



# TREADS

[www.aamc.co.uk](http://www.aamc.co.uk)

The September 2018 Newsletter of AAMC

## Editor's Bits – Morton

I often like Motolegends' product descriptions, and this one appealed: Well, this café racer number is the epitome of the jacket we all wish we owned. Right out of the bag it looks as though it was handed down to you by your dad. The 1.1mm leather is beautifully aged and worn. With armour, it's a terrific biking jacket. Without armour, it's a terrific looking biking jacket. *Instant credibility without the hassle of years of bar fights, banned substances, loose women and multiple fractures!*" [my italics]

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As a Triple-lover (first Speed, now Street) I occasionally look for non-Triumph variations on the theme. Significantly different from the routine inline version is the Honda NS400R – a V-3 two-stroke:



with two cylinders in front and the third behind and above. Wikipedia tells me that this road bike was inspired by Freddie Spencer's 500cc GP-bike.

Suzuki also made a V3 two stroke engine called the RP68 that made 19 bhp and revved to 20,000 rpm.

An alternative approach is to separate all the cylinders, as in the W-3. This goes back (as far as I can tell) to Anzani bike engines in the early 1900s, but Moto Guzzi developed a 992cc W-3 in 1982 and in the US, the Feuling Motor Co worked on one for Harley in the 90s. Oddly adventurous for H-D, and they pulled out, but Feuling sold the 2,458cc, 170 lb.ft pushrod W3 (in a Harley frame initially) in the US from 2001:



That makes it even bigger than Triumph's mighty Rocket III.

Feuling claimed 150bhp at 5000 rpm and 195 foot-pounds at 3000 rpm, which made it about the same as the Rocket for power, but with a load more torque(!). The (trademarked) sound is said to be like a Ducati, with Harley overtones. The late Jim Feuling estimated his expenses for developing the first "streetable" prototype at \$2.5M.

As is the way with these things, this find led me to look further, and an unusual(!) observation on JF from "xrayman41" said "He was involved heavily in projects 'other than internal combustion'. He was a part of the CARAT (Civilian Applications of Reverse-engineered Alien Technology) group at Groom Lake/Dreamland/Area 51. He obtained [Nicolai] Tesla research not

*confiscated by Uncle Sam and was actively pursuing a practical application of the Townsend-Brown field generator. He had a working prototype when he was 'involuntarily retired' with a scalar-wave-induced 'heart attack'.*" No comment.

\*

Stu tells me that speed limits across France have changed this summer: now on all normal two-way roads (ie, not motorways or dual carriageways or main roads with a central divider), there is a blanket 80km/h (50mph) limit. This replaces the former 90km/h (56mph) limit that covered all roads outside of towns and multi-lane roads. 130kph (80mph) is allowed on motorways (110kph (68mph) if it's raining and on urban motorways). More tips on riding in France appear later in this Treads.

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You will have seen in last month's Treads that Sue will be standing down at the AGM next March. This leaves us with a vacancy for Secretary and Treasurer on the Committee. Sue has performed both these roles together for many years and will be a difficult act to follow, but doing both together has made it into a big job and it's certainly not necessary for someone new to do both, unless you want to, so we're currently looking for two new Committee members.

Please will you help us fill these roles, starting next March.

If you think you may be able to help, please have a chat with one of the existing Committee members who will be able to tell you more about it.

## Legal Questions

**NB:** *the law changes all the time, so while the answer was correct at the time of writing, things may have moved on – so check before making any decisions!*

### 1. Can I lose my car licence too?

*I have taken my motorcycle Direct Access at 27 years old, having driven cars and*

*passed my car test nine years ago in Poland. However, my friend has told me I will lose my whole licence (which is now British, as I live in Britain) if I accumulate six points in the two years after I pass my test, is this true? If it is. I wish I had not bothered taking my bike test!*

**Answer:** Your friend is wrong but a few people would make the same mistake. Your first licence was obtained in a European Union country, so it is treated as a British licence under EU Treaty Rules. Your position is no different to any other full British licence holder.

The date of your first full licence, in your case a car licence, means the timer started running on the day that you passed your Polish test and obtained a full Polish licence.

For the first two years, had you accumulated six UK points on your UK licence (and there is no method of putting foreign points, including EU points, on a British licence) then your car licence would have been revoked. You would then have had a provisional UK licence and you would have had to take your theory and practical tests again for any class of vehicle you wish to ride or drive.

The Road Traffic (New Drivers) Act 1995 treats the first two years after getting a full licence as 'probationary'. The test is, when did your licence stop being provisional? If you hold a non-provisional licence, it is treated as a full licence under EU regulations, whether for car or motorcycle and once the two years has expired, your probationary period ends.

