

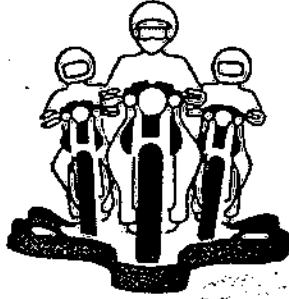


The Club

Membership of the Motor Cycle Industry's Executive Club is restricted to invited Senior Executives of the Motor Cycle Manufacturing and Importing Industry including components and accessories

Starley House, Eaton Road, Coventry, CV1 2FH
Telephone Number 0203 27427
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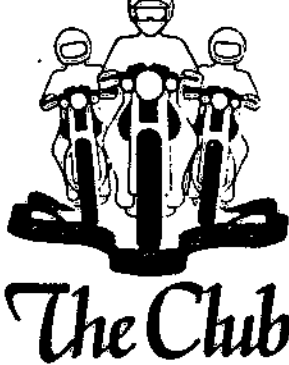
21st

ANNIVERSARY



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

**27, 28, 29 APRIL
LAKE VYRNWY HOTEL
NORTH WALES**



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N E W S L E T T E R

21st ANNIVERSARY CLUB RUN

LAKE VYRNWY, NORTH WALES

April 27th - 29th

Harry Louis said it all in his statement : "There will never be another motor cycle gathering quite like this!"

Driving back to Hampshire on the Sunday afternoon, I had four very relaxed hours to ponder and digest all the events of the weekend just passed. In particular, what a great honour to have been Chairman of The Club over this milestone week-end. A Chairman, of course, has his own set of problems: I frequently found that I was enjoying myself so much - with the result that it was all too easy to forget any number of items on the organisational side!

Many thoughts and memories firmly remain from the Anniversary Run and a particularly strong impression is of just how many old friendships must have been renewed over this week-end and, hopefully, how many new ones commenced! It was an inspiring experience to twice ride the varied and interesting route that Peter Sheen had laid on for us all. In its 130 odd miles we went from sea level to mountain top; from 'A' roads to gated tracks (with moss in the middle) and from stark moorland to rich dark forests. Above all though, it was the sheer quality and atmosphere of The Club gathering itself that made for my strongest memory.

In this Newsletter I had intended to chronicle the highlights of this unique weekend as viewed from the Chairman's footrests. What follows, therefore, is a series of observations rather than a mile by mile, blow by blow, account. I hope that these paragraphs will help you re-live some of the personal highlights, that must surely have occurred, as your week-end unfolded.

A nucleus of your Committee were able to slip up to Wales a day early in order to pre-run the route and generally assist Hon. Organiser Peter with some 'fine tuning'. I can happily report that whilst pre-running the course (and without the awesome responsibility of a 20 bike convoy in tow behind) we experienced a magic day of 'free range' motor-cycling - within the prescribed route, which we had to learn by heart for the morrow. At 4 p.m. we had duly completed our lap but John Nelson and I, feigning less-than-perfect-memories, set off to run the FFestiniog to Dinas Mawddwy section once more so that it really would be cemented in our minds. We thus set off in high spirits but,

try as we might, we failed to pass a filling station that was still open - with the result that John's trusty Triumph gasped its last close by the official Tea Stop, which was actually several hundred feet above the town of Dolgellau. As luck would have it John was able to free-wheel down hill for nearly three miles, right on to the forecourt of a garage that was open. However, it was now getting late and not only was John one of the 'outpostees', he also had a 60 item Raffle to organise! As we reached the gate at the bottom of the pass leading up to Llanymawddwy John looked me in the eye and said "I think I ought to press on". And press on he did!! Although he was giving away 497cc to my machine I could barely keep up. The sheep stood by, open-mouthed, as we tore frenziedly back to our base at the lake, scattering gravel and sheep emissions in all directions! That dash was (for me) 10 minutes of white knuckle exhilaration and was a wonderful aperitif for the Saturday ride itself. John's Daytona tracked straight as a die, serving to remind one how well 'British Iron' handles on 'colonial' going. Another memorable occasion, experienced by all of us, was the anticipation and excitement outside the hotel leading up to the 9.30 Off. From about 8.30 onwards the atmosphere just seemed to build and build - a wonderful feeling, exacerbated by the superb weather - which, although especially requested by Shell, was supplied by the manufacturers without any guarantee of quality or consistency. I though the pre-start atmosphere seemed just as 'electric' as those national trials in days of yore, with all the trade barons tearing about the place.

