

Summer 2017

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



SAM Officers

Chair	Richard Pearce	07779 285666
Secretary	Andy Hall	01963 350452
Treasurer	Alistair Gee	07779 126388
Membership Sec.	Mark Livingstone	01278 653361
Events Coordinator	Jez Martin	07590 368808
Observer Co-ord.	Paul Dyer	07974 747921
Publicity Officer	Ken Octon	07970 114619
Sponsorship & Advertising	Andy Spiers	07876 102602
Full Chat Editorial Team	Gina Herridge Graham Tulloch	07745 052815 07825 201650



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Front Cover: Alistair Gee blazing a trail through the woods on one of BigJon Hooper's Green rides!



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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



It's been a hectic Summer for the SAM editorial team, hence the rather late appearance of Full Chat. One

consequence of a family scattered to the four winds is that when they do make an appearance, everything else is on hold.

However, here we are, finally. Many SAM members have been on exciting foreign trips, but the only time I've managed to get out of our dismal Summer (after the longest day, anyway) I didn't get to take the bike. However, the odometer reading is still climbing

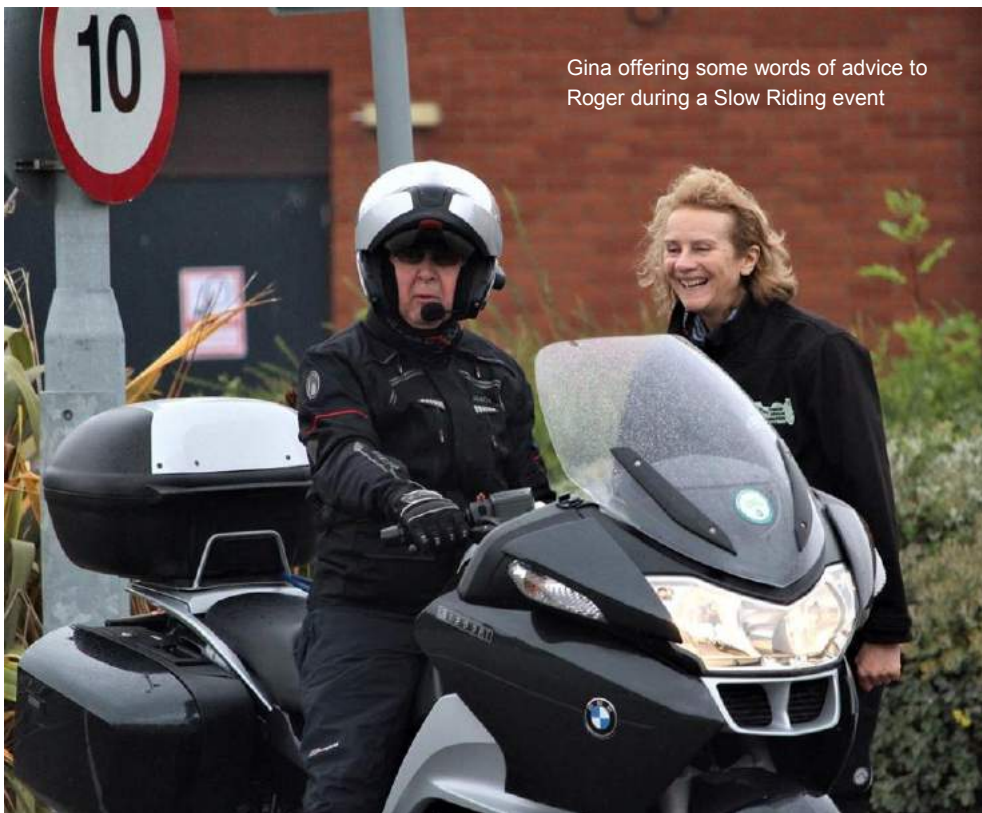


steadily and Shinyu's August present is going to be a D.I.D. chain and sprockets, after a rather alarming graunching clatter when I was hard on the gas at the most recent Thruxton IAM RoadSmart skills day.

After a brief email conversation with one of the IAM RoadSmart Area Service Delivery Managers,

I've discovered that there is an official IAMRS Group Rides policy, and not only that, it is almost to the letter, the same as the one we operate in SAM. I can't decide whether I am more





Gina offering some words of advice to Roger during a Slow Riding event

pleased that we are so forward-looking and professional, or that the IAM is, but either way, it's heartening, especially as we have recently updated the SAM Group Rides policy to take account of any incidents of either ill-advised riding or collisions. I guess you can never guard against the unforeseen, but the more you foresee, the less unforeseen you have to worry about. (The IAMRS one can be found on the website under the Group Rides policy https://www.iamroadsmart.com/docs/default-source/dashboards/running-a-group/forms/group-rides-policy-v1.pdf?sfvrsn=e4c79150_2)

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of Full Chat. Please send in anything you would like included in the next one, for which the deadline will be October 15th 2017.

Gina Herridge



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

What has happened to our summer? I'm told I missed it while away on holiday! I do feel sorry though for those families having UK holidays as the weather appeared to go awry as soon as the schools broke up for their summer break.

Your club committee has one change

since the last edition of Full Chat. Rob Bartlett has handed over the associate and taster ride co-ordinator role to Paul Dyer. Thanks Rob for carrying out this role for our club for many years and thanks Paul for taking on this role which is becoming more demanding with our successful recruitment campaigns. If observers can please keep Paul up to date with their

taster rides and associate observing, it will make his job a lot easier. Elsewhere Andy Hall and Alistair Gee have settled into their respective roles as Secretary and Treasurer and I hope you agree that the handover has been seamless.



A couple of Sundays ago I set off to Bridgwater with the intention of helping Mark Livingstone set up the August Slow Riding Skills Day course. When I arrived, however (about 8.30), he was all but set up, so that was me put to shame. Mark does a brilliant job setting up these Skills Days, its hard work and he certainly has it off to a fine art. His efforts are much appreciated by those attending, some travelling 100 miles or so. I always find it rewarding to take someone who has not had the opportunity to practice such skills before and watch them grow in confidence as they begin to grasp the technique required. The seed is sown, its then up to them to practice, and maintain the skill.

During this particular morning it became apparent that a lady pillion (whose partner was attending the Skills Day) used to be a rider but had lost her nerve and not ridden for some time. With a small amount of coaxing and deep breaths on her part, she was soon aboard Gina's Serrow (which Gina had kindly loaned for the event despite being away on holiday) in a car park away from the action and she was soon riding up and down as if she had never been away. Confidence restored I hope she will be back on the road soon.

