

# 'On Yer Bike'

The quarterly journal of the Cheddar Valley Advanced Motorcyclists



**Promoting high standards and attitudes towards road safety**

Cheddar Valley  
Advanced  
Motorcyclists



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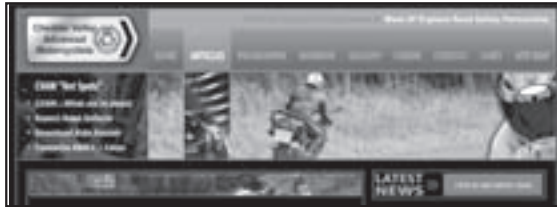
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**Articles | Events | Members | Gallery | Forum | Links  
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# Editorial

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Welcome to this quarter's edition of On Yer Bike. My name is Paul Westlake and I have taken over the reins from Eddy.

This edition is inexcusably late, I offer my apologies and promise to do better next time.

I would like to see articles in here that are written by you, the membership. I know it is a lot to ask on a regular basis, but it is the essence of what we are; a club.

We are supported by many advertisers, most of whom look for a relationship with their customers, so if you have used an advertiser and are pleased with what you have received for your hard earned money, then perhaps a submit a little write-up saying so. It will surely not go unrewarded.

I am happy to include any items regarding kit, rides out, or events. Especially if I don't have to write it all my self.

Paul Westlake

# From the Chair

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Doesn't time fly when you're enjoying (?) yourself. It's February already, 3 months into my stint in 'The Chair'.

January saw over fifty of us enjoy a great meal and social evening, at The Woodborough, a big thank you to Ian and Kim.....same again next year please!

By the time this goes to print, plans for the year will be well in hand. The first ride of 2009, on 1st February, was well supported even though it was very cold. Thanks go to Brian, Tim and all those brave souls who turned out.

Over the next couple of months the next batch of volunteers will be under going Observer training. Good luck to you all and enjoy the experience.

To recognise all the hard work done behind the scenes, by various people who do not ride for one reason or another, we now have a new membership level of Group Friend ( recognised by IAM for none IAM members ). This is open to anyone ( non rider ) who would like to become a member of the club. So if you have a pillion, friend, partner or just someone who, like us, has an interest in Road Safety and Motorcycling then apply now. Those who register will have free membership until September 2009, then a small admin fee of £5 per year will be charged.

Club clothing is now for sale, I'll bring it along to socials, so bring your cheque books.

As you all know, we've been having some very poor weather this winter, which led to

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the Quiz Night being postponed until October. Although we had a great turn out on the night, the Quiz Master, Nick, along with most of the members coming from the north of our area, were snowed in! Well Done to Byron and Andy, who actually made it on their bikes.....BMW riders.....mad or brave, you decide which!



Almost every social evening, for the year, is booked with a guest speaker. The events list is very busy, so keep an eye on the web site for the latest news. If anyone wants to arrange socials or ride outs, over and above the scheduled ones, then feel free to put your ideas forward.

Talking about the web site.....COME ON PEOPLE.....Andy is putting lots of hard work into it. We've had great feed back from outside agencies, about its quality and content, the only thing missing are more Members / Associates / Friend Members taking part in the discussion forums and submitting articles for Andy to complain to me about, because he's overworked.

I'd like to say a big Thank You, on behalf of CVAM, to Jim Newman of The Somerset Road Safety Partnership, who has secured us a £500 sponsorship deal for 2009.

We have a wealth of knowledge and experience, in CVAM, so lets share it out via the web site or through articles in this magazine ( to overwork an already overworked Paul! ).

Finally, I look forward to seeing you all out and about, ride safe.

– *Phil*

### **Price list for CVAM clothing.**

T-Shirts £7.50

Men's Polo Shirt £12

Ladies Rib fit Polo Shirt £9

Ladies Polo Shirt £10

Men's Zipped Sweatshirt Jacket £18

Ladies Zipped Sweatshirt Jacket £16

Unisex Full Zip Outdoor Fleece £18

Men's Micro Fleece Zip Neck £17

Unisex Half Zip Outdoor Fleece £17

Acrylic Hat £7

Ski Hat £7.50

# Honda DN-01 - Review Paul Westlake

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*I took out the DN-01 from Honda the other day. It had had a bit of a poor showing in the reviews I had found, but spurred on by its odd looking character, booked a test ride anyway.*

The gear box is a constantly variable transmission so in that respect it's like a scooter. The seating position, when I first sat on the bike was comfortable, and with the optional high level screen fitted, the instrument panel was clear. I revved the engine and the take-up was gentle & smooth. I got over that and pulled out onto the road. The acceleration was not sporty, but as I leaned into the first corner the feeling was of security, the bike didn't want to wander or wobble, even though I was still riding at a slow pace. I rode down into Yeovil, & left on the Sherborne road.

