall Return !!).

Best wishes to you all.

John Mason.

Land's End or bust!

Well, having arranged 2 trips away - Northern Ireland for the NW200, and The Isle of Man for the Manx GP, both were cancelled. It was quite depressing not getting away on the bikes.

A friend Matt had just bought, a new to him, Yamaha MT10 and wanted to go away for a weekend. So Matt, myself and another friend Marshall team up for a ride.

Not sure where to go we looked at the Covid Map to avoid the "Red" areas. That meant we could basically go west - and that's what we did. Land's End it is then.

We planned to leave on Saturday but looking at the distances and decided to leave Friday afternoon to get 100 miles under our belts for the first night - the weather forecast was meant to be great. However, with the bike washed and gleaming ready for the off, 5 minutes before we left the heavens opened. It absolutely chucked it down but only for 10 minutes. The bike was filthy before we even got to Midhurst!

Chichester was at a standstill with these stupid Pop Up Cycle lanes that have been installed with a grant from the Government to the tune of £781,000! Being on a bike, this still held us up but nowhere near as bad as being in a car!

Matt and I met Marshall at the Esso in Midhurst for us to head West along the A272 to Winchester then ducking and diving to miss the Reduced Speed limit of 50mph on the M27. Finally getting to Podimore Services on the A303 / A372 Junction at 7:30pm - to unpack, shower and then head off to the local pub. Just a little too far to walk, so back on the bikes to get an evening meal before they stopped serving at 9pm. With the bars closing at 10pm and being on the bike, we didn't have a drink - so, may as well head off back to the Travelodge.

As Matt only had his bike a few weeks, on his insurance he stated the bike had a Disc Lock and a Security Chain. Sensibly he took a picture of the 2 security devices. Luckily he omits from the picture that he had left his keys in the seat lock. He realised about an hour later and retrieved them!

The services were very basic, no restaurant but they have a Greggs for a bacon roll and a Coffee to kick start the day. We end up leaving at 10, heading west along the A372 to Bridgewater, where we pick up the A39. Not done that route for many years. As a bike club we used to go to Lynton and Lynmouth for weekends away - back in the 90's. Funny how you can recollect some parts of the road but not others, and certainly more new housing estates, roundabouts and 50mph limits along the way!

Joining the A39 heading to Porlock Hill, god, what a brilliant road that is. Opening up at the top for some awesome twisty roads! Loved it all.



Getting to Lynton in time for Coffee and Cake - lovely Victoria sponge if you needed to know - and it's one of those villages where time seems to have stood still - well, apart from face masks, social distancing signs and barriers.

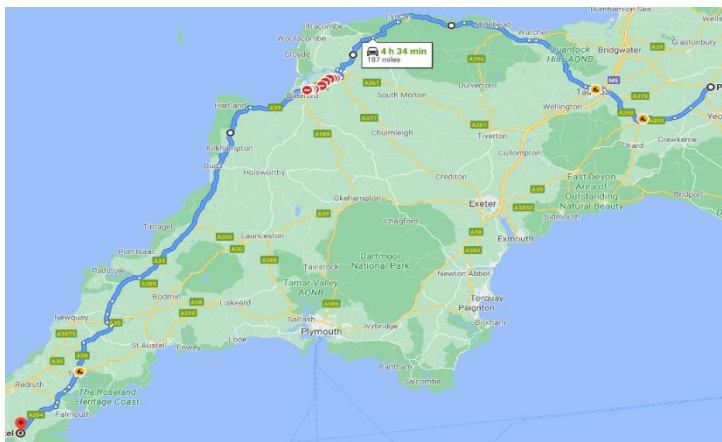


Puncture repair time...

Coffee and cake polished off, time to plan the route to Helston which would be our next stop. Booking into a Premier Inn. The plan was to head south west along the A39 and stopping at Padstow - however, Marshall ends up with a puncture in his front tyre, literally a couple of miles from where we stopped, making it to the fuel station in Barbrook.

Now, Marshall is one of the most disorganised people I know - but somehow - he had a puncture repair kit!! How, god only knows - he also had some tyre weld that was 10 years out of date! But, not having to actually ever repaired a puncture with one of these kits - a quick scour of YouTube soon gave us the idea. It worked - and we were on our merry way again but delayed by an hour now.

Day 2 the “approximate” route – as we found some more twisties to play on.



The route was great taking in some lovely scenery and twisty roads - but just outside Bude the heavens opened again, but this time really windy as well. We had to ditch the Padstow stop, just because of time, but stopped for fuel and a coffee to make up for it. Arriving at the hotel at 6:30pm after the 190 miles from Podimore - shower and changed over to eat. My cousin lives nearby so called

him and also Andi Mills, so we all met up for an evening meal, a few beers and a great laugh. Again, being chucked out at 10pm, which is great to see them sticking to the rules as they are, regardless of agreeing with them or not.

