

Autumn 2016

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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Front Cover: John Hooper, Roger Moffat and Ian Fraser (TEC) enjoying Rick Chubb's Midweek Ride



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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



Summer may have arrived a bit late this year, but at least it got here in the end, and reminded me that it's actually easier to get mud off a bike than dead flies. With tutoring at a total of four IAMRoadsmart Road Skills training days (three at Thruxton and one at Mallory), plus our own jaunt to Spain and sundry other training and observing duties, I've been able to make the most of the weather and get out on the bike (almost) to my heart's content. As the days shorten and the weather threatens to close in, it becomes more of a struggle to find the opportunities, but late season riding always feels like such a bonus, and more worthwhile for it. Even so, as spilled grain gives way to wet leaves in joining the perennial mud on our roads, my exuberance needs to be tempered with a little more caution. Until the leaves are all down, the road surface beneath the trees is hard to read, and my excellent Michelin Pilot Road 4's do need to be in contact

with the tarmac to grip it. It must also be time to paint some ACF50 on the little Fazer's fasteners, to ward off the effects of the road salt season.

With the new CEO, Sarah Sillars having completed her first year in place at the rebranded IAM-Roadsmart, there is now a determined effort to try to bring the organization up to date, so that it can better serve its members and meet its charitable objective of improving road safety. I've already had some communication with a couple of members for ideas on how that might be achieved, but if any of you have suggestions then please contact me with them.

Many thanks to the contributors for this issue, and if any of you have any articles, pictures, advertisements,

snippets of information or interest, please send them either to me or to Graham Tulloch. The deadline for the next issue is 15th January 2017.

Gina Herridge



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

Well that's summer 2016 done and dusted; on reflection I think it was a good one weather wise and I hope you were able to make the most of it, bike wise.

So now we are heading towards winter and Handle Bar Muff time, and this is a product I can recommend, warm and dry hands do it for me. Speaking of recommendations, the next time you have a weeping front fork seal (usually happens just as an MOT is due), don't rush to your bike shop or buy some replacement seals and prepare for ½ a day in your garage. Its most likely that unless your fork stanchions are actually damaged/pitted it's just a tiny piece of grit that has got past the dust seal and not allowing the fork seal to make perfect contact with the stanchion.

Check out "Seal Mate" first, (just google it) there will be videos to show you what to do. I used a piece of 35mm film last time cut to shape when I couldn't find my Seal Mate, any piece of thin rigid plastic will do.....this really works as a long term fix.

On a personal note I usually avoid



test rides as it has been known to be expensive; however I have recently been smitten following one. I have wanted a bike with cruise control since my Arizona trip where the hire bike had this brilliant (for me) extra. My Yamaha Super Tenere has now done

43,000 miles and has been utterly reliable/dependable, easy to service, I can't even remember replacing a bulb. She has taken me all over Europe and as far South as the Sahara Desert. It seemed logical to try the newer version which has cruise control as standard plus some other insignificant sounding upgrades.

Within the first mile of the test I knew it was for me, the insignificant sounding upgrades must have been fairly significant as the engine performance/running was greatly improved. The demo bike wasn't for me though, mine is in better condition, despite the extra 40,000 miles! However I have now found one to my liking in Leominster, so by the time you read this it should be safely tucked up in my garage, so farewell old friend. Don't forget the Saturday morning C&T's starting on the 5th Nov, I guarantee you will come away with something new to consider from each session. Finally do try Steve Schlemmer's 2016-2017 measuring Somerset challenge, it will take you to places you have never visited before, and there will be a prize for the winner.....which I will be going for again! Safe riding. **Richard Pearce.**

SAM NEWS



When you pass your test, please inform Graham Tulloch or Gina Herridge so it can be included in Full Chat to encourage us all.

To the following members for passing their IAM test:

Vince Houlihan on 17th September, observed by Rob Bartlett, riding a Yamaha XJR1300.

Janet Short on 30th September riding a Kawasaki Ninja 300, observed by Gina Herridge.

Alistair Tudor on 16th October riding a Triumph Speed Triple, earning himself a F1RST in the process. Alistair was observed by Dave Watson.

Barry Croft also on 16th October, observed by Richard Pearce and riding a BMW R1200R.

Julie Comer on 21st October riding her Triumph Street Triple R, observed by Rob Bartlett.

And Dale Savin on 22nd October, observed by Rick Stowell and riding a Triumph Explorer.



Thank you to all observers for your help



CONTACT DETAILS

If your contact details change (especially email address), please inform Mark Livingstone so that we can keep you informed of the latest news and events.

Committee Meetings

i.e. what we are doing in your name; all members are welcome to attend Committee meetings to keep an eye on us. Equally, if anyone has a comment to make on any matters mentioned here, please contact a committee member to let us know.



The minutes of the last Committee meeting held at The Old pound, Wearne on 13th September 2016 can be found on the website in the members' only area.

The following 3 articles have been provided by Peter & Gina Herdridge following their attendance at the IAM RoadSmart annual Conference.

IAM RoadSmart News

That “IAM Central” or “Chiswick” as it is sometimes called, is actually quite a small organization, with only a couple of dozen or so permanent staff came as quite a surprise to me. I had always thought of it as a big umbrella structure with departments and rows of office wallahs, never really thinking that as a charity, it is obliged to keep overheads like staff costs to a reasonable minimum. One of the ways IAM RoadSmart tries to keep a lid on staff costs is, as you all know, to use volunteers to deliver much of the training that it offers to the general public through the groups. Another way is to co opt members to provide inputs in advice, planning and oversight, and it is via this route that Peter Herridge has been asked to join the Regional Strategy Group, a new body which meets several times a year to plan, well, the regional strategy. The advantage of having a SAM member in this group is that there is a very short communication chain for anyone who has ideas which might be useful to that planning group. Peter will welcome all of your ideas, thoughts and observations.

In addition to Peter’s appointment, I have been invited to become a Trustee designate on IAM Council. If, after I’ve attended some meetings, the rest of Council approves my appointment, I will be a full Trustee. This role is more to do with oversight and governance, but I will also be expected to be something of a group ambassador, aiming to maintain and improve communication between the groups and the centre, helping to develop and spread initiatives from group level around the rest of the groups where they prove to be useful. Again, I hope that SAM members will contact me with suggestions, advice and problems which they feel that the central organization is placed to address.