On a personal note the container with my Super Tenere and six other bikes has arrived back in the UK and I am collecting her tomorrow (21 Aug) so by the time this goes to print we will have been reunited. She has been on a cruise down the West Coast of the USA calling at Costa Rica then on through the Panama Canal, on to Colombia and Puerto Rico then Georgia before finally crossing the Atlantic to Southampton so I am quite envious. I just hope she travelled well. Safe riding.

Richard Pearse



SAM NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS!

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

to the following members for passing their IAM test:

- John Watson on 10th June, riding a Kawasaki Versys 1000 and observed by Nick Griffin.
- Mark Barrington on 24th June, riding a BMW GS1200 Adventure. Mark was observed by Martin Surrey, and earned a F1RST.
- Alan Chinn on 21st July, observed by Lindsay Wilson and riding a Triumph Tiger 800 XRX.
- Andrew Nash on 24th July riding a Triumph Thunderbird Nightstorm 1700 and observed by Callum Bremner.



Thank you to all observers for your help

And finally congratulations to Rob Bradshaw, who was appointed a Fellow on 30th June.



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 6th June 2017 will be emailed to members.

IAM RoadSmart Ladies Skills Day

After hearing so many great reports on how fantastic the Skills Days at Thruxton were (from Nigel many times!) he persuaded me to book a place at the ladies' day on Monday 19th June and came along as 'pit crew'.

Nigel couldn't believe the noise generated by 65 ladies chatting at once! Luckily Shaun had a whistle to silence us for Gina's welcome, followed by Shaun's entertaining introduction.

My instructor for the day was Pat, a splendid chap who greeted me with



enthusiasm and explained everything very clearly. Never having ridden on a race track before, I had absolutely no idea what to expect, but goodness it was amazing - so wide, one-way, and great sur-

face. Marvellous.

After the first session, I chatted for some time with Pat about cornering, particularly Campbell Corner, a right hander, quickly going into a left, therefore important to get the first one right or the next one's a mess.

The second session was much better, concentrating on braking later, turning later and using the cone markers for start, apex and exit of turns. So that was it, addicted! All too soon the chequered flag directed us into the pits. Surely, we'd only been out for 5 minutes!?

The talks in between sessions by Peter were excellent, connecting

the ride with the information from my instructor, like a jigsaw.

Following lunch, by which time it was incredibly hot, we were out on the track again and could overtake, if safe to do so. I followed Pat for the first lap, then he waved me through. Wow, wow, wow, I had the whole circuit to myself for a lap. It was awesome. I then caught up with another group. Second gear going slowly into the chicane, wacked it against the stop, into third and overtook the group out of the chicane, my Ninja howling along the start/finish straight. Track was clear for a bit then another group, just got by a few and there was the chequered



flag to go in again. No! Just one more lap please! Well, what an experience.

After such an exhilarating session, I decided to end the day on a high and miss the last session. I couldn't thank Pat and all the IAM team enough for providing such a marvellous, instructive day.

No matter what bike you ride or your level of experience, so much can be learnt from such a superb skills day. A lady, who may have been a new rider, had a one to one session with one of the police motorcyclists in attendance. What an opportunity for her, I'm sure she went away with loads more confidence.

The general Skills Day next month is fully booked or I'd be there again feeding my new addiction!

Janet Short

BIKING NEWS

Riding Tip

Try this to maintain your vision when riding in high contrast light conditions; in low sun, or in bright sun with black shadows; under trees or through tunnels. While still in the brightness, a couple of seconds before entering the dark, close one eye. Then when you're in the dark, open it. Vision restored.

Steve Schlemmer

KIT REPORTS

Head-Up Display

Disclaimer: I am not at all a technology geek. If it was for me I could still be with a Nokia 3310 to call and text. Let's be clear.

However sometimes technology can help our daily lives. And my (quasi) daily life involves being on a motorbike. This is a piece on augmented reality, in particular HUD, head-up displays. It is not new in aviation (ask Roger Moffatt for more...) and it is not new anymore in automotive (at the 'prancing horse' HQ we were already planning for in 2005).

Many attempts have taken place in the motorcycle industry in the last few years, until more recently with a concept launched by BMW (that can rely on its investments in the car-segment). Now we actually have a proper product that is being commercialised. Launched a few months ago, this product is called Nuviz - <https://uk.ridenuviz.com/> - Credentials? The company started as a bunch of technologists in 2013 but now is partnering with Pierer Industrie AG (for the record, they own KTM and WP...).



How does it work? The device attaches to most helmets using a high-strength adhesive pad, similar to the adhesive pads used by most action sports cameras. It has

a little screen that projects the info in the right-hand corner of your helmet. The device has also an integrated action camera and an interphone. You can control what type of info you want to see in your visor via a little controller with few buttons that you can mount on the handlebar (not bigger than the Oxford heated grips device).

What can you do with it? See your sat nav route / speed limits / take pics / videos on the go / key odometer info / listen to the music / managing telephone calls

What do I like about it? At £615 you have many devices in 1 and if you sum up the cost of the individual devices you will exceed Nuviz's price (Sat Nav, Intercomm, Go-Pro, etc..). It looks very very easy to control. You control the Sat Nav from the app and you move amongst all the other info at a touch of button on the handlebar, with a minimum distraction for the rider.

What don't I like about it? I don't know actually. I question why someone wants to listen to the music or answering calls whilst riding, but we are all different. Maybe I would like to see a close competitor product to get a feeling.

What you think about is what interests me the most. I like simplicity and this device tells me it is really simple and you don't have to have millions of gadgets to fiddle with (before and during the ride). With KTM behind this and BMW pushing for this



type of technologies (did you see the new 'odometer'/mini ipad on the GS?) I think we will see more of these type of technologies in the next couple of years. **Mik Simonetti**

CyclePump Compressor

Jane and I were riding North towards Ashton on the A49 in Herefordshire when I heard the crack as the front tyre ran over something and squirted it out. Then the doof-doof-doof-doof of something big, on, or in, the rear tyre. When riding, it's a lottery whether you see debris at all, let alone in time to react. At speed, a small object is discernible for only a fraction of a second. Cars and trucks usually clear the parallel wheel tracks in each lane but when you change position from one side of your lane to the other, it's worth considering a quick glance at the middle of the lane where you're going to cross it. If you happen to be scanning elsewhere in your observations, you may miss gravel or debris. I've seen and avoided a trailer jockey wheel complete with handle; I've seen and avoided, in heavy rain, a sliding spare wheel dropped by the car in front; I've often seen small objects if the contrast was good. However, at 60 mph I missed seeing this grey-on-grey hazard and ran straight over it.

