THE SPORTS COUNCIL

EAST MIDLAND REGION

OFF THE ROAD MOTOR CYCLING

IN THE

EAST MIDLAND REGION

Report of a Working Party establish by the Planning Panel of the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation (East Midlands)

WORKING PARTY MEMBERSHIP

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Introduction

Following the production of the report Motor Sport in the East Midlands the Planning Panel of the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation discussed the problems and opportunities of providing for motor-cycling of a non-competitive and recreational nature and set up a Working Party with the following terms of reference:

"To consider the needs of motor-cyclists beyond those provided by motor-cycle sport; to focus on the requirements for providing for motor-cyclists who are outside of the influence and control of the governing bodies; to prepare a topic report outlining the problems and opportunities and to recommend ways in which the needs might best be met".

- The Working Party did not consider the formal, competitive needs of Motor Cycling sport which are the subject of the separate report mentioned earlier (Motor Sport in the East Midlands).
- 3 Two postal surveys were carried out.

The first, addressed to Local Authorities in the Region, attempted to discover the extent of the problems caused by casual motor-cycling and the attitudes and/or remedies adopted by individual authorities.

The second survey was aimed at existing clubs affiliated to the governing bodies - the Auto Cycle Union (ACU) and the Amateur Motor-Cycle Association (AMCA) - to try to gauge the extent of their holdings or usage of off-the-road sites, and the extent of the demand for more accommodation of this type.

Some members of the Working Party have visited facilities outside of the Region. A number of approaches have been discussed and the report contains a series of recommendations for the consideration of the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation and the agencies concerned.

Background Statement

Motor-cycling is an all-embracing term but it should be appreciated that there are a number of separate motor-cycle activities which fall within the scope of this report. These include activities such as Scrambling, Grass Track Racing, Freak Hill Climbs, Enduros, Trial Riding, Trail Riding, Road Racing, Sprinting, Hill Climbs and Fun/Practice.

Motor-cycling is an exciting, skilful and enjoyable recreational activity offering a wide range of competitive and 'fun' opportunities. It is also a quick and economical form of transport. There is an increasing number of motor-cycle sales each year but in order to practice, motor-cyclists of all standards have to travel long distances to find suitable venues and there is an increasing tendency to use informal sites, often involving trespass. It appears at present that most clubs are making do with less than adequate facilities.

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In a survey of District Councils in the Region it was found that only three Authorities (out of the 33 that responded to the questionnaire) have any policies concerned with the provision for motor sports of any description. Ten Authorities had considered making provision for casual and/or 'off-the-road' motor-cycling although only one appeared to have been successful. Table I summarises the results of the survey to District Councils and highlights the fact that 30 out of the 33 authorities knew of areas of land being used without permission and that, although 10 authorities took some form of action to prevent nuisance by motor-cyclists, only 4 of these had taken positive action to try to identify the extent of the problem and find alternative venues.

NB County Councils were not consulted as part of this exercise.

Whilst there are excellent training schemes available in many parts of the Region, formal instruction is not compulsory and many new owners take machines on to the roads with a minimum of tuition. Many good

Road Safety Training Courses have been set up as a result of recent

legislation. (See Appendix 2).

buss on sites

bushrunters

At the same time, the last two decades have seen the restoration of large areas of derelict or despoiled land which at one time were the (admittedly unauthorised) training grounds for beginners. In many cases these sites have presented the only opportunity that young riders have had for informal casual recreation. Many decisions for the restorations, although environmentally beneficial and overdue, were taken without consideration of casual use by motor-cyclists (and others). In some cases little thought has been given to the provision of alternative facilities. Only lately has the extent of the problem been realised, and some attempts made to remedy the situation.

Since 1980, nearly 1,000,000 'road' motor-cycles have been sold in the United Kingdom and to this must be added the sales of approximately 45,000 'off-the-road' models catering for motor-cross, scrambles, trials and enduros. The Motor Cycle Association of Great Britain estimates that there are approximately 1,300,000 road machines currently operating in the country and that this figure has remained fairly static for the last three years.