Sunday was the big un, Helston to Lands' End, although that's only 25 miles, it was the 200 additional miles after to our final hotel in Weymouth.

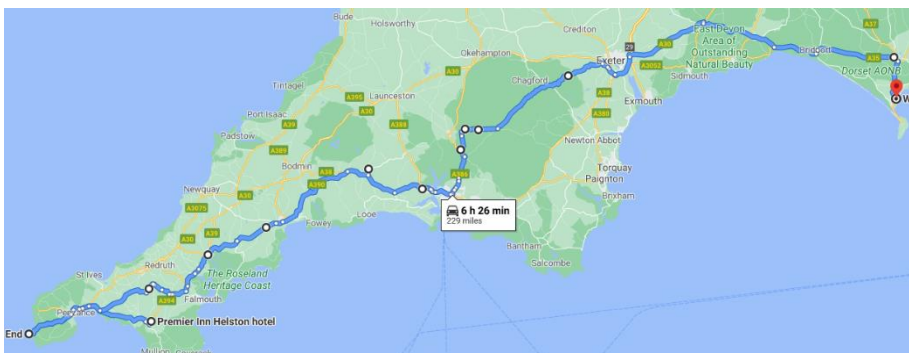


Lands' End we take the obligatory photo of the post and had a little wander - stopping for a coffee - however the machine seemed to be making it so strong you could only just drink it. (it was so strong; I could still taste it **The dirty bikes at Helston.** 3 hours later!) Leaving the tourist site we headed East - but taking the small twisty roads missing all the main roads, this was OK for a couple of hours but by 2:30pm worked out we would not be at Weymouth till 10pm. so, we "edited" the route but still wanted to take in

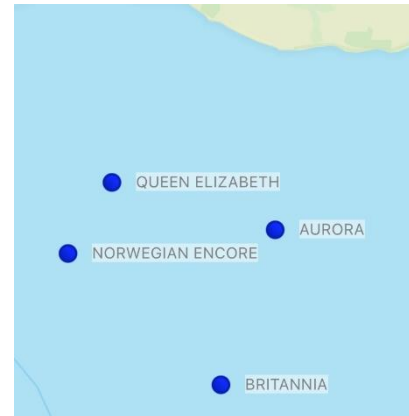
Dartmoor whilst we were that way.

Stopping at the Dartmoor Inn for coffee and a Pasty. Estimating our arrival time now as 7pm, I suggested we booked a meal - well, you can't have 3 blokes going away without the obligatory curry - that was soon settled.

Table booked for 7:45, so we had better get a move on. Matt and I were fine as it got a little chilly as the sun started setting behind us, but we had heated grips - we would stop at lights and Marshall would ride between us and "nick" one heated grip from each of us to warm up a bit..



Whilst at Weymouth we could see several cruise ships anchored off the bay -



So, the Sunday night Curry and a few beers, walked back to the Hotel - this must be the earliest I've been to bed when on a bike trip - ever!



But Monday came and it was just breakfast, and time to have a look at the cruise liners anchored off Weymouth - before heading home - again missing the motorway.

The Hotel in Weymouth. Royal Hotel – Nice!

640 miles of fun, some wet and windy but smiles all the way. Conclusion – taking the Tracer 700, the engine is superb for this, I was a bit concerned coming from the BMW R1200GSA for touring down to a little 700 – but I must say – it copes very well, 200 mile fuel tank range, averaging 67mpg – complaints? Yep, the Seat is bloody uncomfortable – so, before hitting serious miles I'm going to have to do something about that – or just give in and buy a BMW S1000XR that I've wanted for some time now.



Steve Pearce

On the Road Again (The Ballard of the G12CSR)

It stands hunched, powerful, eager, lea.
Glittering in the showroom lights.
It waits for me, my new machine,
To hare with it the rare delights
Of sweeping curve and country lane,
Of rushing wind or stinging rain
Of being alive and free again
And being on the road.