Gina Herridge

IAM RoadSmart Workshops

The following is a summary of the four workshops I attended at the IAM RoadSmart 2016 conference.

Policy & Research

This workshop was presented by Steve Kenward, CEO of MCIA (the Motorcycle Industry Association).

The headline data from Steve was that some recent research shows that without a modal shift in transport (i.e. a move away from the increasing reliance on cars) congestion on UK roads is only going to worsen and, indeed, is likely to double over the next couple of decades). However, some work in Belgium shows that a 25% swap of modal transport usage from cars to PTWs (powered two wheelers) on a congested urban road (congested to the point of stationary queuing), reduced the congestion to zero.

In the UK at present there are 1.2 million PTWs; the fastest growing sector of the market is small capacity machines 50 – 125cc.

There is clear correlation from many countries that increased PTW usage per capita on the roads results in a reduction of KSI figures (Killed & Seriously Injured) amongst riders.

Motorcyclists make better roads users, they are 23% less likely to be involved in an accident in either a car or on a motorcycle if they have both modes of insurance.

There is, however, little recognition of the place that PTWs could and should have in governmental thinking at both local and national level.

Business Update

This workshop was presented by Ken Keir, IAM RoadSmart chair, and Sarah Sillars, CEO of IAM RoadSmart.

There was a clear emphasis that advanced riding and driving, and being part of IAM RoadSmart should have enjoyment and fun at its heart alongside the improvement in road safety.

This presentation reviewed strategic progress over the past year and looked into the future. Of some 870,000 full licence holders for motorcycles in the UK, there are 53,000 who have an advanced riding qualification (about 6%). The current IAM RoadSmart thinking is that we have been trying to draw riders into this pinnacle of the triangle, the tested qualification, but what we should be doing more of is offering a broader base of products. This will enable IAM RoadSmart to achieve its charitable objective in improving road safety through education. So we are looking forward to modular training, for example, and the ability to achieve full IAM RoadSmart membership with a group sign off rather than taking a test.

There was also an explanation of the thinking behind selling the Chiswick

office

(a hugely valuable capital asset) and how that money can be used more effectively in supporting the charitable aims of IAM RoadSmart. The new premises at Albany Place, Welwyn Garden City, are on a short term lease while new, permanent offices are being sought.

The rebranding to IAM RoadSmart has been a capital outlay for the organization but it has already yielded benefits in, for example, the motoring press where the advice and views of the organization now have much greater traction. And IAM RoadSmart is leading a sector wide group to give a collective voice to the road safety concerns, issues and solutions that can be proposed to government.

Insurance

Led by Paul Woosley, IAM RoadSmart Head of Membership, and Lewis Murray and Diamuid Lavery from IAM Surety insurance.

This workshop revealed some very interesting work that has been conducted between IAM RoadSmart and IAM Surety on the claims made by members with IAM advanced qualifications.

Some key headlines:

The top for reasons for claims:

1. Member lost control of the motorcycle (mainly low speed or stationary manoeuvring).
2. Theft.
3. Member hit a third party in the rear.
4. Member hit a parked vehicle.

There is a very direct correlation between the likelihood of claiming and the time that has lapsed since taking the advanced test; claims for those who took their test between 5 and 10 years ago double in number.

Combining this research work with the understanding of the needs and desires of the membership has now led to the introduction of IAM RoadSmart Fellow membership, which will require three-yearly retesting and will also attract improved insurance benefits from IAM Surety. There is much more detail coming on this but it looks like a good scheme for all of us who wish to maintain our safety as road users.

Group Handbook

This workshop was presented by Shaun Cronin and Peter Serhatlic, the

Southern and Northern Region Service Delivery Managers respectively. The new group handbook is now available in its draft form. As well as laying out the structures and procedures for running local groups, the new handbook also has the policies we would expect to see in any organization. We now have an opportunity to review the contents of the draft handbook and offer feedback before 25th November 2016. Thereafter it will be available on-line in a version controlled format. **Peter Herridge**



Whilst attending the recent IAM RoadSmart Conference, Peter Herridge had the honour of being awarded an IAM RoadSmart Star Performer. These awards were given in this, the 60th anniversary year, and were nominated by IAM RoadSmart staff. Congratulations to Peter on this well-deserved award—obviously folk in IAM RoadSmart are seeing what we in SAM have had the benefit of for years!

(photo above of Peter receiving his award from CEO Sarah Sillars)

Young Rider Workshop

Recruiting and Retaining Young riders.

I believe that children are our future....

Of the 18,854 IAM motorcyclists, how many would you guess to be under 26 years old?

It's 20. Yes, 20, not 2,000, not 200, 20.

At the 2016 IAM RoadSmart Conference, there was a strong focus on planning for the future of the IAM, and where the next 60 years is going to

take the organization. The short answer is that unless we find ways to engage younger road users, not very far. The mean age of IAM members is increasing every year, and the commonest reason for non-renewal of membership is that the member has died. This situation applies to the groups just as much, and if we want our groups to be thriving in 10 or 20 years' time, we have to find a way to serve and to engage younger members. This is not news to SAM members, and Graham Tulloch, in particular has doggedly pursued opportunities to contact and to engage young riders for several years now. I was asked to assist IAM RoadSmart's Young Ambassador, the very impressive 18 year old Eloise Peabody-Rolf, in delivering the Young Rider Workshop at the conference, and some interesting messages emerged. These will be more fully collated at Chiswick/Welwyn Garden City in due course, but my personal highlights are as follows:

Communication

If it ain't available on a smartphone, it ain't available. If we want to publicize what we do to a younger audience, we have to choose social media communi-

cations which they regularly access. These include Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Snapchat and Instagram. SAM has a presence on Facebook, but it's likely that if we do successfully recruit more younger members, they will want to be part of an online community which allows them to share experiences and posts in a frequent and immediately accessible way, and very likely with other people who are not local. In other words the idea of geographically located communities is less likely to attract them than a looser association of like-minded people with whom they keep in contact via their phones.

