

Winter 2018

# ***FULL CHAT***

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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*Front Cover: David Hedditch enjoying a ride through  
Cheddar Gorge on his MultiStrada*



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## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



A very Happy New Year to everyone in SAM. 'Tis a grey, dreich day as I write this, and although I know in

my head that if I got out on my bike it would be much better than it looks, my heart is saying "Eeugh!" Just think of washing that horrible black kak off the bike afterwards. And he's so clean at the moment. (Did I mention that he has gold wheels?)

Despite all that, we had a great turn out for the "Resolution Shuffle", the first ride of the year, and even some sun (yeah, bit of a shower towards the end, I admit) to cheer us on our way.

It's the time of year to think about what you want to achieve in 2018, and it's very pleasing to see that a number of people have already taken up opportunities to have some mentoring and coaching for their riding skills, some with specific goals, and others just for a general MOT. See later

in the issue for ways in which you might do the same for your riding. Observer training is due to get underway in early February, at the new and larger venue of Lisa and Jez's place in Othery, where there will also be a slight change of cast as I recuperate from further surgery for my locally-recurred breast cancer. As everyone who has trodden this or a similar path can attest, it is a dreary, depressing, inconvenient and annoying one, and I keep holding on to some-



thing Peter said when he faced life with a colostomy after his bowel surgery: "It's a whole lot better than cancer." Thanks to those who have expressed sympathy and concern to me; I am quite relaxed regarding talking about it, and, indeed, not talking about it.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of Full Chat, the deadline for the next one is April 15th 2018.

**Gina Herridge**



## ***CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS***

Listening to local radio recently, a discussion was taking place regarding memorabilia, tickets and so on that people had kept from attending various events over the years, and that got me thinking. Initially I thought that's not me, and then I realized, oh yes, it is!

Here is one such item, my program from the 1970, 500-mile race held at Thruxton which was an annual event back then. It was a race for produc-

tion bikes and was keenly contested by Triumph, Norton and others, as manufacturers were keen to prove their machines' reliability and endurance racing was clearly a good shop window. What makes this one interesting is that as you can see (I hope) entry number 21 was a 19-year-old Barry Sheene, teamed with Dave Croxford competing in the 500cc class.

I have no idea how long they lasted, as Barry was "just another rider" at the time. I note that I have a line through their entry which indicates that they retired.

Dave Croxford was also known as Crash-





Detailed Description of 500 cc Entries (Continued)

21. 1970 KAWASAKI MACH 3 498 cc  
 Entered by S. D. Welch (Read Bros.).  
 First Driver BARRY SHEENE (19)  
 A racing motor cyclist of Westminster.  
 Second Driver DAVE CROXFORD (28)  
 A racing motor cyclist.
22. 1965 NORTON 885S 497 cc  
 Entered by Ian Kennedy Motorcycles.  
 First Driver ROBIN DUFFTY (25)  
 A toolmaker of Windsor.  
 Second Driver DONALD MAY (29)  
 A toolmaker of Farnborough.
23. TRIUMPH T100T DAYTONA 490 cc  
 Entered by E. Beesington

er Croxford so that might be a clue. The Kawasaki H1 would have left the Triumph Daytonas for dead in a straight line, definitely not through the bends though, and then there would have been the additional pit stops for fuel, as the Kawasaki triple was a thirsty beast. For the record, the vic-

tors that year were Peter Williams & Charley Sanby on a 750 Norton. Despite Dave Croxford's nick name he went on to win in 1971 with Percy Taite on a 750 Triumph, and again the following year teamed with Mick Grant, this time on a Norton Commando. Kawasaki got their win the following year, 1974 with Barry Ditchburn and Kork Ballington on a 750 H2 triple... there, every day is a school day!

This will be my last Chairman's Ramble as I am due to vacate the chair in March at the AGM. So, may I take this opportunity to thank you all for making my tenure stress-free. It's been a privilege for me to serve, SAM is a great club with a good number of members quietly working away to the benefit of us all. There is far more to this club than being service providers to the IAM, although that's the glue that binds us together.

Ours is a very sociable club, witness the numbers that turn up for some of the weekend rides and I



Time for Richard to put his feet up!

believe that's the key, we ride bikes because we enjoy it, having fun, as safely as we can make it.

Particularly pleasing is the increase in club membership that's taken place this year. Like all clubs we need new blood to keep us moving forward. Traditionally we have hovered between 100 – 120, our current membership is just short of 160. This I feel can be attributed to a number of things, but two in particular: our increased social media presence, and taster rides.

Part of our social media face shows us having fun and presenting ourselves as motorcyclists having fun, I suspect that some peoples' perceived ideas of Advanced Motorcyclists don't always include the fun element.

Taster rides have allowed motorcyclists to put us to the test first before committing their hard-earned cash to the program, and it works, so huge thanks and well done to those driving and assisting these programs.

Finally, don't forget our AGM on 20<sup>th</sup> March. This year it's being held at High Ham Village Hall. There will be a guest speaker, and food will be available.

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 tests:

- Simon Kidner on 20th November, riding a BMW F800 ST and observed by Mick Hill.
- Kate Hill on 30th December, riding a Triumph Speed Triple 1050R. Kate was observed by Richard Pearse.
- Sarah Mabbott, also on 30th December, riding her Kawasaki 650 Ninja, observed by Rick Stowell.
- Andy Merryfield on 9th December. Andy was riding his BMW GS 1200 and was observed by Andy Spiers.
- Jon Taylor on 17th January. Jon was riding a Triumph Tiger 800 XRT, and was observed by David Bates.
- Paul Butterworth on 18th January, riding his Triumph Explorer and observed by Rick Chubb and Martin Surrey.



**A huge thank you to all observers for your help in assisting these members to achieve such a great set of results.**



### 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.

## ***How Do I Get My Riding Checked?***

At the last committee meeting, discussion was held about the best way to make it easy for each of us to have our riding looked at informally, just for a bit of a health check. It was suggested that the Green rides could provide an opportunity for attendees to ride as a pair with an observer (or even just take the position ahead of one, since the order should remain constant throughout the ride) and have a chat about it afterwards. If you are interested, then mention it to the ride leader before the ride, or if you have already had a word with a favourite observer then just go ahead and ride together. The idea is that peer-to-peer mentoring is a useful way of helping us all to focus attention back onto our riding, and to pick up any less than useful habits we may have unconsciously developed. More a case of maintaining excellence than of fixing serious problems.

