

ANY QUESTION

ANSWERED ✓

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

A bit of copaslip on the CBR's grommets will make for easy future fairing removals



OWNING & RIDING

Q How can I free off a seized fairing fastener?

I was about to give my Honda CBR600RR a good clean when one of the bolts on the V-piece under the radiator just kept turning. So I thought I'd take the left-hand fairing off and carefully remove the V-piece. Then I found another bolt seized in its grommet in the fairing. How can I get them out? Tom Affleck, Liverpool

Answered by Scott Bullett, Doble Motorcycles
These grommets have got a threaded brass top hat insert, which gets corroded and seizes – but there are several ways you can go about removing them. Give it a good soak with penetrating oil first, and if you can get around the back of the grommet you may be

able to grip the top hat with pliers or small molegrips and gently force the fastener to move, but beware rounding it off. Here in the workshop we've got a rattle gun which spins a lot faster and is more successful at 'shocking' and freeing the thread off.

If it still won't budge and you can see enough of the rubber portion

you can slash and break that up with a very sharp craft knife until you can remove the rubber, which will allow the brass insert to pass through the larger hole. Whenever we have a bike in for a service we always use a dab of copaslip on all the fasteners and it's the first bit of preventative maintenance I do when I buy a used bike.

Q Which do-it-all jacket will keep me comfy in all conditions?

I'm looking for an all-season jacket with a removable thermal liner for under £300. I don't really like waterproof linings; I'd prefer to slip on a waterproof oversuit and keep the rain out. Nick Paulley, MCN forums

Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles

There are a number of three-layer jackets which tick your boxes. They have a thermal

liner closest to your body with a waterproof liner zipped in place between that and the outer shell. The waterproof liner also works as a windproof layer, so it will give you some warmth and it's breathable – waterproof oversuits are not. Your best bet is the RST Adventure II. The thermal and waterproof layers are interchangeable so you can choose which layer (or both) you want to have.



RST Adventure II
from £249.99



Dainese Sandstorm
from £379.99



Alpinestars Bogota
from £209.99



Spada Compass
from £198.95



Glitchy fault code and warning light could just be damp in FJR's electrics

Q Is FJR1300 warning light a storm in a teacup?

I braved Storm Katie over Easter on my Yamaha FJR1300 and was rewarded with a yellow engine warning light. At first it flickered, but by the last day of my mini-tour it was on continuously, along with a '31' fault code. I was able to get home and once it had dried out for a few days the fault code and light have both gone away. Where do I start trying to trace it? Leslie Peters, Earlswood

Answered by Ernie Lodge, FJR Centre

When a warning light is intermittent it's generally a 'glitch in the matrix' caused by moisture. The FJR electronics run on low voltages and it doesn't take much dampness to make it borderline. Now it's dried out I'd pull apart the main connectors and clean out any corrosion. If the '31' code was real it would indicate a lean air/fuel ratio, which could be caused by a faulty fuel pump giving low fuel pressure, clogged injectors, a defective oxygen sensor, a short circuit in the loom or a malfunctioning ECU. So focus on the connectors in those circuits, then give the whole bike a good coating of corrosion inhibitor on a low-humidity day to give it the best chance.

Q Can a Cat B write-off go back on the road?

My son bought a Kawasaki ZR-7 last week but only carried out an MCN Bike Check after we had collected it. The check revealed the bike was made a Category B write-off in 2010. I thought Cat A and Bs had to be taken off the road, so I'm worried it could be dangerous. Trevor Jones, Golders Green

Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN

There is no legal impediment to a Category B write-off being put back on the road, as there is only a code of conduct between insurers, the police and Government departments, not legislation. If it has passed MoTs since 2010 and you are happy with the way the bike handles then you shouldn't have a problem. You may find it harder to sell on, assuming your buyer performs a bike check before buying. You have no legal recourse against the buyer, unless you directly asked them if the bike had been written off.



The F800ST's mild steel box-section frame can suffer excess heat transfer

Q How can I stop my BMW burning my legs?