Delivery

Given all the above, the next question is how we deliver training to someone who is not necessarily physically present. The idea of online modules of training which they can access, again via their phones/devices is a natural answer to the problem. This means that IAM RoadSmart needs to develop these modules in a form which can be accessed in that way: i.e. with graphics which are comprehensible on a small screen.

Access

The who, where and how we get into contact with young people occupied a lot of deliberation. Many groups have tried approaches through schools, colleges and events, but found that the uptake was really very poor. The idea that the younger, well, let's face it, sexier members of the group would make better recruiters was aired. If a more aspirational image is presented by the recruiter, it's more likely that the audience will engage with the idea.

Visibility

To make IAM RoadSmart "the go-to organization for driving and riding advice and support" we are obviously going to have to increase its visibility. Approaches to local media to sponsor a junior member of staff to do advanced training was

one initiative suggested to help with this, the payoff being that a write up appears after each session. As an aside, it was recognized that going into schools and colleges to talk to children and young people would be a great



way of achieving a degree of visibility, but at the same time the training and membership payoff might be in years rather than months. However, being in the back of people's minds as a future source of advice, support and training has to be better than not being there at all.

Can You Help?

Please talk to the young folk (actually, make that all the road using folk!) in your life and ask them what they think would make them engage with road safety generally and skill development in particular. Any suggestions or information you have or get, please send to me in some form.

Gina Herridge

ginabromage@googlemail.com

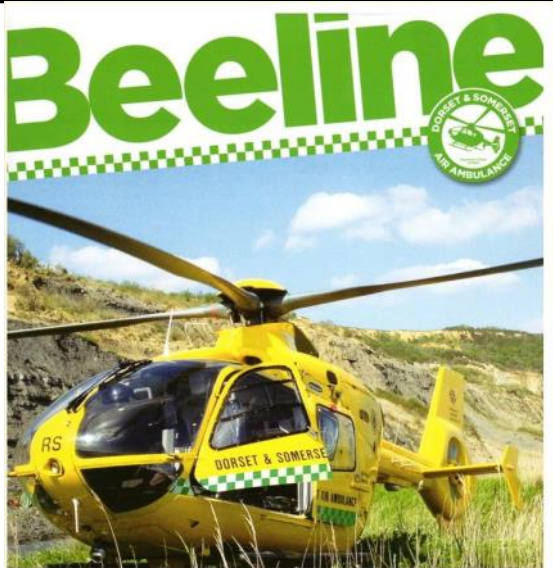
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DSAA Presentation

Earlier on this year, Paul Dyer arranged a visit to the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance's offices in Wellington to hand over a cheque for £200. This was money raised by SAM at the Pancake Express ride, as well as donations given by members at Control & Technique sessions held over the winter months.

Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA) has been the preferred chairperson's charity for a number of years now, being a vital charity in providing rapid emergency treatment (hopefully never needed by a SAM member) in accidents and serious injuries. Paul has a particular interest, having been lucky enough (?) to have been a passenger in a DSAA helicopter following a recent medical emergency (not motorcycle related). The article here was included in DSAA's magazine, but in case readers are



Pancake success

Members of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists (SAM) paid a visit to the Charity's head office to present the proceeds from this year's Pancake Express, which totalled £200.

Now in its fourth year, the event has become a real favourite for those who take part. Following an early morning start from Langport, the riders enjoy a two-hour motorcycle ride on Somerset's beautiful and varied roads, before returning for a hearty pancake breakfast.

The group also provides a range of technical training, host various bike-related events and organises more than 50 rides for its members and guests throughout the year.

Sam Smith, Fundraising Support Administrator, was thrilled to meet members of the group and to receive the funds raised.

Sounds yummy!

Pictured from left to right: Dave Watson, Sam Smith, Gina Bromage, Paul Dyer, Andy Spiers and Graham Tulloch

confused, note that Graham, Dave and Andy's names have been changed!!

RIDE REPORTS

Rick's Midweek Ride

Since Gordon raised the suggestion for more midweek rides during March's committee meeting, these have continued to prove popular with those doing shift work, running their own businesses, or simply enjoying the freedom of retirement. Rick Chubb and John Hooper have been instrumental in arranging many of these, and it was Rick that arranged one such ride one Thursday in the middle of September. 6 regulars duly turned up at Ilminster on another day of beautiful weather, ready for a trip along the Somerset/Dorset border, bound for a coffee and cake (what else!) stop at the Egg Cup café at Swyre. Heading down through Kingstone and Clapton, a left turn at Birdsmoorgate took us to a short stop at Pilsdon Pen to

take in the stunning view south to the coast. Then on through Broadwindsor and Beaminster before turning off through Toller, Cattistock and Grimstone before a deviation (to avoid the A37) through Muckleford and Martinstown before climbing up to Hardy's Monument and on to



Portesham. Just a short trip through Abbotsbury and a look at Chesil Beach behind us in the mirrors took us to The Egg Cup at Swyre, another SAM regular (and of course included in Roger's list). Refuelled with excellent cakes, the return trip took us through Burton Bradstock and along the A35 before heading home via Salwayash, North and South Bowood back to Broadwindsor before heading home via Crewkerne. Another excellent, relaxed midweek ride in perfect weather. **Graham Tulloch**

Camberwick Green

As anyone who has been "fortunate" enough to join us on the weekday

rides will know, John Hooper has the knack of finding parts of the countryside never before seen by your average biker. Thursday's ride took this to a higher level with many miles through the woods somewhere near Toller Down (I think). I started to think perhaps we could be ambushed by Robin Hood or a highwayman, only to find the biggest problems were the unsuspecting drivers

meeting several crazy motorcyclists "lost" in their lane! Further on we passed a 33% warning for the next downhill, I did not know we had such a hill so close to home (must try to get over there with the pushbike). I think everyone enjoyed the route and the mid-ride tea stop at Kilmington was great. My next ride will take us across the dunes at!!! (Only joking.) Thanks John.

Rick Chubb

Autumn Uprising

After a miserable wet Saturday, the weather forecast looked good for October's 1st Sunday of the month green ride. Whether it was this, or the attraction of breakfast beside Shearwater Lake that brought 20 bikes (plus Mary, Pam and Kim on pillion) out to this year's Autumn Uprising ride doesn't matter, it was great to see so many riders keen to enjoy a relaxed and relatively short ride on what turned out to be a glorious sunny day.