**Gina Herridge**



## ***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 8th January 2018 will be emailed to members.



## *Let's Hear It for the Volunteers*

The reason it's so much fun to be part of SAM is because we've always been blessed with members willing to give up some of their precious time for the benefit of all of us. If you are one of those who has contributed time and/or skills and services in the past, a great big thank you from all of us. If not, but you have reached a point in your life where there is a little slack, please consider volunteering to help out with the various SAM events and functions. We need more volunteers to assist with the forthcoming South West Peninsula Spring Rally, and always looking for new members for the Recruitment Committee.



## *AGM & Club Officers*

SAM's AGM will be held on 20th March, at which our esteemed Chair, Richard Pearse, will come to the end of his term. There is also the opportunity to nominate and vote for the other club officer positions, Secretary and Treasurer. Your nominee must agree (!) and needs a proposer and a seconder. The nomination forms are available from the Secretary, Andy Hall, and need to be completed and returned to him by 6th March 2018.

NOTE: You must be a full member of SAM and of the IAM (i.e. have passed your test) to vote at the AGM.

## ***Solution to Autumn 2017 Crossword***

**Across:** 1 Fitter, 2 Kawasaki, 9 Owners, 10 Flathead, 12 Ring, 13 Cafes, 14 Jawa, 17 Supercharger, 20 Motorcyclist, 23 Otto, 24 Jeans, 25 Wear, 28 Threaded, 29 Rotate, 30 Nippiest, 31 Bosses.

**Down:** 1 Footrest, 2 Tinsnips, 3 Euro, 5 Allied Racing, 6 Ante, 7 Arenas, 8 Indian, 11 Tacheometers, 15 Arrow, 16 Wench, 18 Side-cars, 19 Starters, 21 Norton, 22 Stir up, 26 Maxi, 27 Moto.

## ***SAM/Yeovil Freewheelers Synergy***

SAM members (and trio of Magistrates) Callum Bremner, Chris Thomas-Peter and Lindsay Wilson (the handsome one in the background of the picture below!) have a perfect method of getting to know their wider community in the fast lane as riders for Yeovil Free-wheelers Emergency Volunteer Service. Yeovil Freewheelers EVS (The Blood-Bikes) is a registered charity which has been serving the community since 1978. **It is the oldest operational blood-bike group in the UK and celebrates its 40th Anniversary in October this year.**

The group derives no financial support from either national or local Government nor from Yeovil District Hospital. All members are volunteers, receiving no remuneration for their efforts and, in addition, those same volunteers are responsible for raising all of the money for the running costs of three bikes and advertising material (approximately £20,000 pa). The group operates all year round, seven days a week, riding from 7pm to 7am on weekdays and provides 24hr cover all weekend, often in very challenging weather conditions. A very con-



servative estimate of the financial savings the group provides to Yeovil Hospital would be £85,000 pa.

Although named Yeovil Freewheelers, the group provides a service across a wide area between Bath, Bristol, Taunton, Exeter, Dorchester, Shaftesbury, Wincanton and Shepton Mallet, with regular runs to an analysis laboratory in Oxford and more distant destinations when required. Routine and emergency runs include the delivery of blood/tissue samples, medication, breast milk, medical documents, CT

scans and small pieces of medical equipment. The runs are to hospitals, hospices, nursing homes and private addresses which are often in isolated areas.

To maintain the trust and financial support of the community, a high standard of conduct is demanded of riders and they are all required to be Advanced Riders, either IAM/ROSPA qualified or be in training to achieve that standard. SAM, and particularly Nick Griffin, have been absolutely vital to achieving that goal. Nick revolutionised training policy, raised standards and instituted regular assessments. In so doing he both significantly raised levels of personal skill and fireproofed members of the Committee from what would be serious consequences of any failure to protect the safety of volunteers. Several riders are now also SAM Observers. Yeovil Freewheelers are all aware of the positive influence that SAM and Nick have had and hope that this short article will be accepted as a "Big Thank You!"

The most recent recognition of the quality of the service Yeovil Freewheelers provide was at the award ceremony in London in April 2017 of the "Good Morning Britain TV Health Star Awards". Yeovil Freewheelers were honoured to receive the Winners Award in the Team Category. The Group sees this as validation of their efforts over what will be 40 years service to the community by October 2018.



**Lindsay Wilson**

## BIKING NEWS

### *Highway Code Breakthrough*

Dave Parker has sent us this extract from the Kent Advanced Motorcyclist Group's Magazine:

#### **Time to React? Perhaps not.**

Do you know what your reaction time is? I bet you don't. Do you even care what your reaction time is? No, of course you don't, and that being the case you won't be losing any sleep over the headline news that the Highway Code has, for decades apparently, been building the wrong reaction times into its braking distance figures. However, unlike sensible, calm, cool-headed us, some people in the media have been getting in a bit of a fizz about this: the Highway Code is wrong! How can this be? Shock! Horror! We have been misled. What can save us from certain crashes now? It is the end of the world....and so on.

Apparently the Transport Research Laboratory has decided that it takes us 1.5 seconds to see a hazard and react to it, whereas the Highway Code's braking figures are based on a reaction time of only 0.67 seconds. (Stop yawning at the back there, and pay attention.) Look, if the Highway Code's notion of braking distance was the only thing that had prevented us from slamming into the back of every car in front of us every time they braked, we'd all have been dead years ago.

The fact that the Highway Code has for years been bleating about stopping distances based on the 'wrong' data, shows what a load of cobblers it all is. And who is to say that this new 1.5 seconds reaction time is 'right'? How do we know that some other smartarse won't come along next week and double it or halve it? The fact is that we ride using our judgement about what is a 'safe' distance to leave between us and the car/lorry/bus/horse in front, and we know what that distance looks like and what it 'feels' like even if we can't say exactly how many metres it is. In any case it is an enormously variable distance which you can't learn by rote. It is necessarily born of experience, and I know that's a problem for learners, but it is, nonetheless, a fact. The 'braking distance' we allow ourselves is based on our assessment of the road condition, the vehicle we are following, the vehicle that we are in or on and the traffic density and all the other zillion bits of qualitative information which we continuously process as we ride or drive along. Moreover, that distance, like it or not, is a huge compromise between what is completely 'safe' – which, let's say, is infinity – and what's practicable given that there are a few million other people on the roads too.