However, if you accumulate six points in your first two years of a full licence, your licence is simply lost. There are no appeals, no court hearings, just a letter telling you that your licence has been revoked and you then have to apply for a fresh provisional and start all over again. However, this does not apply nine years after you got your first full licence.

Recent holders of full licences need to be very careful about this Act. If you are pulled over by a Police constable in the

first two years of holding a full licence for minor speeding, or if he pulls you over for a duff brake light and a bald tyre, you could instantly lose your full licence, if you have not held it for two years, if you passed your car and bike tests in close succession, you lose both.

The police are fully aware of this and it is at contacts like this when your attitude becomes absolutely crucial. A police officer will either give you words of warning or, if the defect is more serious, he can give you a vehicle rectification notice, without points.

A bad attitude means you will be written up and points win a lot of trips on the bus. This is not about a power-crazed copper setting out to ruin your life. Most police officers assess whether or not words of warning are sinking in. A much better response to being pulled over is to promise to rectify your ways, fix your brake light, replace your bald tyre, keep an eye out for speed signs or whatever it is that has drawn police attention, if the copper is a powerhungry numpty intent on ruining your riding career, then a couple of minor infractions can do this. Speed cameras are immune to persuasion, so do not trip two of these as a new driver.

As a general proposition, it is wise to avoid any police attention in the first two years after your provisional licence has been changed to a full one, whether for a car or a motorcycle. So look after your bike and don't risk a 'silly' pull. Keep your lights working and your tyres good, don't have a noisy can and while small plates and a black visor don't attract points, they attract police attention. For the first two years of a full licence, keep a low profile, obey speed limits and avoid behaviour likely to attract police attention.

Andrew Dalton, [RiDE Magazine](#) September 2017

**2. When does an accessory become a modification?** And If I make a minor modification to the bike, how much does my Insurer need to know?

A number of RiDE readers have written to me in the past few months with the same query after one big bike insurer has been rejecting bike renewals for pretty obscure reasons. Ben, for example, replaced the rather tatty fairing on his 20-year-old Honda Blackbird with a pattern fairing, in black and orange Repsol colours, rather than standard black. When he told his Insurers, they declined to insure the "modified" bike. I have heard the same story for stubby brake levers, nose cones and even luggage racks – all coming from the same insurer.

The rule is simple, following a change to all insurers across the European Union. This remedied the extraordinarily hard position taken in English law which had not changed since the Edwardian era.

Some insurers still have not quite got used to the shift in the balance of power. The old rules were that you, as a consumer, proposed your insurance and even if a question was not asked, you were obliged to raise any matter which might make the insurer reconsider its premium.

At its harshest, this meant you were supposed to apply the tests that an underwriter would apply, even though you couldn't fairly be expected to understand what these might be. The worst excesses were mitigated by the Insurance Ombudsman (as was) but the law was extraordinarily unfair and resulted in proper claims being rejected. The most egregious rejection I saw was for a motorcycle with uprated fork damping oil and springs being rejected for a theft claim.

Following the Consumer Insurance Act 2013, the burden reversed. If the Insurer does not ask a question it cannot hide behind "non-disclosure". It means that if an insurer does not ask the question, it cannot be interested in the answer so it cannot take it into account. If you carelessly, recklessly or dishonestly answer a question incorrectly, then a claim can still be rejected – but not on a whim.



If your proposal form asks "What modifications have been carried out on the motorcycle?" the words bear their ordinary meaning. Modification means a change but English law is interpreted reasonably. So Ben, with his changed fairing, has modified the motorcycle and the insurers, if they ask the question, can decline to reinsure the bike on renewal. However, they can decline to reinsure it even without modification. Unfortunately, Ben now has to answer any question that another insurer might ask him, namely: "Has any insurer declined to insure you?" He will have to say that he has been so rejected. So insurers who have a very rigid policy on modifications are best avoided.

There is no need to panic, though. The law is interpreted reasonably by sensible and pragmatic judges and insurers know this. An Insurer should not refuse to pay out if you replace your OE tyres with stickier rubber, because tyres are consumables and get replaced. Replacing a rotted OE exhaust pipe with a fire breathing Akro or Beowulf is a declarable modification. Tyres or sidestand extenders are not.

At renewal time, you are governed by the market. Your insurer can choose not to renew your business for any – or no – reason. I suspect when renewals are declined on spurious grounds, the insurer is either running down its bike Insurance presence or moving out of a class of Insurance.

You may be loyal to an insurer but they will not be loyal to you. My Insurer wanted to stick my 18-year-old daughter on a £1300 policy for a Yamaha MT-125 – third party – while another quoted £380 for comprehensive cover. One insurer wanted the business, the other didn't. If you want loyalty, get a Labrador.