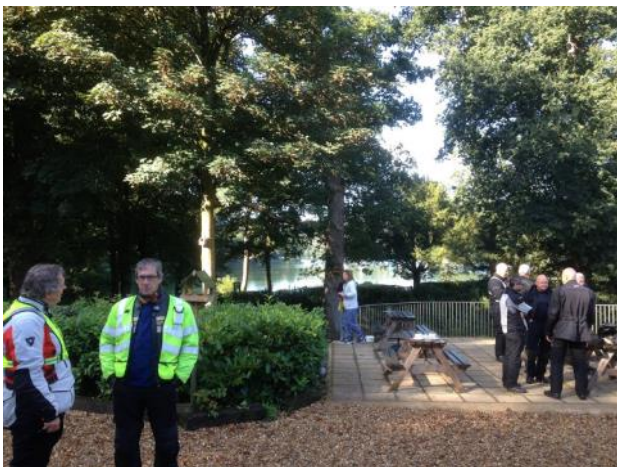
The recently introduced guidance for limiting groups to 15 bikes maximum therefore needed to be considered, but in view of the quiet roads planned for this ride, and the likely lack of traffic, it was decided that we would remain as a single group. To compensate for this, the need for the group to spread out and give due consideration to avoiding any undue inconvenience to other road users was stressed within the pre-ride briefing.

With Hugh Beamish donning the TEC Hi-Viz, the group set off through Queen Camel, Sparkford and Galhampton ,



before turning off just before Bruton and heading through Redlynch and Hardway, all the while keeping Alfred's Tower in view on the horizon. Typical of SAM rides, there were cyclists, horses, farm dog running free, a scooter rally and a caravan on a single track road to add to the usual hazards of muddy roads, potholes and rutting – all safely dealt with by all riders. Unlike previous years with this route, the mist had lifted early, leading to strong sun dappling through the trees. This caused more of an issue for some riders (me included), but once again was handled with ease (and greater than usual concentration) by all.

Shearwater Lake café provided a beautiful setting for breakfast, the hosts just about managing to organise the varied needs of us all, despite us spreading about both inside and out. Thankfully both food and drinks were delivered tasty and hot. Unfortunately the Red Kites that gather around the lake didn't appear during our visit, as they did for me on my recce 2 days previously, but appear to be regular visitors to the skyline in this locality.



The return journey continued to offer the opportunity for viewing some stunning scenery and villages, winding through The Deverills before cresting the hill above the Blackmore Vale, dropping down through Mere and then on along the “old” A303 through Zeals, Bourton, Wincanton, Holton and South Cadbury before heading our separate ways at Sparkford.

The U-Turn at North Cadbury just before our return to Sparkford was deemed by many on this ride to be a navigational error by the ride leader, being unprepared to accept my claims that this was actually a brief bit of slow-riding practice! Luckily, everyone handled this manoeuvre with ease, proving how valuable and successful this sort of training is!!

Graham Tulloch

Exmoor Experience

As motorcyclists our hobby always thrives on having the right roads in the right area for us to enjoy and in SAM we are blessed on having Exmoor on our doorstep with its stunning scenery and usually quiet enjoyable roads . I make no apology in heading for this National Park for the destination on the social



rides I lead. Thus the Exmoor Experience Ride.

This years route took us to Bampton then north to the valley of the river Haddeo to cross the ford at hamlet of Bury always a good photographic location!



Then over true Exmoor via Molland Common ,Twitchen and up onto Twitchen Ridge where late-comer Steve O joined us.

Refreshments were taken on the north coast at Lynmouth. We followed the scenic north coast for our return route to Porlock ,Dunkery

and back to dispersal at Milverton.

Matt Towill

Exmoor Breakfast Ride

In brilliant early morning sunshine, Graham, Ken, Dave, Steve and Tom were waiting for me at Southfields, Ilminster for a 8.30am get away to the second meet point at J27 Services M5. On that part of the ride I realised we had 3 Triumph Explorers in the group, obviously the bike of the moment.

Ian, Richard and Steve were at J27 and after the usual pre ride banter we set off westwards to Dulverton and from there via steep minor roads we climbed to East Anstey and Molland Common. This is Exmoor at its finest in early October sunshine and the approaching Autumn colours, solitude, with fine views and just an hour after leaving the chaos of the A358 and A303 at Ilminster.

Travelling further west we stopped

at Fyldon Common to admire the vista. We were at 483 metres above sea level and with Dunkery beacon at 519 Metres we were close to the roof of Exmoor. It had clouded over and there was a noticeable chill in the air at that altitude so we rode on to Kingsford Gate where we turned south and dropped down to The North Gate Café at South Molton for that well-earned breakfast.

A shall-we-say progressive ride followed back to Wiveliscombe via Black Cat for an end of ride chat and dispersal.

If you were unable to join this ride I think you missed a good one in an area we are so lucky to have right on our doorstep.

Matt Towill

This photo was sent in by Lindsay Wilson. Looks like the motorway signal operator should have gone to..... a popular High Street Opticians!



QUIZ

Something to keep you occupied whilst having a coffee. The following **AN-AGRAMS** all refer to motorcycles. They include just the manufacturer name, and the model range/type – there are no numbers or letters. Answers next issue. First with all 30 correct answers to me wins an IAM Buff!

