

ANY QUESTION ANSWERED

If we don't know the answer, we'll find the person who does

Q Can I swap bikes for a summer tour?

A group of us are going on a summer tour of Europe. Since we decided to go, I have been lucky enough to meet a girl who's keen to come with me as a pillion. The trouble is I've only got a single-seat GSX-R750, but a mate with a garage full of bikes has said I can borrow his Honda CB1000F. Where do I stand on insurance and taking the logbook in my mate's name?
Will Cooper, Bedford

A Answered by Alastair McFarlane, MCI Tours
A loan arrangement might seem the simplest solution, but it can open a can of worms. How do I know this? Because we had 'friends' who swapped bikes on tour. One binned it with his pal's girlfriend on the back (fortunately not too badly hurt) and it was an uninsured mess that cost money and friendship. So don't do that.

The solution is for you to swap logbooks and put the Honda in your name via the DVLA with a receipt that says you have purchased the bike as seen and assume all responsibility for its condition and fitness for purpose. Make sure it is fit for your tour first though. Before you do that, check with your insurers that your policy for the single-seat GSX-R doesn't automatically exclude liability for

pillion passengers. You also need to check you have European cover for the places you intend to visit. You should also make sure you have comprehensive cover and not just the minimum under EU law. There is a remaining issue of insurance of the GSX-R. Your friend cannot insure a bike he does not own, so that bit gets messy. Perhaps you could just refit the pillion pegs and passenger seat on the GSX-R?



Borrowing a mate's bike is not as simple as it sounds

KIT CHOOSER

Q What's the choice on open-face lids?

I want something a bit different in an open-face helmet, something with a bit of style to go with my new Triumph Bonneville. Something a bit different – a touch lairy – maybe a 'hairy bikers' type of thing?
Andrew Boscombe, Norwich

quality and close-fitting. If you wanted something off the shelf that may tick your boxes, the HJC FG-70S, especially in the flashy new Aries flame job may work for you. The AGV RP60 is of a similar ilk and the Spada Raze has a couple of designs that may work – as does the Bell Custom 500. Perhaps the best of the off-the-shelf bunch is the Shoei J.O, which is a very close-fitting helmet and will work well with any classic style bike.

A Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles
What you've seen the hairy duo in are Davidas, which are British-made and great



£278-£399
Davidas Jet

£139.99
HJCFG-70S

£159.99
AGV RP60

£349.99
Shoei J.O

£159.99
Bell Custom 500

£69.99
Spada Raze

Q Why is my Honda NC750 stuck in gear?

My NC750 has racked up over 20,000 miles but it developed a serious fault with its automatic gearchange, getting stuck in gear until I switched it off. Then it reset itself and I could get it back to neutral to be recovered home. It's out of warranty.
Phil Nicholson, email

A Answered by Scott Bullett, Doble Motorcycles
The shift drum mechanism is linked to the gearchange motor by a pin. Unfortunately, the motor doesn't have much mechanical sympathy and often 'crashes' into each gear, putting undue pressure on that pin, which may damage the shift drum mechanism before it eventually snaps. It really needs a resistor to damp out some of the force. It takes about two hours labour, plus £157.27 for all the parts.



The pin that links the gear change to the shift drum on an NC750 can wear, sticking the bike in gear

Q Do I need to prime my Harley's oil cooler?

The oil cooler on my Harley-Davidson Street Glide has a leak all along the bottom joint between the grille and frame. When I fit the replacement, do I need to prime/bleed the new cooler to make sure there aren't any air locks in the system?
Alex Hamilton, email

A Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
Before you do anything, double check your frame number with Harley, as there has been a recall from leaking oil coolers. If you do it yourself the oil cooler is on the unpressurised side of the lubrication system, so there's no need to prime it. Just make sure you don't overtighten any bolts or unions.

The big cover up

Last week, we answered a question about motorcycle covers for bikes with a top box. In this, we forgot to mention the Oxford Aquatex cover (£29.99), designed to accommodate a top box for. A cover of this kind is available for most machines including scooters, motorcycles, quads and three-wheelers.

MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q Can I make my own bills?

