



ROSPA ADVANCED DRIVERS And Riders North Wiltshire Group



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Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

News February 2008

I think we now have the whole Tamplin family in the group as we welcome both Anne Roger's wife, and Sharon, his daughter who have recently joined.

Congratulations to Dave Hooper and Les Alley who have passed their bike retests gaining Gold passes and to Peter Scatchard on his car retest gaining Silver.

Re-test?

Please can you contact either Chris Gleed or Glyn if you wish to check your skills before going for a retest, and then let Monica know date and your pass so that we can check that we are keeping our standards high, the group is not notified by Head Office when a group member has a retest.

Web Site

We understand that some members have had problems accessing the web site or registering to join in the forum. If you have had or are having difficulty, please contact Julian by email: - burtens.middlewallop@gmail.com

Christmas Meal January 2008

Organising the Clubs Christmas get together in January appears to be working well. Once again the strength of our group was reflected in the turnout of 33 members and partners at The Village Inn, Liddington with a good 'balance' between those that rely on two wheels and those on four. Judging from the noise, sorry, deep and stimulating discussion, coming from each table it was clear that people are getting to know each other with the resulting wit and repartee coming through.

Those of you involved in organising anything know that a successful event does not just happen by accident, so thanks must go to Monica for putting in the time and effort to make it go smoothly – THANKS MONICA. Geoff thanked and presented Monica with a well deserved bouquet of flowers.

If you haven't managed to attend so far I suggest that you look out for next years date.

Excellent company, good quality food and a natter about everything under the sun – well almost!

Dave Hooper

Click on the link below to see what some of our bikers get up to at night

http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_7240000/newsid_7245800/7245890.stm?bw=bb&mp=rm&news=1&bbcws=1

Motoring in France?

I thought this may be of interest for those of you who go to France. From Telegraph Motoring 26th Jan: -

I live in France and on the spot fines are common place for speeding, failing to heed stop signs and not wearing seatbelts. I did not realize that you could loose your licence on the spot! A friend was caught at 150kph in a 90kph zone. She was given an instant two month ban and had to phone a friend to collect her.

Problems with the DVLA?

Instead of using the 0845 or 070 No's Direct Line to the DVLA is 01792 782341
And then ask for Vehicle or Driver Enquiry

Talk Report - ISLE OF MAN TT – PAUL WESTON

The group meeting in February was treated to Paul Weston starting off by giving a talk on his experiences of visiting the Isle of Man TT race and ending up as an impassioned calling to all bikers that this is most definitely on the list of things to do before you die.

Paul explained the history of the famous TT race, tracing it back to 1907 and even included a photo with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (creator of Sherlock Holmes) supporting that very first event. In 2007, the centenary year, Paul was visiting for the first time but his mates had been several times before so he was given the 'royal tour'.

He had some excellent footage and photos mainly due to striking a deal with the Isle of Man Tourist Board to spread the word! And probably like many in the room I started to wonder if this was going to be lots of photos of very nice scenery interspersed with blurry speeding motorcycles, with Paul and his mates hanging out of every pub on the island. How wrong we were. One of the opening clips was to watch, in full, a 17 minute video of a local man – deemed an 'average TT rider' - riding round the circuit. It must have been the quickest and most terrifying 17 biking minutes I have seen. To see the speeds that this rider was achieving, on little more than 'good B roads', was phenomenal. Touching speeds in excess of 200mph, staying around 160mph for most of it and slowing to a mere 70mph as he took tight right-handers in what were normally 30 mph limits was startling, and a testament to the guy's skill and knowledge. When Paul told us that last year's winner *exceeded 230mph*, achieving the fastest ever circuit, you really start to wonder at the skill of these riders or just their sheer madness.

Paul excitedly started to tell us about how 'Mad Sunday', the day when the circuit is traditionally open to the public to race around the circuit (and perhaps infamously known for its high casualty rate) has been extended to the whole week, before and after racing. Paul's excitement was clearly dampened as he recalled that he burned the clutch out of his Kawasaki on his first circuit and had to make do with a borrowed and slower bike for the rest of the week. We felt for you Paul!