Graham Tulloch

1.	TRAUMATIC DUD TAILS	16.	DOVE RAN A HOARD
2.	DONS RUSH NEAR CORN	17.	I AM DAISY HANOVER
3.	PETER HEAR MY NAU- SEA	18.	W.C.C. IN BAD SHOVEL TANK
4.	DARLING DADS HAVE TEERY COLLIE	19.	TOIL ON AU PAIR
5.	DAVE LEND A HAUL	20.	U VACATE LID I.D.
6.	PANIC POOR RAIL AD	21.	HERMITS PURPLE TIT- TER
7.	BIRTH PUN HID MUR- DER	22.	ELF IN HEADBOARD
8.	NUDE MARKET TV	23.	MOM PUKES TROT
9.	ANDREA ATE MUCH HAY	24.	HELD ANY NOB
10.	A POUND NEAR PHONE	25.	MATRON ON CONDOM
11.	I ASK GUID ZULUS	26.	EVICT MAD JOURNAL
12.	TRY A FULL ON BLEED LIE	27.	I PUNCH AT DATA
13.	SIR KEV ASKS AWAY	28.	GIN DOWN OLD HAG
14.	RAVISH LAIR PIE	29.	TEXT RUTH ON LOVE ETC.
15.	M, PHONE VIRILE BLUNT	30.	OAF REQUIRES AURAL

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Control & Technique

"Bike Maintenance"

Sat. 5th Nov. 2016

10:00 @ The Old Pound, Wearne,
nr Langport TA10 0QJ

Presented by Matt Towill

SAM Green Ride

"Southern Comfort"

Sun. 6th Nov. 2016

09:30 @ Cartgate Services

Led by Wayne Timbrell

SAM Committee Meeting

Tue. 8th Nov. 2016

19:30 @ The Old Pound,
Wearne, nr. Langport TA10 0QJ

SAM Events Meeting

Fri. 11th Nov. 2016

19:30 @ Kelways Inn,
Somerton Road, Langport

SAM Amber Ride

"Exmoor Ramble"

Sun. 13th Nov. 2016

09:30 @ Cross Keys Inn, nr.
Norton Fitzwarren

Led by Richard Pearse

SAM Red Ride

"Twisties Galore"

Sun. 20th Nov. 2016

10:00 @ Cocklemoor Car Park,
Langport

Led by Graham Tulloch

Control & Technique

"The Comfort Zone"

Sat. 3rd. Dec. 2016

10:00 @ The Old Pound, Wearne,
nr Langport TA10 0QJ

Presented by Gina Herridge

SAM Green Ride

"Frostie Fingers"

Sun. 4th Dec. 2016

09:30 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Rick Chubb

SAM Green Ride

"Frozie's Toesies"

Day Date Month Year

18:45 @ Podimore Services

Led by Graham Tulloch

**Refreshments including Bacon/
Sausage Baps will be available at
C&T sessions. Come along and
join in with your experiences.**



Ninja 300

Soon after buying Janet's 300 Ninja, we realized some adjustments would need to be made. It seems that most manufacturers don't cater for the female riders' smaller hands and so still fit clutch and brake levers with too large a hand span, that are often non-adjustable.

So we fitted a pair of Pazzo racing levers with six position span adjustable clickers (green in this case to match the bike). I've used these levers on many bikes in the past and they are top quality. Another good make is CRG. Ones to avoid are the cheap ebay items from China.



Next, we realized the mirrors didn't extend out far enough, the only rear view being Janet's elbows, so on went a pair of mirror extenders from SW Motech.

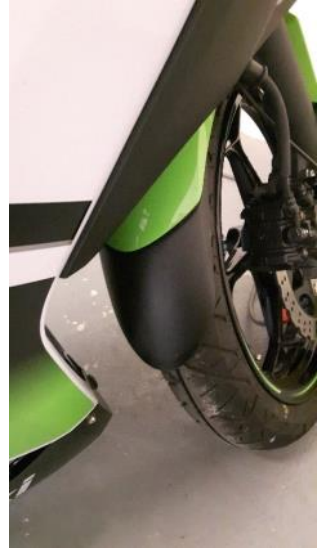
The side stand footprint wasn't that big, so on went an R&G side stand spreader which works well on all surfaces.



Also fitted (see photos opposite) are R&G paddock stand bobbins, R&G radiator guard and a fender extender (bonded on). Arguably most of these items should be standard fitment, especially the radiator guard!

Triumph Sprint GT

On my recently purchased Triumph Sprint GT, I found that the riders foot pegs were a little too high, so I fitted a lowering kit from MFW in Germany.



This lowers the foot pegs by 25mm and the brake lever has been adjusted to suit. Same on the gear change side.

Also the pillion foot pegs were far too high, so I've fitted 50mm extensions (also from MFW) which are fully adjustable and in this case, move the foot pegs lower and further forward.



These foot pegs have worked very well as we have just returned from a 2,500 mile trip through Spain with no aches and pain - this is why the bike's so filthy, haven't got around to cleaning it yet!

Nigel Short

BIKE REPORTS

1991 Honda VFR750

Here is a history of my red VFR750FM. It was registered on 9-8-91 and I bought it from a fellow SAM member (Sue) on 8-7-98, at 7 years old and

with about 16,000 miles on the clocks. It now has 66,575, and at 25 years old only comes out on sunny days. I have had other Honda V4's including 4 750s, a VF1000R and an NC30, but have kept this one. I have taken it touring with Maggie on pillion to Ireland twice, Spain on several occa-



sions, France and the Isle of Man. It's comfortable and handles well, but is a little underpowered when fully loaded, although only noticeable if trying to keep up with bigger bikes. In fact only up hills. Despite use through many winters the finish has stood up well and only last week, when stopped at a level crossing, a bike pulled alongside and the rider commented on its condition. It's got some wear and tear, but considering my infrequent cleaning schedule it's done well. It's had some bits replaced, not because of an accident but I robbed them for another bike which I had sold and then let fall over! Apart from the hugger, rear shock and full Motad exhaust it's stock and is a good all round bike. Apart from touring it's done track days and many pre-breakfast laps of the TT course. The best bit is the sound, even with a legal pipe it's just a pleasure to wind it up and hear that V4. In the 50,000 miles I've done it's not needed any valve shims changing, it's had about 12 rear and 10 front tyres, 3 chain and sprockets (Scotoiler fitted) and two lots of front brake discs (the first pair were pattern and didn't last long); also a reg/rect (a common problem on Hondas), and the rear shock after the original lost its oil and had us grounding the undercarriage on Ireland's bumpy roads. Oh, the main stand collapsed so a replacement came from ebay. It does about 50mpg. A great bike. As of today it's on SORN and will be given a rest. It's not likely to get sold in the near future.

