

ANY QUESTION ANSWERED

If we don't know the answer, we'll find the person who does
Send your questions to: advice@motorcyclenews.com or 01733-468002

Q Trackday tyres are blunting my Blade

You do have options but you might need to change the way you ride

The rear tyre on the 2017 Honda Fireblade SP is a 190/50 ZR17 and nobody I have found makes a trackday tyre to suit this size. If you change it to a 190/55 ZR17 (plenty of tyre choice at this size) the bike's electrics will play up. It's so bad I thought the back wheel was loose! What's the solution?
Scott Wills, email

A Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
No tyre manufacturer currently makes a 190-width track tyre (slick, rain or treaded) with a 50% aspect ratio. As soon as tyre designers started making 55-aspect ratio 190s and racers discovered that they gave more side grip and drive traction, that was it for the 50-aspect ratio trackday/race tyre and that was quite a few years ago!
For the past few years, 1000cc racers have moved on

to 200/55-17 and 200/60-17. In 190/50-17 form, racing street tyres, such as the Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP, Metzeler Racetec RR K3 or Bridgestone Battlax RS10 are as extreme as it gets.
We have ridden the bike on different size tyres, like the Bridgestone Racing Battlax V02 200/65-17 slick and 55-aspect tyres without a noticeable change in performance.
I suspect that the Honda's road-focused traction control design is catching you out on the track. It assumes that if you have an 'event' that makes it kick in, you will ease off the throttle as well, allowing the traction control to become a little loose. This means it keeps cutting in and out if you keep the throttle pinned for a fast corner exit. The trick is to ease off the throttle and then get back on it, rather than 'lean' on the traction control all the time.



KIT CHOOSER

Q What are the best boots to wear with my A-stars textiles?

I'm looking for a new pair of boots to wear under my Alpinestars textile trousers. There is so much choice out there that it's proving difficult to make up my mind. Can you please advise on the best options for about £200?
John Weir, Grangemouth

A Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles
I'm going to take a punt and assume that as you're wearing textile trousers you'll be after something waterproof. Your

best bet is to find a shop with a selection to try on with your trousers. You'll probably find the Alpinestars SMX-6 WPs work well with your trousers and the TCX S-Speeds may also work for you, as would the TCX S-Sportour Evos. These are all sporty style boots with toe sliders, if that's not your thing then maybe look at the Sidi Black Rains or the Dainese ST Long Ranges. For me, the best boots in this category are the Alpinestars Webs. They're great value as they're Gore-Tex lined and very reliable and durable.



Q Why won't this GSX-R start?

My mate went out today on his Suzuki GSX-R1000. He parked up to go into a shop, came out, put the key in, fuel pump primes, clutch in and hit the starter and then... nothing. The only thing that happens is the fuel pump repriming. It doesn't even turn over. It's ridden in all weathers. So far, he's sprayed the switchgear and sidestand switch with WD40, but still no go.
Adrian Fellows, email

A Answered by Steve Scully, GT Motorcycles
He needs to check that the neutral light is coming on correctly. If it isn't, the bike will think it's in gear full-time and won't fire up. If there's no joy there, it is probably one of the cut-out switches. Start with the sidestand switch as that's most exposed to road muck - especially at this time of year - and also easy to bypass to test, then take a look at the clutch switch.



Your first step is to check that the neutral light is coming on properly

Q How do I give my springs a Spring clean?

I want to give the rear shocks on my 2005 Suzuki GSX1400 a really good clean up, but I don't know how to remove the springs.
Ed Smith, email

A Answered by Gareth Evans, Reactive Suspension
The spring is held in place by a collar at the top of the shock. Once you have reduced the preload to minimum, and if you are really strong and have a helper, it's possible to compress the spring by hand, then slide the collar out. If you can't manage that, there are car spring compressors available which clamp onto the spring coils. You use a spanner to wind them tight. There's a fair risk that the painted finish of the springs will be damaged, as they are designed for the wider coils on cars. Your best bet is to take them to a suspension specialist with the right motorcycle-specific spring compressor. I use a WP compressor that also works on forks. At £257, it's probably a tool too far for you.

MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q Will wrong trousers hit my payout?

A car pulled out on me back in the summer and left me with an injury to my left leg. Fortunately, it was nothing too serious. My solicitor is now telling me that his insurer wants to reduce my compensation by 25% because I was wearing trousers that were not protective. They say my injuries would have been less serious. Is this right?
Harry, email

There is nothing requiring bikers to wear protective clothing such as gloves, boots, jackets or trousers

A This is not right, no. Bikers are legally required to wear helmets. There is nothing requiring bikers to wear protective clothing such as gloves, boots, jackets or trousers. The Highway Code advises that 'strong boots, gloves and suitable clothing may help to protect you if you are involved in a collision.' The Highway Code does not say it will protect you, which is partly the reason there is no legal requirement. This advisory guidance is not compulsory.