10 The success of the television programme 'Kick Start' has resulted in an increased interest in the activity by quite young children, and the demand for small 'off-the-road' machines has steadily increased.

Together the two market elements of increased sales to young persons of their first road machine and the increasing number of quite young children with off-the-road machines, have tended to highlight the lack of suitable places where the owners of both licensed and unlicensed machines can practice bike handling skills and undertake familiarity and proficiency tasks. It has led to the unauthorised use of formal recreation areas to the detriment of the normal user and the local resident. Collectively, therefore, the survey, the growths in experience and research have shown that positive planning for the range of motor-cycle activity has not been common practice amongst local authorities.

power to way start to have

Operational Control

To a large extent the lack of positive planning for motor-cycle activities has, however, several problems to overcome before beneficial developmenty can take place. Nevertheless there is a series of issues which are relevant to the development of suitable facilities.

Location

Currently, the semi-professionals and the casual riders have extremely limited opportunities. It could be argued that there needs to be a specific hierarchy of sites because the user requirements seem to be in direct relation to the distances they will travel, although evidence suggests that the more skillul and sophisticated riders are prepared to travel further than the more casual and unskilled number riders.

We work to proposed sites that have been considered evidence suggests that the more skilful and sophisticated riders

- Amongst residents near to proposed sites that have been considered for this type of use experience has shown that there is a general feeling of apprehension about the amount of noise that might be generated. Noise near dwellings from public places is difficult to overcome.

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- There are occasions when sites get very dusty with resultant air pollution. Drifting dust is a source of potential nuisance and dust is an inevitable result of motor-cycles being used in dry weather.
- A few anti-social motor-cyclists can easily spoil the image of the law-abiding majority.
- The Working Party is concerned at the legal implications surrounding the use of unsupervised sites on a casual basis and the lack of appreciation by some users of the dangers of using unauthorised Additionally, some organisers are operating sites unofficially without realising their legal obligations.

Administrative Control

12 Accessibility/Time Zoning/Frequency of Use

Many Planning Authorities use Section 52 of the Town and Country Planning Act to limit the number of occasions when a site can be used, and the times at which it can be used. This can seriously was of reduce the effectiveness of the site and limit the ability of the site operator to invest in improvements, especially where a major facility is intended.

use of antivirsed sites preductes invostment

Normally, motor sports organisations can, with the owners permission, use land up to 14 days a year without planning permission (permitted developments). Another power exists to remove that 'development right' and require submission of planning permission in the normal way even for short duration use. However, there are other powers under other legislation which a Local Authority could use to limit the scope of the operation.

Conclusions

a) Motor-Cycling must be recognised as a valid recreational activity. To date there has been a lack of appreciation and awareness of this, not only in terms of actual facility provision but also in making and adopting positive policies to allow for development.

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- b) Problems of an anti-social nature can be caused by certain types of motor-cycling activity, but the Working Party has found that most motor-cycle clubs are aware of this and, through efficient organisation and administration, take positive steps to alleviate the problems.
- The current state of learner-rider legislation ensures that the majority of new riders must have formal training. There is an increasing demand for suitable training facilities.
- 3 Growing media involvement, together with increased leisure time, are combining to increase the popularity of the activity.
- There would appear to be opportunities to satisfy both of these demands by catering for their requirements on a single site or on a range of sites.
- hierardias
- Demand for facilities ranges from those required by casual users who are not prepared to travel long distances, to the type of site used by the semi-professional who requires a more sophisticated facility. Therefore, the hierarchical approach to facility provision would seem to be appropriate. A casual site may be as small as two acres, any shape, up to a sophisticated site of perhaps twenty acres. It does appear that riders are prepared to travel considerable distances for this type of facility.
 - 6 With a hierarchy of sites the following objectives might be satisfied:
 - a) To provide recreational/leisure and sporting activities.
 - b) To provide motor-cycle training in terms of machine operation and road skills.