A little diesel spill on the roundabout at the bottom of Babylon Hill caused no anxiety, a push of the bars and a little sashay and I was through. Traffic was light, so I accelerated to seventy and held it there. The ride was still comfortable, no untoward buffeting, and very little vibration. I didn't notice any slowing as I climbed the hill. The ride remained comfortable at all the speeds I tried.

I rode on through Sherborne, out to Milborne Port and turned off to Charlton Hawthorne. The roads and the surfaces were varied, dirty here, wet there, but no handling problems evidenced themselves.

I really enjoyed the ride, the handling

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was good for a cruiser, that is what this bike really is, despite the looks. The long wheel base ought to make it difficult to manoeuvre on tight corners, but it isn't.

When I got back to Yeovil, the traffic was a lot heavier & I had ample opportunity to try slow riding, give it a handful & use the rear brake as you would on any other bike, the DN-01 sits there comfortably (like your favourite arm chair) and above all, is steady.

I wouldn't expect a sports bike fan to enjoy this bike, but with a 65BHP 680cc engine, foot boards, and a good temper, this is a bike that could easily go very far indeed. I managed to exceed the thirty minute period, and would happily have gone a lot further.

I think this is a bike that would be good for a commuter, in or out of town. If you like the Deauville, you'll probably like the DN-01 too (they share an engine). At the current price of £9200 otr, it is far too expensive, but price reviews are expected soon says a source close to Honda. Luggage is also an issue, though my test did come with a top box, which after all is all many of us have anyway.

# Night Riding

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## Daniel Butson

For those of us who tend to ride just for pleasure during the summer months, the thought of taking the bike out at night is probably less appealing. However, plenty of people use their bikes all year round, which means at some point they are going to be faced with riding in the dark. The most obvious issue to contend with is the lack of visibility, although it's not always clear as to the best way to deal with it. The following tips hopefully highlight the key things to remember when riding at night.

### Improving your chances of being seen

This is really where hi-visibility clothing will add most benefit. A bike has a relatively small profile particularly from the rear. Wearing hi-visibility clothing will help create a visible outline of the rider and reduce the likelihood of other drivers confusing the lights as part of the vehicle in front.

If you are two up it is most important for the pillion to wear hi-visibility clothing, as it provides most benefit from behind. You should also consider how luggage such as top boxes and rucksacks might reduce the effectiveness. Hi-visibility sticky strips can help. Free Hi-vis rucksack covers are available from the club, courtesy of Somerset Road Safety Partnership.

When following other vehicles it may be preferable to ride clear of the leading vehicle's taillights. By taking a central position or varying your position in your lane, this will help to separate you visually from other traffic.

Hazards in the road create a different problem. As your headlight range

is likely to be poor, by the time you have perceived a need to take avoiding action for something in the road, it can be too late. Travelling in the tyre tracks of the vehicle ahead can put your mind at rest, but return you to the mixing in problem above.

### Improving your ability to see

Making sure that all your lights work properly and are clean enough to maximise their benefit is a must before setting off in the dark. If you think the headlights on your bike are particularly weak you may want to experiment with brighter bulbs some claim to be up 50% brighter. If you go to a bike dealer, he probably won't carry high intensity bulbs, but will refer you to Halfords or similar. They don't understand bikes in general and will give you misleading or poorly informed opinion. Know what your bike can take, your dealer or garage man will help you out. In general it is normally sufficient to ensure your headlights are clean, free from dust and have good quality standard bulbs.