My BMW F800ST runs brilliantly, but I'm only 5ft 4in so my legs rest on the bike's frame and it gets extremely hot – so hot that I have to hold them clear of the chassis at times. The dealer has assured me there is nothing wrong, but I'm not convinced – should the frame really get that hot? Tracey Foster, Nottingham

Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN

There is a lot of heat transfer from the mild steel box-section frame, even with the ST's 'second skin' design. If you haven't already had the lowering kit fitted to the bike, fitting one might position your legs away from the frame. If you've done this and are still suffering, you could buy a sheet of heat-resistant silicone rubber and trim it to size before attaching some to the relevant parts of the frame with cable ties. This stuff is used in ovens and can cope with 350°C so it should help you keep your legs cooler. Also, as leather is better at resisting heat than textile, leather trousers will be your best bet for keeping cooler.

TRAVEL & TOURING

Q I'm off to the Spanish desert, how do I keep my cool?

By Chris Scott, Sahara expert and author of The Adventure Motorcycle Handbook

Dehydration kicks in once 2% of our water volume has been lost, and by the time you feel thirsty you are already there. Go over that and it's severe headaches. Go to 15% and it's organ failure. So here's how to keep cool. Dark colours absorb heat, light colour suits reflect it. Keep your boots on, otherwise the ground and engine will heat your

feet and swell them up. A helmet provides insulation against hot air and protects from the sun. Soak a scarf with water and wrap it around your neck to micro chill the blood passing through the carotid artery in your neck on its way to the brain. Use rehydration tablets and drink frequently. Rest in the shade and know where water or help might lie ahead. However, exposing your skin to air that's hotter than your body temperature

(37°C) will increase your body temperature and make you feel worse. Riding in a T-shirt will cause the layer of perspiration on your skin to evaporate faster than your body can produce it. Then you will sweat more to compensate and dehydrate even faster, you'll feel better up to the point when you pass out. So, wear a soaking wet T-shirt under your jacket and seal all the vents and cuffs and you'll be amazed at the difference it makes.



Wear a wet T-shirt under your kit to help stay cool in the desert

TECH WATCH

Q How far in advance do tyre manufacturers do their R&D work?

Answered by Mark Sears, Product Support Manager for Dunlop UK
Research and development never stops. The R&D teams are always reacting to the challenge and looking to be first with technologies in the market place.

Relating this to our new RoadSmart III, we have to ensure the product works on different bikes and in different terrains and climates so there is a lot of physical testing that goes into the development of a tyre prior to its launch. This all happens once the work has gone into the computer-aided designs which we might use to develop tyres.

For example, we had technical specifications and drawings of the finished RoadSmart III over a year before the launch, however the tyres had to be thoroughly tested in all conditions. Testing in this way gives accurate figures on things like mileage and wear rates. These are very important factors to a sports-touring tyre. Tweaks would have been made to the tyre after the physical testing as part of its development process.

As soon as a tyre is launched, work has usually already begun on its successor. This is what the R&D teams do – they constantly evolve and develop in line with many external and internal factors. It is an ever-evolving cycle.

During development of the RoadSmart III, Dunlop engineers completed a 31-month test and development programme comprising an incredible 1.2 million kilometres (746,000 miles) of evaluation. They evaluated over



Dunlop put over 746,000 testing miles into the new RoadSmart III

200 different tyre compound and construction options and the intensive test programme focused on new materials, tread concepts and advanced compound development to get to the final tyre specification.

MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q How do I get myself an interimpayment?

I had pretty bad injuries in May 2014 when I was side-swiped by a car. I am still not at work (I am an electrician by trade) as I still need further surgery. I have required a great deal of care, which my wife has provided. I have also spent a lot of money on physio and gym equipment to try and get back to my former self. The car driver's insurer admitted that the accident was his fault but their solicitors are refusing to give me enough money to get by. I have no more savings and am at a loss as to how I am meant to survive without an income. They have only paid me £5000 so far in addition to paying for my written-off Ducati. What can I do as my family is suffering?

Chris Long, Bath

'There is no good reason why you cannot force the insurer to pay'

The good news is that liability has been admitted. The bad news is that the solicitors acting for the insurer are either being mean or your solicitor is not requesting adequate interim payments. An interim payment is a "payment on account" of your compensation claim to tide you over until such time as you are compensated in full.

Assuming you have medical evidence linking the accident to the inability to work and you can prove a history of pre-accident earnings then there is no good reason why you cannot force the insurer to pay you your lost income to date (as well as other financial losses).

The £5000 amount sounds hopelessly low so I suggest you speak to your solicitor and ask him to threaten a court application for a significant interim payment in the absence of the insurer paying up within 14 days.



Andrew Campbell
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