



The Club

AUTUMN RUN Knighton, 2-3 October 1993

Principal Organiser: Tom Waterer

When Nick Jeffery asked me to write up the Run, I initially found myself struggling to enlarge on those few retained images of events from what now seems like a decade ago, rather than a mere three years. Here are one or two:

! Rollo Denbigh with his head in the stocks at the lunch stop.

! David Dixon dashing on ahead to take yet more excellent pictures for me. In particular, the apparently impenetrable flock of sheep on the switchback B4358 just before the coffee shop at Beulah. Those just behind me will have the same vivid memory!

! David Strathcarron in the *Grinnal* and Nick Jeffery with the horrendous banking sidecar, the "*Flexit*"

! Nick Rogers, that doyen of international respectability, reappearing with half a Welsh bog hanging from the underside of BMW's K1100LT. Hardly the last word in trail bikes, Nick!

Funny how one memory stimulates another!

So how about tackling this in a more systematic way? It always helps to start at the beginning. During the planning phase of a Run in unfamiliar territory, there is a particularly satisfying moment when at last the route feels right, and after exploring half North Wales without success (Peter Sheen had already used all the best roads!) I finally settled on the rectangle of roads Knighton, Llandrindod Wells, Tregarron, First, it was the Chairman who measured his length across a sharp left hander, unsaddled by injudicious use of the front

Knighton (sounds more like a *TRI-angle* to me - Ed). Even so, Andy Smith and Nick Jeffery had to lean on me to drop a further 50 miles which would have included Llangurig and Newtown! Our hotel was the Knighton Hotel, and our hostess Mrs Bulcock. Although comfortable it was a little on the small side which resulted in a falling out with the Chairman!

The ride started uneventfully enough, but the hairpins above Dolfor caught out at least one Runner, Keith Davies I believe, who found himself "*Wall of Deathing*" ten feet up the bank. Apart from the constant alert for sheep, all arrived safely at the

Trout Inn for coffee.

The next section of road is one of my all-time favourites, Beulah to Tregarron is utter magic (and, believe it or not, every time we recced it there was fine weather). It has everything, heart-lifting scenery, forests,

moorland, hairpins at the *Devil's Staircase*, even trail riding and then a slalom of bends down the northern slopes, all before dropping down into the valley above Tregarron. If you missed this Run there will be another chance to sample these delights in the reverse direction in Autumn 1997!

The roads from Tregarron to the aptly named *Pisgah* lunch-stop saw some hard riding by one or two runners that invited comment from a small number of the more conservative members.

On regaining the saddle after lunch - adequate in quality and ample in quantity - we set off again at a suitably brisk pace for the long leg back to the Elan Valley reservoirs. It was on this section that we had our casualties.

brake on Norman Hyde's *Harrier*. And then it was Nick Rogers who galloped his K1100 into the Welsh bog. Luckily, both

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were without injury to anything but pride. I do recall a bemused Nick trying to claim that it was all the road's fault, as it appeared to go straight but then decided to turn right instead! Fortunately the ever innovative Ray Battersby and the RAC driver were able to sort out the damage to the bikes in double time.

Nick Jeffery's masochistic choice of the *Flexit* proved doubly satisfying as his passenger, the ample and innovative Ray, put the outfit well over its recommended weight limit. If its handling was heavy to start with, it became a Bullworker on overtime with the sidecar overloaded. Discretion being the better part of valour, Ray retired to the RAC van for the duration of the Run. The Grinnal, in which Ray had hoped to hitch a lift, was incapable of accommodating the sylph-like

forms of both himself and David Strathcarron!

Our return journey included a stop at the small visitors' centre just outside Rhayader, this dealt with the reservoirs and their flora and fauna. Also, and this was of greater interest to myself, the construction of the reservoirs included a railway, which was removed on completion. The afternoon tea was at the rather twee Victorian surroundings of the *Metropole Hotel* in Llandrindod Wells. Twee or not, the Metropole is no stranger to motorcyclists, being the HQ for the Welsh Two Days.

The ride back to Knighton was a pleasant anti-climax, and we all arrived safely. Thank God Andy and Nick had talked me out of that extra 50 miles!