At night, ride with main beam on all the time except when there is oncoming traffic. Although you will be able to see better, any approaching driver will be dazzled, making it difficult to judge your speed or identify how much of the road you are using. It is also likely that they will flip back to main beam to return the courtesy and this won't help either of you get past each other safely. If you are dazzled by an un-dipped headlight, flash your own light quickly to alert the other driver but don't retaliate by putting your lights back on high beam

When glare from oncoming traffic is a major problem, one way to combat this is to use the two-point scan. It consists of shifting your line of sight between two constantly changing points on the near side edge of the road; one directly in front of your bike and the other opposite the oncoming vehicle. Keep your eyes moving in this fashion until the offending vehicle passes by. This will keep you on course but will not tell you what is happening ahead, so slow down.

Remember to turn your lights on according to the highway code, half an hour before sun set, and turn them off if you so desire half an hour after sun rise. I tend to ride with them on all the time that way you can't forget.

Unless your visor is new, it will have lots of tiny scratches which won't help you to see when faced with oncoming traffic, particularly if they don't dip their beam early. Add that to the cooler damper night-time air and

increased condensation and you are going to find it pretty difficult to see. It can often be easier to flip your visor up momentarily, but if you are doing a lot of night riding you will need to replace your visors regularly. It goes without saying of course that wearing a tinted visor, or sunglasses at night is both pretty stupid and illegal.

In colder weather a self adhesive insert such as Fog City or Pinlock for more complicated helmets will help reduce the condensation to a manageable level. Some riders consider inserts to be as much hindrance as help, so make your own decision.

Even if you have a new visor and bike fitted with particularly good headlights, you will have to accept that visibility is reduced and this ultimately means you will need to adapt the way you ride.

### **Adapting your riding**

At this point it's worth reiterating the riders mantra about being able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear. Night riding reduces both the distance and the quality of what you see, which ultimately means you will have to ride slower. It will be harder to identify surface problems as well as the general direction of the road, which is particularly important on unlit country roads. Always be prepared to slow down or stop if you really can't figure out which way the road is going – don't guess what you can't see. You will also need to be aware that since you are going slower there is greater chance of

other vehicles catching you up. They may be incorrectly relying on your general direction and braking points to plan their own driving. If you simply roll off the throttle on the approach to a bend, a following vehicle may not notice you slow down. Here it can be useful to 'show some brake lights' to highlight the drop in speed.

A vehicle ahead illuminates the road well in front. You will see signs, bends, debris, in plenty of time. A driver even further ahead, or at the head of a queue, may dip his lights, signifying an opposing vehicle. Conversely, such a vehicle putting lights on main beam signify no such vehicle. Scan for other vehicles they can tell you a wealth of information to put in to your riding plan; the sharpness of a bend; a side road - don't overtake or just simply to slow down.

Textbook position for view are of little use. They rely on illumination and there is rarely sufficient.

When cornering your lights typically won't be pointing in the direction of travel, so it's important to have plenty of lean in reserve. If for example the bend tightens or the road surface alters you may need to react quickly. Although cat's eyes indicate the type of white line along the centre of the road, generally, the more white paint in the line the greater the number of cats eyes, the greater the hazard.

The effort required to focus and plan appropriately when riding at night is significantly greater, particularly when riding on dark country roads. You may even choose to avoid them altogether.

## **Physical issue**

It is generally not advised to ride when you are tired particularly at night. Night riding over long distances can easily leave a rider in auto pilot mode, where we may not react to hazards as quickly as they would during the day. This is particularly true for empty motorways that enable constant unhindered speed to be achieved. It is also worth noting that it gets colder at night even in summer.

## **To helps us reduce fatigue**

Varying your speed and taking regular breaks is really the only way to combat this fatigue. If you have a long night time journey ahead and are unprepared for the cold, make regular coffee stops as this not only gives you a break, but helps you warm up.

## **Additional Hazards**

Apart from watching out for other drivers who may also be suffering from tiredness or sometimes under the influence of alcohol, you need to keep a look out for wild animals which are generally more active and a lot harder to see. Even in built up areas you have the risk of foxes and cats, but you are most likely to encounter wildlife on a country road, where you may have been the only vehicle to use the stretch for the last hour or so.

So to finish off, remember this: The hazards you face at night are the same ones you deal with in daylight. it's just that you can't see them as well.

I had to edit a few pictures from the original article to get it all in, but I hope nothing takes away the joy that this petrol head exhibits in...