As Paul explained the layout, not just of the circuit but the whole week, and how every Islander contributes to the TT in some way, you could feel the passion building in his speech. The TT is not just a week of racing it is a way of life for the islanders who are intensely proud of the heritage and world standing of the TT. It is unique and each year is history in the making. Paul, as best he could, tried to explain the atmosphere and ambience of the event, which he did magnificently but clearly there is only one thing to do – don't be a TT virgin any longer!

Simon Dorset

A TRIP TO GERMANY, 7 - 10 SEPTEMBER 2007

Glyn Davies loosely mentioned in Spring 2007 that there was no 'European' tour for the bikers of the North Wilts RoADA group for the year. As a relatively new member, and keen to contribute something, I rashly mentioned that I might be able to organise a trip to Germany. And so it came about. If I am honest it was a bit of a Busman's holiday for me as my intention was to plan the trip around various British Army bases in Germany that I had served in, albeit a few years ago. So pulling in a few favours from my fellow Royal Military Police colleagues the scene was set for a 4 day jaunt to Northern Germany.

Banking on a late summer after a miserable June and July, the dates of 7 – 10 Sep 07 seemed ideal (read on!). Sadly there was not a great deal of take up for the trip but the intrepid trio that set off were Geoff Sumerling, Julian Burton and myself. The bikes involved were also ideal for the trip. Geoff was taking his glorious new Triumph Sprint, with bespoke panniers, for its first foray to foreign shores, Julian was well equipped on his expedition prepared BMW GS 1100 Adventure (Charlie Boorman eat your heart out), and I was bringing in a bit of quality with a Honda VFR 800 VTEC (with a cheapo tail pack)!

An early morning start led to a rendezvous at Clackett Lane services on the M25 and then a dash for Dover to catch the ferry. We landed at Calais at midday local time and prepared ourselves for a long haul across the Low Countries to reach our first destination at Rheindahlen, just inside Germany. The new A16 autoroute meant that we only had to spend 40 minutes in France before we hit the Belgian autoroute system, travelling via Gent and Antwerp. Negotiating Antwerp is quite an experience as we had to make 2 turn offs with the road signs seemingly only at the actual junction, plus the somewhat chaotic driving of the Belgians who bring a new definition to tail-gating – the 2 second rule is replaced by the 2m rule!

Crossing into Holland we headed for Eindhoven and then Venlo. While the route was all 'motorway' it did not invoke the endless boredom that the M6 can generate. European autoroutes seem to be more interesting, probably because they are mostly 2 lanes hence you need to keep your wits about you when overtaking trucks, making sure you aren't pulling out into the path a very fast Mercedes/BMW/Porsche, despite the 120km speed limit, that most seem to ignore. Once into Germany though we thought we could look forward to 'unlimited speed' on the famous autobahns but nowadays even the speed loving Germans have introduced speed restricted sections and an advisory limit of 130km/h (about 80mph) applies elsewhere across the network.

Arriving at the Joint Headquarters base in Rheindahlen is like entering little England – a complete town with all the facilities and amenities you would expect just for NATO forces. It was somewhat devoid of troops though as this base will close in the next couple of years as the Army moves some of its formations back to UK. A far cry from the glory days of the British Army of the Rhine 20 years ago, ready to repel the Soviet hordes!

This was the first taste for Geoff and Julian of military hospitality – a 20 bunk room in the transit accommodation! I did detect a slight look of horror on their faces as the door was opened but with only 3 of us in the room, it was clean, dry and had plenty of space – and free! With a good pizza and a couple of steins of beer in our stomachs we retired ready for the trip to Osnabruck the next day.

