



# The Club

SPRING RUN - New Coundon, 15-17 April 1994

Principal Organiser: Wilf Harrison

Members will forgive the brevity of this, the first of my scribblings, for two reasons. I travelled the entire 220 mile route not astride a motorcycle but astride the gear knob of a late-model-year Ford Transit van. Secondly, Mike Jackson didn't volunteer me to contribute these notes until after the memories of the Run had faded into the oblivion of Saturday night.

Some members will have learned, that as one of the industry's leading motorcycle accident investigators and to further research into this important topic, I decided last April to experience at first hand, the trauma and bone-crushing abilities of the wheels of a large Ducato van running amok over my lower limbs and pelvis. I signed myself out of hospital to chair our new Chairman's interesting-leaning sidecar outfit for the Autumn Run. But the legacy of the accident is a left shoulder with little - though improving - movement. Insufficient to ride safely on two wheels, and until recently even on four.

Anyway, for the Spring Run, I cadged a lift with Hugh Palin and the RAC driver. It was then that I learned how the lap-belt that comes as part and parcel of the Transit's centre seat isn't designed for a paunch of my bulk.

Presently, our esteemed Hon Treasurer - I think - appeared from the depths of the road-works to relay the message that a bike *could* get through. Naturally enough, we became the rear of this

So, wearing a gut-slicing belt and a very friendly driver touching my knee at the prospect of the slightest bend, we progressed along Wilf Harrison's superb course. Despite the pungent aroma of burning disc pads as we negotiated hairpin bends, it became clear to all that a Transit cannot possibly keep up with a motorcycle - even the slowest of our riding members - no names mentioned here.

In the morning I recall the superb scenery passing by and in particular, the magnificent

Kielder lake and dam. After a super lunch at Bonchester Bridge, we joined the optional run to visit the Jimmy Guthrie memorial. I suppose it's a sign of the times that even in a motorcycling Mecca such as Hawick, the assembly of so many machines managed to turn some heads.

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***AOh I'm SURE it'll be alright,* responded Hugh with all the smooth authority borne from years of military training.**

Just about the only time the motorcycles came into view was when, during the afternoon, the route had become DUG UP. Those members not riding trail bikes, or with a history of smooth road competition, drew to a halt and awaited instructions from the rider behind. This tactic we learned as the RAC van crested a hill, for there up ahead was a bunch of nonplussed riders congregating alongside a ROAD CLOSED sign.

cavalcade and you can imagine the looks - and thoughts - of these road navvies, toiling at their holes, at the sight of not one, or two, but thirty-odd bikes rumbling past their TarMacadam

machinery. But could a Transit get through the narrow gaps?

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*I'll be drummed out...!*

*Oh I'm SURE it'll be alright,* responded Hugh with all the smooth authority borne from years of military training. The gods were with us too for as we approached a narrow section, a contractor's van pulled out and cleared a way

through the debris, machinery and the army of sweating workers and onto the crumbling remains of Aydon Castle where we enjoyed tea.

Some of the more frivolous individuals elected to play at full-size forts whilst enjoying a massive pile of cannon-fodder in the form of very rocky buns. Thinking of my expanding waist-line and the Transit's lap-belt, I desisted.

Overall, an excellent run over some of the best scenery these shores can offer.

*Ray Battersby*

*April 1994*