# A Year in the Life of a Trackday Addict

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## Keith T (aka BRG)

**This article gives you a look into the life of a trackday addict. It details the events of my 2008 season - from the point of buying a new track bike, preparing it for the track and taking part in five trackdays. BEWARE it contains details of costs - so is not recommended for those of a nervous disposition.**

This article gives you a look into the life of a trackday addict. It details the events of my 2008 season - from the point of buying a new track bike, preparing it for the track and taking part in five trackdays. BEWARE it contains details of costs - so is not recommended for those of a nervous disposition.

I am BRG – an epithet collected for my fondness for the colour British Racing Green (something I'd yet to discover with my first bike (left)).

Nibelung is the name of my track bike. He (I give all of my bikes male names; in contrast to my female cars!) is named after the mythical German dwarf (or Nibelung) named Alberich, who kept a hoard of gold (an allusion to my Aprilia's somewhat blingy



colour scheme). Legend has it that the Nibelung lived around Worms (a town in Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany) – not far from where I lived for a while.

My avatar on the RSVR.net forum shows an excerpt from the painting 'Der Mythos der Nibelungen' (The Myth of the Nibelung) by Michael Sowa.

# 1 – Background

## 1.1 The muse

**I was leading a fairly hobby-free existence. The heady delights of nicotine and alcohol are, for me, a distant memory. I eschew externally-sourced stimulants of all forms (with the possible exception of caffeine) and I had thought my days of self-inducing adrenaline were largely over (I'm talking about rowing and skiing here!).**

Then a colleague and biker friend persuaded me to do a trackday. Not having the courage to do it on my own bike, I found a school that provided the hardware (the now defunct Ducati Experience) and signed up for my first venue, at Cadwell Park in 1998



I come from a biking family. I was taken to spectate at Oulton Park as a toddler, and pater had been

a biker in his younger days (between the wars). He still had a bike, a James Cadet, and when I was a nipper I was sometimes taken to primary school riding on the tank! My real biking obsession started when big bro' got his first bike (a BSA C12), but more so when pater took me to the 1968 TT for the day. (Ago won the Senior and Bill Ivy clocked the first 100 mph lap on a 125.)

I've found that the adrenaline rush I get from riding on the track gives me the biggest high I've ever experienced

(measured as intensity times time). What started as a once-a-year treat in 1998 has turned, for me, into a full-on hobby. Alas, like all addictions, one needs ever more exposure to satisfy the craving - translated into trackday terms, that means more trackdays and bettering my performance and that of my bike all the time. It's like emptying money into a bottomless pit! What fun!

## 1.2 Previous track experience – schools and own bikes

Here's a list of the track days I've done so far. Days with my own bikes are shown in bold.

As you can see below, what started as a little burst of adrenaline once a year has turned into something altogether more addictive. By the way, you may spot a hiatus from 2002 to 2005. This was after I crashed on the road in early 2003 - a near-death experience that left me unable to contemplate biking for ooh, a couple of years...

Circuit	Bike	Organiser	Weather	Mishaps
1998-04-21 Cadwell	Ducati 748	Ducati Experience	Dry	
1999-08-05 Cadwell	Ducati 996	Ducati Experience	Dry	Lowside
2000-06-20 Donington	Honda CBR600F	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Dry	
<b>2001-05-10 Darley Moor</b>	Triumph Sprint ST	West Midlands IAM	Dry	
2001-06-08 Donington	Honda Fireblade	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Dry	
<b>2001-08-22 Castle Combe</b>	Triumph Sprint ST	Castle Combe Circuit/ Fowlers	Dry	
<b>2002-06-19 Castle Combe</b>	Triumph Sprint ST	Castle Combe Circuit/ Fowlers	Dry	
2002-07-03 Donington	Honda Fireblade	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Wet	
2002-08-28 Donington	Honda Fireblade	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Dry	
<b>2005-08-10 Castle Combe</b>	Ducati MTS1000SDS	Castle Combe Circuit/ Fowlers	Dry	
<b>2006-06-07 Castle Combe</b>	Ducati MTS1000SDS	Castle Combe Circuit/ Fowlers	Dry	
2006-06-21 Donington	Honda Fireblade	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Dry	
<b>2006-10-04 Castle Combe</b>	Ducati MTS1000SDS	Castle Combe Circuit/Fowlers	Dry	
<b>2007-05-02 Castle Combe</b>	Ducati MTS1000SDS	Castle Combe Circuit/ Fowlers	Dry	
2007-06-27 Donington	Honda CBR1000RR	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Dry-Rain	
<b>2007-07-14 Pembrey</b>	Ducati MTS1000SDS	Phil Bevan Trackdays	Dry	
2007-07-25 Donington	Honda CBR1000RR	Honda Ron Haslam Race School	Wet	Lowside
<b>2008-05-07 Castle Combe</b>	Aprilia RSV1000R- F	Castle Combe Circuit	Dry	
<b>2008-06-04 Castle Combe</b>	Aprilia RSV1000R- F	Castle Combe Circuit	Dry	Lowside
<b>2008-07-05 Donington</b>	Aprilia RSV1000R- F	No Limits	Rain-Dry- Rain/Dry	
<b>2008-08-06 Oulton</b>	Aprilia RSV1000R- F	Focused Events	Dry-Wet- Dry	
<b>2008-09-03 Castle Combe</b>	Aprilia RSV1000R- F	Castle Combe Circuit	Rain-Dry- Rain-Dry	