Dale's Bike-Seal kept the tyre inflated, avoiding loss of control as I slowed down and pulled safely off the road. An 8mm dia, 50mm long bolt, had been forced radially into the tyre, slap bang in the middle of the tread, with its hexagon head protruding. This was not something I could leave in the

tyre. What a way to start a 10 day tour of the West Coast of Scotland. When I pulled out the bolt, I wasn't quick enough to rotate the wheel so that the sealant covered the hole, and I lost some air. I decided to plug the hole and that lost some more. I used my "Stop and Go, Pocket Tire Plugger!" repair kit which injects an 8mm dia plug with a 15mm mushroom head down a 4mm dia applicator into the tyre. By now the tyre had only 10psi – I needed 42psi.

For years I have carried a large diameter hand pump. I knew it would achieve the pressure as I've used it to pump bicycle tyres to 65psi, but I've never pumped the volume of air that a motorcycle tyre requires. I've always had sealant in my tyres and my punctures have self-sealed and gone unnoticed, or stayed up long enough to reach a garage, or gone

down slowly at home. But squatting at ground level, at the roadside, in biking gear and in the hands of a 70 year old, the pump was useless. After 100 strokes I had 12 psi and was exhausted. Now what?

At this point, help arrived in the form of Chris on his GS; a former police motorcycle rider, on his first day of retirement, looking forward to a long expedition with mates to the Balkans and Greece. His kit included a 12 volt air compressor. Two minutes saw the tyre up to pressure.

Chris's compressor was a CyclePump made by www.bestrestproducts.com, available in UK from www.metalmule.com. It's the size of a thick paperback book and is unashamedly rugged and more



expensive than others on offer. The Finance Director sitting behind me immediately approved a purchase. I ordered on-line while in Scotland.

The tyre stayed up for the rest of the 1500 mile trip and the repair lasted the following few hundred miles till the tyres needed replac-

ing.

My CyclePump was delivered when we arrived home. I may never use it, but the comfort of having it will be priceless. With Bike-Seal, "Stop and Go" and CyclePump I am now demonstrably well-equipped.

Steve Schlemmer

Riding Kit for All Seasons

What to wear while riding: a personal view

What we choose to wear while riding is a very personal decision. Here are my thoughts and solutions; I hope they'll be of interest.

General

Your motorcycle helmet, clothing, gloves and boots must keep you safe, with high visibility, impact protection, joint support and abrasion resistance. In addition they must keep you comfortable. Bike gear has to ensure you are: warm when it's cold; cool when it's hot; dry when it's wet.

Commuting

For many years I commuted into the centre of Plymouth by motorcycle. I worked in an office and needed to be smartly dressed. However, if I was going in by bike then safety and comfort on the bike was paramount, and if the ride in was wet I had to be sure to stay dry.

I felt there were two alternatives: a one-piece, impact- and abrasion-resistant oversuit that was available at the time, with full work clothes underneath; or wear bike gear and change clothes on arrival at work. Although the oversuit would not require me to change on arrival I was not confident that a work suit or jacket and trousers would remain presentable underneath. Also an oversuit was an added expense with a single use and would need replacing in one piece. On the other hand, wearing bike gear, although I'd need to change at work, meant I wouldn't need to buy any new gear, I'd be safe and comfortable on the bike, could mix and match jacket and trousers depending on the weather and replace jacket and trou-

sers separately.

So, I kept a smart jacket at work, rode into town wearing my bike gear and took a pair of shoes and trousers to change into on arrival.

Business

Based in Plymouth, I also had to travel all over the West Country to various appointments and meetings. Whenever possible I went by bike. This was slightly different from commuting as it was usually impracticable to change clothes. So I bought some black, armoured, denim jeans and a pair of more formal, city motorcycle boots that looked like Chelsea boots. When I removed my riding jacket to reveal my shirt and tie, particularly sitting in meetings, no one would know I had ridden. And at the end of the day, maybe two hours from home, instead of a tiresome car journey, I had a lovely evening ride, possibly extended to take in the moors or the coast.

Touring and everything else

Jane and I started touring as soon as I passed my test. For the first few years we had one outfit each; black, Cordura and Gore-Tex jackets and trousers, and heavy, tall,

all season touring boots. We never wore the detachable, quilted linings, preferring to layer up with a sweater that could also be worn off the bike. For UK and Northern Europe these outfits were initially fine but soon showed up three, key disadvantages. Firstly, while keeping us warm when it was cold, we found it difficult to be cool enough when it was hot. Secondly, although the Gore-tex linings kept us dry inside, after heavy rain the outer, shower-proof materials soaked up a lot of water which chilled us when riding in the cold and poured off in pools when we stopped for drinks or lunch. Finally, we liked to have time off the bike during tours and do some light walking; carrying additional walking boots proved to be a nuisance.

We overcame these disadvantages as follows. To be cooler



in hot conditions we bought a summer outfit of brown leather jackets and blue denim, armoured jeans, a combination that significantly reduces solar loading. We carried thin, waterproof jackets and over-trousers which kept the water completely off our clothes and could be simply shaken dry. And we rode in waterproof, walking boots which were high enough to give ankle protection.

Jane rides mostly in summer and now manages all year with one, well-vented, leather jacket and suitable layers underneath. I now have both a warmer, leather jacket for winter and a well-vented, lighter-coloured, leather jacket for summer.

The colour, shape and size of my bike make it quite noticeable. However, in poor visibility I will wear my waterproof jacket which is yellow with reflective panels.

Helmet

Our first helmets were BMW System 3. With their flip-up chin guards they give a close fit round the neck, which has warmth and noise-reduction benefits. I always wear a washable balaclava-style liner, it



keeps the helmet fresh, can be washed every day in really hot conditions and longer, winter versions can help seal your neck. Jane wears a tubular buff to the same effect. When it's chilly I wear a bandana to keep my neck warm. I prefer this to a tubular buff as I can remove a bandana underway if it warms up. The helmets have good air vents and removable neck pieces for warm weather. White helmets stand out best in traffic.