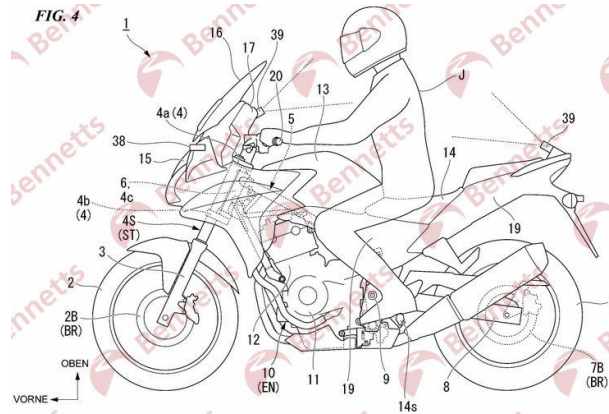
Too long since last I felt the thrill
Of factory fresh precision ride,
The effortless surge up a hill-
Wide vistas on the other side!
And good companions, old or new,
And cupped around a steaming brew,
And those familiar things you do
When being on the road.

And with someone in mind, to share,
The privilege of that special breed.
With sparkling eyes and windblown hair.
Who clings to you when you're at speed.
How good life's promise, in it's prime-
The countryside at harvest time.
The pleasures, simple but sublime
Of being on the road.

GR

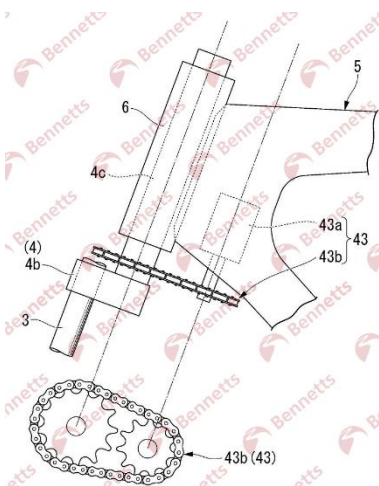
Honda Developing Motorcycle Autopilot

By Ben Purvis Bennetts



Adaptive cruise control is one of the key new technologies coming to bikes in 2021 but the radar-based tech is just a stepping stone towards increasing autonomy. Now Honda is working on system that will provide steering assistance as well as automatic acceleration and braking.

The technology is increasingly well-established on four wheels, with ‘driver assistance’ systems rapidly improving in modern cars. Just last week Tesla began beta-testing its ‘Full Self-Driving’ technology, which is intended to give its cars the ability to undertake entire journeys with the driver acting as a supervisory safety-net rather than taking direct control, and a host of current modern cars have ‘lane-assist’ systems as well as adaptive cruise, effectively giving them the ability to operate on motorways without involvement from the driver. There are legal loopholes to be cleared before truly autonomous vehicles are allowed to operate on the roads without human supervision but there’s no question about the direction that development is heading.



Chain-drive system allows servo to move the steering

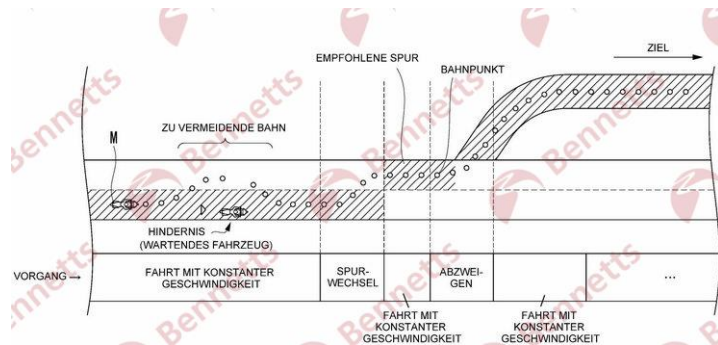
In 2021, bikes take their first step in the same direction, with Bosch’s radar-assisted adaptive cruise control appearing on Ducati’s Multistrada V4 and as an option on BMW’s updated 2021 R1250RT. The system keeps a constant distance from vehicles ahead, automatically controlling the throttle and brakes when it’s engaged to maintain the gap even as traffic changes speed. KTM and Kawasaki have also signed up to use the technology, and it won’t be long before it becomes relatively commonplace.

Honda has always liked to be a high-tech pioneer, but the company’s usual modus operandi is to develop its own in-house systems rather than buying them in from others. As such it’s no surprise to see patent applications for Honda’s own adaptive cruise control. What is surprising is the fact that the latest design also includes a steering-assist system.

The patent document shows a servo motor mounted behind the steering head with a chain connecting it to the bike's forks. Under normal conditions, the motor would act a bit like an adaptive steering damper, helping to prevent or control unwanted headshakes, but the patent also suggests it can steer the bike itself, particularly when it comes to lane-changes on motorways.

Honda has already demonstrated that it can make self-balancing bikes using an auto-steering system, in its Riding Assist and Riding Assist-E prototypes, so the technology is real world stuff, not pie-in-the-sky.