Jacober

- c) To create an environment where young people and officialdom can meet to share a mutual motor-cycle interest.
- d) To provide a positive learning environment with facilities designed for maximum use, for flexibility and for wide-ranging appeal.
- 7 An ideal site at the top of the hierarchy would contain:
 - a) A safe, controlled environment, with qualified supervision.
 - b) A range of terrain and surfaces to cater for motor-cyclists of all levels of skill proficiency, including
 - i) A trail park/sports/rough terrain area.
 (To provide for learning control skills and recreational riding).
 - ii) A hard surfaced road training area.

- c) A workshop/storage garage facility to cater for
 - i) The hire of a range of machines.
 - ii) Repairs to machines.
 - iii) Developing new maintenance skills derived from learning under qualified supervision.
- d) A small room for 'theory' lectures (and for film shows/slide presentations etc in inclement weather).
- e) A refreshment area with social facilities and toilets.
- f) The facility for riders to be assessed for proficiency (eg Part 1 of the Motor Cycle Test).
- g) Floodlighting.
- 8 The minimum two acre site requirement appears to be:
 - a) A safe environment with supervision.
 - b) A lower range of terrain and surfaces including some stretches of acceptable 'road surface'.
- 9 Because of the need to be close to population the Working Party anticipates conflict between the locational demands of the majority of sites and the likely environmental considerations of noise and dust pollution. Therefore there will be a need to examine design opportunities to combat these problems. The Working Party also recognises that people are prepared to travel long distances to the more sophisticated type of sites.
- 10 Sites need not be solely for motor-cycle use. Good partners could include sports such as BMX and cyclo-cross.

Recommendations

It is recommended that

- Local authorities should have a positive approach to the provision for and training of motor-cyclists, both from the point of view of the retention of existing sites and the provision of new sites and their management.
- 2 All local planning authorities should consider including statements of intent and policies for positive provision for motor-cycling in local and other plans.
- 3 Local authorities and other agencies should consider policies which cater for the needs of motor-cycling activities which are displaced by either the reclamation of derelict land or the development of other sites which are presently used by motor-cyclists on an informal basis.
- 4 Any agency setting up such a facility near a sensitive environment should insist on machines being silenced to road use standards.
- 5 Existing and new motor-cycle clubs are encouraged to adopt policies and programmes designed to attract the casual individual motor-cyclist.
- 6 All local authorities, the Sports Council and other grant aiding bodies should consider assisting the provision of the type of facilities outlined in the Conclusions.

References

- Recreational Motor-Cycling in Wales in the 1980's Prepared for the Sports Council for Wales by the Cambrian Council of Welsh Motor-Cycle Clubs
- 2 Auto Cycle Union Youth Division Year Book 1984
- 3 Sheffield and South Yorkshire Tackle the Motor Cycle Problem A report by John Bauer, Assistant Director (Open Spaces and Amenities) Sheffield City Council (Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management Journal September 1983)
- 4 Provision for Motor Cycling
 A discussion paper prepared by Derbyshire County Council Planning
 Department
- Motor Sport in the Eastern Region
 Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation. September 1983
- The Development of the Motor Cycle Market since 1945
 The Motor Cycle Association. January 1984
- 7 Motor Cycle Centres Leaflet produced by STEP Management Services Ltd
- 8 Star Rider Times
 Published by STEP Management Services Ltd

Appendices

APPENDIX 8

Regional Council for Sport and Recreation (East Midlands) APPENDIX 1 October 1983 Questionnaire to Local Authorities APPENDIX 2 Regional Council for Sport and Recreation (East Midlands) February 1984 Questionnaire to Motor Cycle Clubs Table 1. Results of Questionnaire to District Councils APPENDIX 3 APPENDIX 4 Table 2. Some facts relating to the 'organised', governing body structure. APPENDIX 5 Map. Amateur Motor-Cycle Association Clubs and Circuits in the East Midland Region. APPENDIX 6 List of Agencies Concerned with Motor Cycling APPENDIX 7 Glossary of Terms

Motor-Cycle Training Scheme

APPENDIX 1

REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR SPORT AND RECREATION [EAST MIDLANDS] WORKING PARTY ON MOTOR CYCLING