After a few years we decided to have Bluetooth intercom. We tried two different versions before finding a fully reliable, waterproof version made by Scala Rider. (We were given a full refund on the two other makes that failed when wet.) We have since changed to units by Interphone which are compatible with the sliders for the inner sun visors on our latest System 6 helmets.

Jacket

I understand that you can now buy textile jackets and trousers where the waterproof, breathable layer is laminated or otherwise combined with the outermost layer so that the jackets don't soak up water. I've not tried these so can't comment. Even if they worked perfectly, I'd personally still prefer separate waterproofs. Why wear a waterproof layer if it's not raining? Only one ride in nine is wet.

When you buy a jacket, consider buying it one size larger than best fit. This way you can accommodate extra layers when it's cold and you have more air-circulation space inside for when it's hot. Whatever you ride, you can experiment to find ways to have air moving through your jacket when the weather's hot.

As well as generous cooling vents in arms and chest, make sure you can open the cuffs to allow air flow up your sleeves. My first leather jacket, now my winter jacket, has elasticated cuffs. I made some cuff vents from plastic electric cable ducting which I could tuck into the cuffs when it was hot to allow air in. You can now buy purpose-made vents (see www.ventz-range.com). Mine worked fine but



the Ventz product looks to have a much larger area for better flow.

The minimum I wear under my summer jacket is a thin, long-sleeved, shirt of technical fabric, from an outdoors shop (I like Rohan). The shirt sleeves keep the jacket sleeves fresh and help evaporative cooling. The shirt needs to be a snug fit to help wick away moisture. These shirts also dry overnight after washing.

The maximum I wear under my winter jacket is a thermal vest, warm long sleeved shirt, heated waistcoat and thermal mid-layer (outdoors shop again). If that's not enough I put on my waterproof. These layers keep me warm down to zero centigrade although I try not to ride in less than three degrees.

Heated clothing

I bought a heated waistcoat my first winter riding; I had it for 19

years before the element finally failed. If you don't have one, you can't know what you're missing. Jane has a heated jacket with heated sleeves as well. We always carry them. They can be a useful extra layer when they're not switched on. They are a real comfort even in summer; early in the morning in the mountains; in the wet to combat evaporative heat loss; or even late on a summer's evening after a hot day.

When your body temperature reduces, blood to your extremities is reduced. The heated layer helps keep up your core temperature. It's like magic; you switch on the heating and your hands and feet warm up.

Gloves

I always carry three types of gloves: thick, insulated, waterproof, winter gloves; thinner, waterproof, summer gloves; thin, pale-coloured summer gloves. I tend to buy new ones before the



previous pair are worn out and I carry the old pairs – very useful if you get wet on a long journey to have a dry pair of gloves to put on – I currently have five pairs in use.

I can't overstate the benefit of pale-coloured gloves in hot and sunny conditions. You don't need to spend a lot, some suppliers carry specific biking gloves but heavy-duty, tan gloves for work, gardening or horse-riding will do. One colleague who rode Route 66 in blistering heat bought a pair of pale, riggers' gloves after day-one and rode next morning with one black glove and one tan glove; he said the difference was amazing.

Trousers

My winter, leather trousers tuck into my tall, winter boots – no draughts. They are loose enough to take thermal long-johns underneath. My summer, armoured, blue denim jeans allow air to flow round my ankles. This ankle cooling, with the flow up my sleeves past my wrists and the flow through the helmet, are three key ways to keep cool.

Boots

My first boots were inexpensive, tall and black. I quickly realised they were suitable only for winter, and when I could, I replaced them with some ALT-BERG Clubman, waterproof boots which I still have and have been a great investment.

For summer, I first bought some inexpensive, yellow, work boots which were great at temperature control but not very comfortable for walking. So I bought some ALT-BERG motorcycle desert boots (now discontin-



ued) which were excellent at the job in some very hot trips, but again not so comfortable for walking. For touring trips, we started wearing our walking boots to ride in, and this solution has worked well for many years. Now that we are walking less far, instead of 'walking boots you can ride in', I've bought some TCX Hero waterproof boots that have been well reviewed as 'riding boots you can walk in'. I can thoroughly recommend both my pairs of boots.

If your boots have laces, use up the spare length by a turn or more round your ankle, tie small bows and double them. I have had laces come undone and stream out behind around the rear wheel and suspension, fortunately without catching in anything. I've also caught a loop of lace on the foot peg when putting my foot down, but was quick enough to free it and put my foot down safely, otherwise I'd have been on the floor.

Waterproofs

I didn't start riding when my contemporaries did in the early sixties. Then, there was little dedicated motorcycle clothing available, and if you rode a bike by necessity, you probably couldn't afford special kit anyway. Friends told of long, cross-country journeys in winter in the wet with their donkey jacket on backwards or a bicycle cape under their ex-army combat jacket.

When I started riding, I expected to be warm and dry at all times.

I still remember my first really wet trip. It was on a dealer outing to North Devon, in October, into the teeth of a North-Westerly, gale-driven rain-storm. After two hours, when we arrived at the pub and undressed, I was annoyed to find a half-inch of my shirt collar was damp. The veterans who'd started riding in the 50's and earlier, revealed more and more damp and wet, in one case from his neck down to his lap. They didn't seem bothered at all. The only rider completely dry was the member of dealer staff who had raided the clothing department and wore a fully waterproof textile suit with a set of waterproof jacket and trousers over and then a one-piece, waterproof, breathable suit on top of all that. I'd thought he'd been eating too many pies.

A few years after I started riding, a non-rider asked me, 'Don't you get wet a lot?' I didn't know. So I started noting down in my riding log whether the ride was wet. In the fifteen years 'since records began' it averages at only one wet ride in nine (11%). That includes years of commuting, business trips, observing, training and touring, doing over 10,000 miles a year, when the weather rarely was a factor in deciding to ride. Also, I was based near Plymouth which is quite wet when compared with other places. Now I'm retired, and I sometimes choose my weather, and I ride only 6,000 miles a year there will be fewer wet rides.

For all those dry rides I prefer to wear my winter or summer outfit as appropriate. We've sometimes worn waterproofs for extra warmth in spring and autumn, and in changeable weather on motorways we'll wear them as a precaution. Otherwise we're happy to stop and put them on only when it rains. In summer, if it looks like a really wet day and there's high speed riding I have a pair of walking gaiters that I can put on over my boot tops and under my waterproof trousers.