Andrew Dalton – [RiDE Magazine](#), August 2018

## ...But the story doesn't end there – Eddy

I meant to dig out some further WWII motorcycling pictures following the July edition of Treads, but forgot. Now Morton has included some more in the August edition I thought we should, at least, make it a trilogy.

A few years back I wrote a book titled 'Called to Arms' (History Press) detailing the war experiences of most of that generation of my family. Their service ranged from decorated fighter pilot to Japanese prisoner of war camps, from Royal Observer Corps to Land Army and fast patrol boats.



My father was a farm manager at Henfield Farm next to what is now called Emmerson Green, This was a 'reserved occupation' and as such he was excused service. Instead he joined what was at first called the Local Defence Volunteers....from 'Called to Arms':

*But now we must wind the clock back to 1941, life for Jack on Henfield Farm continued. In May 1941 aged nineteen he volunteered into the Local Defence Volunteers, the 12<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire (City of Bristol) Battalion Home Guard. He was put in Number 1 platoon Bristol East Double Company, at Page Park, Staple Hill Bristol.*

*In spite of the jokes, the Home Guard performed a number of valuable roles including escorting shot down enemy airmen to custody and guarding airfields, munition factories and 5000 miles of British coastline, freeing regular forces to undertake frontline duties.*

*It was not formed in preparation for war but very much as a result of it. Furthermore it was not instigated by government or officialdom but as a result of freelance action by a few and the will of many. It started life as the Local Defence Volunteers, LDV or more colloquially (Look, Duck and Vanish). The LDV was barely an organisation, more a collection of local groups often run by former First World War military personnel. Some that emerged during the early part of 1940 were clearly managed better than others. But all was not lost and, over the period of a few months, this rag tag group was armed, uniformed and trained.*

*In April 1942 the day before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday Jack was formally discharged from the Home Guard 'In consequence of joining the Forces'. He was not subject to call up but he had volunteered into the Royal Marines. On the 12<sup>th</sup> November 1942 he took up his promotion as Temporary 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant RM at HQ RM Division Artillery. In May 1943 he was promoted to Temporary Lieutenant, and by November 1943 he had been appointed Company Adjutant so the one who kicked against discipline was now responsible for it – not the first or last time that ploy has been used.*

The pictures show my father formed up on his 1932 350 Velocette complete with girder forks reg. GHU 202 (just in front of the officer's knee) and again coming a cropper.



Note the adherence to safety head gear, shrouded headlights and more interestingly the white armband, upon which was the insignia LDV. So this picture predates the Home Guard being so named.

**Been there, done that, got the T-shirt** - Morton

We had a break in Norfolk recently – by car, not bike. I know 230 miles is nothing for *real* bikers (“Do it before coffee, then get some proper distance in”), but about 150 miles in a day is plenty for us.





Anyway, a pleasant time was had: a steam launch trip on the River Bure, a seal-watching trip complete with hundreds of common and grey seals (in and out of the water), Norwich (Cathedral, sitar-playing busker with tame hawk by his side,



homeless man with ferret on a lead, etc).  
On the last morning, however:



- and what a pleasure it was: a big shed crammed with 80+ bikes from the 1920's to the 1960's, in all conditions from decrepit to immaculate, and from many countries. A happy hour – or more, the time flew by – was spent poring over these bikes, including the draw-jopping Lambretta scooter. Yes, really, because it was a *dual-control Lambretta*! Never heard

of one, never dreamt of one, but there it was, with two sets of handlebars:



The eagle-eyed among you will have spotted that the handlebars are not aligned (the rear ones seemed fixed), so how much control they could exert is dubious! Apparently, Lambretta offered them to dealers to demonstrate scooters to new riders; not many dealers bought them – surprise!

Anyway, highly recommended if you happen to be in North Walsham with an hour or two to spare.

## Riding in France - Ed

Bennetts Bike Insurance has an article on its website about riding in France: (<https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/features/travel/>) The whole thing is worth reading, but I've culled a few points for inclusion here:

**Pollution rules** – many major cities have adopted a system of Vignettes (stickers) graded from 0 to 5, identifying the EURO pollution levels of vehicles, with 0 the cleanest. Some cities now refuse entry at any time to vehicles with no sticker, or with a sticker showing level four or five. Stickers cost a few Euros and are available easily from [www.certificat-air.gouv.fr](http://www.certificat-air.gouv.fr), and last the life of the vehicle. However, bikes first registered before 31 May 2001 aren't eligible for a Vignette at all, so are completely banned from many areas, and bikes registered up to the end of June 2004 only get a level four Vignette and can be banned from some areas if pollution levels are very high.

In Paris, within the Périphérique ring road, there's no entry without a Vignette from 8am to 8pm on weekdays. Lyon, Strasbourg, Lille, Toulouse and Grenoble (this over a big area) all have varying restrictions when pollution levels are high. Fines for non-compliance are €68 in most areas, €35 in Grenoble.

