

l i n c o l n s h i r e

# BIKER

HELPING YOU GET MORE FROM BIKING

issue 05



**TYRE TECH**  
GUIDE TO PRESSURES

TRIED AND TESTED  
**DAN**  
**LINFOOT**

BSB FRONTRUNNER SHARES HIS KIT HINTS AND TIPS

plus



**NEW METAL**  
2014's  
NEW BIKES  
OUR GUIDE TO THE BEST OF  
2014'S NEW MODELS



**TECH WATCH**  
FOCUS ON  
AIRBAGS  
WHY WE'LL ALL SOON BE  
WEARING AIRBAGS



**BETTER RIDING**  
BRITISH SUPERBIKE  
SCHOOL  
LEARNING NEW SKILLS AT  
BLYTON PARK RACETRACK

# Tried and Tested BRITISH SUPERBIKE SCHOOL

It's all about being in control – learning the fundamentals on a day's machine control course will make you a smoother, quicker and safer rider.

words: Simon Toyne | photography: ian mcGr r / imGphoToG raphy



**H**idden away in deepest, darkest Lincolnshire, Blyton may be home to two of the county's best kept secrets – the simple but challenging Blyton Park circuit and the British Superbike School.

The British Superbike School is all about teaching road riders the fundamentals of bike control from the safety of a track, helping them to master the basics and become more



confident in their own ability, with none of the dangers associated with riding on the road – there are no trees, no signs, no traffic coming the other way, and no speed limits.

They offer three courses – Riding Skills For Road Riders, Advanced Riding Skills For Trackday Rides and One-On-One Intensive Coaching, and also have their own race-prepared Honda CBR600RRs for hire.

We're here for Level One, and after

90-minutes of misery riding in the wet we find the track, the rain easing off as we pull into the car park.

After signing the obligatory disclaimers, the day begins with a safety briefing before the riders are introduced to their instructors, a mix of ex-racers, TT riders, instructors and racing school coaches. The atmosphere is very relaxed, and the huge variety of machines in the car park, and the lack of egos among my fellow riders, means I'm pretty sure it will stay this way throughout the day.

The day will be split into five 20-minute sessions, each session focusing on an area of riding.

I'm partnered with instructor Ade Taylor, a handy club level racer who's been running his own training school in Grantham for the past 18 years. After a quick chat about my riding experience it's time to get suited and booted for the first session, which is all about learning the track. Ade leads, pointing out braking markers, tip in points and apexes, all the while observing how you're riding and any areas you may have for improvement.

Blyton Park is a 1.6 mile mix of flat, sweeping corners, tight chicanes and two long straights, with a few bumps here and there to keep things interesting. The good thing about it is that there's nothing to distract your vision from the oncoming corner, and the track's compact dimensions mean that even if you do mess up a section you haven't got long to wait before you get the chance to get it right again.

It's immediately clear to Ade that I'm a bit rusty, and that I'm far too busy on the bike. "Just relax" he says. "You're trying too hard, constantly moving and unsettling the bike, and



**Opposite main**  
Lean angles and cornering speeds increase as confidence grows.

**Above**  
Quattro Plant Kawasaki's Dan Linfoot supports the school and can regularly be seen on track instructing.

**Left**  
Instructors are always on hand to observe and offer advice.

as a result you're having to work far harder than you should. Ease off a bit and it will come."

After each session on track there's a classroom session – throughout the day we'll cover rolling on the throttle, driving out of corners, countersteering and braking (front and rear).

The first proper session on track is all learning how to control the bike

with the throttle. You're allowed two gears, and light brakes, which means speeds are still pretty slow, further helping riders familiarise themselves with the track's layout.

Ade says: "The worst thing you can do is throttle off. Roll the throttle on on the approach to the corner, smoothly, don't crack it open, and you'll find the bike is more stable as you tip in.

And don't forget to countersteer. Give the left bar a little nudge if you want to go left and the right bar a tiny tap if you want to go right. You'll be amazed at the difference it makes to the bike's handling."

It works, the bike feels more compliant and it's far easier to turn in.

## "I TRIED IT TOO"

**D**ucati 748 rider Richard Cook came from Barnsley to improve his riding and feel more at ease on his bike.

He says: "The British Superbike School at Blyton Park is a fantastic alternative to conventional track days. It combines classroom-based theory lessons with plenty of track time and coaching from experienced instructors.

