

The Club

Spring Run

France 25-28 April 1996



A record in pictures, documents and words
of
a most enjoyable event

Weather: impeccable

Organiser: Simon Hill

Photographs: Hugh Palin
Nick Jeffery
Dennis Bates

Story: Alan Baker



Who went to France

The 1996 Club Run in its entirety (almost): *Standing from the left:* Wilf Harrison, Bob Trigg, Chris Ventress, Tony Dawson, Alan Baker, Hugh Palin, Keith Blair, Maurice Knight, Dave Martin, Ludi Beumer, Jim Coreless, Simon Hill, David Strathcarron, David Hill, Martin Lambert, Peter Meek, Chris Wade, David O'Neill, Nick Jeffery, Ray Battersby, Norman Hyde, Geoff Selvidge, Keith Davies, Graham Goodman, Peter Sheen, William Colquhoun, Nigel Brown.

Seated: Frank Finch, Nick Hopkins, Dennis Bates, Richard Davies. *Missing:* Alan Blake

Members and their machines

Peter Sheen	900cc	Triumph Daytona
Simon Hill	750cc	Honda VFR750
Chris Ventress	1,000cc	BMW K1
David Strathcarron	1,000cc	BMW K100
Tony Dawson	1,200cc	Yamaha FJ1200
Graham Goodman	1,000cc	BMW K100
Keith Blair	800cc	BMW R80
Maurice Knight	750cc	BMW K75
Dave Martin	1,100cc	Honda Pan European
Alan Baker	1,100cc	Honda Pan European
Peter Meek	850cc	Yamaha TDM850
Nick Jeffery	1,100cc	BMW R1100RT
Wilf Harrison	800cc	BMW R80
Keith Davies	1,100cc	Moto Guzzi California
Richard Davies	1,100cc	Moto Guzzi California
David Hill	750cc	Suzuki GSX-R750T
Dennis Bates	600cc	Yamaha Diversion
William Colquhoun	850cc	Yamaha TDM850
Alan Blake	600cc	Cagiva River 600
Nick Hopkins	350cc	BSA B31
Norman Hyde	900cc	Triumph 900 Sprint
Bob Trigg	850cc	Yamaha TDM850
Ray Battersby	750cc	Honda CB750N

Rescue and support RAC Unit

Hugh Palin		Member
George Whisker (<i>driver</i>)		RAC Ford Transit
Yvon Vanhelputte (<i>RAC France</i>)		
Jim Coreless (<i>Mobile</i>)	750cc	RAC Triumph 750

Guests and their machines

Chris Wade	850cc	Yamaha TDM850
David O'Neill	750cc	Honda VFR750
Nigel Brown	1,000cc	Yamaha Exu FZR1000
Geoff Selvidge	1,100cc	Kawasaki GpZ 1100 ABS
Frank Finch	1,100cc	Kawasaki GpZ 1100
Martin Lambert	750cc	BMW K75RT
Ludi Beumer	850cc	Yamaha TDM850

25.04.96.

Welcome to Portsmouth, please note the following.

IMPORTANT!

Most of our ferry tickets have gone astray in the post after leaving P&O!

If your ticket isn't in this envelope, please quote the reservation number below to the vehicle check in staff. They will issue your ticket promptly and without charge.

F59132230/6 BATES CABIN D46.

LESS IMPORTANT!

The pub previously advised as The Spice Island Inn, is in fact The Ludmore Cellars! It is right outside this RAC Office.

I have not reserved any accommodation for the return crossing as there is a wide choice of entertainment options on board. However, if you wish to reserve a seat or cabin for the return crossing, you may do so at the information desk on the ship, during the outward voyage.

Cabin keyholders, names already advised, may find that the key is issued at the vehicle check in. This saves you having to retrieve it from the purser.

When crossing the Tancarville Suspension Bridge, about fifteen miles from Le Havre, keep to the extreme right. There is a narrow lane giving toll free crossing to cycles and motorcycles.

If you have a mechanical problem during the journey to Blois and can't find the RAC support vehicles, I am advised that in an emergency, you may contact RAC France on the freephone **05 29 01 12**. Tell them you are with British Motorcycle Industry Club. Any problems ask for **Yves Van Helleputte**, who will join us on Saturday.

