



Newsletter

October 2014

A comfortable living

Earlier this month, I had to make a work visit to Bunessan on the Isle of Mull. It's only 50 miles to Oban along the coast road and in daylight and good conditions it is a superb ride. But catching the early boat meant leaving at around 05:30 and as luck would have it, in the pouring rain and pitch dark. At that time of the morning there is little traffic but meeting the timber wagons with their lights on full beam and another half dozen spot lights fixed across the top of the cab can make the Commandos candle seem quite weedy. It was also quite odd not having any instrument lights – I leave the greenspot speedometer on for decoration and have never fitted a light to the revcounter. The only rider facing illumination is the battery charge indicator, but because I know that it changes colour at about 2800rpm I felt I had a reasonable gauge of what was going on. After an "interesting" ride, when I booked the 'bike into the boat I was so cold my teeth were chattering. The clerk enquired "if I wouldn't have been more comfortable in the car?" At the time I replied along the lines of needing to take the 'bike because of the sky-high CalMac charges but cost is not the real reason any of us use our old 'bikes.

So I was still giving that some thought as I blundered down the empty single track road as the rain stopped, the sun came out and burned off the mist. More comfortable? Definitely. I would have been dry and warm and could have drank coffee as I drove. But better? Is comfort the only criteria? I could easily have taken the car but chose the Commando instead. While there can be a grim satisfaction in riding through poor conditions, you can't really call it enjoyable.

But then driving the car isn't enjoyable either and the conclusion I came to was that by

taking the 'bike if the weather improved at all, I would get some enjoyment out the trip. The discomfort is the price paid for the enjoyment. Not a bad deal really!



On the topic of the Commando lights, I have an H4 unit with both filaments powered through relays. The lights are OK I suppose, but I wouldn't want to go a long distance at night on unfamiliar roads. There has been a bit of chat recently on the Access Norton forum with some of the USA riders fitting LED lamps. Has anyone tried these? They still seem quite pricey (around £40 to £50) and would like to hear a bit more before jumping in.

Events

TVNOC Autumn meeting
Oct 26, 2014 around noon
Tullybanocher café, Comrie