"The small number of riders on the circuit means you'll often have an empty track in front of you, while the ratio of riders to instructor (two to three per instructor) means you'll be given a load of feedback specifically to your riding.

"The circuit itself is not intimidating and is perfect for novices, though there's still more than enough variety to keep more experienced track riders happy.

"The emphasis throughout the day is on getting the basics right, gradually building your knowledge and improving your skills to make you a smoother, faster and safer rider. The level of rider experience on the day is generally at novice level which is reassuring and there is no pressure to push yourself beyond what you feel capable of. However, as you progress through the day you begin to realise how good your bike is which gives you the confidence to push a bit harder. You will come away with improved confidence and a feeling that you know the capabilities of both yourself and your machine a lot better."

## BSB RACER FOR HIRE

**B**SB racer Dan Linfoot is a fully signed-up believer in what the British Superbike School is trying to achieve, and can often be found coaching on their days on his own ZX-10R.

He says: I love working and interacting with people who have the same interests as me. I love helping people improve, and if they can go away from here feeling safer and more confident in their own abilities, then we've done our job.

"Coaching asks helps me improve as a road rider and as a racer.

Dan can also be hired as a one-on-one coach at almost any track day throughout the country.

Contact him on 0759 002 0607 to discuss your needs.





## BSB BACKGROuND

**M**ike Abbott, a pretty handy road racer back in the day, started post-test motorcycle training in 2009 after qualifying as a RoSPA Instructor, and set up the British Superbike School to provide the best setting for riders to master bike control.

Mike says: "I find teaching on the road great for hazard perception and positioning, but there's so much going on that it's very limiting for improving bike control. There's so much else you need to be focussing on."

"I've taken clients to track days in the past, but the basic problem on track days and for most schools is the sheer number of riders on track (sometimes 40 or more) of varying abilities. Riders often find themselves stuck in the crocodile behind slower riders, or intimidated by a passing stream of more experienced riders. This makes working on your riding very difficult, and you'd be lucky to get many clear laps during the day."

"Here at Blyton park we've got the best balance between cost and the number of riders and have settled on just nine riders on the 1.6-mile track plus coaches, which along with grouping riders by experience and ability, should give all riders the space and time they need."

For more information visit <http://www.britishsuperbikeschool.co.uk>.

**Top**  
Raise your vision and look where you want to go.

**Bottom**  
Missing yet another apex.

**Opposite top**  
Coaching staff are vastly experienced and come from all disciplines. They know their stuff.

**Opposite bottom**  
Ducati 748 rider Richard Cook (left) enjoyed Level 1 so much he's already booked on to Level 2.

## "Braking upsets everything, so you have to get everything done in a straight line."

The next session sees us focussing on when to apply the throttle to power out of bends. The track's still pretty wet at The Wiggler, a tight left, right between the two long straights, so we'll still need to remember smoothness.

"Rolling the throttle on too hard early in the turn will push the bike wide, forcing you to hesitate or even roll of the throttle. Be disciplined and wait for the precise moment you can drive out of the turn. This will allow you to be assertive with your throttle and get to full gas sooner, carrying more speed down the straights."

It's a simple enough drill, one that's very effective, though the temptation is to wait until the bike's fully upright before getting smoothly on the power, losing drive and time out of the corner.

The next session sees us concentrate on braking solely with the rear brake. I've got to admit, I use the rear when it's wet, or when I'm in town, but using the rear anywhere else is pretty alien to me.

Ade says: "We'll go round using only the rear. It'll show you that you can use it when cornering, it should make your lines tighter, and it won't get you into trouble. If you grabbed the front you'd be in all sorts of trouble, but the rear will make the bike feel more stable, more settled. I use it all the time, give it a go and let me know how you get on. And don't forget to look through the corner to make sure that you're driving towards where you want to go."

Whereas the first two sessions see speeds increase, the third session is the first time they tail off. I've got nowhere near as much stopping power or control with my Ducati's rear, and it feels like we're tiptoeing our way round. Only using the rear means my approach speed drops, as I don't have the confidence in the rear that I have with the front, but conversely

my riding improves dramatically – my lines are much better and I'm hitting more apexes. Another point to note about Blyton is that it's so open that even if you do get things wrong you can just run onto more Tarmac.

Despite never really having enough faith in my bike's feeble rear brake it's still a powerful demonstration of many options you've got should you run out of tarmac. I'd definitely recommend using it before grabbing a big handful of the front brake should things go pear-shaped.