The weather could not quite decide what it was going to do with showers interspersed with dry spells. Needless to say what constituted rain was much in discussion as this would determine the

donning of our waterproofs. I was reliably informed by my fellow bikers that the sheeting showers did not constitute rain (which must be continuous and at an angle of 45 degrees) hence the waterproofs stayed packed! After another blast on the autobahns, north to Osnabruck, we could stretch out the bikes a bit. I only topped 125 mph (we didn't want to leave Julian behind on his GS!), and cruising at 100mph was quite comfortable for all of us.

At Osnabruck we were met by Regimental Sergeant Major Steve Judge of 115 Provost Company Royal Military Police (RMP), who entertained us to lunch in his Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess. Steve has been a friend for many years and is a keen biker, now being able to play, again, with Honda Pan European ST1300 police bikes, which the RMP use. After a quick briefing we were joined by a few other keen bikers from the unit and set off for the hills and valleys of the Osnabruck area. Biking in Germany is a delight (as is driving) because the Germans do seem to have better road discipline and have respect for bikers. There is also a much friendlier attitude from other German bikers too with everyone giving a left hand wave as you pass. The weather again could not decide what it wanted to do so some careful riding was called for. A stop for the customary 'Kaffee and Kuchen' – coffee and cakes - was included and much appreciated! Overnight accommodation was in a flat in the married quarters patch – a little more like home! Dinner was out in a traditional Beer House with an array of snitzels, steaks and pommes frites, washed down with plenty of beer.

On Sunday we set off again for another route out to the Dummersee (a great big lake) with the weather being a bit kinder to us, allowing coffee to be taken outside! Back at Osnabruck, Geoff and Julian had the chance to play on the ST1300s, which brought a decent grin to their faces! After lunch we set off for Sennelager for the last stop, again a good blast down relatively clear autobahns. Sennelager is the main training base for the Army in Germany and Geoff and Julian were treated to seeing plenty of 'heavy armour' moving out onto the training areas, all training for Iraq.

Overnight was in the NATO Officers Mess, a bit of luxury for the last night, well relative luxury! The last morning we were considering going back via Arnhem but with a slightly later start and the weather actually raining (yes I was allowed to put on my waterproofs) we decided to go to the Mohne Dam, that was breached by the famous Dambusters raid in 1943. The roads to the Dam consisted of excellent sweeping bends on superb tarmac through forests and hills, so even though it was wet, we managed to keep a good pace up. After the obligatory photos at the Dam we headed off back to Calais. Then it really did decide to rain! While I have much to praise the European autoroute system for, some of the surface quality, particularly in Belgium, leaves much to be desired in the wet. Basically the roads are concrete slabs which means heavy spray is inevitable. Riding in dense traffic (Antwerp again) with lorries kicking up plumes of spray and the still maniacal Belgian car drivers doing obscene speeds and tailgating as normal (does it really take longer to brake in the wet??), required plenty of concentration and a bit of luck!

Apart from an embarrassing navigational error that meant that I missed the Calais ferry turn off (despite my 2 colleagues apparently frantically signalling – what do you mean I was not looking in my mirrors?) we enjoyed a little more of the French countryside, but caught the ferry in the nick of time. Once on the shores of Old Blighty, we learned what a wonderful sunny weekend you had had. At least we had a dry run home.

For those of you who could not come you missed a real treat. Although I have now left the Army there may be the opportunity to do a similar trip this year, subject to me getting a job and the right mates in the right places! Watch this space!

Simon Dorset



Stand by your beds!' – our first night in proper military accommodation! Not looking too happy though....!



The crew. From L to R: Geoff (Triumph Sprint ST), Simon (VFR 800 VTEC), RSM Steve Judge (Suzuki GS1400), ST 1300, Colin Webb - 115 provost Company (VFR 800), and Julian (BMW GS1150).



Reminiscing – Simon on a Pan European ST 1300 Police Special with Julian in the background, outside 115 Provost Company HQ, Osnabruck, Germany.



In front of the Mohne Dam. For a small fee Simon can bore you rigid about the Dambusters Raid. Neither Julian or Geoff was willing to pay!



Where did we make the hole...??