Working Party is to concentrate upon the problems posed by casual 'off-the-road' nally unauthorised] motor-cycling and to make recommendations about how to er for the needs of young motor-cyclists.
ME OF AUTHORITY
ME OF OFFICER COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
us:
unauthorised] motor-cycling and to make recommendations about how to r the needs of young motor-cyclists. OF AUTHORITY OF OFFICER COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE: t: Number: your Authority sware of any existing facilities where young motor-cyclists can practice ely in 'off-the-road' situations under controlled conditions? Please give details. ase give any known instances of areas of land being used without permission [please icate location and whether there are complaints fromnearby residents etc]
Please give any known instances of areas of land being used without permission [please indicate location and whether there are complaints from nearby residents etc]
Please indicate whether your Authority has <u>formally</u> considered any complaints about motor-cyclists and the result.

4	Please indicate whether your Authority has considered making provision for casual and/or 'off-the-road' motor-cycling. [Please give location and area of site].			
	Working Party would be interested to see any plans that have been prepared and any s indicating how such facilities might be managed].			
5	Please give details of any approaches made to your Authority by recognised Clubs and/or Governing Bodies requesting assistance in the search for land that might be used for motor-cycling activities. Please include any applications for planning permission to develop such facilities.			
6	Has your Authority any agreed Policies in respect of the provision of facilities for Motor Sports? If so, please give details.			
TAM/S	S			

27.10.83

APPENDIX 2

THE SPORTS COUNCIL [EAST MIDLAND REGION] MOTOR-CYCLING QUESTIONNAIRE

NA	ME OF CLUB:
NU	MBER OF MEMBERS: (if possible indicate in the age groups below]
	Under 15 years:
	15 - 30 years:
	Over 30 years:
SEC	CRETARY: Name:
	Address:

	Telephone Number:
LIST [Cor	T OF SITES USED BY CLUB FOR MOTOR-CYCLE EVENTS: ntinue on separate sheet if required]
a)	Location and size:
ь)	Type of Events:
c)	Number of times used per year:
_	OF SITES NO LONGER USED:
a)	Location and size:
b)	Type of Events:
c)	Reason site no longer used
DOE MOT	S YOUR CLUB HAVE A DEFINITE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SITES FOR OR-CYCLE SPORTS? IF SO, WHAT TYPE OF EVENTS?

. IF ADDITIONAL SITES WERE MADE AVAILABLE DO YOU THINK YOUR MEMBER-SHIP WOULD INCREASE? IF SO, BY HOW MANY?

IF URBAN FRINGE SITES ON DERELICT LAND WERE DEVELOPED TO ATTRACT YOUNG MOTOR-CYCLISTS, WOULD YOUR CLUB BE PREPARED TO:

- a) Participate with the Local Authorities in their planning and development? YES/NO
- b) Assist in the running of these sites?