The idea is to have adaptive cruise control using radars, cameras or both to monitor traffic ahead and a computer to operate the brakes and throttle and maintain a safe distance even as traffic speeds change. But the addition of steering control means the bike can also automatically change lane and even follow sat-nav instructions, for instance leaving a motorway at a chosen junction without any help from the rider.



Honda's patent application, written in German, shows how a bike could automatically steer around obstacles and follow sat-nav directions.

The steering servo can also apply steering inputs automatically to counter side-winds or even to assist in emergencies, acting alongside traction control and ABS to help prevent crashes.

Of course, such a level of control gives the bike's computer an unprecedented amount of responsibility and there's a clear desire to ensure it's not abused. Car makers introducing ever more capable semi-autonomous systems are increasingly adding driver-monitoring cameras to make sure the human at the controls remains alert and vigilant even when the car is operating the controls, and Honda's patent suggests a similar idea for its bike. The document shows a camera in the bike's dashboard, pointing at the rider's head, and another in the tail unit looking at the rider's back. The idea is to monitor your riding position and add that data into the mix – helping the bike decide whether you're alert and assisting in deciding whether inputs at the bars are intentional or accidental.

It's clearly going to be years before any sort of lane-assist system for bikes is ready for real-world use, but it's clear which way the wind is blowing when it comes to autonomous-driving technology. Does it have a place on bikes? While the idea of relinquishing control to a computer might be scary, provided the tech works reliably it could take some of the mental strain away from long motorway trips while still handing back full control when you find some more interesting roads.

Break Time

What is it?



Which UK Racetrack is this?



Dad jokes for the month

Justice is a dish best served cold. If it were served warm it would be just water.

3 unwritten rules of life...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Lateral Thinking:

Driving in Circles

The man finds himself commuting to work in his car every day. Upon arrival to work each morning, he proceeds to drive his car in a circle four times before finally parking it and entering his office building. Why does the man drive in circles every day?

The Isle of Man TT Races 2021

<https://www.iomtt.com/tt-info>

Sunday 30th May - Friday 11th June 2021

The 2021 Isle of Man TT Races begins on Sunday 30th May with an opening ceremony and party in the park held at the TT Grandstand as well as the first afternoon qualifying session which is a new and welcomed addition to the TT schedule. From Monday to Tuesday, qualifying sessions revert back to evening sessions with the final qualifying session taking place on Friday afternoon.

From Saturday 5th June onwards you can look forward to a full racing schedule with a full day of racing on Saturday where you will enjoy a 3-lap sidecar race along with the thrilling Superbike race. Superbike Saturday is followed by 'Mad Sunday' where fans can have their own ride around the world-famous TT course. Racing then takes place on alternate days, Monday, Wednesday and Friday known locally as Senior Race day which features the final sidecar race and concluding Senior TT.

There will be an action-packed programme of events and entertainment held at the TT Grandstand and across the entire Island so no matter when you choose to visit there will always be something to do.

The Schedule

When do the Isle of Man TT Races take place?

The TT takes place over a 2 week period with the first week dominated by practice sessions followed by a week of racing with the first race day taking place on the Saturday before Mad Sunday with racing then held on alternate days (Saturday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday). Practice Week is becoming increasingly more popular for first time and seasoned visitors alike with practice sessions taking place most evenings you have the days free to explore the natural beauty that the Island has to offer. Mad Sunday always falls on the first Sunday of June and is a popular date in motorcycle fans' diaries with plenty of meets, events and parades taking place across the Island.

Qualifying

Sunday 30th May - Qualifying

Monday 31st May - Qualifying

Tuesday 1st June – Qualifying

Qualifying

Wednesday 2nd June - Qualifying

Thursday 3rd June - Qualifying

Friday 4th June – Qualifying

Race Days

Saturday 5th June - Race Day 1

Monday 7th June - Race Day 2

Wednesday 9th June - Race Day 3

Friday 11th June - Race Day 4

How to Get There

The Isle of Man is easily accessible by ferry and plane from key regional ports across the UK and Ireland. The ferry company which operates between the North West of England and the East Coast of Ireland is the Steam Packet Company with regular services between Liverpool, Heysham, Dublin and Belfast during the summer months. Services are increased over the TT fortnight however it pays to be flexible with your dates and consider travelling without your vehicle.

Ferry bookings for TT operate on a deposit system where a provisional sailing schedule is available a year in advance allowing you to book your space for following TT with the final fares and schedule being released in December.

The Isle of Man is also well served by key airports including London Gatwick, Manchester and Dublin meaning that our international visitors have a selection of airports to choose from when making their travel plans. Flying is often seen as an attractive alternative to travelling by ferry and is quick and convenient with flight times averaging between 30 and 60 minutes from the UK and Ireland.

