



The Club

SPRING RUN ~ Diss, April 1991

Principal Organiser: Dave Martin

GOD rides a Harley. Allegedly! Dave Martin's first run coincided with him leaving the employ of Harley-Davidson some two weeks previously. Whether this had a bearing on what happened during this weekend, only He knows. He may have been annoyed, but according to Bike magazine He rides a Vespa anyway. What Dave will tell you is that he took great care, when arranging the route, that the sun was behind us for most of the day.

We gathered at the Scole Inn, near Diss in Norfolk on the Friday night. What a lovely run to Scole, fine roads and excellent weather. This beautiful old (17th century) coaching inn had wonderful rooms, the stables were converted to more rooms of a very high standard, and the restaurant was all ours, having been closed to the public.

Gathering on Friday night, we started the weekend by consuming some good beers by a roaring log fire. The fact that we needed a log fire in April should have been an omen.

Yes, it snowed again. Doug Hele was the most sensible. He went back to the hotel and spent the rest of the day in warmth and luxury. After

Saturday started cool, with a brisk (ill?) wind. The local newspaper was there, photographing the event for prosperity and some free advertising for the hotel, and off we set, some 20 minutes late. Within 12 miles it snowed! Not a little bit. Not the normal English, small snowflake type of snow, but SNOW! Snow where the flakes would not be out of place in a

Moscow winter. Snow that stuck to the visors, the screens, the road. Nobody could see, but nobody could stop either. Was it wrath from above? Even though Dave Martin was still riding a Harley? Even though Peter Agg was riding a Harley?

Onward rode the 35 (or so). Finally the snow relented and eased, and speeds began to creep up. The roads were mainly 'B' class, though of a very high standard, and the

route was so designed that we avoided the long straights that exist in this part of the world. A slight detour to miss Thetford through a very Eire piece of countryside (as commented by Keith Blair) - one could almost expect the Almighty to descend upon us - and onto the coffee stop. Guess what?

a quick coffee and biscuit, the silly ones amongst us ventured out into the blizzard to shovel the snow off the bikes and on our way

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again. More splendid roads (Graham Goodman - or was it Maurice Knight? - "I have never been over 100 mph so much in one day") to a pub lunch. We left the pub after a hearty meal and a couple of drinks in reasonable weather, to stop 2 a mile down the road to put on our waterproofs; it was Snowing again!!!

Ziggy-Zaggy roads to the Imperial War Museum at RAF Duxford, where we had a guided tour if it was wanted, or just wander by ourselves.

At last the weather became kinder and most people made their own way back to the hotel at their own pace. The weather got a bit nasty again and when we got back to the Scole Inn, the Manager appeared with some home-made

hot punch and was it good! Hot and alcoholic, it made the day worthwhile.

Evening was spent again in front of that great big log fire, a hot meal to follow and more revelry. Andy Smith and Dave Martin were trying to get a free weekend out of the manager, even propping the bar up to about 3.00 am. Simon Hill, on his first run as a guest, was asleep on the large table in the bar.

Sunday was bright. Cool, but no snow.

Although Dave had taken great pain to ensure that the sun was behind us, he had not allowed for the snow to be in front of us, and behind us and... well, all around us really!

Dave Martin

December 1995



The Club

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CORRIGENDUM - SPRING 1991 REPORT

We are indebted to Doug Hele for setting the record straight in relation to the Spring 1991 Run Report kindly and posthumously prepared by Dave Martin several years after the event. and circulated recently. May I personally, as instigator of the compilation of the historic Run Reports (where no report was prepared at the time) sincerely apologise to Doug for the inadvertent error.

Nick Jeffery

Doug writes:

Before the 1996 Birdlip Run which I attended (thanks to Norman Hyde) I received the Club's re-write-ups on many runs, starting with Diss 1991. A very good story by Dave Martin.

Much to my surprise I noticed that Doug Hele (that's me) went back to the Hotel after coffee and biscuits, due to the snow.

*What **actually** happened was that the Wankel Norton that I was riding was rather high, wide and heavy for me in those conditions, so that I was somewhat scared to proceed. Norman suggested that I return to Diss but, apart from the possible disgrace in doing so, I realised that if I got lost in the snow I might be in more trouble than staying with the pack. Furthermore, the bike was on Trade Plates since Richard Negus had forgotten to tax it, and on my own I would be more conspicuous than with ordinary plates.*

I therefore decided to proceed with the others, and gradually the weather improved. I remember going to the RAF Duxford Museum and after the tea stop I wanted to be well up with the pack so I led away. Unfortunately I took the wrong fork and found myself on my own.

Reading the Club Map without glasses I decided the only sure thing was to proceed through Bury St. Edmunds, which I did.

Time was going on and the weather was getting dull, but as I left BSE I realised or was conscious that I was being followed. When I arrived at the Scole in Diss it became apparent that I had been shadowed by no less a person than Andy Smith, a very kind action on his part.

Unfortunately we were too late to sample the Punch but by Dinner-Time we were nicely thawed out.

Since then I have had operations which have sorted out my eyes, and so I am hoping that some of my problems at that time could have been caused by vision or lack of it.

Sorry to bore you all, but at the meeting on Sunday at Birdlip Mike Jackson and Nick suggested that I put it on paper.

Thank you.

DOUG HELE@