## 2 – Nibelung: the track bike

### 2.1 Why a track bike?

Aside from school venues, I spent several years using my own bikes on track. Here they are:



*Triumph Sprint ST*



*'Wolfram' Ducati  
Multistrada*



*'Neppomuk' Aprilia  
RSV 'Nibelung'*

Using your own bike has the advantage that it's relatively cheap and that you're more familiar with the character of the bike. The flip-side is that the more you do to make the bike faster (removing various bits, fitting special tyres, brakes, clip-ons, rearsets etc.), the longer it takes to convert the bike for track readiness. Also the further you get down this particular trail, the more has to be done when you arrive at the circuit and when you're ready to go home. It's a losing battle! So a dedicated track bike, although being initially more expensive, can save you a lot of time (well, at the time of the venue at least - you'll spend shed-loads of time in the garage between times!)

In the last couple of years, I've taken out track insurance with Pit & Paddock. This is not cheap in terms of cost per venue, but has paid for itself this year after a mishap at Castle Combe.

### 2.2 Cost envelope

Once I'd decided that I wanted a dedicated track bike, the first question was whether I had anywhere to put it. There's not only the bike to consider, but paddock stands, spare wheels and various bits of paddock junk as well. I also have a road bike (a Ducati Multistrada), so things are presently a bit of a squeeze in my garage. I'll just have to move some gardening stuff into the attic! I think it's important to set yourself a budget for these things, as overspending (and, I suspect, the following divorce) is just too easy. I decided that I could afford to spend £10k to get the bike to track. This had to include all non-recurring costs; trackday costs would be in addition to this.

(I shan't mention the fact that I had to buy an estate car and a trailer in order to carry all the stuff with me.)

### 2.3 How much power - what kind of bike?

#### Having campaigned my Multistrada and a Haslam-school Fireblade on track for three seasons, I'd made up my mind that I wanted a V-twin. Why?

Well I like the sound, I like the fact that they're not mainstream, and I like the somewhat lugubrious power delivery of the beast (though having said that, the standard Aprilia has bugger all to offer below about 7k, and will only run to 10k). They're not up to the performance of a Jap one-litre inline-four ('14'), but they do have soul. So, given the obvious choices of an Aprilia or a Ducati, why did I choose the Aprilia? The simple answer is cost. My budget meant that I could only afford to spend about £7.5k on the basic road bike before the extras had to be bought. So what were my options?



#### **Ducati 1098-S**

At £14k for the basic road bike and too new for any used bikes to get onto the market, this was way too expensive.



#### **Ducati 1098**

At £10k this represented a lower price, but didn't have the suspension I felt was a prerequisite for a track bike. It too blew my budget.



#### **Ducati 999-S**

Used/New - these were on the market for about £9.5k new, so I reckon I could have got hold of a second-hand one for my budget, but the truth of the matter is that they're too small for my 1.88m (6'2") frame, and I find it hard to lift my feet onto the pegs when sitting in the saddle. Generally very uncomfortable for me.



#### **Ducati 998-S/996-S**

Used - well within budget, but again the size problems of the 999.



