

Talking point

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'Don't treat racing like dodgems'

Will age limits be enough to make racing safer? No, not on their own. Big grids don't help matters as there are more things to be hit by, so reducing the grid size will only mitigate the dangers slightly. Perhaps grid spacing could help on the earlier parts of the race but performance will always bring the riders together eventually. This is a non-contact sport and should remain that way so the FIM/Dorna need to be more draconian, whoever the offender. Let's get back to rewarding skill – our sport is dangerous enough without turning it into high-speed dodgems. Time to start a new debate over when 'rubbing fairings' is actually ramming. **John Cox, email**



STAR LETTER

Write something that spikes our interest and you could get selected for the Star Letter slot and receive this brilliant Maintenance Pack from our friends at XCP worth £30



True spirit of adventure

I was reading about Honda's new CRF300 Rally (MCN, December 1) and wondering who it might be suitable for when I found the answer in a new YouTube video from Noraly Schoenmaker, aka 'Itchy Boots'. In case people don't know, she is a global adventurer from the Netherlands and a brilliant human being in every way. She has just returned from Africa and travelled on a seven-year-old Honda 250 but now has a new CRF300 for her next big adventure to Alaska. I can't wait to see footage from her latest travels. **Nigel Cousins, Bude**



Christopher's R850R is a work of art

Bleeding silly idea

I've seen several adverts for brake lever locks. Has no one realised the thieves merely need to crack the bleeders to release the brakes, making the bike nice and easy to wheel off somewhere secluded to remove the lock using a big rock or whatever? Seems a massive waste of time if all the thieves need is an 8mm spanner to render it useless. **Ross Curtis, email**

Keeping it simple

Here's a pic of my elderly BMW R850R painted by my daughter. I despair at the ever-increasing electronic wizardry built into new bikes and wonder if all this tech will prove as durable as my plain and simple old Beemer which runs like a Swiss watch after 26 years and is easily maintained. No wonder Royal Enfield are doing so well with bikes that encapsulate biking freedom in its purest form. **Christopher Williams, email**

Common sense on speed

I do find it disappointing that we have fellow riders who feel that all speeders deserve penalties with the full weight of the law. Surely, everyone should see it is just a game? If every speeder was caught and prosecuted there would not be a single bus or cab driver (or anyone else) left on the road. The police used to draw a line between safe speeding for the conditions and outright dangerous speeding. Sadly, common sense involving motoring has long left the argument. **Ed Keogh, email**

Export-only bikes?

Congratulations TVS for rescuing Norton and for obviously investing massively in the future. But wait a minute, the Government have said that in a few years the sale of combustion powered vehicles will be banned in this country. That means that we will be reading about glorious new machines being made in the UK, but they will all be for export and we'll get some silent electric product. Yippee! **Allan Woodcraft, email**

'That's not a sh*t idea'

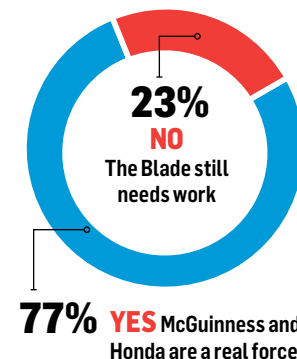
Living in London it was only a matter of time. My beloved 2018 Blade was stolen (on my birthday, no less). Not having access to a garage, it was chained to a lamppost outside my house, had a disc lock on the front and a throttle/brake lock on the bars. All were angle grinded off in less than 40 seconds. I won't be buying a new bike whilst I live in London. Just not worth it. How can we be in 2021 and firms still don't fit (1) trackers as standard (hidden where they can't be reached); and (2) some form of auto-wheel lock? Got my eye on a 1997 FireBlade now – cheap to buy, cheap to insure, fun and ULEZ exempt... Also considering buying an old van and storing the bike in there. As my friend commented: "That's actually not a shit idea." **Andy Morrison, email**

First biker on the scene

I was out cycling near Loomies café in West Meon, Hampshire when my friend skidded into a car and badly injured himself. One of the first people to stop and assist was an ex-Royal Navy diver called Roy (who was riding his immaculate Moto Guzzi V85). Roy was superb and did an excellent job of reassuring my friend, running through medical protocols and helping with keeping him occupied and distracted as he lay in the road. I would like to express my gratitude to Roy through your letters page – his calm assistance was hugely appreciated at a time of high stress. **Adam Jones, email**
Ed: Good work Roy and we hope your friend is making a speedy recovery

READER POLL

Has McPint done the right thing going back to Honda?



MCN
LAW

Your tricky legal questions answered

Q 'Am I going to get stung?'

In August I was out riding my Honda Blackbird when a taxi came across from the other side of the road and hit me, knocking me off and injuring me. The taxi driver blamed his swerve on an insect bite on his hand and his lawyers are arguing I have no case for compensation. They say their client was not negligent as the sting caused the loss of control and it was not his fault. Apparently he had his windows open and claims something stung him, causing him to veer across the road. How can this be right – I didn't do anything wrong and got taken out! **Ian, email**

A Your opponent's lawyers are relying on a legal defence known as "automatism". This is where someone cannot be held responsible for their actions if they had no knowledge/control of them. For example committing a crime whilst sleep walking

'Ask for evidence that the sting really happened'

or having an epileptic fit out of the blue whilst driving. An automatism defence can succeed where a person experiences a total loss of control through no fault of their own.

The Defendant will have to satisfy a court that he was stung and that sting caused him to swerve. You should ask for evidence such as photographs of his hand to show any evidence of a sting. I would also argue that even if he can prove he was stung, his response to being stung was wholly unreasonable.

Andrew Campbell

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

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