Conclusion

For safety and comfort, once we set off on a ride, we should not be thinking about what we're wearing. If conditions change, stop and make adjustments. Just as we reflect on our riding so we should reflect on our clothing, and improve our choices where necessary. Build up a collection, especially of accessories, that works for you; control your temperature and stay dry.

Steve Schlemmer

Well Done to all the new Local Observers!

Congratulations to the Local Observer Class of 2017 - Paul Dyer, Dave Bates, Paul Goulder, Dave Lefeber, Roger Moffat, Bob Muckett, Adam Evans and Greg Souster. With thanks for all their hard work, as well as that of the training team who have helped them on their way.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SAM Committee Meeting

Mon. 4th Sept. 2017
19:30 @ The Old Pound,
Wearne, nr. Langport TA10 0QJ

SAM Green Ride

"September Evening Ride"
Wed. 20th Sept. 2017
18:30 @ TBC
Led by Tom Moore

SAM Green Ride

"Autumn Uprising"
Sun. 1st Oct. 2017
09:30 @ Podimore Services
Led by Graham Tulloch

SAM Green Ride

"Eli's at Dusk"
Wed. 11th Oct. 2017
18:30 @ Cartgate Services
Led by Lisa Parsons

SAM Red Ride

"Breakfast by the Lake"
Sun. 22nd Oct. 2017
09:00 @ Podimore Services
Led by Rick Chubb

SAM Amber Ride

"Woody Bay Express"
Sun. 17th. Sept. 2017
09:00 @ Cross Keys Inn, nr Norton Fitzwarren

SAM Amber Ride

"Wilts Wander"
Sun. 24th Sept. 2017
09:30 @ Podimore Services
Led by Hugh Beamish

SAM Red Ride

Sun. 8th. Oct. 2017
08:30 @ Ilminster Little Chef &
09:00 @ M5 J27 Services
Led by Matt Towill

SAM Green Ride

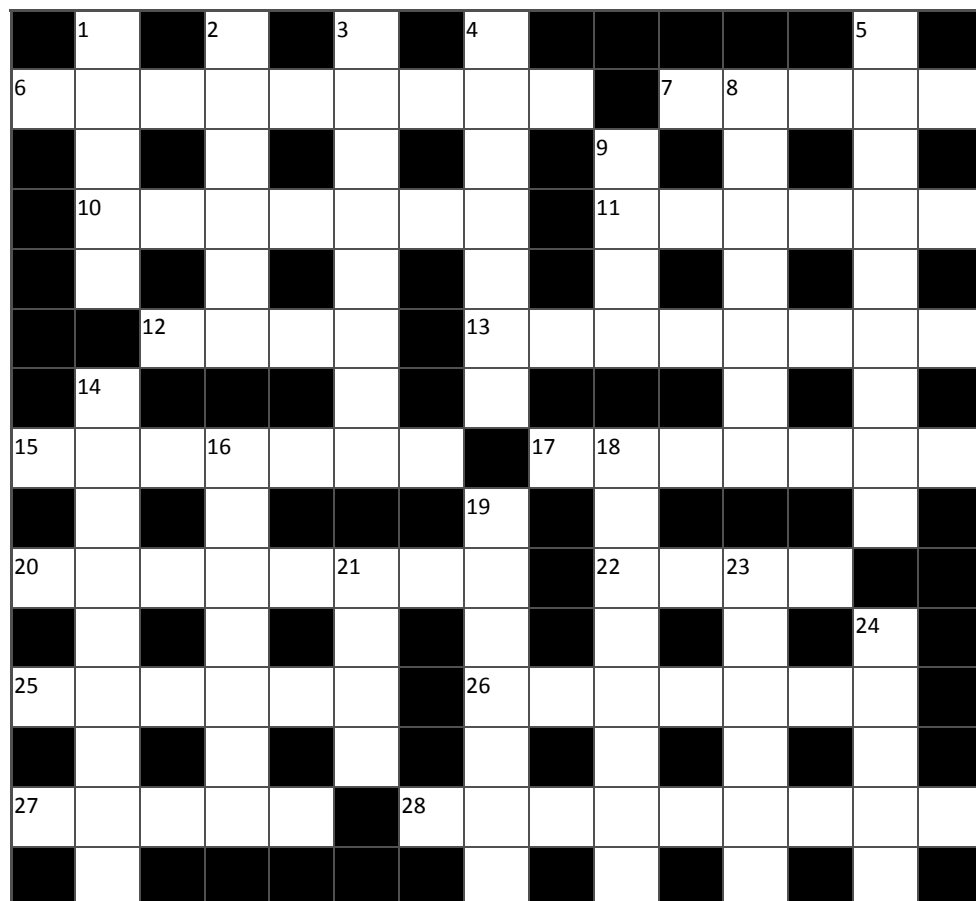
"Cheddargorgeous"
Sun. 15th. Oct. 2017
09:00 @ Podimore Services
Led by Sally Huard

SAM Amber Ride

"I Have No Clue!"
Sun. 29th Oct. 2017
09:00 @ Podimore Services
Led by Ben Everard

Please check on Events List or Website for up to date information before Event.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 6** Unknown halogen, a novel nut shape (9)
7 Race pace (5)
10 A right competitive entry (7)
11 Clue with time for European church control (6)
12 Clothes found in a box (4)
13 Put back in? No, it is optional (8)
15 Italian model? My! French good woman and queen (7)
17 Having fun, quietly producing eggs (7)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

Across (cont.)

20 Lent like SAM members (8)

22 South African iron strongbox (4)

25 The Internal Revenue Service stands for something that belongs to them (6)

26 Fringe benefits from short one surrounded by second rate American bridge players (7)

27 The system is initially found in the membership's garages (1,1,1,1,1)

28 Dear slept drunk, very drunk (9)

Down

1 Support by a learner is lawful (5)

2 Fisher hears bear (6)

3 Move towards cheat on edge (8)

4 Young lady cuts moves quickly (7)

5 Repeating again, rebuilding Indian house in key (9)

8 Chickens reportedly cheap (7)

9 Book turns (4)

14 Court District of Columbia joints for bio-mass fuel (9)

16 Paring seabird drinks French wine (7)

18 Abundance of boozier on headland (8)

19 Eccentric? Even now dads dance (7)

21 Throw Crusoe a way off (4)

23 One who doesn't eat achieves first Olympic aim (6)

24 Remains of trees (5)

Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

RIDE REPORTS

Mad Dogs & Englishmen

I have always held the opinion that the best way to get away from it all during a bank holiday is to stay at home. The mayhem on the roads etc led me to the description for my ride, Mad Dogs and Englishmen, as applies to the midday sun.