### *Getting a Wriggle On*

As a follow up to Rob Bartlett's enlightening talk about his extensive bike-gear wardrobe and how to stay in the 'Comfort Zone', I would like to pass on a technique that has served me well over many (many!) years.



It's not necessary to give this a name but *Isotonics/ Isometrics* would be close as a hint to the basic idea of moving your muscles without causing much (or any) body movement, an important feature as we don't want to compromise stability or control of our machines.

I've been getting a wriggle on for so long that I very rarely think about it. The idea was passed on to me by my father, who taught me to ride. He rode motor bikes all through the war. From what I remember the official bad weather bike gear was a 'Great Coat', and a balaclava under your



open-face helmet, hence the need to try and keep warm by whatever means possible. Riding up and down vehicle convoys or being a despatch messenger meant that you couldn't stop for anything.

For long stints in the saddle, standing up on the pegs is something that we all do from time to time, (yes even on BigVic, with Pam on the back), but only when we have to.

So, this eases the muscles for a brief spell but totally goes against my better judgement as far as safety is concerned on public roads. So, what can we do and stay safe?

The answer for me is to concentrate on groups of muscles and simply move them, but keep your body in more or less the same position. Just wriggle different regions from time to time. Not only does it stop muscles tightening up, which puts pressure on joints, and causes pain, but the great benefit in cold weather is that it increases blood flow in the muscles and tissues. This keeps the heat circulating, as opposed to the blood/heat being directed inwards to the organs. I have no proof but I believe that tensing and relaxing the muscles in your shoulders and neck helps to keep the brain well supplied with blood. However, when I realise that my concentration is fading I stop, get off and rehydrate. Works for me, so get a wriggle on - in winter and in summer. I feel that I stay more relaxed and so ride better than I would otherwise.

**Ian Fraser**

## *‘A’ Pillar Blindness, or CBRD – Don’t Let It Happen To You*

Ever had one of those moments when you are bimbbling, or even barrelling, down a lovely A road, and approach a junction with minor roads entering, one of which has an approaching car. You can see it, clear as day. It arrives at the junction at pretty much the same time as you, and completely fails to give way. There are many crashes at junctions, and much muttering amongst motorcyclists about “blind drivers”, but sometimes they really do seem to be blind. It happens that on modern cars, the A pillar is quite a chunky affair, for both styling and structural reasons. Most of us also drive, and I bet that when you get to a junction, you rock back and forth in your seat, to make sure that the big blind spot created by the A pillar is cleared before you pull out. Not all drivers do this, and if they approach an open junction, where they can see a long way down the intersecting road, and they don’t see anything coming, they may well not bother to slow for the junction. The result of that is that the blind spot created by the A pillar also moves at a constant speed towards the junction, and if you are in it, you remain invisible to that driver, unless you do something to get out of the kill zone. There is an excellent article pointed out to me by Steve Schlemmer at <http://singletrackworld.com/2018/01/collision-course-why-this-type-of-road-junction-will-keep-killing-cyclists/> which describes the situation from a cyclist’s point of view, but the geometry and the hazard are both exactly the same for us. CBRD stands for “Constant Bearing, Decreasing Range”, and is a flying and maritime term where craft much more commonly adopt straight courses, but the principle is worth our attention too.

**Gina Herridge**

*{Editor’s note—I used to have a 2007 Seat Altea (see below), and it had one of the worst ‘A’ pillars of any car I’ve driven, due to its design and airbags.. Every junction and roundabout needed physical movement in the driver’s seat to check for other road users. So take extra care if you see an Altea (or Leon) at a junction or roundabout! Graham Tulloch}*



## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

### **SAM Green Ride**

"Morning Ramble"

Sun. 4th Feb. 2018

10:00 @ Podimore Services

Led by Graham Tulloch

### **Control & Technique**

"Cornering"

Sat. 10th Feb. 2018

10:00 @ Othery Village Hall,  
Fore Street, Othery TA7 0QU

### **SAM Green Ride**

"Breakfast Run"

Sat. 17th Feb. 2018

09:00 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Rick Chubb

### **SAM Red Ride**

"Checkpoint Charlie"

Sun. 18th Feb. 2018

09:00 @ Cross Keys, Norton  
Fitzwarren

Led by Rob Bartlett

### **SAM Green Ride**

"Broken In Ride"

Sun. 25th Feb. 2018

09:30 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Dave Parker

### **SAM Green Ride**

"March Hares"

Sun. 4th. Mar. 2018

09:30 @ Cartgate Services

Led by Jez Martin

### **SAM Committee Meeting**

Mon. 5th Mar. 2018

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

### **Control & Technique**

"Group Riding"

Sat. 10th Mar. 2018

10:00 @ Othery Village Hall,  
Fore Street, Othery TA7 0QU

### **SAM Green Ride**

"Boing Boing Spring"

Sun. 11th Mar. 2018

10:00 @ Cocklemoor Car Park,  
Langport

Led by LeeThompson

### **SAM Green Ride**

"March Mosey On Down"

