

In this piece, Nick Readman, one of our team of National Bike Observers tells us about his machines and experiences.

When did you pass your bike test and what was your first machine?

I passed my bike test in 1991 on a Kawasaki KDX 200. However, I had been riding trials bikes since being 7 years old and only managed to convince my parents to allow me to take a road bike test to enable me to ride an Enduro bike to events! I quickly progressed to a Suzuki GSXR 750!



What particular things do you remember about the early biking years?

Freedom, friendliness, being cold and wet and not really caring.

Can you tell us all the different bikes that you've ridden / owned?

No, it's too difficult; a quick count shows I have owned over 50 bikes.....trials, enduro, motocross, touring, road bikes, track bikes, scooters. The only thing I've never owned is one of those chopper things!

Current bikes in the fleet:

- BMW K1600 GT LE,
- Honda CBR 1000RR SP2,
- Honda CBR900RRN,
- BMW C400X

See Photos of BMW and Fireblades below.



What is or has been the best bike that you've owned and why?

Different bikes have meant different things at different times of my riding life.....my best bike is always the current one that I intend to keep forever, until I see something else!

I guess the most "special" bike that I've owned is the Honda CBR 1000 SP2 (one of my current fleet). It's homologated for World Superbike Racing, with an engine built by HRC, with only 500 built worldwide and with less than 80 in the UK; that makes it a pretty unique bike. Of course, I've had to fiddle with it to try and make it "better" – I never learn!

Do you regret selling any particular bike? Why?

No – never look back 😊

What has been your most exhilarating moment on a bike?

I have two stand out moments (not including the scary one below!)



I was riding alone from Aberdeen to Tomintoul over the Lecht at 05.30 on a June Sunday morning on a very trick Honda Fireblade with no ABS, traction control, electronic suspension or anything else to get in the way. I've a rubbish memory, but I seem to remember every minute of that particular ride!

Then on the same bike but on the Isle of Man this time during a fast road riding course, when on the last day, I managed to out-pace my instructor over the mountain, yet had a feeling that everything was happening in slow motion – that was just awesome!

What has been the scariest moment on a bike?



In 2012 at Nürburgring on a Honda VFR 1200. After spending a few days learning the way round, gradually getting faster and beginning to feel confident enough to start pushing on a bit, I was fully committed to a right hand bend and with the bike leant over, mid corner a Porsche 911 GT3 RS drove round the outside of me and came so close he cracked my left hand wing mirror!

Which are your favourite biking roads in Scotland?



Anywhere up the West Coast.

What is your worst road in Scotland?

The A90 between Aberdeen and Dundee.

Great stuff – many thanks Nick, for telling us about your bikes and special moments.