



This Month – NEC Motorcycle Live 16-24th November



One thing I learnt at this year's NEC Bike Show is that I've been thinking about electric motorbikes all wrong. Don't think of them as a green alternative to "proper bikes", because they're not. They're not particularly less polluting (see the article below) and the mining and disposal of lithium for the batteries is not exactly good for the planet. What they are is just another type of bike. They're not trying to be a copy of an existing machine, such as a Fireblade, but rather a completely unique riding experience. Nothing rides quite like an electric. Seen in that light they begin to make sense.

My curiosity was piqued talking to Dale from Zero motorcycles (bottom left above). They, along with the Harley Livewire, are producing some of the few "real" electric bikes (as opposed to step-through style scooters) at the Show. As yet the battery range is not brilliant – 75 to 100 real world miles with an hour's recharging at a dedicated charging point or 12 hours from your domestic circuit at home. Brakes, tyres, frame etc. are pretty much the same as a conventional bike. Where they come into their own is in the power delivery – instant, blistering acceleration and no gears. I tried out the Livewire, albeit only on the rolling road, but if that is anything like the real world it'll be a blast.

At the moment they seem to be a rich man's toy. Coming in at around £29 000 the Harley seems a well put together piece of kit if just a tad on the pricey side. Meanwhile the Zeros look equally well made and

around ten grand cheaper. Like electric cars, the prices need to come down for most punters to consider one. However, if you fancy a test ride on a Zero our nearest dealer is Not Your Average Bikes in Ossett. I'm sure you know where your nearest Harley dealer is.

Are electric vehicles really so climate friendly?

This report is by Professor Hans-Werner Sinn, professor of economics at the University of Munich. He was president of the Ifo Institute for Economic Research, and serves on the German Economy Ministry's Advisory Council.



Germany's automobile industry is its most important industrial sector. But it is in crisis, and not only because it is experiencing the effects of a recession brought on by Volkswagen's cheating on emissions standards, which sent consumers elsewhere. The sector is also facing the existential threat of exceedingly strict European Union emissions requirements, which are only seemingly grounded in environmental policy.

The EU clearly overstepped the mark with the carbon dioxide regulation that went into effect on 17 April 2019. From 2030 onwards, European carmakers must have achieved average vehicle emissions of

just 59 grams of CO₂ per km, which corresponds to fuel consumption of 2.2 litres of diesel equivalent per 100 km (107 miles per gallon). This simply will not be possible.

As late as 2006, average emissions for new passenger vehicles registered in the EU were around 161 g/km. As cars became smaller and lighter, that figure fell to 118 g/km in 2016. But this average crept back up, owing to an increase in the market share of gasoline engines, which emit more CO₂ than diesel engines do. By 2018, the average emissions of newly registered cars had once again climbed to slightly above 120 g/km, which is twice what will be permitted in the long term.

Even the most gifted engineers will not be able to build internal combustion engines (ICE's) that meet the EU's prescribed standards. But, apparently, that is precisely the point. The EU wants to reduce fleet emissions by forcing a shift to electric vehicles (EV's). After all, in its legally binding formula for calculating fleet emissions, it simply assumes EVs do not emit any CO₂ whatsoever.

The implication is that if an auto company's production is split evenly between electric vehicles and ICE vehicles that conform to the present average, the 59 g/km target will be just within reach. If a company cannot produce electric vehicles and remains at the current average emissions level, it will have to pay a fine of about €6,000 (£5,150) per car, or otherwise merge with a competitor that can build electric vehicles. But the EU's formula is nothing but a huge scam. Electric vehicles also emit substantial amounts of CO₂, the only difference being that the exhaust is released at a distance – that is, at the power plant. As long as coal- or gas-fired power plants are needed to ensure energy supply during the “dark doldrums” when the wind is not blowing and the sun is not shining, EVs, like ICE vehicles, run partly on hydrocarbons. And even when they are charged with solar- or wind-generated energy, enormous amounts of fossil fuels are used to produce EV batteries in China and elsewhere, offsetting the supposed emissions reduction. As such, the EU's intervention is not much better than a cut-off device for an emissions control system.

A research paper published this year shows that, in the context of Germany's energy mix, an EV emits a bit more CO₂ than a modern diesel car, even though its battery offers drivers barely more than half the range of a tank of diesel. And shortly thereafter, data published by VW confirmed that its e-Rabbit vehicle emits slightly more CO₂ than its Rabbit Diesel within the German energy mix. (When based on the overall European energy mix, which includes a huge share of nuclear energy from France, the e-Rabbit fares slightly better than the Rabbit Diesel.)

Adding further evidence, the Austrian think-tank Joanneum Research has just published a large-scale study commissioned by the Austrian automobile association, ÖAMTC, and its German counterpart, ADAC, that also confirms those findings. According to this study, a mid-sized electric passenger car in Germany must drive 219,000 km before it starts outperforming the corresponding diesel car in terms of CO₂ emissions. The problem, of course, is that passenger cars in Europe last for only 180,000km, on average. Worse, according to Joanneum, EV batteries don't last long enough to achieve that distance in the first place. Unfortunately, drivers' anxiety about the cars' range prompts them to recharge their batteries too often, at every opportunity, and at a high speed, which is bad for durability.