Diary of a British Superbike... Marshal

By Laura Maliphant Bennetts



A 6:30am alarm call on a Friday morning would normally mean work, but not today, today is an orange army day....

I am Laura Maliphant and I have been a Racesafe marshal for 5 years. It all started for me back in 2015 when a colleague of mine got chatting to me and she said she was off marshalling for the British Superbikes at the weekend. I had to find out more and before I knew it, I had signed up and on 21st February 2016 I was heading to Bedford Autodrome for my Racesafe training course. The day was packed with information and I left super excited for the season ahead! Once you have completed your training course you have to complete 12 days of trainee marshalling alongside an experienced marshal to be fully signed off with a mix of flagging and pickups. Even when you are signed off you will never be alone, and that's part of the beauty.

The Racesafe family is fantastic, we are all there to achieve the same goal and for the love of the sport. Marshals are people from all walks of life, you could be assigned to work alongside a teacher, a lawyer and a shop worker, we even had an astrophysicist who joined us on his down time searching the galaxies!



People often ask me why I do it? Three long days, unpaid, out in the elements which can be anything from 30 degrees (while wearing sturdy boots, fire retardant overalls and gloves) through to freezing cold with rain or the occasional snow shower. The answer for me is simple; the people I work with and feeling like a part of the racing family. My passion for racing goes deep, I used to race at club level myself but because of the all-too-familiar 'funding issues' I had to give it a rest, so this for me is the

next best thing. As a Racesafe marshal you not only get to support the BSB championship, but also the UK rounds of MotoGP and the World Superbike championship. I have had some of the most incredible experiences from standing under a MotoGP Podium to a pillion lap round Knockhill.

I've attended the British round of MotoGP since 2008 as a fan but 2016 was my first year as a marshal, and I was lucky enough to sign on at Luffield for an incredible experience. After the Moto 2 race where Johan Zarco took the win, he finished his victory lap by pulling over track side at Luffield. I looked to the Incident Officer (this is the marshal who is responsible for the corner and does the radio communications with race control) who allowed 2 of us to run out to see if he was ok... he was more than ok, he got off his bike and left it in my capable hands while he headed over to the tyre wall to perform his celebratory 'Flipping Frenchman' routine. Yes, I was holding the back of Zarco's bike watching him about 20 feet away, back flipping off the tyre wall! As he walked back, I heard another bike pull up which was our local lad Sam Lowes. He asked me to hold his bike which I did, he ran through the gravel, threw both boots into the crowd and headed back to his bike... and me. He gave me a high five before jumping back on his bike and riding down pit lane. Moments like this cannot be bought, it blew my mind, and I knew that I was hooked on marshalling for life.

My first three years as a marshal I was trackside, rotating during the day between flagging and pick-up. These are the two roles that all trainees will start off with. I am happy doing either, flagging holds great responsibility; riders look to you to know if the track is clear ahead, if an incident is coming up, if something is wrong with their bike or if a faster rider is approaching them. Once you start flagging you realise how much they pick up on what you are doing so it is critical to get it right, not only for their safety but for the safety of your fellow marshals.



Above: rescuing James Rispoli. He was grateful.

Pick-up is where I feel most vulnerable and it really gets the adrenaline pumping, having to run out into a gravel trap to pick up a bike and rider which can be scary if a live session going on. Sometimes the bike is badly damaged to the point it needs multiple marshals to lift it and get it clear of the gravel. If heading to a fallen rider, you never know what you are going to see. It could be a rider who is winded and just needs help getting up and moving, but it could also be a rider with a serious injury or unconscious. Every corner has a fully qualified doctor or paramedic on, with a simple signal of an

arm straight up with a closed fist, the medic knows they are needed. When marshals are out picking up, there is always one who is the 'spotter', they will watch the oncoming traffic and will shout if anything else decides to fly our way. If you hear them shout, you have to just drop and run. A perfect example of this was when Cal Crutchlow had crashed at Brooklands a few years ago and Marc Marquez missed the yellow flag and came flying in. The marshals grabbed Cal, and all avoided a potentially serious incident.

The last two seasons for me have been on the recovery team. You will see us flying around the outside of the circuit on taxi bikes to pick up fallen riders who need taking back to the paddock, or in the big recovery vans trackside picking up the crashed bikes at the end of each session. I am very proud to have been the first ever female taxi bike rider for Racesafe. It took riders by surprise at first seeing a ponytail hanging out the back of the helmet. But they are used to it now.

