

# ANY QUESTION ANSWERED

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

## OWNING & RIDING

### Q Why is my oil light flashing when I brake hard?

Every time I ride my Suzuki GSX-R1000 K1 hard and brake heavily the oil warning light comes on for a few seconds. Why?  
**Dale Parris, London**

**Answered by: Steve Scully, GT Motorcycles**  
From what you are saying your oil pressure is getting marginal now and again, so there are three areas to check in order. It's unlikely, but the oil pump could be losing efficiency. That's easily tested at a Suzuki dealer using a pressure gauge that can be bolted into the motor. Make sure the engine is at operating temperature first. Next is the oil pressure release valve. It's bolted into the sump so the front pipes have to come off, then the sump. It's a simple ball and spring switch that you can inspect and wash out with fuel. If it's still playing up, then it's a dicky oil pressure switch that's giving an inaccurate reading.



Your oil pressure release valve could be at fault. It's a simple fix



Aftermarket dash will cure your R7

### Q It's high time I sorted out my R7's dodgy clocks

The speedo and warning lights on my 2001 Yamaha R7 only work sporadically. The rev counter is not digital and still functions. The fault was traced to a faulty regulator-rectifier that allowed too much current through. That's been replaced, but the clocks are proving impossible to source.  
**Duncan Pearce, email**

**Answered by: Stuart Gaines, Herne Bay Motorcycles**  
It looks like you are going to have to go aftermarket. Fortunately a lightweight Taiwanese Koso DB01R clock assembly is only about around £90 (www.digital-speedos.co.uk). Buy a kit online and it will come with everything you should need and is a good-looking upgrade to get you back on the road.

### Q I can't get out exploring on my stuttery Triumph XC

My 2013 Triumph Explorer XC will run OK for a few days then when I hit a slight downhill after doing six miles or so at 70mph, it stutters and the engine management light flickers.  
**Kev Cross, email**

**Answered by: Bryn Phillips, Total Triumph**  
It sounds similar to an issue I had with a very early Explorer. There was an inconsistency with the throttle position sensor signal and because the bike uses a ride-by-wire system, it would shut itself down. I cured the problem by replacing the throttle body.

### Q CBR misfire is driving me round the bend

My 2002 Honda CBR600F has an intermittent misfire that's driving me mad. Every four to six months number one cylinder stops firing when starting from cold. After a few seconds it's ok, then over the next few days the misfire gets more persistent until below 3500rpm it won't fire and the exhaust smells of petrol. Above that it's fine. After a week or so everything goes back to normal. I use my bike every day for commuting and it's worrying me.  
**Charlie Thomson, Sevenoaks**

**Answered by: Scott Bullett, Doble Motorcycles**  
As it's only affecting one cylinder it can't be a systemic fault in either the fuel system or the electrics. If you can smell fuel it's not being starved of petrol either. So, we are looking at electrics and as the fault is on one cylinder it's probably the combined plug cap and coil. They can rust internally and then develop a little crack, which allows the elements in.



Don't panic, good wet grip is possible

### Q Are there any cruiser tyres with good wet grip?

I have a Victory Cross Roads fitted with Dunlop Elites. They are OK in the dry but very 'wooden' in the wet. Are there any options?  
**Rob Brown, email**

**Answered by: Bryn Phillips, Cambrian Tyres**  
There are very few tyres made in the 130/70 R18 and 180/60 R16 sizes for the Victory Cross Roads and even fewer are actually approved for use on the bike. Other than the original Dunlops just the Avon Cobras or Metzeler ME888 Marathon Ultra are recommended and either will give better feel and much better wet grip than the Dunlops. Unlike tyres such as Michelin's Pilot Road 4 or Bridgestone's T30 EVO that deliver outstanding wet grip for riders of bikes such as the GSX-R750 or VFR800F, there are no cruiser tyres that give similar levels of wet grip.

## TRAVEL & TOURING

### Q Does touring the globe have to cost the Earth?

**Answered by: Andy Davidson, MCN adventure expert**  
Bike travel will cost you money but that doesn't mean you need to re-mortgage the house. You can make it as expensive or as cheap as you like, depending on the type of adventure you seek. If you want a soft bed in a hotel and a nice meal out every night then you'll burn through your cash. But you can do it cheaply

by controlling your two biggest expenses: accommodation and food. Take a tent and get into the camping spirit. Forget about campsites, carry your water in a Rotopax and wild camp near a lake so you can wash yourself and your clothes. Buy food, prepare sandwiches for lunch and cook dinners on an open fire or an MSR fuel stove that runs on petrol. To break

up the solitude of camping, try out hostels every so often using [hostelworld.com](http://hostelworld.com). They are much cheaper than hotels and many of them have private rooms if you don't like the idea of sharing with hippy backpackers. Also, [couchsurfing.com](http://couchsurfing.com) is an excellent service which allows you to meet people who are willing to let you stay in their homes for free.