#### **Aprilia RSV1000R-F**

Used - just the right size for me; performance on par with a 999S and all the track-ready goodies (Öhlins front, rear and steering damper) as standard.

**A few quick phone calls later, I'd managed to persuade a guy to flog me a brand-new 2006 RSV1000R-F (i.e. 1½ years old) for £7,250. Deal me in!**

## 2.4 Straight out of the tin

So what have I got? Well the basic bike's allegedly pretty close to the one that Troy Corser and Nori Haga campaigned in WSB (and we all believe that, don't we children?). The WSB bike used a short-stroke engine which mine hasn't got - but in a way that's a good thing - see section 5 'The future'. Having said that, the difference between any road bike and a factory racer is still going to be immense! The maximum power and torque spread are very similar to those of a Ducati 999, though well short of a



1098. It has got good quality (Öhlins) suspension. It also has a steering damper and radial caliper brakes.

## 2.5 No conversion

My aim was not to have to do anything to it to get it on track! In the event, I'm a wee bit shy of this mark, but not much. The main feature of the bike had to be that the exhaust would pass Castle Combe's strict noise restrictions. These are 105 dBA at 0.5m perpendicular to the outlet at three quarters maximum revs, i.e. 7000 rpm (for most other circuits it's at 5000 rpm).



In the event, it just scrapes through, with three readings at 105, 101 and 104 dBA on three different days. (It just shows how variable the readings can be.)

It needed track bodywork. This was always in the budget, but having seen it in white, I just had to get it painted BRG, didn't I?

The suspension was good, but after the first track day, I felt it could be improved, so I took it to my suspension guru (MHRacing) who increased the front spring rate from 9.5 to 10.0N/mm to cope with my track-ready 113kg (17¾ st) and tweaked the damping a bit here and there.

**A season later, as a result of some shimmy problems through Castle Combe's Folly, I've changed the rear spring rate from 95 to 100 N/mm.**



The Brembo radial brakes are certainly on a par with anything I've used before (equal to the Tokiko radials on a Fireblade). The standard pads give very controllable stopping power, which can be easily applied to maximum effect with a couple of fingers (while using the throttle for down-changes).



Most trackdays are held on weekdays. For me, it takes a lot of planning and business manoeuvring to be able to get time off work for these, so I can't easily re-arrange them. Add to that the cost in terms of money and effort in getting to these venues (my wife and I haven't got the energy to get to a distant venue for the 08:00 sign-on time, so we need to book accommodation), and it becomes necessary to go ahead with the trackday whatever the weather. So I got hold of a pair of spare wheels and a set of rain tyres, to make the eventuality a lot safer than on road tyres. Then, of course, I had to have them in a matching colour for the bike!



Mrs BRG, my ace photographer and 'pit monkey' (as one envious onlooker referred to her), is a wizard when it comes to changing

wheels, and we've so far worked in perfect harmony.

## 2.6 Logistics

With a dedicated track bike, there's no possibility of riding it to and from the circuits.



In previous years, I've hired a trailer from Honeywell trailers in Bristol, but the time involved in picking up the trailer and dropping it off again is more than I can afford. I reckoned (rightly as it turned out) that I'd be better off investing in my own trailer.

I decided to go with a Bikelug (now known as Motolug). (This picture does not show the final set of tie-downs.) This trailer has the advantage of pivoting just behind the hitch point so the chassis can be tipped backwards alleviating the need for a loader ramp. It also has the advantage of being collapsible so that it can fit in the back of a car.

This has proved invaluable as I take the bike to quite a few places in addition to track days (tyre fitter, tuner, suspension specialist). The trailer fits together with just a few cotter pins so it is a literal ten minute job to assemble/dismantle. Now that Mrs BRG and I have perfected our routine loading the bike is also a ten minute job. I use four tie-down straps and a handlebar tie-down.

## 2.7 Running in

**I've run in all of my previous bikes even more gradually than the manual suggests, carefully increasing the revs (and load) by 1000 revs every 500 miles.**



In the meantime, I read the Motoman article and became fairly convinced that his argument was a good one. So that was the approach I took. However, a word or two of caution:

This strategy takes you into illegal road speeds in first gear right from the off!