After getting up at 7am and getting my orange army overalls on, I meet Paul (my marshal buddy for the weekend) at 7:30am on Friday morning, we are the first up and out of the campsite as we needed to make sure that all the kit is dropped out around the circuit for the weekend ahead. Paul has the kit map, and I am in the back of the van putting out the right kit at each post. Every post will need to have a combination of sets of flags, number boards and scoops. The number boards are used to show a rider number who has an issue with their bike and needs to stop or has been black flagged, through to a safety car situation where we display the 0 board to show it is on its last lap before the race can continue.



Dropping the kit out usually takes about half an hour depending on the circuit. We then head into pit lane to meet all the Incident Officers (IOs) who have a briefing each morning with Stuart Higgs, Race Director. During this meeting we listen to any information about weather updates, change in timetables and any updates that may be necessary to the smooth running of the day ahead. Once complete we drop of the IOs to their posts to ensure the start of the day can happen on time.

After all marshals and medics are on post, we get ourselves into position, this weekend we are based at pit exit. We are covering the first third of a lap of the Brands Hatch Grand Prix layout: Paddock Hill, Druids, Graham Hill Bend and Cooper Straight. There are two other recovery vans who cover the rest of the circuit. We stand trackside for the inspection lap, this is where Stuart Higgs and other key members of race direction head out in the safety cars to do a marshal count, medic count and make sure we are ready for the first practice session. I check the back of the van is ready for pickups, ensuring the ratchet straps are in place and we have a spare scoop on board in case we need to drop one off at a post if theirs has gone off in an ambulance with a rider.

During each session I am sat in the van or stood next to the circuit listening to the radio waiting for any calls about fallen riders or mechanical retirements. If a red flag is needed, then we need to be ready to go trackside and collect the bike. Sometimes we are required to do a fast turnaround, so as we approach the corner I am jumping out the van before it has fully stopped, I run to the back and open the doors, slide the ramp out and turn for the bike, Paul starts to get the bike lined up and then we get it up the ramp as quickly as we can. Once up the ramp I take control of the bike and use the large straps to fasten it in. The straps loop round the rear wheel, under the foot peg, under the handlebar and then ratchet tight to the side of the van. I stay in the back of the van with the bike to make sure it does not move about but also to make sure we do not have any issues such as the bike catching fire which is a chance when dealing with hot crashed bikes that are potentially leaking fuel.

As soon as the bike is loaded, we take the bike to the technical team in the scrutineering bay. They will hold onto the bike if the rider has had to go to the medical centre, or if the rider is ok then the bike can be released back to the team. We can then roll back to pit exit ready for the

next call. We can fit up to five 600cc/1000cc bikes in the back of the vans or six of the smaller Honda British Talent Cup bikes. It can be a bit of a squeeze, but we make it work. For sidecar recovery we have a couple of ways of getting them back if they cannot be ridden. If leaking oil or full of gravel then we load them onto a flat bed, but if they are ok then the rider takes the steering and the passenger sits backwards with feet up on the front bumper of the van, and we then drive nice a slowly and give them a push back to the paddock. A little scary the first time you have to do it.

During the weekend we had a few fallers at Cooper Straight. Where we were based means we can run on foot to assist the on-post marshals. One of the fallers was unable to get up so needed to be scooped. When you need a minimum of four marshals to scoop, they can use the extra help to get the bike clear. The team worked super-fast and had both bike and rider clear of the track and to safety in a matter of minutes! I went to assist as the medics needed extra hands to lift the rider onto the stretcher to get him in the ambulance. Paul and I got stuck in, taking a corner of the scoop to lift and help get him away quickly and safely. We were then able to clear the bike away from post.

Fridays are usually our quieter days; free practice is for setting up the bikes and getting the riders eye-in for the weekend ahead. Saturday and Sunday are when we are usually busier, this is when riders are pushing harder for good qualifying times, or for that race battle. This weekend was no exception with multiple championships to be decided everyone was giving it their all. I could feel the tension in the air and being stood at pit exit, when the riders were lining up to go out on track, I could see the focus in their eyes. It is something you just can't experience from your sofa at home.

Marshalling is voluntary however you do get free camping, a meal voucher for each day you are marshalling and normally you would receive a guest pass for each day you marshal as well. This year was a different one due to the marshals having to bubble together, so sadly no guests.



The orange army are always looking for more volunteers and you would be more than welcome. You can apply to join Racesafe here, applications are only open for October, with the training days being held in February before the season starts. This year has been strange but incredible, no fans has been a real shame as the racing has been one of the best seasons so far - multiple race winners through the season, very close battles and championships brought down to the final race.

Three's company: Triumph Trident full specs and details released

By Jordan Gibbons MCN



Triumph have finally unveiled the Trident: a new entry-level triple that by their own admission is designed to knock Yamaha's MT-07 off the middleweight top spot. So what is it? Well it's not just a re-skinned Street Triple S if that's what you're thinking.