As for EU lawmakers, there are now only two explanations for what is going on: either they didn't know what they were doing, or they deliberately took Europeans for a ride. Both scenarios suggest that the EU

should reverse its interventionist industrial policy, and instead rely on market-based instruments such as a comprehensive emissions trading system. With Germany's energy mix, the EU's regulation on fleet fuel consumption will not do anything to protect the climate. It will, however, destroy jobs, sap growth, and increase the public's distrust in the EU's increasingly opaque bureaucracy.

Speed limits to be beamed to vehicles on sign-free roads

Signs could be removed from the side of major roads within eight years under government-backed plans to beam speed limits and traffic information directly into vehicles, experts have said. A trial of superfast 5G wifi will be introduced next year to enable roads to communicate directly with vehicles, ultimately making road signs redundant.

Experts behind the trials said we could expect to see "naked highways" from 2027 as road signs were decommissioned and information was displayed on digital units within vehicles. It could ultimately pave the way for some traffic lights to be removed. Live on-road trials will be developed over the next year in parts of Birmingham, Coventry and Greenwich, southeast London, as well as at the Millbrook vehicle testing ground in Bedfordshire.



The move comes amid concerns about pointless signs littering roadsides. A government report last year estimated that the number of signs had doubled in 20 years to 4.6 million, with motoring groups estimating that as many as a third were of little use. It is hoped that the move away from signs will improve road safety by allowing vehicles to get information about road conditions and accidents more quickly. It is also expected to cut costs for highways authorities. Local authorities spend hundreds of thousands of pounds a year repairing and updating signage, with costs running into the millions on motorways and A-roads.

Daniel Ruiz, the chief executive of Zenzic, the company behind the development, said: *"The objective is to put in technology that leads to the longer term objective of taking signs out. We reckon that by 2027 we will no longer be reliant on physical roadside signage."* Zenzic is a public-private partnership established to drive the development of autonomous vehicles in Britain. It is funded through a £100 million government grant and £100 million from the automotive and technology industries. It has created a series of "testbeds" on public and private roads to test self-driving and "connected" vehicles.

A 5G broadband network to communicate with vehicles will allow for advanced signalling displaying speed limits, highways exits and traffic updates in vehicles. Highways England has begun a trial of similar technology on the A2 and M2.

A plan published by Zenzic said that it expected signage to start to become digitised by 2022, with the "initial decommissioning of signs and signals beginning in 2027". The widespread adoption of such signalling would be expected by the end of the next decade.

It is expected that cars will have far more autonomous technology in the coming years so information about road conditions will be fed directly into the in-car computer system and used to navigate, or control the speed, without input from the driver. Some other vehicles on which the driver retains more control will probably display the same information on the dashboard infotainment system. Drivers of vintage vehicles without digital displays would need to continue using road signs, suggesting that it will be many decades before signs are eliminated altogether.

Council speeding tickets?

We could be hit with more speeding tickets under proposals to give councils the power to enforce offences. A coalition of 32 local councils in London wants to be able to take responsibility away from the police and issue fines for low-level speeding in 20 and 30mph zones. Under the plan some speeding offences would be decriminalized, similar to driving in bus lanes. This would mean that a speeder could get a council fine but not penalty points on their license. The councils claim that the police are too overstretched to enforce the lower speed limits adequately. However, the government is unlikely to agree to the scheme as it might be seen as penalizing road users even more. Councils may be given extra powers though to punish offences such as stopping in box junctions and be allowed to keep the cash from the fines. Sounds like that could be fun.

North West Motorcycle Alliance

This is not a MAG organisation but a monthly meet for all bike clubs, organisations and interested bikers anywhere from Cheshire up to Lancaster. The next meeting is hosted by the **Union Riders MCC** at the **Malaga Drift, 1 Church Street, Salford M30 0DL** at **8pm** on **Wednesday 29th January 2020**. **Please check the NW Alliance FB page for any last minute changes to venue/dates– they do happen!**

Here is the latest, up to date list of biker events this autumn which the Alliance has put together, which includes a few changes from the previous month.