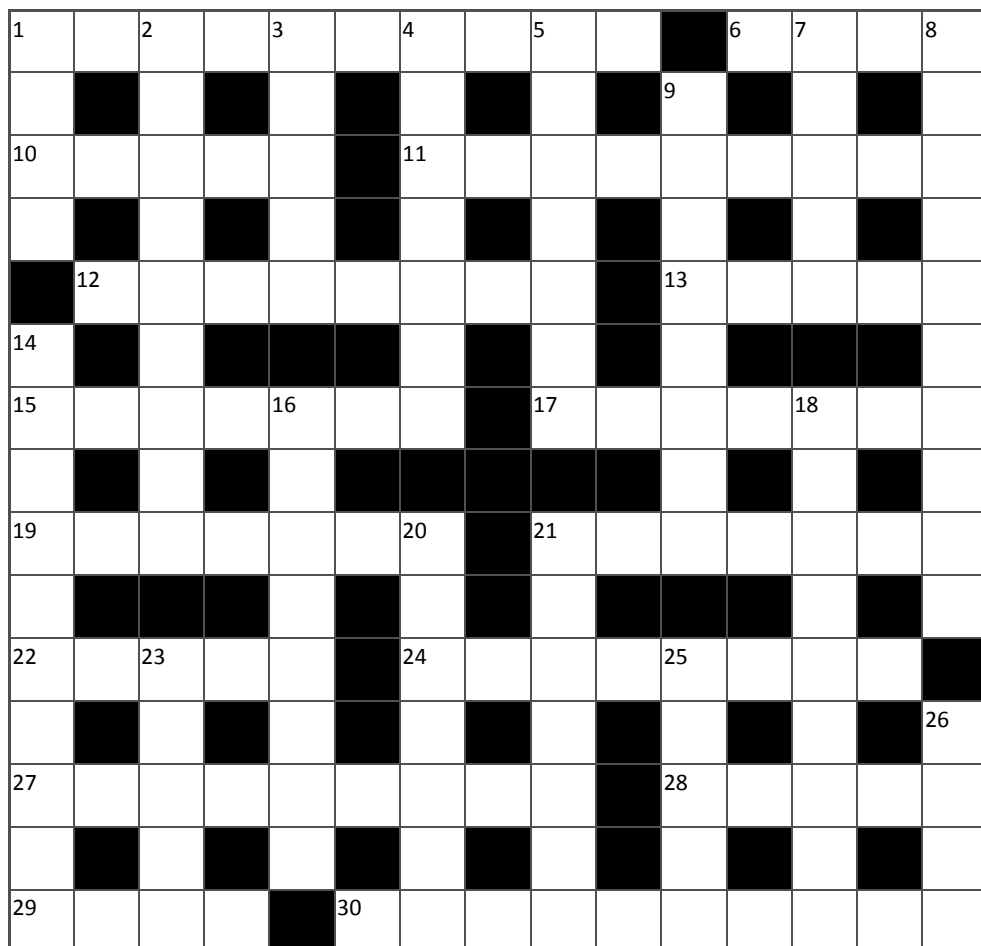
Sun. 18th Mar. 2018

09:30 @ Cartgate Services

Led by Roger Moffat

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

# CROSSWORD



## Across

- 1 Breaks down on yank raceways (10)
- 6 English trunk you could put it in (4)
- 10 Said part of wheel (5)
- 11 Long flick and short click about unknown system of gears (9)
- 12 Indication of acceleration due to gravity in broken pistons (8)
- 13 Ten Australian dollars for reproduction of recorded sound (5)
- 15 Yamaha models a rider's rebuild (7)
- 17 Break in Aldi's a blessing (7)



## **CROSSWORD (cont.)**

- 19** Celebrity cooked angel, one left (7)
- 21** Book a little left in 29 (7)
- 22** Initially, single cylinder Rudge appears prone to break up (5)
- 24** Bored, it gets longer when stroked (8)
- 27** Total range of movement when tulip made changes (9)
- 28** In his philosophy, Drake swears there's something many headed ... (5)
- 29** ... Kant however, resolves for something armed (4)
- 30** Metal operates provider of material for your motorcycle (10)

### **Down**

- 1** Type of brake dance, finished early (4)
- 2** A gesture of agreement, I confess, giving a protective coat (9)
- 3** Polish Barry, for instance, but short (5)
- 4** Sadly, 'e's broke 'is trainers (7)
- 5** Not joined-up, impressed (7)
- 7** The chain should be; the rider shouldn't, especially well (5)
- 8** Volunteers, cold, in short term speed measurer (10)
- 9** Goes round by cols (8)
- 14** Assorted frank chats turn linear into rotary motion (10)
- 16** The Spanish cheek twitch is oval (8)
- 18** Prohibit sore server (9)
- 20** Narrative from a cold, foreign nobleman (7)
- 21** Release from credit with a new start (7)
- 23** Nipper, not quietly, changed to mature (5)
- 25** Expertise in conversation? Not at all (5)
- 26** They open valves in river, South (4)

Solution in next issue

*Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.*

## RIDE REPORTS

### *Hugh Beamish's Wilts Wander*

I must confess I was looking forward to this extended Amber ride all week, and Hugh did not disappoint. I didn't do a rider count at Podimore but there were enough for the group to be split into two. Ken had volunteered his services before the event and as the 19<sup>th</sup> rider arrived it was apparent that Hugh had to now give Ken the route. I was quietly impressed by this because when I lead a ride the route needs to be practised about 50 times to make sure I'm happy with it!

Hugh performed a good solid and clear briefing, as is usual the only part of the route I needed to remember was the first part: get on the A303 at Podimore and then get off the A303 at Sparkford. The route would be an anti-clock-wise exploration into Wiltshire, heading off through Bruton, Gillingham and Shaftsbury then along the A30 towards our cafe stop at Tisbury.

I was given the green light to ride on ahead to take some action shots so I overtook the group at Haynes Motor Museum and pressed on along the A359 and stopped in the sweeping dip just before Bruton. I was told later that one rider thought this was the norm but after I overtook the leader he eased back into the group. I only just managed to get myself positioned with the camera before the group whizzed by, I was a little disappointed with my results because I had forgotten to put



the camera in sport mode and quite a few were fuzzy. Peter was 'tail end charlie' so I found him waiting for me just round the corner. No doubt my delay helped to stretch the group out a little more through Bruton.



Tisbury is midway between Shaftsbury and Salisbury - the long 14th Century tithe barn where our cafe was located had been recently restored. It was originally built for the Abbess of Shaftsbury as a storage barn and was owned by Shaftsbury abbey until the Dissolution. Together with the farmhouse and the gate-houses the barn is part of one of the finest surviving groups of monastic grange buildings in the country. The barn is used by Messum's of London to display their sculpture and art work. There were no price tags on anything so I expect the pieces were out of my range. If you didn't know already a tithe is a 10<sup>th</sup> part of something paid as a contribution

to a religious organisation or compulsory tax to government. Looking up at the ceiling was impressive as you could see the beams were very old, one of our group who I shall not name (he rides a Ducati and belongs to the alternative IAM) expressed his opinion quite loudly that the whole structure should be knocked down and replaced with new..... I'm pretty sure he was joking.