YES/NO

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

TABLE 1 Results of Questionnaire to District Councils

	Is your authority aware of any existing facilities where young motor cyclists can practice freely in 'off the road' situations under				
	controlled conditions?	Toda STedae Toria Unio	- L		
		00 (1)			
- 1	a) No	20 authorities			
	b) Learner Courses	11 authorities			
	c) Other off the road facilities	5 authorities (6	venues)		
2	Known instances of areas of land being used without permission.				
	a) Number of authorities 30				
	b) Number of venues involved	86			
	 No complaints received 	45 venues			
	ii) Complaints received	41 venues			
3	Authorities which have formally considered complaints about motor-				
	cyclists casual use of land.				
	a) New byelaw or enforcement of exist	ing byelaw/police			
	action or prosecution has resulted	The state of the s	8		
	b) Solicitors letter has resulted		1		
	c) Closure of area has resulted		1		
	d) Formal record of complaint has bee	n made but no	2		
1	action taken		-		
	e) Attempts made to identify extent of problem and to				
	try to provide suitable alternative venue				
4	Authorities which have considered making	Authorities which have considered making provision for casual and/or			
- 1	off the road motor-cycling.				
-70		ng provision for casua.	l and/or		
.,	off the road motor-cycling.		l and/or		
	off the road motor-cycling. a) Site found	l authority	l and/or		
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5	off the road motor-cycling. a) Site found b) No site found c) Search continuing Approaches made to authorities by recon	1 authority 4 authorities 5 authorities			
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5	off the road motor-cycling. a) Site found b) No site found c) Search continuing Approaches made to authorities by record of land for motor-cycling activities. a) Authorities approached b) Sites found c) Unsuccessful approaches made by:	1 authority 4 authorities 5 authorities 10 1 Governing Body Clubs Parents Social Services Youth Service Police	3 2 1 1 1 2		
5	off the road motor-cycling. a) Site found b) No site found c) Search continuing Approaches made to authorities by record of land for motor-cycling activities. a) Authorities approached b) Sites found c) Unsuccessful approaches made by: Authorities with agreed policies in res	1 authority 4 authorities 5 authorities 10 1 Governing Body Clubs Parents Social Services Youth Service Police	3 2 1 1 1 2		
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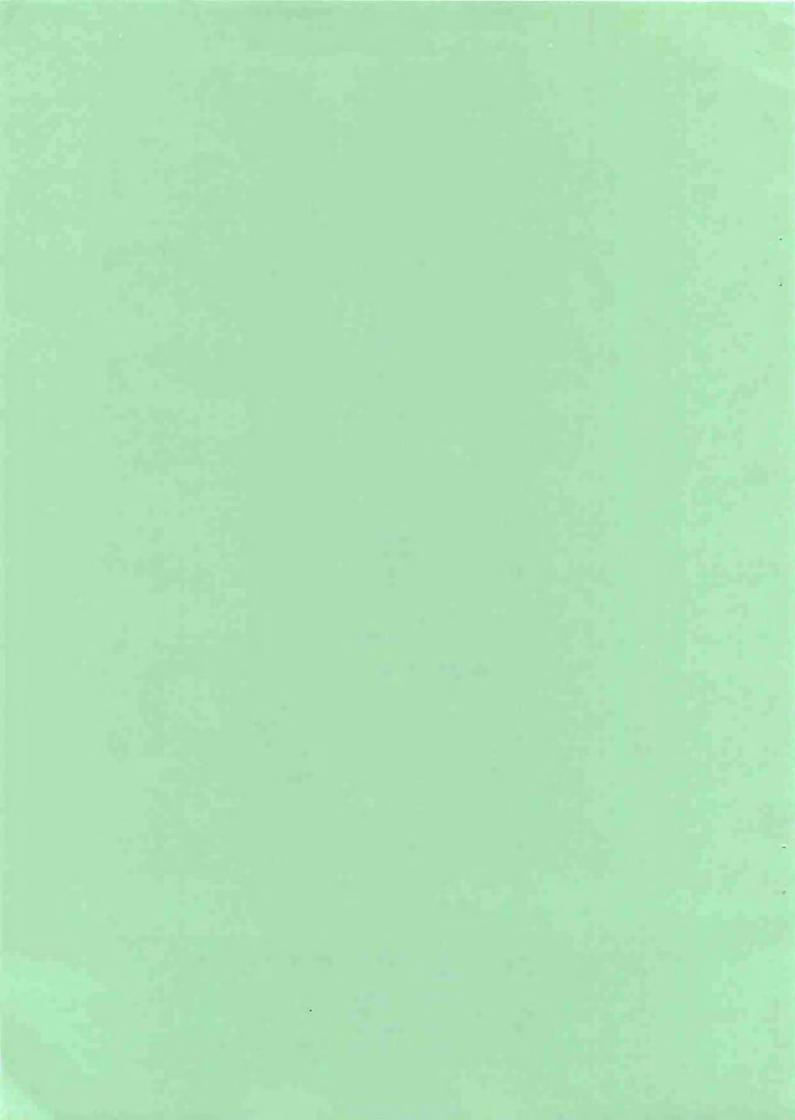