You're effectively caning it on a new bike, with whose behaviour you're not familiar - this is exciting to say the least - especially when you're mono-wheeling in second and third! If, as

me, you're doing this at the start of the season (i.e. in the middle of Winter), then the road - to put it mildly - is not at its grippiest and this is the last thing you feel like doing!

Whilst the argument for a high load break-in for the piston rings appears to be a good one, break-in for other components of the bike, such as gears and brake pads, would appear to benefit from a more gradual approach. Anyway, with oil change to the recommended dinosaur-oil before I even fired it up, and another change + filter at 80 miles, I clocked up about 850 miles before taking the SORN (and another change to dino 10W40). As an aside, I won't use synthetic or semi-synth in a track bike with oil-bath clutch.

The jury's out at the moment, but I expect to have the pistons and rings available for analysis soon.

# 3 – Target circuits

## 3.1 Castle Combe

Castle Combe Circuit opened just 18 months after Silverstone in the summer of 1950, making it one of the longest established circuits in the UK. Until 1999, the circuit followed its original layout, around the perimeter of the old air base. In that first year, a young Stirling Moss won a race and over the next few years, names like Mike Hawthorn, Colin Chapman, Les Leston, Roy Salvadori and John Surtees thrilled huge crowds.

**NB: The Bybrook chicane** is a temporary feature put in only for the bikes and stems from an international Superbike race in 2004 at which Michael Rutter (I think t'was he) requested a feature to slow riders into Camp due to the limited run-off available on the exit. Made up of a 'pimple' of tarmac added to the inside of the circuit just before Camp Corner with hay bales and tyres put in the middle of the circuit proper to enforce the corner.

Length: - 1.850 Miles (2.977 km)

Direction: - Clockwise

Telephone: - 01249 782417

Website: - [www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk](http://www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk)

Location: - Castle Combe Circuit, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 7EY

I'd been there six times before 2008.

Bybrook Chicane put in place for bike trackdays and races

I like this venue but the noise limits, though understandable, are a bit restrictive at 105dBA at 3/4 max revs (7000rpm on the Aprilia) but Nibelung cleared this on three venues at 105, 101 and 104dBA. The council restricts the number of riders on the track at any time to 12, so instead of running three ability-based groups per hour, each of 25-35 riders, like most trackdays, they run six mixed-ability groups per hour, each of 12 riders, to make up the cash. This is fine, but as they insist on 1½ warm-up laps, this doesn't give you much time at your own pace. I often find I'm grouped with much slower riders. Patience, patience! The main thing to remember about CC is that



there are only four left handers: one is fast (Avon Rise), but is not taken at the limit due to braking for the following Quarry right-hander; two are slow (40+mph) exits from esses (Esses and Bobbies) and one is the middle apex of the new Bybrook chicane. The point is that the LHS of the tyre is always cold when you need it. Riders in the know always exercise caution here - those less respectful come off - simple!

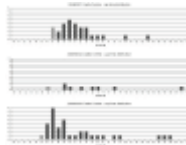
My first outing here in 2008 was the first time out on the Aprilia, so I was keen to get to know the behaviour of the bike, and not to push things too hard. Notwithstanding, I equalled my personal best at 1'27".

I have to confess that I made a horlicks of braking for Avon Rise on my second outing here. I was hitting this point somewhat faster than I was on the Multistrada (145mph vs. 130mph) and thought to take a wide turning point, over at the right-hand side of the track. I thought I'd taken account of the brow at the RHS of the track at the braking point and left my braking until the bike had settled. I miscalculated, and was still on maximum braking at the turning point. The combined forces of turning and braking were too much for the (road) tyre, and I lost the front at 120 mph. Luckily (?) Mrs BRG was there to capture the event...

The upshot of this was total damage of around £4,000, of which £2,670 was covered by insurance and £1,330 was uninsured (insurance excess, helmet and fairing). Note to self: DON'T DO IT AGAIN!

At my last visit, I booked two sessions back-to-back. This worked well because the officials insisted that I came off the circuit and rejoined it again at the end of each session. This meant I could play catch-up on hot tyres and gave me 1½ laps of empty circuit. Bliss!

My personal best for CC improved over the year from 1'27" to 1'25" with consistent spread around 1'26". Very satisfying. Clocked top speed (between Folly and Avon Rise) was about 142-145mph, though I never felt that I managed to nail it through Folly, as it always felt that the front would wash away on the exit given the slightest provocation. I've consulted with my suspension guru who has since upped my rear spring rate from 95 to 100 N/mm.