The quality of the cake matched the quality of the art work on display inside. The huge chocolate cake was only released by the manger after the last piece of carrot cake was purchased, much to the disappointment for those who had opted for the flapjack. The size of the chocolate cake was way out of proportion compared to

the size of the flapjack and whispers of discontent were spreading through the group, especially from my Irish friend beside me, who was wearing a leather suit which he agreed wasn't in best condition and rides a KTM.

Peter was later overheard suggesting that the KTM's outnumbered the Explorers on this rideout - the total number of KTM's was 4 - hardly justification to now rename the group as a KTM club.

The route back to Haynes led us across to Stourton and up past King Alfreds Tower. The narrow

road up and over was wet and greasy in places and coupled with the silver car who barged his way through the group presented quite a challenge - 'Look Out' all up and coming Masters 'might be's' - this lane may well find itself onto the pre test Masters ride route.

90 odd miles later we arrived at our dispersal point which was Haynes. It would have been rude not to have another coffee! Thanks again Hugh for an enjoyable route and an unusual cafe stop. **Lisa Parsons**

### ***Measuring Somerset***

Once again Steve Schlemmer put together a list of 16 questions relating to places in Somerset. Set about 9 miles apart if (unlike me) you do not get lost, I guess if done in one go it would be about 160 miles. I have tried in vain to complete the task in one day, so this year decided to do the nearest 4 to the east on one afternoon, then to the west another. The first went well, but the second outing, on what had been a pleasant morning, found me wandering about Exmoor in cold, wet, fog. Never mind, I now had 8 answers, and as I had started after the end of October I only needed 8 to complete.

December 6th found me with a free day and a reasonable weather forecast, before both the tail end of a storm, and then possible snow to follow, so off I went in search of more measurements. After threading my way through the traffic of Taunton I headed towards Aisholt, and as I rode gingerly down a steep hill, came across a bus struggling to get past a car driver who seemed reluctant to get his 4x4 tyres dirty. After a moment on



the muddy descent when my front tyre lost grip, I waited while the lady bus driver retrieved her nearside mirror, and eventually squeezed by. The road into Aisholt was closed with a diversion which I followed, and eventually found the item to be measured.

On to Bridgwater to follow the A39, (in the wrong direction), U turn, then find Chedzoy and no.2. Walton was quite easy to find, even for me; No. 3. Mark was also fairly easy; No. 4.

Now, I could have called it a day but this is fun, so after stopping at Dear Leap near Priddy for a sandwich, on I went and did a tour of

the Mendips in my search for Easton; No. 5. On to Stoke St. Michael and the "Square"; No 6. Ditcheat found me pacing out the churchyard trying not to fall over any tombstones; No7. And finally onto Charleton Horrethorne for No. 8.

The day had stayed dry, mild and still, but now the wind was getting up, and my ride home had me knocked about by it as I crossed Windwhistle. My bike was a lovely shade of brown. A great day finding (eventually) many new places not seen before. Thanks to Steve for the challenge.

**Rick Chubb**



## *Tick in the Box Mk4*

'Why tick in the box'? Steve asked.

'Jez gave it that title as it was the first ride out I led after passing my test 4 years ago' I replied.

There are plenty of titles I could have given it after today's experience... 'River Riding', 'Soggy Saunter' or 'Torrential Tester'...

I was certainly surprised when I counted 12 of us at Kelways! There were a few new members too. C.J from Taunton on his second green ride, Gez, on his first green ride and Alex who had only recently passed his test. They certainly weren't put off by the conditions. The Met Office had forecasted 100% chance of rain right through to 3 o'clock that afternoon. The forecast was 'spot-on',

the roads were awash with standing water and mini floods cascading across the road. Two umbrellas weren't enough to keep the sign-on sheet dry. Hazards of the day were pretty obvious at the ride brief.

The 33 mile route was heading for destination Haynes at Sparkford. The intention was to meet up with other SAM members, Graham, Richard and Andy who were conducting 'Taster' rides there at the Breakfast ride-in. Only on arrival did we discover that the tasters never turned up, and that Nigel from the Bournemouth and Wessex Advanced Club had made a special effort to attend because the booked taster person came from that area. They all seemed





fairly high on coffee on our arrival.

The route was a twisty one. Somerton, Castle Cary road, then north to cut across through Evercreech and then down through Bruton. There were plenty of hazards to consider because of the wet condi-

tions, there was a high likelihood of meeting flood water around every bend, so the advice of slow in / fast out was a good one to follow. On-coming traffic on your own side of the road due to flood water was another possibility along with gravel and mud. Considering everything, everyone made good progress. Another personal issue was the visor fogging up, even with a new helmet I still didn't have 100% vision. I'm so glad that I don't wear glasses like some of the riders in our club.

Several people that I spoke to took several pairs of gloves, me included. One to wear on the way out and one to wear on the way home. Graham took three pairs in preparation for the taster ride. He won the prize for the most pairs of gloves in one ride.

In a perverse sort of way I really enjoyed the challenge of the ride. As the ride leader I had no choice but to turn up, so I'm delighted that so many other nutters turned up for the party.

**Lisa Parsons**



Andy & Richard waiting in vain for Taster rides to arrive!

## KIT REPORTS

### *A Couple of Items I have Loved—and Not Loved*

I have used **EBC brake pads** for many years (and shoes before that) and like them so much that I've not looked any further. So, for me they are the best.

My belief in the quality of their pads was strengthened when I replaced the stock pads on my Triumph a few years ago now. The difference was startling. Of course this could have been because the Triumph pads were rubbish, but getting the same results with BigVic just proved the point.

As we said at Jez Martin's excellent "Braking" C & T session recently, as part of safe and effective braking the "feel" is an important (if subjective) factor. High quality pipes and calipers do make a big difference. Even good maintenance of, or upgrading, the pistons shows positive improve-

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ments, but at the end of the day the contact between friction pad and disc is what we rely on.

EBC now have EBC Direct as an online factor for their products and they are quick, efficient and great to deal with. Having an American bike which is a limited edition I've emailed them just to be sure that the pads that their web site '*finder*' recommends are the correct ones, and their response was within hours, friendly and reassuring.

I've recently taken delivery of some new pads and as usual I got a discount code, which I can "share with friends and family". Unfortunately this latest one (see above) is only 10%. Over the years it's been as high as 30%, but feel free to use it.