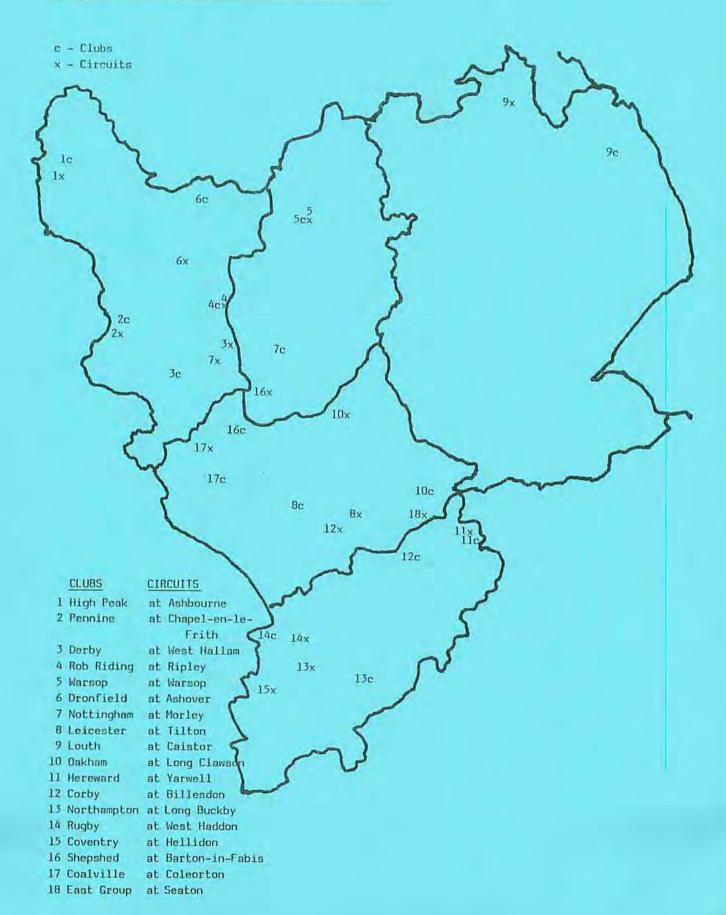
TABLE 2 Some facts relating to the 'organised', governing body structure

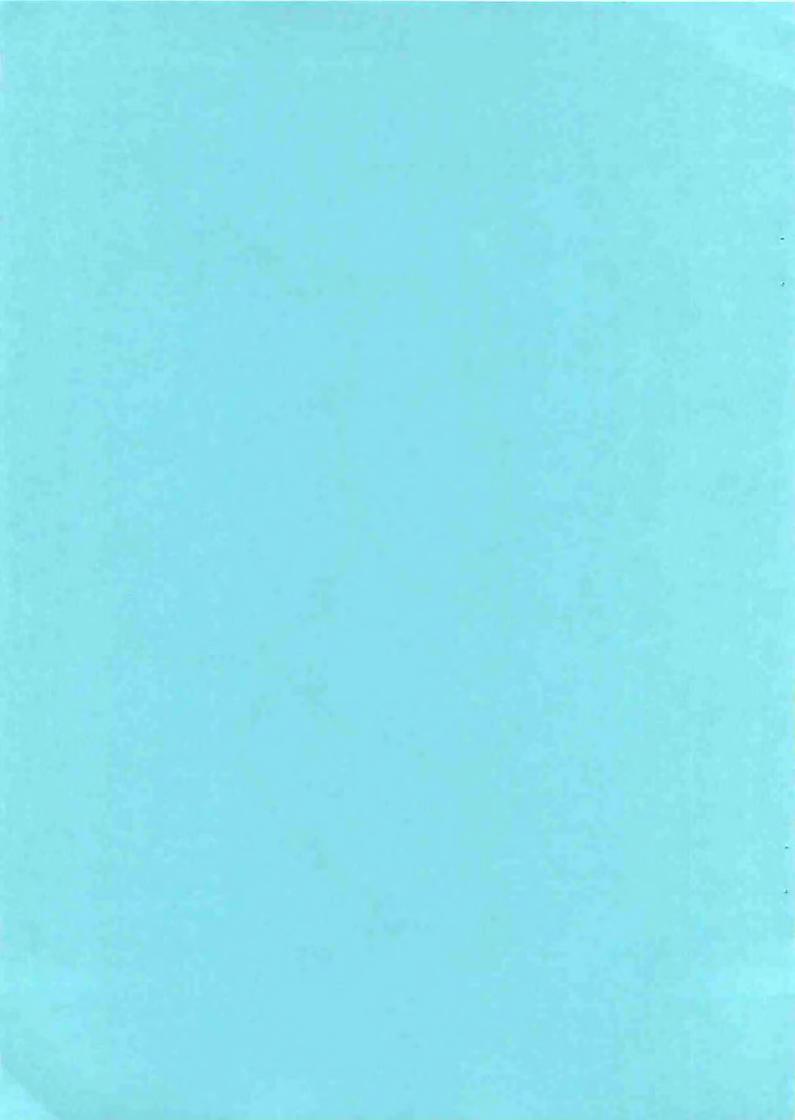
1	a) Total number of respondent clubs			28
	b) Total Membership of respondent clubs			4,649
	c)	Number of clubs organising	i) Trialsii) Scrambles/Moto-criii) Enduro	12 16 1
2	Freq	uency of authorised use of	existing sites by respond	dent clubs.
	a)	Once per year only		1
	b)	2 - 5 times per year		41
	c)	6 - 10 times per year		5
	d) More than 10 times per year			1
3	a)	Total number of respondent difficulties over using si	clubs which had experienc	ced 19
	b)	Reasons for loss of site:	No of clubs	No of sites
		i) Change of ownership	4	4
	1	ii) Local objections abou	ut noise 4	5
		iii) Objections concerned unauthorised use	with 2	2
		iv) Farmers reclaiming la agriculture	and for 3	8
		v) Others	6	6