There was a tiny thing during the Friday evening that gave me a wry old thrill; because it was so in character and so appropriate to the event. I am referring to Mike Riley's bow tie, which some of you may have noticed was actually a modified 'old version' red Club tie - with the m/c motif still on display. Just two days before travelling up to Vyrnwy I came across a picture of Mike in the MOTOR CYCLE, circa 1950, winning an award in the Scottish Six Days Trial, riding a square tube framed DNW. (It certainly took the Japanese a few years to copy that idea!) Mike is a Founder Member of course and a participant on every Club Run that I have attended since 1972! His technical pedigree was obviously stretched to the limit in the creation of this particular bit of sartorial R. & D.!

You will recall our morning Coffee Stop at the B4391/B4212 crossroads, a few miles west of Bala. This was the test case for Group 1 to have arrived, and gulped, and generally unwound, before Group 11 hove into sight. Nevertheless, it was vital that Group 11 should arrive at the rendezvous, on schedule, to ascertain that both convoys were travelling at similar average speeds, etc. Let me tell you that, as I led our group down from the Craig yr Hyrddod foothills across the junction and into that lay-by, it was a moment of considerable pride - because I was on time TO THE EXACT MINUTE. You can imagine my deflation when somebody who knows me well said "that's the first meeting involving motorcycle people to which you've ever been on time!" I shall deal with him at Blandford

contd.....3

I was impressed and delighted to observe the BMW trio riding up to this Coffee Stop, in line astern, all dressed in corporate garb. A very professional turn-out indeed and it really put the folk from Calthorpe and OK Supreme to shame..... And then there was a moment I shall savour from the Car Park at the slate quarry at Lechwedd. It was Treasurer-elect, Dennis Bates, plonking away to the Tea Stop with Group 1, on that Trials Ajay, making some delightful 'wiffley-puffley' noises. Only thing missing was the smell of baking mud on a hot silencer.

Later on I caught a glimpse of John Surtees, astride a Honda, doing some spontaneous back-roads evaluation. The gleam from his eye shone through the full face helmet with 5,000 volts! And wasn't his unscripted speech that night, something to cherish? Like so many of the very greatest 2-wheel achievers he is truly a modest bloke and I think it was both a wise and popular move to have chosen J.R.S. to represent 'The Sport' at our Anniversary Run. Because the reponse to this Run was so good you will probably have been aware that it was necessary to 'outpost' half a dozen people. In the event the selected six were Committee Members and O.A.P.s. I would like to chronicle The Club's appreciation to them all for fitting in with these arrangements so graciously and without fuss. The farmer has now written, incidentally asking for the return of his daughter!

There was also something else that happened out in the wide open spaces that gave me quite a charge. On the afternoon loop you may remember that - after the slate quarry and before the Tea Stop - we dropped down steeply from some open country, over a bridge, before climbing up to a similar height on the opposite side of the valley. At that point the Group 11 convoy was spread over a two mile length of road. (Now I had a standing arrangement with Wilf Harrison, our Tail End Charlie, that whenever he and I could see each other he would raise his arm - provided that our flock were all behaving, up in line ahead of him). Well, at this particular juncture, we had not exchanged a signal for some miles. Whereupon Wilf, on the top of his side of the valley, waved at me; two miles or so ahead in mileage terms but, having reached the same elevation as Wilf, only about 800 yards apart as the crow flew. Luckily I couldn't see Wilf's lips moving - he was probably urging me to cool it! Whilst I may not have described the geographics of this incident too clearly it was, nevertheless, an unusual way of convoy communication - back to front - and not one that would be possible in The Fens!

It is appropriate to thank Fred (Corbett's Epic Ride) Green for detaching himself early from the Tea Stop and riding right into the Lake Vyrnwy Hotel kitchen and so delaying Dinner by a crucial hour! Some of you may not know how Group 11 came to arrive at the Tea and P place so late, but suffice to say, we over-relaxed at the slate quarry. In fact, we had reached that short pause in the railway yard some 8 minutes late and the error simply compounded from that point onwards.

Only now can it be revealed that, having navigated until the Lunch Break at Llanberis without error my complacency had created a cruel thirst within which could only be quenched with draught Guinness - which then instilled certain inaccuracies into the navigation system! This is, I believe, referred to as 'WIPE-OUT' in computerese. Anyway, as we descended from the heights some 3 or 4 miles beyond our Llanberis luncheon and rode through those castle walls at Croesywain I 'wrong-slotted' at the next crossroads. (If you are full of Guinness and in doubt at a crossroads, you inevitably take the Dublin turning). The result of all this was that, more by luck than judgement, we eventually regained the prescribed route but in so doing were now running behind the Mini Bus containing the Founder and Senior Members, driven most ably by Dennis Woods. (Whilst the F. & S. Members had undoubtedly also quaffed handsomely at the Victoria Hotel, they hadn't made any navigational errors!) So, you can imagine the look of surprise as our convoy came up from behind and overtook them! Honestly, the looks on their faces had to be seen to be believed.