EBC Brakes Direct are official resellers of the full range of EBC Brakes products for automotive, motorcycle, mountain bike and kart fitments. We offer next day shipping and free delivery on all orders over £50.

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### A word of warning.

As a follow up to Moff's "Kit Report" in our Autumn 2017 FULL CHAT, I share my very recent experience of **Tyre Pressure Caps**. I put some on BigVic prior to our Europe tour 18 months ago. The ones that I had (see above) were very reasonably priced ebay items. It's worth mentioning that my tubed tyres don't seem to lose much pressure and I do periodically top up by over inflating and then releasing air until I get the required value.



Anyway, just before Christmas, when I had a routine service at my dealers, the mechanic told me that my front was 6 p.s.i (18%) below recommended setting and that the valve cap was still indicating a safe 'green' colour. It's was supposed to start changing at a 2 p.s.i drop. I've thrown it away, fitted a new valve, and bought a tyre valve extender tube for my inflator so that I can more easily check pressures.

Footnote: [Now the **ABS** makes sense] - on my way down to Poole for that service my ABS activated when I executed a fairly routine stop when traffic lights went to red. On damp tarmac not something that I would normally expect.

**Ian Fraser**





## MEMBER'S TRIPS

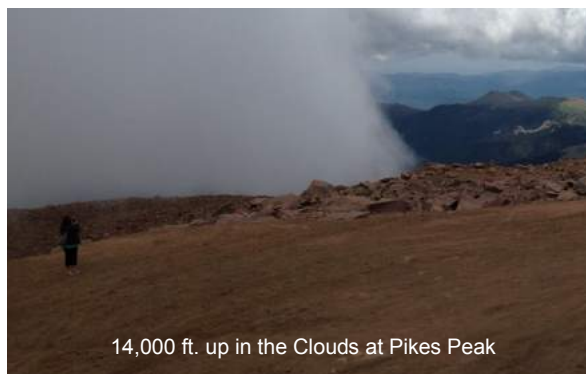
### *Coast to Coast USA—Part 2 of 2*

Today is Pikes Peak day. First, we make a visit to Royal Gorge as usual we are up and away early and it's only just opening up when we arrive. We venture out onto the suspension foot bridge which crosses the Gorge, with a 1000 foot drop below us the view is impressive, I'm not so keen on the drop though. Then it's onward



into the Rockies and one of the ride's highlights, the ride up Pikes Peak (You Tube is your friend) to 14,400 ft. How people race up here is beyond me, I keep well away from the edges as we ride up, and up, and up, into the clouds. We started up already at 8000 feet and the climb was 19 miles

to 14400 ft. This was my first experience of altitude sickness, I hopped off the bike expecting to move around normally when I found I couldn't and had to move very slowly to avoid the woozy feeling that overcame me. The return journey was equally impressive with the Rockies laid out below us.



The following day was a day off the bikes and an opportunity to explore the mountain town of Salida. Next day on towards Silverton, we head West through the Rockies over 10,000 ft passes and fabulous scenery, before arriving at Silverton, an ex-mining town which has remained pretty much



unchanged since then. Silverton to Mexican Hat, we rode South down the Million Dollar Highway to Durango. Quite why it's called the Million Dollar Highway is disputed, the most accepted is that it cost a million dollars a mile to build back in the day. What can't be disputed is that it is a stunning ride. I'm getting used to addressing the temperature changes in the Rockies, we left Silverton early and it was just 4 degrees, I know by midday it will be at least 20 even at altitude, by the time we reach Monument Valley it's in the 30's.

Mexican Hat to Bryce, and rode up our first unpaved road, the Moki Dugway which takes us up to a plateau with fantastic views of the valley below. This is Utah at its finest. We then follow Highway 12 which follows mountain ridges and on to Bryce Canyon with its unbelievable colours, the road was a dead end so we got the same views twice!!



The Moki Dugway and the colours of Utah

Next day we rode the Northern rim of the Grand Canyon with incredible views of the Colorado River below. The following day it was an early start to catch the early morning light that gives the rocks and trees at Zion National Park the most amazing colours. From Zion we drop down and follow

the shores of Lake Mead around to the Hoover Dam, it's getting hotter now, it's California in early July.

I used a Camelbak for the entire trip - being America, every motel/hotel has an ice machine so the routine was to fill it to the brim every morning with ice then top up with water. Being able to take a drink on the move was a huge help in keeping hydrated, particularly in California. The other useful tip is to put half a sliced lemon in the Camel back every couple of days, helps keep it clean and gives the water a touch of flavour.

That night we stayed at Boulder City and as Las Vegas was only 25 miles away it seemed a good opportunity to "ride the strip" at dusk. I've now done it and glad I did but I won't be rushing back. It

Hoover Dam and the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge over the Colorado River



was good preparation though, getting acclimatised to the heat, as the following day was our ride through Death Valley.

Another early start, and what an extraordinary place, the lowest place in the western hemisphere. As well as riding through the valley we rode 5000 ft. up to the top of one of the mountains that surround the valley to get a view from above, it was also appreciably cooler up there and the valley set out below was a stunning sight. Back





down to the valley floor and it was midday by now and the temperature riding through rose to 47 degrees (it gets hotter) then there is the engine heat to contend with plus the radiator fan which was working overtime whenever the speed dropped riding through the valley. What an amazing day, one I will never forget.

Today is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and it's a visit to Yosemite National Park, and I



The Tioga Pass entry to Yosemite

wonder how progress will be on the roads on this major holiday. First, we visit the ex-mining town of Bodie, which was abandoned when the gold rush stopped. Many of the buildings remain, it's deserted and everything is left as it was so it really has the feel of a gold rush town. We then headed to Yosemite