motocouss not defeated.

Some questions not analysed.

Amateur Motor-Cycle Association Clubs and Circuits in the East Midland Region





List of Agencies Concerned with Motor-Cycling

AUTO CYCLE UNION

National: The Secretary

Mill Buck House, Corporation Street, Rugby, Warwickshire

Tel: Rugby 70332

Regional: Mr G E Padley (Secretary)

Laburnum House, 10 Hatfield Street, Retford, Notts., DN22 6LY

Tel: Retford 705622

2 AMATEUR MOTOR CYCLE ASSOCIATION

The Secretary AMCA, Darlaston Road, Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 9XL Tel: Walsall 39517

3 STEP MANAGEMENT SERVICES LIMITED.

Federation House, 2309/11 Coventry Road, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 3PB Tel: 021-742 4296

4 ROAD SAFETY OFFICERS

Derbyshire - Mr R Goodall

County Road Safety Officer, County Engineers Department, Derbyshire County Council,

County Offices, Matlock, Derbyshire

Leicestershire - Mr D L Sabey

Director of Planning and Transportation Leicestershire County Council, County Hall,

Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RJ

Lincolnshire - Mr D J Shirley

County Road Safety Officer

City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LNI IDN

Northamptonshire - Mr E H Cooper

Senior Road Safety Officer

Northants County Council, Highways Department, Northampton House, Northampton, NNI 2HZ

Nottinghamshire - Mr D Singleton

County Road Safety Officer

Notts County Council, Department of Planning and

Transportation, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road,

West Bridgford, Nottingham

Glossary of Terms

SCRAMBLING

Otherwise known as Moto-Cross, these are relatively short races around a well defined course of, say, a mile or so, on undulating ground with steep gradients, jumps, sharp bends and mud, sand, etc. The machines are specially designed for this sort of going and are not usable on public highways.

GRASS TRACK RACING

This is racing on a reasonably smooth grass surface on a short oval course with no special hazards. The technique is similar to speedway racing. The machines are only suitable for this one type of sport.

FREAK HILL CLIMBS

Usually a knock-out competition with riders tackling a very steep rough climb, two at a time with the winner or furthest up the hill going forward to the next round. Scrambles or Enduro machines are used.

ENDUROS

These are tests of speed, reliability and stamina not unlike the familiar major car rallies. The motor-cycle events are now run almost exclusively on rough tracks in forestry land or wild moorlands. They last for five or six hours covering in excess of 100 miles. The aim is to ride to a predetermined speed schedule over a previously unseen and very challenging route. Special stages are used to decide the winners. Machines are designed for off-road use but are normally taxed and fully road worthy.