Rick Chubb

TRAINING EXPERIENCES

Masters Journey

Masters – My Journey

Having been an Advanced Motorcyclist since November 2012 and progressing to NO (National Observer) in intervening years, I started thinking about the Master's program in the middle of last year. Speaking with other members of the club who had achieved the qualification and from training I received whilst in training for NO at Llandrindod Wells, I was left a little confused as to what was actually expected to achieve this prestigious standard.

The discussions held at our last AGM further pricked my interest as something I wanted to achieve – for myself – to be the best Motorcyclist that I can be.

The Journey

After chatting with Peter Herridge about the pros and cons of purchasing the Mentorship package, I decided to go for Mentorship as part of my prep and duly paid my money to IAM in May.

I was assigned our own Nick Griffin as my mentor for this endeavour, and we embarked on our series of 6 mentored sessions. Our first session was a bit of a shock to the system as he stopped me inside about 10 minutes for a 'chat', another 20 minutes; another 'chat' and another 30 minutes and we were done – except for the final 'chat'. All of my impressions of what was expected were well wide of the mark and Nick had to reset my understanding of the standard and its requirements. Nick helped me understand how to plan and execute my overtakes better – an area I feel I have always struggled with – and also extolled the virtues of appropriate **restraint**. Over the course of our time together we had good sessions, and not so good sessions, but gradually small tweaks and refinements (sometimes not so small) brought us to the end of our official time together and I applied for the test proper.

In amongst my prep for the test I had been selling my house in Yeovil and trying to buy one in Othery - with a numpty for a buyer, this straightforward transaction proved to be anything but, and it turned out that I moved into

my new home (4 months from sale to completion) only two weeks before my test date in September. I therefore never managed to get out on the bike practising anything like as often as I had planned, so when I did meet up with Robbie Downing early on a Saturday morning in Burnham on Sea, I still felt I hadn't done enough.

Robbie does what he does best and put me at my ease and off we went on a route that took us through Cheddar Gorge and around the Mendips on a variety of roads and hazards (goats on the road in Cheddar!) ending up at a MacDonalds for the final questions and verdict. To my surprise, I passed and the clincher according to Robbie was not the overtakes or the progressive ride at the speed limits, it was the demonstration of **restraint** on a particular section of road when following two cars and assessing the buffoon in the high powered sports car (constantly darting around looking for the overtake) as the biggest hazard so dropping back to let him get on with it instead of trying to force my own way past.

The Misconception

It is very easy when chatting with

now fellow Masters to gain the impression that in order to be successful at this level you need to be going for it, hell for leather, at the speed limit at all times and never miss an overtake – however marginal. I can safely state, THIS IS NOT TRUE, as Nick and Robbie said to me Restraint is just as key.

The Truth

What is expected is a Safe (and Legal), Systematic, Smooth ride with 'Sparkle' and it is this 'Sparkle' that is the difference between a good Advanced Ride (F1RST) and a Masters.

Safe means that we continue to apply all of the principles of safety at an Advanced Level, including being able to stop in the distance we can see to be clear on our side of the road, but know how much distance is needed at the speed you are travelling – don't be over cautious, but adjust your speed as your limit point of vision moves – it is not about haring round bends at national speed limit regardless for fear of 'Failure to make progress'. Restraint is equally important to maintain your safety.

Systematic means applying the System of Motorcycle Control, as we all do as Advanced Motorcyclists, but to the highest of stand-

ards – Roadcraft is your bible here. Smooth means we appear not to be working, everything flows from one hazard to the next, completely unhurried. Gina gave me an analogy of the Shark and the Ant, which really helped me to understand the difference in riding style that is expected at Masters level: if you think about an Ant, they are constantly



scurrying about darting from one position to the other in sharp rushed movements. The Shark, however, glides from one position to another, unhurried and always exudes control.

Sparkle is probably the most difficult to express in words and the one thing that confuses the most. Sparkle is there when you have really put the ride together, flowing through a series of bends in a smooth, planned, unhurried (Shark-like) way, always in control and not having to over-correct a less than optimal application of the system. Sparkle is taking that overtake when it presents itself, without fuss or drama. Sparkle is when you use your observation links to prepare for a potential hazard before it develops into one. You know when your ride has sparkle – you feel it yourself.

Conclusion

My mentorship time with Nick was very valuable time for me, not only did it reset my understanding of the standard, it helped to sharpen up the planning of my ride and focus on my interpretation of hazards – it gave lots of food for thought. I have to say a huge thanks to Nick for his time and his knowledge, he was an excellent mentor and I would recommend the mentorship approach to anyone considering their Masters.

The debrief from Robbie is gold, to get an analysis of your riding at such a detailed level to help you improve further from a rider of his calibre is huge. Yes I passed, but there are still things to work on and Robbie articulated those in such a constructive way, at this level it is all fine tuning.

Would I commend the Master's program to others? Absolutely - if you have the time and drive to concentrate on being the best rider you can be, do it.

Jez Martin

BIKING MEMORIES

Doris Porter, 63

Well, enough about my father. I started motorcycling late at 50. Jane and I had enjoyed cycling, including on our tandem, but when we moved to Devon we found the narrow roads and steep hills dangerous and hard work. One day we cycled past a motorcycle rally and the penny dropped. Time for an engine.

Through Direct Access I went from complete novice on a Wednesday morning to riding away on my first R1100RT on the Sunday morning. I spent Wednesday on Compulsory Basic Training, all day Thursday and Friday morning on a 500 and passed my test on Friday afternoon. It was a 'left foot down' regime and if I stopped with my right foot down, my fearsome, ex-RN instructor would stop alongside and stamp on it. (When I joined IAM my charming lady observer converted me to 'right foot

down' without recourse to corporal punishment)

I'd paid a deposit on a second-hand, 1996 model year RT in Hampshire and my first ride was 190 miles home to Plymouth.

At the time *Ride* magazine included, in its road tests, little sidebars featuring inputs from people who'd bought the model tested. One input, for a Ducati Monster, was by Doris Porter, 63. So when people said to me that 50 seemed late to be starting, I used to tell them about Doris and other riders I then knew, of even more advanced ages.

