

# A Day That Changed My Life

## Boots VSOC C12

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The Date Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 the sun was out and it was a glorious day, Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> was C12 end of season party for which I was tasked to get the loos and BBQ equipment over to the Royal Oak Pub which lets us use its field at the back.

I was the General Manager of a Company called Grundon Sand and Gravel Ltd and on the Thursday my plan was to visit our Quarry down in Bordon in Hampshire as that was part of my role. As it was so nice I decided to ride my BMW K1600 GTL. Everything was fine at the Quarry so next on the list was to nip up to High Wycombe to pay for the porta loos for the week end party.

The ride back was in glorious sunshine along the M3 motorway and I left at the Ascot-Bracknell Junction and proceeded along the A322 to the first set of traffic lights which changed as I approached. "Great" I thought and carried on following a Ford SUV which kindly pulled over to let me through. I acknowledged the driver with a wave as thanks. As I approach Swinley roundabout there was an area where vehicles from Ascot could cross the carriageway to turn right to Bracknell on the A322.

As I was almost at the roundabout when a green Peugeot 307 saloon pulled out of the junction and stopped !!! I was travelling at approx 60mph and hit it centre back of the car, I had no time to brake or avoid hitting it.

The next thing I remember was laying on the floor about 30ft from the bike and car with a young man leaning over me saying "I am sorry, so sorry, I did not see you".

I could not see him though as my face was covered in blood and I had a hot pain in the bottom of my neck. By this time a doctor who was passing stopped to attend me until the paramedics and Ambulance arrived.

Whilst I lay there the music on my bike was still playing and it was Queen (don't stop me now) and I remember someone shouting "Turn the music off".

The paramedics and ambulance crew cut my jacket off, then stabilised me so they could put a neck collar on. I was lying beside the road for nearly 1 hour until they were satisfied I could be moved safely. I told them “you better get more help as I am a big old boy” they laughed, and got help.

Inside the Ambulance the police breath tested me as is normal procedure. I blew negative as I had not had a drink for a couple of days, (phew). I remember the policeman checking my helmet and getting the ICE contact out of my phone and ringing my wife.

The ambulance crew said I had lots of witnesses who confirmed the young man just pulled out on me and the police where asking other road users if I had been speeding. The reply from them all was that the motorcyclist was not at fault. (lucky I waved to those drivers that moved over for me).

The ambulance crew said to the police “We are taking Simon to Frimley Park Hospital”, “No”, I said “my wife is terrible with directions, take me to Royal Berks Reading, at least she’ll find that one”. The crew said it would take a little longer to get there and they needed confirmation from someone that it would be okay.

We were off to RBH with ‘blues and two’s’ going. It’s approx 10-15 miles but seemed to take ages,

I was rushed in to ICU where lots of people were all over me. After all the examinations it was found that I had fractured the C5 and T1 vertebrae with massive soft tissue damage fractured front teeth and I needed stiches across my nose and side of my eye. The staff where brilliant and fitted an Aspen collar around my neck which I was not allowed to remove for 2 months, so washing and



sleeping upright was a nightmare.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>

Meanwhile back at the Royal Oak the toilets had arrived and so did the Vultures, wondering where were all the marquees and BBQ equipment was. In true Vulture's style they managed to get some gear together.

I was very lucky and allowed home after 6 days of pleading that we could cope. The hospital agreed and set up all the follow-up treatments that would be needed.

My brother in law arrived to collect me but we had to wait for the Doctor and Sister to come round. They told my brother in law to be very careful when driving home and wanted to know what vehicle he had as a small sports car or equivalent would not be suitable. I piped up "No worries he has a Range Rover", "Great" they said, well actually he has a MG Sports ..... a little white lie !!!!

At home was a letter from the recovery company saying they would be charging me for storage.

I contacted my Insurance company MCE who are just Brokers and not interested in recovering the bike for me. They put me in contact with a company that said they could get me a replacement bike whilst mine was being repaired. When I explained I was in a collar and had broken my neck they said well you won't need one then.

The other Insurance company was Direct Line I had a letter from them, reference the Accident, and when I called them the lady I spoke to was brilliant. I told her about the recovery company and she said " No worries we will get it picked up and taken to BMW in Maidenhead". The conversation went on about my injuries and when I told her about them she said "I am sorry but I cannot help you any more as those injuries are dealt with by our Serious Issues Department and I can only offer money on light cases.

MCE still no help, they passed me on to Solicitors called Fletchers who would be dealing with my case if I wanted them to.

In the meantime Direct line had taken the bike to the garage and organised a loss adjuster to inspect it.

I again contacted MCE about all my motorbike gear that had been destroyed, they said "You will have to claim on your policy". "Why" I asked "won't that put my premiums up next time?", "Oh yes" they said but you could claim it back from the other insurance company". "Hang on" I said, "You should be helping me", " Sorry we are just the brokers" !!!!!

The bike was written off and BMW said they had never seen the front forks fold into themselves like these, also the top of the bike was seriously damaged from the impact of hitting the car which shot me through the bike screen.

Recovery is taking a long time, but being a typical male I ordered a new bike and this time I chose Bennett's Insurance instead of MCE. However, I soon found out I could not ride it without pain.

Nearly two years on I am still recovering. My advice is PLEASE don't take the cheapest Quote as it might not be the best, shop around or check out the VSOC site.

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