TRIAL RIDING

These are entirely contests of machine control and have no speed elements. Courses, often entirely on private ground, include sections of extremely difficult going with rocks, mud, leaf mould, sharp turns with descents and steep climbs. Marks are lost on these short sections for stopping or touching the ground and the winner is the rider who loses least marks. The machines are special trials mounts but many are taxed and road worthy. The events are mainly quiet affairs and attract only a small number of enthusiasts as spectators.

TRAIL RIDING

This is non-competitive and not to be confused with the previous activity. It is recreational riding on vehicular rights of way which are unsuitable for normal traffic. Typical tracks are "green lanes", grass or stone surfaced, often narrow, steep, rough and preferably with splendid views and some sense of adventure. Because of the increased popularity, codes of conduct have been drawn up aimed at keeping groups of riders as small as possible and recognising other peoples' rights in the countryside.

ROAD RACING

Where public roads are used, eg for the Isle of Man races, they are closed for the occasion. The term more generally refers to racing on road-type surfaces and layouts, on a private circuit as, for example, in a park. Some events are for production road machines but most are for specialist racing bikes.

SPRINTING

This is another specialist sport and is usually run on a knock-out basis with the fastest of each pair of riders over a straight quarter mile sprint going through to subsequent runs. Well surfaced private roads are used. The machines are a mixture of racing and production bikes.

HILL CLIMBS

These take place on steep sections of private roads with a series of bends to challenge riders handling ability. They are usually organised with each rider attempting the run a number of times to determine the fastest climb of the day in each class.

FUN/PRACTICE AREAS

These are new and very few and far between. They are non-competitive but should ideally include areas suitable for trials, trail and enduro practices, especially for newcomers. For most established Club riders the main purpose of these areas is to assist the Police, countryside wardens and others in their efforts to curtail misuse of common land and public open spaces.

MOTOR-CYCLES AND THE LAW

At 16 years of age riders of powered two wheeled motor vehicles are restricted to mopeds - the definition of a moped being as follows:

"Moped means (i) in the case only of motor-cycles which are first registered on or after 1 August 1977, a motor-cycle which has a maximum design speed which does not exceed 30mph, a kerbside weight which does not exceed 250kg, and, if propelled by an internal combustion engine, an engine cylinder capacity which does not exceed 50cc, or (ii) in the case only of motor-cycles which are first registered before 1 August 1977, a motor-cycle which has an engine with a cylinder capacity not exceeding 50cc and which is equipped with pedals by means of which the cycle is capable of being propelled.

Learner riders of 17 years of age and over are restricted to solo machines of up to 125cc with a maximum power to weight ratio of 100kw/tonne and a maximum power output of 126bhp. If the machine was first used (in most cases this will mean registered) before I January 1982, only the 125cc limit will apply. If it was first used on or after I January 1982 all three limits will apply. Riders over the age of 17 who have passed both parts of the motor-cycle test may ride any size machine.

Motor-Cycle Tests

Under the *Motor Vehicle (Driving Licences Regulations 1981) motor-cyclists have to pass two tests:

Part I is an off road manoeuverability exercise of set tests. It normally takes 30-40 minutes and is under the jurisdiction of people authorised by the Department of Transport eg County Road Safety Officers.

Part II is the "normal" Department of Transport road test under the jurisdiction of an appointed Department of Transport Inspector.

Provisional driving licences are now issued to riders of motor-cycles and mopeds for a maximum period of two years during which time the rider must have passed both part one and part two of the motor-cycle driving test. At the present time riders of mopeds do not need to take part I but may apply to take part II as soon as they feel confident enough to pass. However, on passing they will receive a licence only to ride a moped and will be required to take both parts of the test should they wish to transfer to riding a motor-cycle providing that they are at least 17 years old.

Those who do not pass both parts of the test with two years will have their entitlement to ride a motor-cycle suspended for one year. After the one year's ban they may apply again for another two year provisional entitlement and there is no limit to the number of licences that may be obtained.

* S.I. 1981 No 952 as amended by S.I. 1982 - The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendments) (No 2) Regulations 1982.