We had enjoyed overseas touring by bicycle so we started touring by motorcycle. After a couple of years we rented a Goldwing in the Canadian Rockies. Boy, it was hot. We went through a little place in British Columbia that claimed to be the hottest place in Canada;

it was so hot we couldn't bear to stop. We were wearing our only outfits - all black, waterproof textiles and suitable for the worst weather the UK winter can throw at you.

We've since discovered the thermal benefits of pale coloured gloves, boots and jackets, and reinforced blue denim jeans; and how to manage airflow around ankles, up sleeves and through jackets – buy your jacket one size too large, for internal airflow in summer and extra layers in winter. However, on this early trip, my feet, in knee length black boots, were particularly hot. When I told the renter about this on returning the bike, he helpfully pointed out the adjustable, lower-fairing, air vents which deflect hot air from the engine onto the



rider's feet for heating in winter. They'd been set for winter for the whole, searing, two-week trip.

Anyway, our return trip included two days on the Rocky Mountaineer train, from Vancouver to Calgary, with friends who'd been touring by car while we'd been biking. When we disembarked, an older, English couple who'd been sitting behind us said they'd overheard us talking about our trips. They were bikers and were surprised when in conversation I revealed we'd been riding only two years. So I told them about Doris Porter, 63.

'That's amazing' the woman said. 'I am that Doris Porter.'

Steve Schlemmer



MEMBER'S TRIPS

My North Coast 500

We had often talked about touring Scotland but somehow warmer/drier locations always won through. This year was different though, with our first granddaughter due Karen didn't want to go too far.

So decision made, a costal circuit was planned to include John o' Groats as we hadn't been before. A leisurely 10 days with the only long days being day one, to Kendal and the final day, the run home from Edinburgh. The holiday was taking place during the school holidays both English and Scottish, so it seemed safer to pre-book accommodation, so Booking.Com was brought into play.

Day 1 took us to our first overnight stop, Kendal, avoiding motorways where possible, so via the Wye Valley and Hereford (now there is a city that needs a by-pass)

The following day was a most enjoyable trip through the Lake District, along the shores of Lake Windermere, a ferry across to Coniston Water for lunch via Hawkshead then onward to our second overnight at Moffat and

yes our arrival into Scotland was in the rain, so expectations were met.....however that was the only rain we had during the trip, so no complaints there.

Oban was our next overnight destination, once past Glasgow we were treated to miles of the Loch Lomond shore line before we made our way to the famous Green Welly Stop for lunch before moving on to the West Coast town of Oban. We enjoyed Oban, and watching the Caledonian MacBrayne ferries constantly moving in and out of the port servicing the islands added interest. Now I believe



it was in Oban that I spotted a copy of Ride magazine, on the front cover was splashed North Coast 500, "Scotland's Most Amazing Route", so I had to buy it. Now, I may be the last person in the UK not to have heard of the NC 500 but that's how it was. I was inter-



ested to see that although the route starts just North of where we currently were, we would soon be following the identical route. I now know there is lots of information on the route available via the internet, even stickers & T-shirts available, it's being marketed as Scotland's Route 66!

The following day we had intended to visit the Isle of Skye but by the time we had a run through Glencoe and a leisurely coffee stop time was running away from us and we had to make Ullapool that evening, so island hopping was put back for another occasion. Sticking to the coast road where possible we made our way north to Ullapool for our overnight stop. By now we were taking great views and roads in our stride, we were well into the NC500 now and competing for road space with cyclists and camper vans and we would compare notes with some at the coffee stops.



Day 5 took us initially North before heading East along the North Coast past Durness, Smoo Caves (partially closed, too much water, fortunately not falling on us), past Dounreay and on to John o'Groats for the mandatory photographs. The North Coast weather could be described as fresh and we felt suitably dressed in bike gear, so photos, coffee, then onwards (as

there is not much else there) to our overnight destination of Wick.

Day 6 to Inverness was an easy mileage day at just over 100 miles on



quicker roads than we had been on recently, so when we came across the splendid Dunrobin Castle it was an ideal opportunity for a leisurely visit and the best falconry display I have seen. Onward to Inverness where by chance our accommodation was owned by an ex speedway rider and he had one of his bikes on display in the bar.

Day 7 and our destination was Edinburgh, it was an easy day so we decided to take a detour to visit the Falkirk Wheel. For anyone that doesn't know, it's a rotating boat lift connecting the Forth and Clyde Canal with the Union Canal. It's a very impressive sight as it raises and lowers canal boats 35 meters and as it is counter balanced requires very little power. Then on to Edinburgh battling in rush hour traffic with the low fuel light flashing, the cooling fan running and not a garage in sight, yes I remember that leg of the journey! However the next two days were spent off the bike and public transport was our choice as we were introduced to the city by a good friend. Visits included the Royal Yacht Britannia, and Holyrood Palace, also the Royal Mile and of course Princess Street, all well recommended



Day 10, farewells and 400+ miles of motorway home, but sometimes it just has to be done. I was recommended Tebay Services and Gloucester Services and I can pass on that recommendation as they offer a far more pleasant experience than the traditional Service Stations.

So to sum up, a most enjoyable trip, stunning scenery, some brilliant roads, and considering the time of year not too busy. The weather, well we could have managed a little more sunshine but it was more or less kind to us, and the two days R&R in Edinburgh finished off our trip perfect-

ly.

While we didn't replicate the North Coast 500 exactly (as it starts and finishes in Inverness) we did most of it. The guys from Ride magazine did it in two days, I would recommend a more leisurely approach if time permits. Would we return? Most definitely (even if Nicola & Alex Krankie seize control!)

Incidentally following our holiday I even managed to fit in a trip (just) to the Classic TT before our grand daughter finally put in an appearance. I must say though, she was worth waiting for.

Richard Pearse

Ride to the Wall 2016

My first visit to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, near Litchfield was as a brief lunch stop as my wife Linda and I drove up to a holiday cottage in Derbyshire. I had heard of it previously but I was inspired by our brief visit. The next visit for us was a day out when caravanning at Chatsworth House with a friend. We lost track of time and when we returned to the visitor centre to leave, we discovered that all the exits were locked! Fortunately, as the cleaning staff was still on site we were able to exit ok. What an inspirational place! For info, visit www.thenma.org.uk or <http://www.ridetothewall.org.uk>

I knew of the annual 'Ride to the Wall' at the beginning of October and asked Linda if she fancied joining me on the bike to take part.