The weather on 27th August was excellent and I was a little shocked to see 24 bikes turning up at Kelways and therefore requiring a split of the group into two. Wayne Timbrell very kindly offered to lead the second group with Paul Dyer as Tail End Charlie.

The route was intended to keep off the main roads as much as possible so as not to encounter Bank Holiday day trippers and the like. We left Kelways through as many back roads as possible to Haselbury Pluncknett and on to Mosterton, but to my surprise and annoyance the road was closed leading under the bridge to the Misterton cross roads (only checked two days before and no prior warning!) The diversion included some green lanes, I am sure John Hooper would have approved as these are more of a main road to him, judging by his ride routes. Onward to Beaminster and again hitting the 'B' roads including some beautiful scenery and views into the little village of Evershot and the subsequent crossing of the A37 towards Batcombe, eventually joining the A352 at Lyons Gate and onwards to Sherborne. This is the point where poor Wayne had to think on his feet due to the congestion in



Sherborne which only minutes earlier did not present itself for my lead group. Anyway all well that ends well and the short hop via Marston Magna and Podimore ended back at the Potting Shed for a well-deserved bacon bap and cuppa, although Wayne must have needed slightly more sustenance, as he tucked into a hearty breakfast which he said “did not touch the sides!”

I think everyone enjoyed the ride despite the diversions and some entertainment when a tractor towing a trailer was very skilfully reversed to allow the group to pass. **Andy Spiers**

Dorset Dogleg

The first Sunday in September's usual Green ride was greeted with miserable weather, and John Humphries – leading his first ride – must have thought he would be riding it on his own. But true to SAM tradition, 7 keen riders (plus 1 pillion) turned up for a wet trip to the South Coast, and to make sure John's efforts in creating an interesting and enjoyable route were rewarded. The route from Podimore started with a familiar route through Marston Magna and Sherborne, but then the title of the ride came into operation by tracking through Kings Stag, Puddletown and Warmwell before heading West, skirting the top of Weymouth and through Abbotsbury before the obligatory breakfast stop at the Kabin Café,

Eype, just outside Bridport. Having left pools of water under our chairs from dripping waterproofs, Rick, Barrie & Carol headed for home separately, the rain having eased off slightly, whilst the rest of us took the direct route home via Beaminster (where John had to continue the family tradition of beeping his horn through the Tunnel!) and North Perrott. Great to see Guy Viney out on his first SAM ride for this event, which saw all riders capably handle the tricky conditions – great preparation for winter conditions! Well done, John, an enjoyable and well-planned ride along some new roads for many of us. Hopefully you'll offer us some more rides like that in next year's events calendar! **Graham Tulloch**

BIKE REPORTS

MASH 400



While attending the recent Triumph Owners MCC rally at the Red House in Yeovil I noticed that Bransons had a new season launch on. Eschewing the mass of Kawasakis on offer the bikes that caught my eye were the Sym and Mash ranges. One short chat later and I was out around the lanes around Yeovil aboard the bike pictured left.

A downsized XBR500 (down to 400cc) motor fitted with modern fuel injection slotted into a retro looking scrambler bike. First impressions were the switch gear were a little dated (possibly in keeping) and cheap in feel, but this is a £3995 motorcycle at end of the day.

Riding it – bit of a revelation. Very comfortable. You could do many miles on this with no discomfort, albeit not at great pace. More than adequate power and performance in town and back roads but at anything much above 75 mph (on a private road guv'nor) it did run out of puff, but that's not the point of a bike like this. The scrambler-look tyres gripped adequately for the performance of the bike, and handling and braking were perfectly acceptable.

As a second bike, commuter or whatever, I'd say it's good value and I have to say I did return it to Bransons with a smile on my face as it was fun to ride.

Matt James

Honda NC750X The story so far

First a reminder of how I decided on the Honda. I wanted a basic, economical, adventure style (for comfort), not too tall, long lasting (10 years plus), simple to maintain at home, and easy for my pillion, Maggie, to get on/off.

After a test ride and joining the NC forum I checked out the local dealers and eventually realised that as Bransons were offering new ones for £6,199 I would have a brand new one (in all my years of biking I have had only 6 new bikes out of over 60 bikes owned). Bransons were happy to keep the bike until March, and I collected it on the 14th after returning from a holiday. Even with such basic specs, it has an instrument panel that can be set to different colours, I have set it to blue and left it. I am sure I just could not be bothered with all the variables on many bikes these days.

So, how has it gone so far? 4,530 miles on the clock in 4 months including our trip to Scotland and many SAM rides has confirmed my initial impressions that the bike is comfortable and suits my criteria for future years. On a couple of 300 mile days I did get a bit of seat ache, but no more than on anything else, and this is a personal thing often influenced by body shape, cloth-

ing and posture when riding. Honda claim 83mpg. I did not expect to get this as most manufacturer's claims are rarely matched, but to date I have seen this figure on several fills of the smallish tank (14.5 litres) so a range of over 200 miles is possible. The instruments show an average fuel consumption and whilst enjoying the views of the north Scottish coast it was gradually creeping up to 96mpg, before we got onto more open roads and opened the throttles again. Although it has an "X" and slightly taller suspension, it's not tall, and at 5ft. 8in. is just about right for my confidence on dodgy car parks etc. The standard Bridgestone Battle Wing tyres



have given no issues but don't look like lasting more than 6,000 miles. Problems? One major fault lies with the L.E.D. headlights, which although bright are sadly lacking when leant over in a corner, leaving me guessing where the road goes.

Although I am not into customising, I like to add bits to improve my enjoyment of biking, to this end I wanted some heated grips, after chatting to others in SAM I decided to stick with Oxford and waited for the summer sales and bought their Adventure style grips for £47. I fitted a Scottoiler, which incidentally only used half the oil in the standard size reservoir on our 1,900 mile trip to Scotland. I have also fitted a fender extender and a flap to protect the rear shock. I bought some Givi side rails and have added my Shad top box for additional luggage space, although the space where the fuel tank usually sits is big enough for waterproofs and any other day to day bits and pieces.

The most asked question I get is about the performance, as most of the press gave very low opinions of this. All I can say is this, it does not feel "fast" but seems to go quickly, a bit like a diesel car, more relaxed and less effort for the same result, I keep the revs above 3000 and the gearing is so high I am always one gear lower than on other bikes for the same situation.