Bon Voyage!

Simon Hill.

PS, Please mark your choice on the attached menu and hand it to the receptionist upon arrival at the Hotel Mercure.



BLOIS - CENTRE



Our hotel and menu
pamphlet
Hill Groupe menu

Le Saint Jean



Outward bound



Friday was a free day. You made your own way from Le Havre docks to Blois. Maurice, David, Wilf and Dennis elected for a route which took in Le Mans stopping for lunch on the famous main straight. Others took a scenic route. Simon Hill arrived at Blois at 1.30pm while Bill Colquhoun and Nick Hopkins were the final arrivals in time for dinner. Alan Blake's borrowed Cagiva suffered a puncture; the five-hour delay in getting help to Alan and Peter Sheen rather spoiled what should have been a simple rescue matter. It would happen to a tyre man. Was it a saving grace that the cover was by Pirelli and not one of Alan's dearly beloved Avon's?



The 52ff lunch stop for some of the party bound for Blois. Norman Hyde, Frank Finch and David Hill await theirs, while Nigel Brown gives the bike a once over, and Dave Martin searches for the "toilette"

The bikes attract admirers including a small citizen of the Fifth Republic.





George Whisker, minus the customary shorts he wore throughout the Run, tarries awhile during the long drive from port to hotel. Jim Coreless rode the RAC Triumph, enjoying his second Club Run

Raison d'etre



08.45 hr and we should have been away. Still, most were present. Frank Finch and Peter Sheen admire Richard Davies' Guzzi. Wilf wipes his glasses while Maurice gives his usual warm smile before donning helmet. Tall figure at the rear with white helmet is Bill Colquhoun. Silver-haired Ludi Beumer in smart black and red riding suit, talks to nattily dressed Keith Davies. The Hon Sec is lost in admiration for one of the parked bikes.

The facade of Hotel Mercure contrasts in its modernity with the main part of Blois- all seventeenth and eighteenth century or earlier. Parallel to the road runs the River Loire still more than a quarter of a mile wide even though the coast is several hundred miles distant.



The TDM 850 Yamaha, ridden by Luidi is in the foreground, along with its rider. He is talking to the Hon Treas. and Peter Meek. Behind, astride the BMW, sits Wilf, guest, Martin Lambert, is consumed with interest by its rear end(!). Just coming into view is David Hill on the big Suzuki.



Moments later focus switches to Simon Hill who, despite the nonchalant pose in discussion with Keith, moments later will straddle the VFR750 to head the convoy who he knows will follow him westwards on the 160 mile run.



St Aignan: The riders wend their way uphill through this small town dominated by its church surmounting a cliff from which it overlooks a river sunk deep in a gorge.



Break out from St Aignan with its chateau to head down an arrow-straight, tree-lined road, so typical of France. Keith Davies turns on the power.



Miles and miles of superbly surfaced roads, virtually empty of traffic. Wilf said that often he found himself as a lone rider and so was able to enjoy the total freedom of motorcycling. Here the camera captures him at a nifty 60mph plus.



Bends in abundance; real fast ear 'olers! Bob Trigg (850TDM Yamaha) holds the line on a combination of uphill reverse curves closely tailed by Keith Blair (BMW R80).



Montresor: the castle with its thick, imposing walls dominates this small town. Bob Trigg tarries awhile to look back through the narrow street at the southernmost turrets.



While Nick Jeffery marks the corner, Wilf Harrison cants over the BMW into Rue des Deportes watched by a resident from his first floor window.....



....and in a 100 yards or so comes across a reclining Norman Hyde languidly pointing the route to the left for Beesa-mounted, Nick Hopkins and Keith Blair. *The householder was vastly intrigued because there were these two non-French speaking blokes sitting on the pavement outside her house facing each other, one holding a camera. Sacre Bleu!*



Turning left and there's Nigel Brown playing the perfect point duty cop indicating the route. No getting lost here. The convoy system of riders leap-frogging to mark the route worked--as always--like a charm. David O'Neill leads. Nearest the camera is Chris Ventress (B.MW K1)