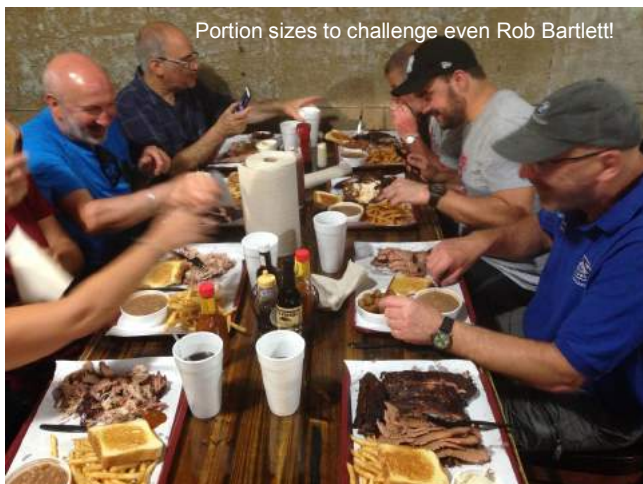
and the East entrance at 10,000ft. It's a beautiful place with plenty of iconic views if a little busy given the date. At one stage we came across what at first appeared to be a traffic accident, cars backed up and then as we filtered (illegal in California) to the front of the queue cars were abandoned at all angles. Apparently if a bear is spotted they leap out of their vehicles and take off after it hoping to get a photograph, there was even a woman carrying a baby wandering on the edge of the forest. It didn't seem sane behaviour to us so we pressed on. I expected that as it was 4<sup>th</sup> July there would be a firework display in our overnight stop off town,



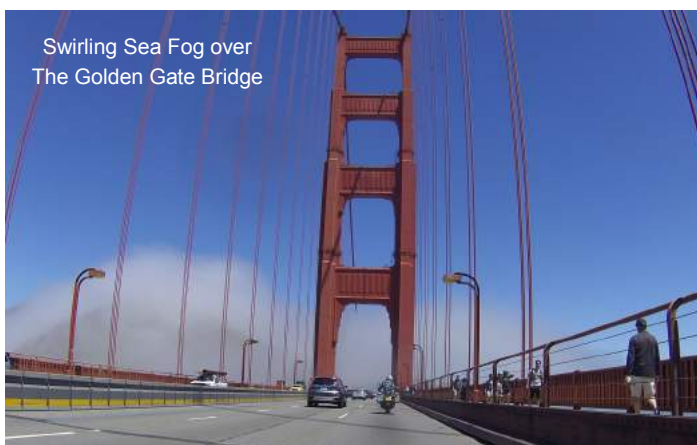
The Grandest Canyon

Oakhurst but no, they are afraid of fires in California, understandable. Only 3 days to go now but we haven't done with spectacular yet. We rode into the Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Park. The ride in was glorious, with great views all around. The Sequoia Trees are among the largest living things on the planet, we stopped off for a walk amongst them to visit the General Sherman tree, the largest single stem tree in the world. At over 2000 tons I couldn't help thinking it would keep my wood burner going for a while.

Today our overnight stop is Hollister. This ride takes us through central California past mile after mile of olive groves, orange groves and many other fruit trees as far as the eye can see. There is clearly a conflict here



between the farmers who want more dams built for irrigation and towns' people judging by the signage along the way. Hollister is where the Wild One with Marlon Brando was filmed so after checking in we walked up the road to Johnny's Bar & Grill where much of the action took place for a cold beer or two.



The final day we rode the Skyline Boulevard, heading for San Francisco. Breakfast was at Alice's, a well-known bike and car meeting spot, indeed we met up with a bunch of Ducati riders heading down



to Laguna Seca for the WSBK round. Also, a guy from Huddersfield who lives over there now who was more than a bit surprised to see 6 UK plated bikes parked outside. Then the final iconic ride of the trip, into San Francisco and over the Golden Gate Bridge. I can't describe how it felt, having grown up watching TV programs like "The Streets Of San Francisco" to actually be riding in on the freeway and following the overhead signs in. The bridge lived up to expectations being partly shrouded in sea fog, it comes and goes due to the temperature difference between the sea (very deep there) and the heat. Lots of photo opportunities of the bay and Alcatraz Island before taking the coast road to Santa Rosa which included a paddle in the Pacific at the first opportunity. Then onward to Santa Rosa for our final night. (I really felt for the residents there following the recent devastating fires.) The following morning, we dropped our bikes off at the BMW dealers for them to be containerised for their long sea journey home. We catch the airport shuttle bus back to San Francisco for our homeward journeys to various destinations in the UK and beyond.



So, we had made it, 5800 miles in three weeks on some of the best roads you could ever wish to ride. Don't let anyone tell you that roads in the USA are all straight! Our leader Chris (aka Bilco) had planned a brilliant route and we picked up so many iconic destinations on route I don't see how it could have been planned any better. And the bonus, we had absolutely no bike issues at all during the trip with a combined mileage of 34,800, and Chris's milometer was reading 142,000 by the end of our trip so don't worry about high mileage on properly maintained bikes.

Trip over and the word awesome not used once.....well only once.

**Richard Pearse**

# BIKING MEMORIES

## *Lest We Forget*

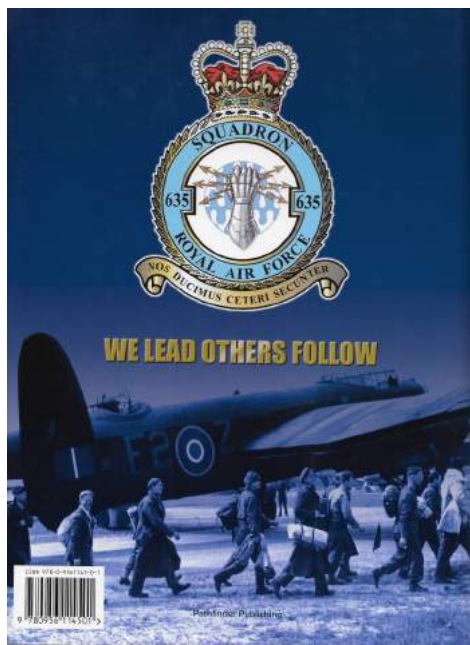
A few years ago I had the good fortune to travel to Northern France and find the grave of my great uncle, my grandfather's brother, who fell in the First World War on the 18th April 1918, aged 24.