We stop for lunch and grab a bite to eat at Blyton Park's well-equipped cafe, chewing the fat with BSB racer and coach for the day Dan Linfoot and exchanging notes with other riders on the course. Everyone's having a blast and the sun eventually breaks free of the thick clouds, meaning the circuit should be even grippier in the afternoon when we're back on track.

The afternoon sees true pace increase, and pretty soon all the bikes on track on showing some degrees of lean. The transformation is impressive.

The next session sees us concentrate on braking with the front.

Ade says: "Braking upsets the bike, so you have to get everything done in a straight line and arrive at the corner with a stable bike. By braking in a straight line, we transfer weight to the front and increase the size of the contact patch, thus generating more grip. Brake smoothly, don't snatch the lever, and see how late you can leave it before tipping in. Once you've got a braking marker you're happy with experiment a little, and see if you can leave your braking a little later. Today's brakes are phenomenal and you'll be surprised at just how late you can brake."

Using the front gives me much more confidence and feel, and as each lap of the 20-minute session progresses I'm leaving my braking later and later. It's starting to feel like I know what I'm doing and that I'm bossing the bike. This is more like it. I see Dan Linfoot with a group of three riders and nip up the inside at Ushers. It's a moment I won't forget.

It's worth pointing out now that while overtaking is allowed, it is strictly controlled. The instructor leading the group has to signal he has seen you, either with his foot or his indicator, before you're allowed to pass.



It's a simple but effective system, and ensures no-one feels threatened or intimidated.

Ade thinks we should use the final session to work on body position. You're getting some big lean now, and if you start hanging off you'll keep the bike more upright, allowing you to get on the power sooner and quicker. It's also safer – carrying on leaning the bike like you are, without hanging off, and pretty soon something will deck out, lift the engine casing off the ground and you'll end up losing the front.

“Move your head to be in line with the mirrors, and aim to get your knee to where your fairing's crash protection is. But remember, this isn't a track day, so don't go out all hell-for-leather. We've all got to ride home, so ride at 80 per cent, enjoy yourself and aim for consistency and smoothness.”

It's that word again. Smoothness. It may well be the school's mantra... smoothness gives ultimate control.

I focus on Ade's words, turn the ignition and take the 749S out for the final session. Ade leads for a couple of laps to warm up the tyres before waving methrough. The tracks totally dry now and I'm riding solo, trying to put into practice everything I've learnt, building confidence. And

then on the third lap it happens... my left knee kisses the asphalt at Bunga Bunga, my right does the same at Ushers before my left touches down at Jochen and Lancaster... scrrrrrrraaaaaaappppppppeeeeeee. Kneedown isn't the be-all and end-all, but it does show that I've got my lines right and that I'm using the throttle effectively.

All too soon the day's over and we're all sat on the picnic tables, swapping tales over a refreshing energy drink. Everyone's raving about the amount of track time they got, the small groups and just how friendly the whole vibe is. There's no bravado, it's just like-minded people revelling in the fact that they're leaving as better riders than when they arrived.

If you want to learn how to be a better road rider and fancy a less intense school experience with personal, detailed instruction in a relaxed and friendly environment then give the British Superbike School a call. And when you're there ask Dan Linfoot about the time he was overtaken going into Ushers.

The course costs £289 for Levels 1 and 2, and £489 for the One-On-One course. For more information contact [www.britishsuperbikeschool.co.uk](http://www.britishsuperbikeschool.co.uk)



# Bike Night

Now  
tWO  
A  
Month!

**From April 2014 – October 2014**

**We now have bike night every 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. All are welcome! From 6:30pm.**

- Music • Outside bar • Burgers and Hotdogs
- Lakeside setting • Onsite Bar & Restaurant

## What is Woodland Waters?...

Set in the heart of Lincolnshire, this idyllic fishing and camping park caters for all your holiday needs, appealing to couples and families alike seeking a peaceful holiday in picturesque surroundings. Set in a beautiful wooded valley covering 72 acres, we offer five well stocked fishing lakes, luxury lodges and park home lodges and a caravan and camping area.

**Woodland Waters Willoughby Road, Ancaster,  
Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG32 3RT  
(Just off the main road (A153) from Grantham to Sleaford)**

**01400 230552**

**info@woodlandwaters.co.uk**

**woodlandwaters.co.uk**