As for the other things above, time will tell.

Rick Chubb

Harley Davidson Street Rod 750

Having previously tried out and been impressed by the American company's Street 750 but not quite feeling ready for its relaxed riding style, when I received an email from Riders asking if I wanted to demo the new Street Rod (pictured below) with its more aggressive stance I thought why not?

My initial thoughts on seeing it were how similar it looks to the old XR1200 they used to market. The demo bike had Vance & Hines slip-ons which even on tick over gave the engine a nice burble sound. Riders test rider took me on a suitably spirited ride on the roads near their Bristol dealership giving me a nice mix of dual carriageway and back roads to get a

good feel for the bike. At no point did the bike feel unsettled through the bends and the v-twin motor punched out of them well enough to put a smile on the face.

Result – the least Harley-like Harley I have ever ridden and I've ridden a fair

few of the range now. The engine pulls strongly with some nice pops and bangs on the over runs. Brakes are on a par with any modern road bike, as is the handling – which is most un-Harley like! In fact, if you took the badges off and let most riders loose on it they almost certainly wouldn't think it was a Harley ... which is where I'm struggling with this bike. I understand they're marketing it to draw in younger riders, but I think the younger riders who've bought into HD will go the route they always have, probably starting with a Sportster and upgrading. Young riders who want the sort of ride and performance this bike can offer wouldn't even consider a Harley, instead going for one of the similar spec'd Japa-



nese or European bikes. This is a shame as it's a cracking bike that I fear will go the way of all of Harley's attempts to be sporting, the XR1200, Buell's and to a lesser extent the V-Rod – it won't be accepted by purists or considered by "outsiders" to the brand.

It's not perfect. I found the peg position a little odd and the controls on the cheap side BUT this is only a £7000 bike at the end of the day and none of these things couldn't be resolved, and I'm sure the company provide a million accessories for it.

I think those that ride it will be impressed and I hope it succeeds ... but it's not enough for me to trade in my Triumph t-shirts yet.

Matt James

KTM 1050

KTM have been making the Adventure for many years; first as a 950 with carburettor fuelling and then the 990 with a less than perfect fuel injection system.

The 1190 and now 1290 Adventure moved the whole thing forward massively, and with modern electronic management, the fuelling is spot on. Barring a few early problems to sort, it is now a desirable and capable true Adventure motorcycle.

Why then, did I buy a 1050 Adventure that is described as the entry level bike? I admit to being vain when it comes to motorcycles, and for me the machine has to look good to my eyes. I like the 1050's conservative looks, more black than loud KTM orange, and plenty of bits to polish and make shiny.

I have ridden the 950 and 990 in the past but they never really did it for me. Having twice test ridden the 1050 I liked it immediately, and at the third attempt with AMS KTM in Tewksbury a deal was done.

It is 95 bhp which I have found to be more than adequate for the type of riding I do. But it's not so much the power, it's the way its delivered from that big V twin with dual plug ignition (light a match and then the bonfire) and Keihin engine management that provides seamless instant power with no flat spots or hiccups. Fuel economy is about 50mpg with a tank range of around 200 miles before low fuel warning time.

The dash has all the usual info we have come to expect from today's bikes, all easily scrolled through from the left hand handlebar control. Suspension is by White Power with the front being unadjustable and the rear with the usual preload and rebound adjustments, which I found gives the best results for me if it's set a little stiffer than the recommended solo settings. I just love the KTM orange rear shock spring. This bike handles beautifully and gives



real confidence in its ability to respond precisely to rider inputs and never feels near its limits. Tyres are Metzeler Tourance Next: 19inch front with a 110 section, and 17 inch rear with a 150 section which adds to its flickability.

Brakes are by Brembo with the front being four piston callipers that are radially mounted with ABS and in conjunction with the Tourance Next tyres more than capable of keeping the bike's 220kg weight under control.

By now you may be thinking that this machine is perfect, so here are the not perfect bits: heat from the engine is not a problem whilst the bike is moving on the open road, but on a warm UK day in slow town traffic the heat coming up from the engine is uncomfortable on the rider's thighs, despite the huge curved radiator trying to keep the engine at the correct temperature.

The standard seat is poor and uncomfortable, after as little as half an hour. This is cured by fitting the KTM comfort seat at £200 plus, why do manufacturers do this?

The machine has a 2 year warranty. I have had the front brake discs replaced as the original ones were warped and gave juddery braking

which was also snatchy at slow speeds. The new discs cured this fault.

The fuel gauge was erratic and remained showing full for the whole of Rob's Welsh Trip this year. Again this has been replaced under warranty.

The dash also suffered from condensation and was replaced; the replacement was preset to the correct mileage.

I have not had satisfactory service from some west country KTM dealerships, with the exception of JD Racing in Saltash, who I have found to be courteous and efficient. They have dealt with my servicing and warranty issues. Saltash is 70 miles away but as I have family nearby this is not an issue. JD Racing also offered me (without my having to ask) a choice of their demonstrators whilst my machine was being attended to. I tried the 2017 KTM 1090 which replaces my now discontinued 1050. It now has 125 hp from the same 1050cc displacement motor with the necessary mods to produce the extra power and new graphics. A nice machine but not nice enough to tempt me away from my 1050 at present.

Matt Towill

MEMBER'S TRIPS

On & Off Road in Wales

Back in the spring, I took delivery of a new Kawasaki Ninja 650 KRT. A few weeks later it was run in, first service done and ready to enjoy a few days away in Wales - on and off road.

We met up with the DragonMoto group at the Shropshire Borders. We then took a route via the Severn valley and over the Wenlock Edge crossing into Wales, then west along the banks of the Teme River, lunch in the Elan Valley, some more splendid roads before

arriving at our hotel overlooking Lake Vyrnwy. (Note to self – upgrade to lakeview room next time!)

The following day we spent off-road at Mick Extance Experience in the heart of the Tenat Valley. The changing area had our full kit laid out ready with our names – shirt, trousers, boots, gloves, armour, helmet. Most of the group rode 250 Hondas, a 125 motocross bike for me – the only one I could touch the ground on!





We rode through forest tracks and over mountain tops. Every corner and peak provided another stunning view.