For a start the engine is completely different and while they might share the same capacity, the bore and stroke are different as are the rest of the innards. That means new piston, new crank, new cylinder head, new cases, new clutch, new liners, new camshafts – hell it would be simpler to name the parts that are the same.

The result of this work, or so Triumph say, is an engine that has the magic combo of low-down torque, a reasonably fat mid-range and a decent bit of top end thrill. Crucially in the A2 market it will also be the only mainstream triple - not many will have bought an MV Agusta Brutale 800 in A2 trim we'd wager - with most bikes' twins and a couple of inline fours thrown in.

Triumph Trident fast facts

Engine: 660cc triple

Power: 80bhp @ 10250

Set height: 805mm

Weight: 189kg (wet)

Price: £7195



The chassis too is all new, with Triumph saying that it delivers the typical 'roadster' handling we've come to expect from the firm. What's especially nice is that even for the price point, it's got nice bits of kit as standard, including 41mm Showa Separate Function forks, Nissin callipers and Michelin Road 5 tyres.

Where it really begins to look special is in the tech department. The Trident comes with a ride by wire throttle, so it has got

two riding modes (Road and Rain) that change the characteristics of both the throttle map and the traction control.

ABS is standard stuff, not your fancy cornering malarkey, although Triumph claim their ABS levels are set at full lean, going some way to imitate the function of a cornering ABS. There's some optional extra tech too, including a quickshifter/autoblipper and even tyre pressure monitors.



All of the tech is controlled through Triumph's latest colour TFT display, with a drop in black and white LCD. Unlike other colour dashes that just give funky colours to the tachometer, the dash on the Trident can be paired with a smartphone (if you buy the connectivity module) unlocking phone calls, music and a sat nav.

But leave aside all the funky new stuff and one of our favourite bits about this new bike is how Triumph have made real efforts to reduce the cost of ownership. For a start the service intervals are just every 10,000 miles, which is a fair bit higher than most of the competition.

Then when it does go in for a service, Triumph have made an effort to reduce the time it spends in the workshop, with a service time nearly half that of some competitors. Lastly the Trident comes with a two-year, unlimited mileage warranty. And all this for just £7199. Consider us seriously impressed.

Blog: Motorcycles no longer dangerous - official

By Steve Rose 07/12/2018 Bennetts



Good news fellow riders. Motorcycling is now officially and governmentally safe. All those years spent explaining to relatives and friends about how it's not really that dangerous are over. All those tedious conversations with colleagues relating how their neighbour's nephew's biker child had his head come off...twice are history. Motorcycling is no longer dangerous.

How do we know this? Well, there was a report published recently about vulnerable road users and how the Government is planning to help make them safer. In it there are discussions about many impressive initiatives to improve the safety of people choosing to cycle, walk and ride horses, but no mention anywhere of motorcyclists. How brilliant is that? Finally, after all those years being vulnerable and dangerous, motorcycling must now be officially safe.

Of course, most of us knew this already because we've ridden hundreds of thousands of miles and the worst thing that's happened is an occasional scabby elbow. Yes, there are people who get hurt in the same way as there are people who get hurt falling down the stairs, but overall the number of miles ridden compared to the number of heads that come off is very much in our favour.

What's interesting here though is that the proposed initiatives to help the vulnerable don't really include anything that makes them actively less vulnerable. So, instead of looking at maybe whether the wearing of cycle helmets should be made compulsory when using public roads, for example, or whether there should be a CBT for cyclists on the road, the paper focusses on things that will make motorists more aware of cyclists without the cyclists actually having to take any more responsibility at all.

One suggestion is that motorists (including motorcyclists) may get an insurance discount if they undertake the National Bikeability training scheme. That's fine, but, in the same way that most

motorcyclists learn quickly that the only way to stay safe is to take responsibility for our own wellbeing, I'd suggest that it's long overdue for cyclists to do the same.

And I say this as a keen cyclist. I spend a lot of time on a push bike and, when I commute to work on one it's frightening just how dangerous it is. I'm not talking about cars and trucks here – where I live, I can do the whole journey from house to work on pockmarked, leaf-covered cycle paths. No, the dangerous bit about cycling is the difference in speed between me doing 15mph and the hundreds of pedestrians, schoolkids and dog walkers all ambling along at 2mph, staring at a phone, often with headphones in, completely unaware of the world around them.