Our nearest meeting point was going to be the northbound Strensham services, but after few days thought, she turned me down as although she does ride pillion, she feels 'too vulnerable' on a long motorway trip. Our youngest daughter Amy had expressed interest previously about visiting the NMA and although she had not motorcycled before,



she said she would be interested in giving it a go! This gave us a few months to get in some practice to see if she was happy on the bike for the 300 mile round trip.

We started out with a ride from Burnham to Stourhead (NT) for lunch via Podimore, then down the A303 in drizzle to Ilminster and through to Taunton. All was well so

back home via the M5. She was more than happy with it and chatted on the intercom most of the way. Looking promising, I thought! The next practice was a little different as we set off via Taunton to Raleighs Cross, and Wheddon Cross on Exmoor and lunch in Knightshayes (NT) near Tiverton. Return again via M5. Happy as a sandboy. Looking very promising,



I thought!

The final 'practice' was to be an overnight visit (at her request) to my old stomping ground near Cardigan on the west coast of Wales. We set off on Saturday morning, M5 and M4 to Newport then A449/A40 to Waitrose in Abergavenny for a coffee stop. We were now by ourselves! Oh Dear! Another clue was that the convoys

we came across were on the other carriageway going the other way! I decided to turn around and change carriageways! As it turned out all the 5 bikes in front did too but almost immediately I was trapped by another quick



lane change that I hadn't expected and was unable to follow them. I was now by myself and unsure of where I was. I knew that signs for M5 j8 should not be visible!

Fortunately Amy was already on to it and had her iPhone in her hand plotting our required destination and doing the navigation. We had about 45 minutes to go so we put our faith in the iPhone. She was struggling to keep the rain off it too. It took us off at the next junction and back on the other carriageway to the intersection where I went off alone and took me the way the others had gone. We never saw any more motorways but skirted around Litchfield and picked up the signs for NMA and joined the stop start convoy for the last 30 minutes into the car parks. That was interesting as I've never ridden 3 or 4 abreast on a single lane slip road, particularly only shuffling 20 or 30 feet at a time.

We arrived on site at about 12:00 so the car park toilets were very welcome. We walked into the Arboretum to the catering village and were spoiled for choice of eateries. There was a helmet store also available there if required. The

whole arboretum was available to wander around and you soon forgot about the rain. We attended the outdoor addresses by Martin Dickinson, a biker who founded the RTTW charity in 2008 and other patrons of the RTTW from within the



Armed Forces, followed by a brief service led by a military chaplain. We then continued to wander around including a late lunch. We realised it had stopped raining at about 16:15 and we were thinking of setting off home. All we had to do was to visit the RTTW merchandise stall to buy 2 dry buffs (I had spare gloves on the bike) and we returned to the bike to find it was the only one left in our parking area so our departure was nowhere near as prolonged as our arrival. In no time we were at the Toll booth for the M6 toll and that was soon dispatched by contactless card. A brief fuel

stop on M42 to remove the misting from inside my pinlock visor and we were off. We stopped for a warm cuppa and toilet in the Gloucester services, phoned home to pre order dinner and off we went on the final leg, drying out as we went in a very pleasant evening ride.

I have asked if Amy would want to do it again on the bike! Apparently she would be happy to but she is keen to visit the NMA somehow in less inclement weather with more time available and wander among the wide variety of memorials including the RNLI, Scouts and several children's charities.

I don't know how the weather may have affected the numbers attending but I gather there were in the region of 7,000 bikes from the 11 start locations. The furthest convoy I gather originated in Belgium. By far the majority of the bikes there were Harleys of one sort or another, but I hate to think of the hours that their owners will take to return them to their normal sparkling appearances.

I would be happy to repeat the trip next year, which incidentally is the 10th anniversary of the 'Ride To The Wall' and for a very good cause but better weather would be welcome. We'll see!

Tony Hamilton



A great turnout for Matt Towill's "Bike Maintenance" Control & Technique session. Next session "The Comfort Zone" - see Forthcoming Events".



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Thank you for your articles and pictures. I am sorry if I was unable to fit them all in. Please keep them coming: Tullochg@aol.com

SAM Code of Conduct

All riders participate at their own risk.

Turn up on time with a full fuel tank. Listen to the brief about the intended ride.

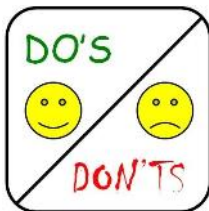
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

Ride with the safety of every other road user in mind.

If you wish to detour or leave before the end of the ride, let the leader know.

Ride cancellation is rare, but in extreme conditions the decision rests with the ride leader. If the ride is cancelled the leader should ensure that someone is present at the advertised start point/time to inform any rider who turns up.

Non-SAM partners, friends and guests are welcome to join rides.



Colour Code of Rides

Green – Ride open to all SAM members. Shorter rides, typically of 2 hours duration, with stops. Aimed at getting riders used to group riding. There is usually no overtaking within the group, except when a slower rider specifically signals the following rider to pass.

Amber – Ride for test ready associates (Observer's discretion) and test pass holders. Riding over varied conditions, usually between a half and a full day of riding.

Red – Test pass holders only. Riding over more challenging conditions. Riding can extend over a full day, sometimes longer.

The ride leader will brief each ride to ensure all riders are aware what's required of them.

The views expressed in this document do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) or Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists (SAM). Similarly, goods and services offered do not carry a recommendation from IAM or SAM.

The Drop-Off System

This is the preferred SAM method to control group rides. Each rider has a 'leader' and a 'sweeper'. Once underway, riders do not need to keep sight of each other, as route deviations will be marked. This is achieved by the 'leader' indicating to the rider immediately behind that a junction is to be marked. This rider (the 'marker') pulls up in a safe and visible position, and indicates the route to all the following riders. The 'marker' then re-joins the group just in front of the 'sweeper'. Everyone on the ride – except the 'leader' and the 'sweeper' – then takes turns to be the marker as they take up the position behind the 'leader'. Headlights are kept on, as this makes it easier to see following and approaching riders.

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