Regular monthly events

HAMC Liverpool Open night 3rd Saturday of month, open 7.30 'til late

HAMC Manchester Open night last Saturday of month - free entry, great bands, food available, open 7.30 'til late

Red Devils MC Manchester Open Night every Friday at the clubhouse in Hindley

Red Rose MAG – meetings suspended until new venue found

MT Heads Meet – Flying Horse Rochdale 8pm every Monday

Road Reapers MCC - meet 1st Sunday 1pm & 2nd Wednesday at 7.30 at the Ellesmere Rd Rec Club, Bolton

Bury the Hatchett MCC - meet at the Two Tubs pub Bury at 7.30 every Thursday

Ronin MCC – every Saturday night @ the Plough, Hazel Grove

Road Slayers Brotherhood every 2nd Friday at the Veterans' Garage Barton

British Bulldogs MCC – every Wednesday at the Balcarres Arms, Wigan WN2 1PA

Spartan MCC meet every Thursday at Railway & Linnet pub Middleton, M24 1GQ

Brigantia Rebels MCC meet at the Old Springs, Spring Rd, Wigan WN5 0JJ 1st Saturday at 7pm & 3rd Sunday at 3pm

Leyland Eagles MCC meet 3rd Mondays at Leyland RAFA Club

Avernus MCC – meet at the Red Herring, Mill Lane Coppull PR7 5AN every other Friday

RBLR meet 2nd Mondays at St.Chad's Club, Whittle-le-Woods

Life Behind Bars MCC meet every other Sunday – Hare & Hounds, 170 Outwood Rd, Radcliffe

Lioness MCC 1st and 3rd Wednesday @ Hope View farm, Astley M29 7LH – free food!

Throttle Twisters MCC every Monday – The Rifle Range pub, Burnley lane, Chadderton

Veterans Garage open at Barton Aerodrome every Monday 6pm onwards

Norsemen MCC – every Wednesday of every month @ Irlam Social Club

Wild Bulls MCC meet every other Thursday at 7.30 in Speakeasy Bar, Preston.

Accrington MCC meet every other Sunday at the Poplar Club, Accrington

Boggarts MCC meet every 1st & 3rd Wednesday at Hope View Farm, Astley M29 7LH

Hell's Belles WMC meet last Monday of the month at the Cauldron, Radcliffe

Phoenix Rising MCC meet 1st Sunday of the month at 3pm Tempest Arms, Chorley Old Rd, Bolton

Coyote MCC – meet every Tuesday Old Cock Inn Oldham Rd Middleton M24 2EB

Pist'N'Nuts MCC – meet every Thursday 8pm @ The Pear Tree, 431 Hadfield Rd, Hadfield SK13 1PY

The Sisterhood – meet first Tuesday of month @ 7pm at The Cart & Horses, Astley M29 7SD

Millennium 2000BC meet at Broadfield Arms, Leyland, every other Monday

Shieldmaidenz MCC meet at the clubhouse, 198 Liverpool Rd, M44 5DB TBA

Road Kill MCC meet at the clubhouse, Unit 10, M44 5AZ, Irlam every Monday evening about 6pm.

Rally Rebels RC meet at the Cock & Rabbit, Manchester Rd, Southport every other Sunday 3-5pm

Antagonist MCC meet every Wednesday at the Church Inn, Chadderton OL1 2RR

Union Riders MCC meets at the Malaga Drift, Eccles M30 0DY every 1st Friday from 8pm

Known upcoming events

14th Dec – Coyote MCC Xmas Party - £5 entry, black tie & posh frocks only Old Cock Inn Oldham Rd Middleton M24 2EB

25th January 2020 – Spartan MCC Rock Night – Railway & Linnet, Middleton M24 1GQ

15th February 2020 – British Bulldogs MCC Valentine Rock Night at the Balcarres Arms

22nd February 2020 – Millennium 2000BC 20th Birthday Bash, Canberra Club, Salmesbury

13th March 2020 – Road Reapers MCC St. Patrick's Rock Night - Ellesmere Rd Rec Club, Bolton

4th April 2020 – Accrington MCC Rock Night - Poplar Club, Accrington

Spring 2020 – 2nd HAMC Manchester 666 Ride – details TBA

7-9th August 2020 Big Barn Rally – Early Bird tickets on sale until end of November (see FB)

14-16th August 2020 – Avernus MCC Underworld Rally – Park House Barn, Milnthorpe LA7 7EB.

31st October 2020 – Accrington MCC Halloween Night - Poplar Club, Accrington

As ever, if you would like to have your say on anything vaguely MAG-related, or sell something bike related, just drop me a line at billgreen@madasafish.com and I'll put it into the newsletter next month.

Bill

NW Political Rep



***Please
ride
defensively***



WARRINGTON WHEELS

10TH ANNIVERSARY SHOW!

UNDER 18'S BIKE BUILDING COMPETITION

22nd MAY 2020 11am - 2pm

BUILD A BIKE RELATED VEHICLE, RUNNING OR NOT, AND BRING IT ALONG TO THE ONE DAY SHOW. BUILD ALONE, WITH FRIENDS OR GET A TEAM TOGETHER FROM YOUR SCHOOL, COLLEGE OR YOUTH CLUB. IT'S COMPLETELY FREE TO ENTER!



TO BE HELD AT CHAIGELEY SCHOOL, 6 LYMM RD, WARRINGTON WA4 2TE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT BOB TOWLER

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bobsbikeclasses.co.uk