*Lap times*



*Top speed*

# What's in your pockets?

**In a recent event that I unwillingly took part in, I gained some experience. To most of you, the following will be common sense, unfortunately, to some of us it isn't, yet.**

I left home at a reasonable temperature, only to find that over the hill, but not far away, were temperatures I wouldn't have dreamed of venturing out on my bike in. In the space of a hundred yards the road had gone from dry to icy, black ice too, and there I was, suddenly bikeless and much dirtier than I like.

I was very fortunate, all I received in injuries were dirty looks from the following drivers who drove round me.

As the day progressed, I found the bruises colouring up. A particularly exciting one on my hip looked like a love bite from a crocodile and proved to be the imprint of the toggle on the elastic string at the bottom of

the jacket. Another late arrival was courtesy of the phone in my breast pocket.

Accidents are by their very definition unpredictable, so it makes it harder to consider the consequences of filling your pockets, or ruck-sack. When I now consider the bits I sometimes carry in various pockets, it makes me cringe. We have all seen the theft conscious riders with a chain over their shoulder. Looks good on a hairy biker, probably not so good in him.

I've got a top box, I now decant what I need into that and just keep things that don't hurt in my pockets.

## Passes and beginners

Test Passes		New Members	
John Hodgetts	24/01/2009	Andreas Henken	10/02/2009
Ian Long	27/12/2008	Sue Hodgetts	10/02/2009
Dee Eaton	21/12/2008	Karen Barclay	10/02/2009
Joanne Wingate	20/11/2008	John Samuels	02/02/2009
Mike Renshaw	20/12/2008	Maggie Mickshik	16/01/2009
Nathan Bowerman	08/11/2008	John Bushell	01/12/2008
Mark Taylor	02/11/2008	Ralph Ferrand	06/11/2008
Mark Millar	27/09/2008	Neil Rosati	22/10/2008
John Hodge	24/09/2008	Lee Booker	14/10/2008
Mark Tredwen	03/10/2008	Malcolm Dykes	09/10/2008
Nigel Peart	09/09/2008	Joanne Wingate	21/09/2008
Kirk Matthews	07/09/2008	Bill Chard	16/09/2008
Tony Field	06/08/2008	John Hodgetts	12/09/2008
Emilia Floyd	08/07/2008	Thomas East	22/08/2008
Steve Loader	09/07/2008	Mark Singleton	20/08/2008
Andy Munday	03/07/2008	Kevin Mountcastle	11/08/2008
		Phil Hale	11/08/2008
		Alison Rix	05/08/2008
		Jonathan West	05/08/2008
		Ian Long	13/07/2008
		Mike Renshaw	09/07/2008

# WHO'S WHO ON THE CVAM COMMITTEE

## DETAILS

<b>Chairman</b>	Phil Dainty chairman@cvam.info
<b>Deputy Chairman</b>	Position vacant
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Duncan Day membershipsecretary@cvam.info
<b>Group Secretary</b>	Maria Brierly secretary@cvam.info
<b>Treasurer</b>	Tim Jeal
<b>Social Events Co-ordinator</b>	Position Vacant
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Paul Westlake info@cvam.info
<b>Chief Observer</b>	Nick Schroeter
<b>Courses/Rides Co-ordinator</b>	Ian Mason
<b>Observer/Associate Representative</b>	Emilia Floyd
<b>Web Manager</b>	Andy Williams cvam.admin@cvam.info

For further contact details please visit our website **[www.cvam.info](http://www.cvam.info)**

### **Members services**

AndyW is proposing to add a members link to offer member services within the club to other club members. If you would like to offer a service or are seeking a service please contact him with details.



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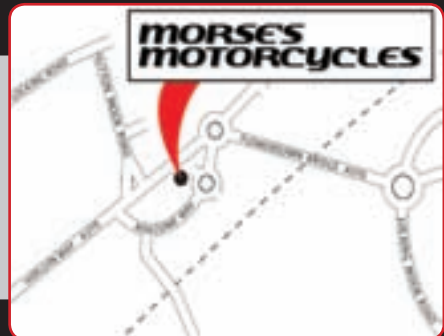
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