

Talking point

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'That ride was truly spectacular'

There are some positive experiences that live on in your memory for the rest of your life – your wedding day and the birth of your first child to name but two. However, another fabulous experience that will linger in my memory for a very long time is a near-perfect ride this week, along the A5 from Bangor in North Wales through Capel Curig and Betws y Coed and over the A543 to Denbigh. The roads were quiet, the weather warm, dry and bright and the scenery was absolutely spectacular. To me, it was definitive proof that motorcycling is indeed good for your mental health.

Phil Hesmondhalgh, email



Write something that spikes our interest, and you could get selected for the Star Letter slot. Each week one lucky reader will receive an MCN T-shirt in a variety of different designs

Manx memories

With the TT in full swing, we have been looking through old photos of my grandad racing in the 1959 TT on his 500cc Manx Norton. He raced a few TTs in the late 50s but had to pack it in when buying a house. Over the years he raced Nortons, AJSSs, Matchless, and Velocette singles and a Triumph Twin. His name is Jack Bullock, from Clitheroe, Lancashire and he's turning 90 in August but still reads MCN when he can. He's been very much looking forward to the TT races as he does every year.

Abigail Stansfield, email

Helping hand

My mate, Dave and I, both in our 70s, were in East Sussex on a trip from Yorkshire to France when we had a blowout on the sidocar wheel of our outfit. It was late Friday afternoon and I was worried we'd not make our ferry. Almost immediately Tom, security systems installer and fellow biker, pulled up in his van asking if we needed



Jack Bullock, turning 90 this year, seen here in the 1959 Isle of Man TT

help. Using his jack and my tools we soon had the wheel off. He then drove the two of us to Groombridge Motorcycles near Heathfield, leaving Dave with the bike. Tom even left Dave a garden chair! The guys at Groombridge had us ready to go in 30 minutes. When we got back to Dave he told us he'd had two more offers of help from passing bikers. Once again, a huge thank you Tom. I'll never say anything bad about southerners again, or at least about southern bikers!

Richard, Sheffield

Bikers are best

It's not often that motorcyclists get praised, however, over the last few weeks one of motorcycling's best routes in the south, has been closed due to a fire and a nearby building being unsafe. I have to praise the bikers who have opted to still visit Midhurst, regardless of the closure. There are two reasons for the praise, firstly, purchasing items from the shops here, who have been seriously affected by the reduction in traffic. Secondly, and probably the most important, those bikers who consider residents by switching off their bikes and pushing them through the narrow pathway.

Matt Ayling, West Sussex

Too many gadgets

As firms now place great emphasis on rider aids, is it possible that the reliability record for the bike is also given? I would be more interested in a reliable machine – a factor which can be impacted by electronics.

John White, email

GS is the benchmark

Every time a new ADV bike/model comes out it's labelled as a 'GS Beater'. But, just what is it beating the GS at? There isn't anything the GS/A does badly. It's not the most powerful in the sector, but it's far from underpowered. It's not the fastest, but it's no slouch. I've ridden other ADV bikes just to see what all the fuss was about and can find no fault with any of them. Though I'm a bit puzzled by some that redline to ridiculous levels and have stupid BHP numbers. I don't understand why the heck you would need that kind of performance, but then I don't design or make the things.

David Jackson, email

Go big, Norton!

What is the point of Norton tooling up to make just 200 naked V4CR café racers? Sales cannot justify the investment in energy, time, research, design and production of such a limited number of bikes. If Norton truly want to be a player in the global market they need to rethink their strategy and build 1000s of machines. They will never compete with the mass producers but they could have an important place in the niche luxury sector.

Jim Findlay, email

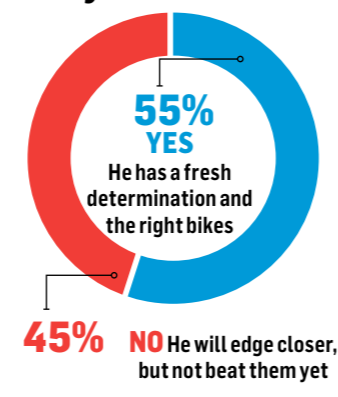
Pricey TT gear

Anyone coming over to the TT, be prepared for a shock at the prices for official merchandise (£25 for a cap, £26 for a T-shirt). The new suppliers have certainly upped the prices

Graham Bradley, email

READER POLL

Will Michael Dunlop beat McPint and Joey's win tallies?



MCN LAW

Your tricky legal questions answered

Q 'Should I just take the cash?'

I had an accident six weeks ago on the morning commute and the other driver's insurance have contacted me and said I don't need a solicitor. They have already repaired my bike and offered compensation. This seems reasonable but my dad is telling me that I need a lawyer to stop me from being ripped off.

Rebecca, email

A The insurer's interest is the opposite to yours – they want to pay as little money as they can, but you want the correct amount of compensation. Because the injured rider typically has no experience of the legal process the insurer is able to get away with paying less than they should.

It has been common for insurers to make settlement offers very soon after the accident before the injured

'The insurer wants to pay the minimum'

person has seen a medical expert. The problem with this is the full extent of a person's injuries, and importantly the prognosis, are unknown. If you then find out you have a more serious injury then there is no second bite of the cherry.

The Civil Liability Act introduced a ban on offers to settle whiplash claims without a medical report, so if your injury was a 'low value' claim of this type then this is a serious breach of the law by the insurer.

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

Visit www.bikelawyer.co.uk or email andrew@bikelawyer.co.uk or call 01446 794169



TRIUMPH

Great shot of my grandad admiring my uncle's Triumph back in the 60s. Paul Owens



ROYAL ENFIELD

My father, Cyril Hurmson, on his RAF Royal Enfield. He died in March and we found this in his belongings. Mark Hurmson



FANTIC

My first bike – a Fantic junior trials bike. I am now riding a Suzuki GSX-R600. How times change! Paul Allen

Me and my now wife Sarah in 2001. The bike was restricted to 33bhp as I had just passed my test. Lee Westbrook



HONDA CB400 SUPER FOUR

YOU NEVER FORGET YOUR FIRST BIKE

A blast down memory lane

Send your first bike pics to: yourpics@motorcyclenews.com



HONDA C70 CUB

My Honda C70 Cub, which I bought used in 1980, modelled by my friend Jo, who bought it from me. David Cooper



SUZUKI GS550

I had this bike from 1987 to 1994. Me and the Suzi went all across France, England, Wales and Scotland. Chris Hudson



APRILIA RX125

On my first big ride to Matlock from Rotherham via the Crich Tram Museum in the Peak District. Daniel Caine



SUZUKI X1

My 'first legal' bike in the late 80s. It was a 16th birthday gift from my parents, costing them £250. Pete Wing

MCN

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