

The Club Track Days for 2012

Introduced by Robert Bensley, the Sporting Register Secretary

As Sporting Secretary of The BMW Club I have the backing of the UK's largest one make club to run track days. In the past two years BMW GB have brought to each of our track days a fleet of demo bikes including at least two examples of the S1000RR

I have a team of fourteen instructors, four coaches and a pit lane organiser. The team's ages vary and they have a wealth of knowledge, experience and most importantly an understanding of the difficulty in transforming road riding to track riding. We all ride regularly on the road and our aim is to teach smooth, flowing lines using the complete width of the track, not necessarily at the fastest pace.

For 2012 we have reserved two days at Snetterton, Monday June 18th and Monday August 6th. We prefer Mondays as those who come from afar can reduce time off work by travelling over on the Sunday and staying overnight near the track.

We aim to give a quality experience for those who are prepared to pay a little extra. The differences and advantages of our day over a commercial day are:-

- Road bikes only
- Open to any road-legal make or model of motorcycle
- Open to non club members
- Less riders on track at one time than other track days; our largest group is 44 riders whereas the track limit is 66
- Entrants are encouraged to give info about their riding when applying so they can be placed in a suitable squad.
- Instruction, help and assessment available at no extra cost

- BMW demo bikes bookable for 20 minute sessions
- A full 20 minute session of training for lesser experienced riders
- A day with a non-profit making attitude and 'club' feel
- A detailed briefing prior to track opening and a mini briefing and morning analysis before afternoon sessions begin
- A full day's programme and timetable booklet, including guidance and advice for newcomers, issued with entry acceptance

Our instructors ride a range of BMWs while teaching and mentoring, from R1100RS through F800 and R1200GS to the S1000RR. We find it no disadvantage at all for an experienced instructor to ride a bike with lower outright performance than his or her students and in 2011 we were delighted to recruit our first female instructor.

The planned procedure for our 2012 track days

As with most track days, the track will be open from 9 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 5 pm; full marshalling and first aid support, including ambulance services, is provided by the track operators. We will divide the entrants into three groups, and each group will get one 20 minute session on track each hour, making seven sessions in total.

Experienced Riders

This group is limited to 44 entrants. We don't insist on all the riders in this group being "fast" but for safety reasons we restrict

the group to riders who have enough track experience not to be intimidated by faster (potentially much faster) traffic.

Overtaking on either side is permitted in this group and help and advice is available in these sessions from instructors with extensive race experience.

Intermediate Riders

This group is limited to 40 entrants, and again we allow overtaking on either side but for the first 20 minute session the entrants are divided into squads of four riding behind an instructor with each entrant getting at least one lap riding behind the instructor.

Riders may get individual de-briefings following the first session.

Cautious Riders

We limit this group to a maximum of 36 riders. In their first session they ride in squads of three behind an instructor, each taking it in turn to ride directly behind the instructor. Following this session the squad is de-briefed by the instructor. Any rider who does not feel confident about taking to the track on their own may ride with an instructor until they

feel ready.

In this group the overtaking will be on the left only for safety reasons and more experienced riders are allowed into this group if they prefer to ride under that overtaking rule. In the free lapping these riders are asked to line up in the pit lane early for their session, so as to be first on track.

The Bottom Line

Proposed cost for the day is £120 per rider. We believe that this format offers riders an enjoyable track day with a relaxed attitude and the opportunity to develop skills relevant to both track and road riding.

Insurance considerations

The subject of insurance for track days has arisen a few times over the last couple of years. As with all insurance there is small print to read and consider. At the time of writing I am of the understanding that if a BMW Motorrad dealer books a number of places for their clients it then becomes an official event, and is therefore covered under the BMW insurance scheme. I will advise on this when I have the answer confirmed.