I was taken out while filtering on my Triumph Tiger in September 2016. Before the accident I did all the housework as my partner has bad arthritis. I could not do the cleaning for a year, so I paid a cleaner cash-in-hand. The insurer on the other side has asked for invoices for the cleaner but because it is cash I don't have any. Can I prepare some invoices?
Garry Thornton, email

A You need to be very careful. In recent months, there have been many examples of cases where defendants' solicitors have applied to have claimants' cases thrown out for fundamental dishonesty and the courts appear to be taking a very hard line against exaggerated and dishonest claims. Even if one element of the claim is exaggerated but the rest of the claim is perfectly legitimate,

'You should definitely NOT produce your own invoices'

the whole claim can be thrown out. Indeed the court rules say it should be thrown out unless the result would cause 'substantial injustice.'

In addition, claimants found to be dishonest would have to pay the defendant's costs and potentially return any interim compensation payments, in addition to running the risk of imprisonment.

You should definitely not produce your own invoices. Either ask the cleaner to prepare them (he/she may not be willing to for tax reasons) and make sure they are 100% accurate. You and your wife should provide witness evidence to confirm the position. Any losses claimed for must be 100% accurate and true.

Andrew Campbell

Solicitor and author of the MCN Law column for the last ten years

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Bikelawyer

Motorcycle Accident Solicitors

EXPERT'S GUIDE TO... LIGHTWEIGHT WHEELS

Carbon fibre, magnesium and forged ally wheels can transform your handling



THE EXPERT

Chris Shelley is the CEO of Dymag Performance Wheels. Chris ran the company from late 1993

to 1997, before leaving to pursue a corporate career. He then resurrected the firm in 2011, after the company was liquidated in 2009.

WHO ARE DYMAG?

Lightweight wheel gurus Dymag have been producing products for cars and motorcycles for over 40 years. As well as producing items for general consumption, the firm have supplied forged aluminium wheels to various racing success stories, including the Hawk Racing BMW S1000RRs and Suzuki GSX-R1000, which have both seen Senior TT victories at the hands of Michael Dunlop.

Alongside this, they also produce lightweight wheels for five British Superbike teams, classic TT bikes and the Spirit Motorcycles Moto 2 race bike, which was piloted by Alastair Seeley and Dean Ellison in the 2017 British Supersport Championship.



Lightweight wheels make bikes steer faster

4 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1 Why do I want lightweight wheels?

If you imagine a standard rear wheel weighs 7kg, a forged aluminium alternative would weigh between 5-6kg, magnesium around 5kg and carbon around 3-4kg.

The biggest improvement is to the flickability of a bike. This is improved to the greatest degree when you reduce the weight of the rim. The lighter the outer most part of the wheel, the lesser the gyroscopic effect – allowing you to turn faster. As well as this, a lighter wheel will help you brake later and accelerate faster, as it reduces the wheel's moment of inertia.



Dymag's carbon fibre wheels have an aluminium hub

2 Why forged is lighter than cast

Forged wheels differ from the cast wheels on most production bikes because of their manufacturing process. Instead of the molten ally being poured or drawn into moulds, forged wheels start as a billet piece that is forced

into dies under heat and pressure. The raw forgings are then machined into the wheel's finished shape. Because the grains of the material are interlocked and in-line with the loads you can use less material for more strength.

3 Carbon is the strongest

Research has shown that aluminium wheels have a good fatigue life, however composite carbon is better. In general magnesium is the worst, however it depends on the wheel. A composite wheel demonstrates good resistance levels in low energy impacts and will

absorb some of it itself. In the same scenario, an aluminium wheel would dent. At a higher level of impact, where aluminium would be distorted beyond use, carbon will also experience delamination.

4 Magnesium wheels need the most care

Magnesium wheels are slowly being phased out for racing. WSB and BSB switched to forged ally wheels a few years ago and this mean wheel companies increased their development and made them lighter. At the same time there are always concerns over their longevity. This is caused by galvanic corrosion, which occurs when the metal comes in contact with things like air and salt.

If you get a dent, scratch or crack in magnesium wheels, then this can cause stress corrosion, which can then lead to failure. Be very wary of old magnesium wheels. You must check them regularly, which leads to question marks around their future compared to carbon and forged aluminium.

Next week Powdercoating