It would be interesting to poll all the members who rode as to which section of the route they enjoyed the most. Not an easy decision - there was so much good territory. However, I think my personal favourite was the gated meadow road through the National Trust lands and which was manned so enthusiastically by the Cubs. Outside of competing in a trial or an enduro it is rare that one rides in so serene a spot. Some of you may have noticed the honeymoon couple in that tent by the stream engaged upon their, er - slumbers. It is fair to assume that they were first disturbed by the passing of Group 1 but, having returned to the job in hand, they looked less than pleased as Group 11 arrived upon their scene 15 minutes later. This incident apart, our excursion along that track did motorcycling's image no harm at all and we have undoubtedly converted the Cubs to the cause of motorcycling. (Maybe the tent couple though they were on land that was owned by the National Thrust!!)

It would also be interesting to know which piece of hardware members thought to be the most interesting in use over this week-end. In my view the prize for the most historic artifact, by a long head, went to Arthur Wheeler's helmet. That item has travelled more high speed racing miles than some of us have travelled miles!

Another memory: this one, concerned with a cacaphony of motorcycle noises, springs from breakfast on Sunday morning. Tom Waterer and I, and some others, sat transfixed as Keith Blair performed some magnificent imitations of the various 'motorcycle engine situations' he had experienced the day before. Not only was he able to imitate Jeff Clew's Douglas and Nick Jeffery's Velocette but also some of the 16 valve/16" front wheeled hardware fresh up from Chiswick and Crawley. Keith is a kind of an internally combusted Percy Edwards!

At this stage I must state the regrets of your Committee that we did not see a soul from either Kawasaki or Yamaha at this Anniversary Run. You may rest assured that we did indeed pass out the appropriate invitations but which, in their corporate wisdom, they declined!

It is also appropriate at this stage to record in writing the thanks of The Club to the following principal sponsors for their very generous support, without which the week-end would have been almost impossible to organise - certainly at the sort of standard we seem to enjoy!

HONDA	-	Friday Wine & Liguers
SUZUKI	-	Saturday Wine
HARGLO)	
DIXON RACING)	- Saturday Liguers
ANDOVER NORTON)	
BMW	-	Sunday Stirrup Cup
STEYR-DAIMLER-PUCH	-	The Mini Bus
SHELL	-	This, that and the other.

Neither should we forget Hugh Palin who organised the RAC Breakdown Service, and all the other folk who helped so willingly whenever they were called upon so to do.

It must be said that the idea of rounding off Saturday evening with a Welsh Male Voice Choir was an innovative one but what a delight they were and how right for this occasion. I wish that time had allowed for them to have completed their repertoire. (We had a secret worry at one time, that Bill Smith might give a solo rendition of "Bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond" but he puffed his pipe forcefully, and contentedly, instead!)

My final memory encapsulates, perhaps, the 'esprit' that is The Club. It illustrates both the tradition and the informality that has evolved and, as I say, all this was captured with a single gesture lasting maybe one second. Let me explain. You will remember the Raffle. Sure, it was running behind schedule but up on the stairs John Nelson, Ivor Davies and Bert Perrigo had it all under control. However, a small group of well lubricated Members impatient, probably, to win one of the many superb prizes or maybe just to return to the Bar, were good naturedly heckling this eminent trio. Completely unperturbed and grinning from ear to ear, Bert extended a well defined 'V' sign to the hecklers - who, not minding at all, piped down to the appropriate decibel level. A very tiny incident, of course, but in those few instants one saw all the ingredients - humour; irreverence; respect; banter; ambience; anticipation; sheer enjoyment and so on, which make The Club what it is. Long may it stay that way.

It just remains to record our regret at not seeing all the Members this time round, but hope we may do so one day soon. We should also thank those Members who were able to attend (and in exactly the correct numbers; and with such a distinguished choice of guests! Ten less at the Hotel and we would have been scratching; ten too many and we would have had to open up the Lake Vyrnwy boathouse! Finally, finally, I cannot close without congratulating Peter Sheen (whose 'baby' it all was) for creating such a masterpiece of 2-wheeled fun and freedom. Who needs to water ski on champagne?

Ride safe 'till next we meet!

MIKE JACKSON
Chairman