It was a first time off-roading for most of us, but with Mick and his team to guide us, we all rode a variety of trails and tracks through 1500 acres of wonderful Welsh countryside. The best bit for me was the motocross track, with bumps and dips full of muddy water. Try as I might, I didn't manage to soak the photographer, just filled my boots with the muddy water instead.

Mick joined us for dinner the same evening and gave a presentation on his seven years of experience as Britain's most successful rider in the Dakar Rally. Dedication and focus doesn't cover it!

The final day we rode through the Snowdonia National Park. A beautiful area, in perfect weather, clear roads and no potholes! Morning coffee in the Vale of Ffestiniog. We continue through the foothills of Snowdon over the Pass of Llanberis with a lunch stop near The Horseshoe Pass before saying farewell to the group on the outskirts of Oswestry.

A marvellous trip from start to finish. Great roads, guides, group and weather. DragonMoto run 2 or 3 off-road weekends each year so might do it all again next year!

Janet Short

MEMBER'S TRIPS

Not Just the NC500

This was to be only my second trip to Scotland, as unlike some of our members I find the distance north a daunting thought, but with Graham being a native and doing all the arrangements (big thanks Graham), and planned stops on-route I was excited to go again. Day one saw us meeting at M5 Sedgemoor services, where the four of us (Graham, Mark, Matt and I) then headed north for the old Severn Bridge to follow the A49 etc. towards Kendal for our first night at the Premier Lodge. Day two found us heading for Scotland and as we crossed the

border I gave a small cheer, the roads now being far quieter than down south. We rode through Moffat and Peebles to Edinburgh, where Graham gave us a tour and we rode the bikes up towards Arthur's Seat overlooking the city. After "checking in" to our lodgings, we had a wander round and ate at a nearby Italian recommended by Graham.

Day three we took a route through Stirling, Balloch, Loch Lomond and Glencoe, via the obligatory stop at The Green Welly, for our overnight stop at Inverness. We walked into the centre but re-

The City of Edinburgh viewed from Samson's Ribs in Holyrood Park





Mark's Triumph in Glencoe

turned via a very wobbly suspension foot bridge to eat at our hotel.

Day four and the start of our target for the trip, the North Coast 500, a circular tour round the top of Scotland. From Inverness we headed west through Achnasheen & Lochcarron to the

Bealach na Ba pass over to Applecross. Parts of this road are a challenge with steep hairpin bends, a great ride with great views, but a bit damp and hazy this time. Onto Kinlochewe and Ullapool and the Harbour Lights Hotel overlooking the sea.



Looking along the River Ness towards Inverness Castle

Day five was to be a big one (perhaps not for you Iron Butt heros) taking us north to Durness, then east through Tongue and Thurso, following the north coast. When we stopped to admire the views, we had the rare pleasure of hearing the Cuckoo, not often heard in Somerset these days. I also remember exclaiming many "wow's" as we crested a brow or rounded a corner. Just amazing, and we had good weather and clear air so at its best. Much of this road is single track with passing places and although quiet traffic wise, most of the drivers we caught up with would pull over to allow us to pass (there are regular signs requesting this!), so we enjoyed the roads unhindered.

On to John O' Groats and a stop for obligatory photos and a wander

Stunning scenery near Ben More on the NC500



round. Now we headed south through Wick, Golspie and Tain, this was made more interesting by the strong side winds that had us wrestling the bars in places, still great roads though. On to our night's stop at Torquish House just outside Inverness. Quite a place with a house and garden full of antiques including stuffed animals and a suit of armour. Great hosts though and they even drove us into the city for our evening out. Day six and now heading back to Edinburgh via Grantown on Spey, Tomintoul, Cockbridge, Braemar and Blairgowrie, stopping at the Laicht Ski centre and Glenshee en route to see The Falkirk Wheel & The Kelpies.



Rick at John O'Groats

Before getting back to our accommodation we stopped below the Forth Road and Rail bridges, taking in the fantastic engineering, and admiring the soon-to-be-opened Queensferry Crossing (the 2nd road bridge over the Firth of Forth at this point). Stopping in Edinburgh for

two nights gave us a chance to explore Edinburgh on day seven, lots of history including Carlton Hill, Holyrood Palace, the Scottish Par-



The Falkirk Wheel



The 30m high Kelpies, near Falkirk

liament Buildings, the Castle and Princess Street Gardens. Also a rest day from biking, great to refresh ourselves.

Day eight and back towards

England down the wonderful A7, then on to Wales to stop in Welshpool at Tynllwyn Farm, a great place known to many of you and not a bad place for our last night.

Our last day saw us heading for our respective homes.

The original Forth Bridge



This is quite a general and vague account of what was a wonderful tour of the furthest points north on mainland Britain, and some of my memories of the

Edinburgh Castle, the Scottish National Gallery, The Royal Scottish Academy, Princes Street & its Gardens, viewed from the top of the Scott Monument



Devil's Beef Tub, Glen Coe, the Locks at Fort Augustus, and the amazing structures in Falkirk are mixed in with some of the most amazing roads I've ridden. Thanks to Graham, Matt and Mark for the company and faultless riding, for close to 1,900 miles.

Rick Chubb

SLOW RIDING EVENTS 2017



A HUGE THANK YOU TO MARK LIVINGSTONE for further developing his excellent Slow Riding Event for this year, and to all those who helped him in setting up, organising, operating and assisting with the best-attended and most interesting slow riding events ever in SAM. Not sure how you're going to top it for 2018, though, Mark!

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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 IAM RoadSmart or Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists (SAM). Similarly, goods and services offered do not carry a recommendation from IAM RoadSmart or SAM.

The Drop-Off System

This is the preferred SAM method to control group rides. Each ride 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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MEMBERS' REMINDERS!

FREE TASTER RIDES!

If you know anyone who is thinking of undertaking some advanced riding tuition, and who may be interested in a **FREE** taster ride, tell them to get in touch with any **SAM** officer.

EVENT'S CALENDAR

Summer may be almost over, but that doesn't stop **SAM** members organising Group Rides. With 6 Green Rides, 4 Amber Rides & 3 Red rides listed between September and December, there's a ride for everyone. Plus, of course, our Control & Technique events.

SOMERSET MOTO FEST 2017 — Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th September sees Somerset Road Safety's fantastic weekend event at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton. With Slow Riding challenges, demo bikes from a range of dealers, parking challenges (car, of course!), children's play area and a host of exhibitors, this will be an event not to miss. **SAM** will be there, offering Taster Rides and other advanced riding advice. See www.somersetroadsafety.org.