

Kawasaki Z1000 Trike

Nigel Summerton riding low in Plymouth



I had a Brachial Plexus Injury due to a motorcycle accident when I was 20 years old. I spent my 21st birthday in hospital. Thirteen years later I got myself an automatic VW trike, which I drove into the side of a bus which was being driven by someone who could only have been a blind driver.

More recently I got myself a Kawasaki Z1000 trike but I couldn't ride it, having only one arm. I initially tried to adapt the controls myself by taking the front brake lever off and swapping it over with the clutch lever. The levers were then upside down. This sorted out the clutch but it was very stiff, and I couldn't use the front brake, but with Jaguar twin discs on the back stopping wasn't a problem.

The next problem was getting the hang of using the throttle and clutch together using my right hand. It only became difficult when turning corners or using indicators, horn, etc. With some practice I may have cracked it but the steering was a bitch, lots of 'wheel wobble'. With my hand occupied operating the controls I was finding it difficult to steer.



I needed some help so I tuned on my PC and signed onto the web, searching for trike adaptations. This directed me to the NABD and I talked to Billy Bigbeard and joined up. In the meantime I found Spike and K Williams Motorcycles in Blackwater, Cornwall. We talked and came up with some solutions. Billy suggested we use an Easy Clutch, and a steering damper. To sort out the problem of the front brake I decided to link it with the rear brake. I phoned around and found an automatic brake adjusting knob supplied by Thin Automotive Ltd. That just left the re-siting of the electrics which we got an electrician to sort out.



It took a lot of thought and some time, and the help of a financial grant from the NABD, but I am now very much looking forward to the rest of the year.

A big thanks to the NABD and its supporters for helping me get back on the road.

I've just spent the weekend stuck to the saddle. I tell you, until you've had your freedom taken away by a disability you don't appreciate how valuable it is. To all those able bodied riders out there, never take it for granted.

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