There is no statutory obligation to wear protective trousers while riding and, as such, a rider cannot be held to be in breach of a law that does not exist. Further, I know of no court decisions that states that a rider can have their compensation reduced for the lack of protective trousers. The insurer is trying to apply the law relating to seat belts worn by car drivers. In such cases, there can be a 25% or 15% reduction in compensation depending on whether a seatbelt was worn and the difference it would have made.

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

Andrew Campbell, Bikelawyer.
Visit www.bikelawyer.co.uk or email andrew@bikelawyer.co.uk or call 01446 794169



Motorcycle Accident Solicitors

EXPERT'S GUIDE TO...

Motorcycle oils

We call it oil but your lubricant is actually a complex mixture of high-tech chemicals



Your oil is a cocktail of clever compounds

THE EXPERT

Martyn Waterhouse, 33, is the Technical Director at Rock Oil and has been with the company his whole career - starting in the lab as a technician 16 years ago.

Oil is the lifeblood of your engine and it doesn't just stop all those furiously rotating metallic parts from welding themselves together. It also prevents corrosion, transports particulates to the oil filter, neutralises the acids produced by the combustion process and cools components.
Bike oils are a blend of base oils, detergents and dispersants. A mineral base oil is the bottom rung, so we use a type of synthetic compound of polyalphaolefin (PAO) molecules, linked with esters (derived from the reaction between an alcohol and a carboxylic acid).
Viscosity modifiers (VM) are long chains of synthetic polymers. When cold, they are tightly coiled, as it allows these polymer chains to pass by each other freely. When they get hot, they unravel and trap the oil molecules around them, so the oil doesn't get too thin as heat increases.
Detergents remove deposits from the engine, while dispersants carry them in suspension until they get to the filter. But, these additives can work for or against each other and any type of motor oil is a fine balance of chemicals.



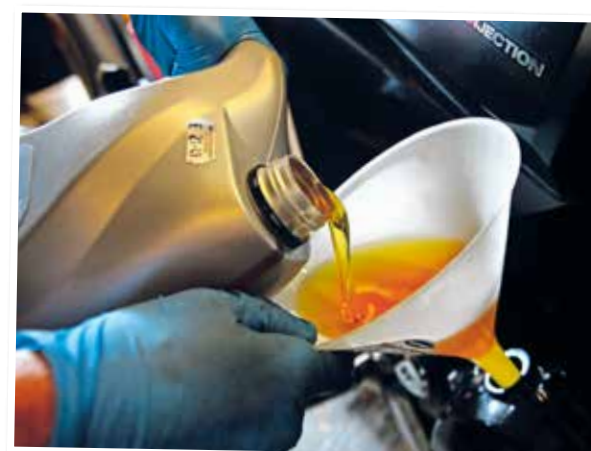
Factory teams and smaller efforts use different oil depending on their budget for stripping engines

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW...

Which standard?
There are two parallel standards for oils: API and JASO. In the 1930s the American Petrol Institute (API) started classifying oil for petrol and diesel engines with 'C' for Compression Ignition Engines like diesels and 'S' for Spark Ignition Engines using petrol, followed by a second letter to show performance level. The very latest is API SN for petrol engines. To get that, an oil has to pass various tests with a new engine on a testbed, which is run, stripped and then assessed for wear, deposits of carbon and other debris.

Cams are hard to lubricate, with the lobes often only getting 'splashed' by engine oil. To meet the SN-standard, wear had to reduce from 120 microns for the SL standard to 90 for SN. The Japanese Automobile Standards Organisation (JASO) came up with their

own standards, with a wet clutch friction test in the mid-90s. This is because friction modifiers introduced into vehicle engine oil were playing havoc with wet clutches on bikes.
On the back of every bottle of bike oil, you will see a JASO rating. It started out as MA - high friction and allowed with wet clutches,



Your oil gets mashed up by the engine so change it on schedule

and MB, which was not suitable for wet clutches. In 2005, MB was dropped and MA split into MA1 and MA2, with MA2 as the highest.
All change
Because the engine oil is lubricating the gearbox and clutch, the viscosity modifiers (VM) it contains end up getting mechanically

sheared, which reduces the viscosity of the oil over time.
We add anti-wear additives that act as a sacrificial layer that chemically bond with the surfaces to give them a slippery coating. An engine under extreme loads will use 10W 50 rated oil.
For every viscosity grade you move up, you lose 3% of your power because the molecules are bumping into each other. So, a privateer race team will use heavier oil as they can't afford to strip an engine all the time, while a factory team will run thinner oil to chase power.

Wisn't for weight...
It's for 'winter' as your engine oil has to maintain its viscosity across a broad range of temperatures, so it must meet more than one viscosity requirement.
The winter viscosity can be anything from SAE 0W, which must be pumpable at -40°C, through to a far less

severe SAE 25W, which must be pumpable only at -15°C.
The summer or high temperature viscosity is measured at 100°C, which is the standard operating temp in sumps, and 150°C, which is a High Temperature High Shear (HTHS) test - looking at main bearing wear. HTHS viscosity is particularly important for racing applications.

Next week

How fuel injection took over the world