Imagine being in a vehicle on the road where you were travelling seven times faster than the other traffic – the equivalent of doing 210mph in a 30mph limit. How dangerous would that be? Cycling in amongst dawdling pedestrians makes spanking a spider seem safe. And that's before you add in the dogs not respecting the racing line, wet leaves, pot holes, push chairs and people just stopping for no reason.

Allowing anyone to ride something clearly as dangerous as a push bike without protective kit or training is reckless, bordering on insanity and yet, as parents and parliamentarians, all of us send our kids off into this anarchic battle zone without any protection at all.

Ok, I'm being overly dramatic here...probably. And cycling on cycle paths is dangerous in the 'scabby elbow' arena, rarely more. Being run over by a push chair isn't as life-changing as being squashed by a Ford Transit, but in congested city centres a cyclist doing 15mph is still going much, much quicker than most of the traffic and pedestrians around them and those drivers or walkers are mostly completely unaware of anything other than whatever's going on their phones.

So, the Government's new focus on these horrifically dangerous methods of transport such as walking is welcome, but please, have the conversation with the cyclists and the pedestrians about taking responsibility for their own actions. Don't just make it our fault, we're still getting used to being safe.

When My Mate Dave Bought a Harley Davidson

We looked up with interest tinged with mild excitement – that chugging sound of a vee twin, another Vincent? We witnessed Dave’s distinctive helmet approaching, like an orange moon floating above a bloated front tyre, deeply valanced mudguard and oddly positioned tiny headlamp! Oh no an American lump!

He stopped and dismounted with exaggerated caution leaving ‘it’. Side valve engine ticking softly as it cooled. Bulbus and clumsy leaning precariously on its side stand. Its front wheel turned into the lean with the headlamp looking down as if shamefaced among the race bred machinery in the club.

The handlebars pointed vacuously at the sky like a child’s drawing of a cow’s horns, saddle like a wedge cut from a lily pad perched on springs. “What do you think?” He asked cheerfully. There was a thoughtful silence.

“How much” asked Ron at last, ever practical.

“Hundred and twenty.” Dave said, slapping the tank with his gauntlets in a proprietary way.

Harry looked down disparagingly at the large flatfoot boards and the hand operated gear lever quadrant on the tank.

“Hey! You could have got a scooter for that!”

“And gone faster” said Bob to loud guffaws

“It’ll go on forever though” said Dave defensively.

“It’ll need to, if you expect to arrive anywhere” said Harry.

We all fell about laughing.

Dave turned on offended silence, swinging his leg over the saddle with studied nonchalance.

“Be careful,” said Bob, “remember to get off and walk when you come to a bend in the road and whatever you do, don’t drop it, we’ll never get it upright again, there’s only four of us here!” More laughter.

“Ok” said Harry, “We’ll just go at get a meal, have a shower, have a kip, get changed and catch up with you in a couple of miles.”

We walked into the Ace, chuckling, with the sound of Dave’s exhaust echoing as he set off.

As we sat down with cups of tea, the door opened, and someone walked in; it was Dave. Was that a slight limp?

We waited as the waitress signalling that our meals were ready.

Dave looked sheepish. “Er, would someone mind giving me a hand please?” he said. “Bit of oil on the corner as I went out.”

We nodded and rose silently, trooping out leaving our four teas and four plates of eggs, beans and chips on the formica counter top, steaming in silent tribute to the fellowship that binds all true comrades of the motorcycling brotherhood, even those who break the rules and go beyond the bounds of good taste.

GR

Regular venues

Wednesday evenings from 8pm in the Adelaide Public House, Teddington.

Saturday mornings Sam's café, Nelson Road in Whitton. If there's a big rugby match on at Twickenham Stadium when we usually reconvene at Power Mill Lane café so it's worth getting hold of one of the team to get confirmation.

24/7 We have a Club page so please "follow" both and make sure your views are heard.



FIND IT OUT AS IT HAPPENS:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/8085330049/?ref=bookmarks>

Contact: This document comes out monthly and is restricted to club members. The FB pages are more promotional and open to a wider audience so there may be more detail in this than we would share on line.

Membership Benefits

CBS in Whitton give us a 10% discount.

BMF (British Motorcycle Federation). The affiliate membership is worth

mentioning when you next seek an insurance renewal or similar.



Breaktime Answers:

What is it?



Mettise Mk 5 Café Racer

Which UK Racetrack is this?



Lateral Thinking:

Driving in Circles

The man finds himself commuting to work in his car every day. Upon arrival to work each morning, he proceeds to drive his car in a circle four times before finally parking it and entering his office building. Why does the man drive in circles every day?

Driving in Circles: This man is not a crazy nutcase. Instead, he works in a congested part of town and is required to park on the fifth floor of a nearby parking structure every day.