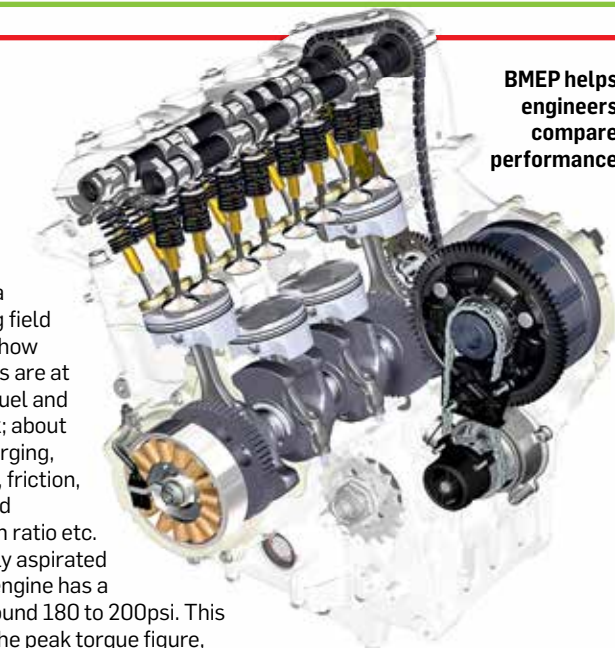
Of course, it is possible to take the spirit of adventure a little too far

## TECH WATCH

### Q What is BMEP and do I need to care?

**Answered by: Simon Hargreaves, MCN technical expert**  
Answering the last question first: no, you don't need to care what BMEP is unless you're an engine designer or a tuner. But if you want to know... BMEP is Brake Mean Effective Pressure, and it's the average pressure needed to push down on a piston to achieve a measured torque output. It isn't a measurement in itself; it's back-calculated from peak torque. The equation is: torque x 150.8 (a four-stroke constant)/ capacity (cubic inches) = BMEP (psi). BMEP is used (among others) such as IMEP, PMP and FMEP – don't ask) to compare the efficiency of multiple engine designs or modifications regardless of size, configuration or revs. So it basically

gives them a level playing field to compare how good engines are at converting fuel and air into work; about cylinder charging, combustion, friction, heat loss and compression ratio etc. A normally aspirated sportsbike engine has a BMEP of around 180 to 200psi. This figure, and the peak torque figure, has remained fairly constant over the years, increasing slightly as technology around gasflow, friction, valve timing etc has progressed. New materials and improved component design have permitted higher rev ceilings. This means peak



BMEP helps engineers compare performance

torque has moved higher in the rev range, and that makes a big difference to peak power, so a 1992 Yamaha FZR1000 EXUP had a BMEP of 176psi and a 2015 BMW S1000RR has a BMEP of 183psi.

### Q Can I get a decent lid for less than £100?

I know your head is pretty vital, but as a newbie biker and student my budget is very tight. What choice do I have for less than £100?  
**John Younger, Downham**

**Answered by: Chris Dabbs, MCN**  
Although the premium brands cost hundreds, a full-face helmet that meets all the latest safety standards

can be had from as little as £50, and you have a choice of flip-fronts in that price range too. The difference in quality is most obvious in the linings and the visor clarity and you won't get the latest racer-replica paint, but features like quick-release buckles, chin and breathguards and vents are common. What's most important is that it fits you snugly and comfortably.



**MT Thunder Italian**



**Box BX-1 plain**



**AGV Basic One**



**MT Flux Solid**

## MCN LAW

Your legal questions

### Q To court or not to court...

After four years of stressful legal action resulting from a run-in with a tractor I finally have a trial date for this November. My legal team is recommending I agree to the Defendant's lawyer's offer of a mediation meeting to try and settle my case before trial. I want my time in court so the farmer realises just how much his stupidity has affected me. I want the court to officially hold him to blame. The problem is my solicitors say that I could be made to pay legal fees if I don't agree to this meeting. Is this correct or can I just insist on the trial taking place?  
**Graham Sullivan, Teeside**

Courts are very keen to encourage parties to try and settle claims by way of alternative dispute resolution. This can take the form of formal mediation (with an independent mediator) or a more informal joint settlement meeting arrangement where the parties and the legal representatives discuss their differences and hopefully reach a settlement satisfactory to

### 'It would be rare for me not to advise giving a settlement meeting a try'

all. The benefit of such meetings is that they remove the risk of going to trial (losing or doing worse than you may do through a negotiated settlement), they are much cheaper than going to court and they free up the courts for other actions unsuitable for mediation.

Lawyers are required to confirm to the court that they have explained mediation options to their clients and the court can impose costs sanctions on parties if they unreasonably refuse to mediate. It would be rare for me not to advise giving a settlement meeting a try and I would follow the advice of your lawyers – if the talks break down then at least you tried settlement and then the trial will go ahead.



**Andrew Campbell**  
Solicitor and author of the MCN Law column for the last five years

**Andrew Campbell, Bikelawyer.**  
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