#### **Compulsory kit**

- You must carry a Hi-Viz jacket or tabard. You don't have to wear it on the bike, but it must be accessible and you have to wear it if you're stopped and off the bike in a vulnerable position.
- You must wear gloves while riding a bike or scooter, notionally CE-approved, though any proper protective gloves should be OK.
- You should have approved reflective stickers on your helmet, but almost no one does (including the locals).
- Your headlight should be on dipped beam during the day (it probably is anyway).
- Officially, you need to carry a breathalyser, but hardly anyone bothers, and there's no fine for not having one.
- It's no longer allowed for the driver of any vehicle to wear in-ear speakers for sat-nav, intercom, phone or music.
- You don't have to carry a spare bulb kit, but if you get stopped with a light out and can't fix it on the spot, you might be stopped from continuing on your way.

#### **Documents**

- You must carry your driving licence, passport, registration document and proof of insurance and be prepared to produce them on demand. Failure to do so is punishable by an immediate fine.
- UK insurance policies automatically cover you for travel within the EU, but usually only for the legal minimum (in most cases Third Party Only). Some insurers offer automatic extensions of full cover, but check before travelling.
- Breakdown insurance is highly recommended. Read the small print though; many policies insist you buy cover for the entire journey, so cover must

include the day that you leave home and not just begin as you land in France, or you may find you have no cover at all.

## **Driving in Europe if there's a hard Brexit**

RAC

The UK will leave the EU on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 11pm. In the event of no-deal being agreed, UK drivers taking their car to, or driving in, EU states may require additional documentation to their UK driving licence.

In addition to their UK driving licence, motorists may also be required to purchase an International Driving Permit (IDP) at £5.50. Getting one over a Post Office counter takes around five minutes.

There are three types of IDPs available, though only two are used in EU states and European Economic Area countries:

1949 IDP: If you are travelling to Ireland, Malta, Spain or Cyprus, you may require a 1949 IDP. The 1949 convention IDP is valid for 12 months.

1968 IDP: If you are travelling to all other EU states, you may require a 1968 IDP, valid for three years, or for however long your driving licence is valid, if that date is earlier.

If you currently have a 1949 IDP, this will remain valid until the date it expires.

*What if I drive to Spain via France where 2 types of IDP may be required?*

You may need to get both the 1949 and the 1968 versions of IDPs, costing £11

*What if I hire a vehicle abroad?*

You may also need an IDP alongside your UK driving licence. You will need to check with the rental company but it may be a wise precaution to get an IDP anyway.

*Should I get my IDP now, just in case?*

If you are travelling in the EU after 29th March 2019, you may wish to purchase a 1949 version from the RAC which will remain valid for 12 months, but this would only be required if you are using a vehicle in Spain, Malta, Ireland or Cyprus after the UK leaves and if no deal is agreed.

Separate arrangements in non-EU/EEA countries will apply.

A 1968 version of the IDP will only be available for purchase from 1st February 2019.

*Where can I read more?*

See the Government's technical papers on Driving in the EU:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/driving-in-the-eu-if-theres-no-brexite-deal>

## Diary of Events

Any new items in red

### OCTOBER

#### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Club Ride

Meet at

9:45am for a 10am start.

**Simon Gough - 0117 973 4120**  
**(note new ride leader)**

#### Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> - Club Ride

Meet at

at 9:30am for a 9:45am

start. **Jim**

#### Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> - National Motorcycle Museum LIVE

Free Museum entry, Autojumble, trade stands, Norton Stars on Stage with John McGuinness, CEO Stuart Garner & chief designer Simon Skinner.

#### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> - Club Ride

Meet at

the roundabout junction of the  
, at 9:45am for a 10am start.

**Eddy**

off  
and

### NOVEMBER

#### Thu 1<sup>st</sup> - Sun 4<sup>th</sup> - International Dirt Bike Show, Stoneleigh

#### Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> - Final Ride of the Year.

Meet at the

(on the north of  
junction ) at 10:15am for a 10:30am  
start.

**Simon Gough - 0117 973 4120**

#### Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Plug and Grub night.

Presentation of Superb Awards for 2018.  
Further details and an application form in  
October TREADS.

**Helen**

#### Sat 17<sup>th</sup> - Sun 25<sup>th</sup> NEC Bike Show

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We endeavour to issue Treads on a regular basis during the third week of the month. Therefore if you have any items to be published in Treads, can you please ensure that they reach the editor before or during the first week of that month. Contributions for Treads are always needed, whether they are motorcycle related or of general interest! Please don't be shy.

E-mail [editor@aamc.co.uk](mailto:editor@aamc.co.uk)

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