On the radio today there was an article about the crews of the Halifax WW2 bombers, their average age was 23. These very young men gave their lives that we could remain free, to travel around Europe for example. There have been countless words written about this and I could never do justice to the respect these men deserve in a few lines on these pages. I am sure many of us have similar family histories that include the loss of loved ones in conflict. The link with our motorcycling? As you tour Europe this summer, perhaps "Remember", as I am sure you will. **Matt Towill**

Matt's article above struck a chord with me, as my uncle was killed on 26th August 1944, aged 23. He was rear gunner in a Lancaster with the Pathfinders 635 Squadron (2nd from right in the photo of the crew), and



was on his 44th and last mission before a scheduled rest from operations. I remember my father telling me how, when he heard the news that his younger brother had been shot down over Schleswig Holstein (near the Danish Border), he rode his despatch bike overnight the length of Germany to the crash site to try and find news of his brother. All he found was a temporary grave. Why I didn't ask him at the time for more information, where he was, what bike he rode, how far did he ride, what was his role during the war, I don't know. However, as with many ex-servicemen, he seldom talked about his war years, the only reminders being the gauntlets



described in mere words, they have produced, and maintain, this particular cemetery to a wonderful standard, a fitting memorial to those buried there.

Many of us will visit the cemeteries along the Normandy coast during our Tours abroad, themselves a harsh but respectful reminder of the horrors of the last 2 World Wars, but when one considers how many other cemeteries can be found on the 1,200 km journey across to Keil, the true scale of loss of life really starts to sink in.

and leather helmet he tried to get me to use when I got my first moped in 1973. Far too uncool for a 16 year old, though, so the kind offer was rejected!

The Pathfinders Squadron's role was to fly in first, drop flares to light up the target, circle whilst other bombers dropped their loads, then take photos before leaving the area. Now buried in the War Graves Cemetery at Keil in northern Germany, we were fortunate to visit this serene resting place 3 years ago (on 6 wheels, not 2), and pay our tributes to the 900 mainly airmen buried there. The work of the War Graves Commission cannot be

Keil War Graves Cemetery



So whilst you Remember, take the time to stop off, pay your respects to those who have lost their lives in warfare, and appreciate the incredible work of the War Graves Commission in honouring these men and women at Cemeteries across Northern Europe.

**Graham Tulloch**

## Events and Equipment Update



*SAM continues to increase its exposure to the motorcycling fraternity in the area, regularly having a presence at events such as Haynes Bike Meets, Slow Riding Days, various Somerset Road Safety initiatives and the Bristol Classic Bike Show to name but a few. This is only possible through the efforts of a large number of willing volunteers from our membership, involved in organising key events, manning our stand at events, taking potential new members on Taster Rides and generally rolling their sleeves up to contribute to the running and visibility of the Club. A huge thank you to all of you who have helped in our events over the last 12 months.*

*This increased exposure has required increased investment in our equipment, with new display boards, publicity material and improved stand lighting for indoor events all being purchased in the last year. Hopefully now our presentation is becoming as professional as our riding skills!*

*Thanks must also go to one of our members, Nigel Gillard (see below) who has once again kindly undertaken the annual electrical testing of our equipment, an essential requirement for eg The Classic Bike Show. Many thanks Nigel.*



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## ***SOUTH WEST PENINSULA SPRING RALLY***

Join us for the 10th Anniversary of the SWPSR. This is a Scatter Rally covering the South West Peninsula completed in 1 day (for those not having taken part before, think of a treasure hunt). It's enormous fun and gets you out onto some roads you will never have ridden before, visiting towns and villages from Wiltshire to Cornwall in the hunt for the answers to up to 15 clues (dependent on which rally award you decide to aim for). You can do it solo, with a pillion or ride as a group - it's up to you. It's not a race but you might challenge yourself to go for the top achievement, the Land's End Award, which entails over 400 miles of riding in 1 day!

All ticket prices include a hot evening meal, a commemorative 10th Anniversary SWPSR Mug and a Rally Certificate for all those completing the day. Buy your tickets online (from the SAM website) before 18:00 on March 18th to save money with our Early Bird tickets, only £29 per rider. A cooked breakfast can be pre-ordered (at additional cost) to set you up for a long day in the saddle - look out for the additional breakfast option at the bottom of the order page (before you hit the "Get Tickets" button).

2017 was so well attended that our Start/Finish location was bursting at the seams with almost 150 riders and pillioners, so we have relocated the operation just a few miles from Langport to Long Sutton Village Hall, which has a much larger, tarmac bike park.

### ***Autumn 2017 Caption***

Thanks to Jon Wyatt for coming up with the Caption for the Autumn 2017 photograph:

***"OK, we're not going anywhere until you give us our helmets back!"***





## TAILPIECE #2

**rider** *n*, an addition to an otherwise complete document

*“After the incident, the rider was uninjured and there was little damage except the big dent in his pride.*

*It had started the night before. Over dinner, he'd been gushing about his new bike and he and his mates had agreed on a ride out - starting at the local dealer's the next morning. They arrived one-by-one and parked, in gear, facing up the slope on the forecourt in front of the showroom window. The mates dutifully admired his new machine and agreed that the rider should lead the way.*

*Rather self-importantly, he put in his earplugs, fastened his helmet and swung his leg over his machine. He found neutral, started the engine and paddled backwards, down the slope and across the pavement. As the rear wheel dropped off the pavement, the side stand, which he'd neglected to raise, struck the kerb and threw bike and rider sideways, down into the gutter.*

*The rider was, of course, grateful for the helping hands and sympathy but would have much preferred to have performed this trick without an audience.”*

### CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!



Here's another one for all you budding “Matt” cartoonists out there. I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo. Suggestions to me at [Tullochg@aol.com](mailto:Tullochg@aol.com), we'll publish the best one (if printable, that is!) in the next issue.

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**SURETY**

\*Based on new motorcycle insurance quotes given by Germainetel to UK IAM members since 2007, for those who met acceptance criteria. IAM Surety is available to IAM members who've passed the IAM Motorcycle Test and meet criteria. Policy benefits shown apply to policies arranged with Agnia Insurance through Germainetel Insurance Services. Calls may be recorded for our mutual protection. Germainetel, Boucher Place, 4-6 Boucher Rd, Belfast BT12 5HB

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](mailto: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.

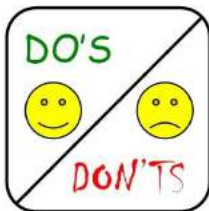
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

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.

### **SWPSR**

The 10th South West Peninsula Rally takes place on Saturday 7th April. Start point this year is Long Sutton Village Hall. £29 for Riders, £17 for Pillioners. Entry forms can be found on the SAM Website. Sign up, and look forward to a great day out in the South West.

**CONTROL & TECHNIQUE** — Saturdays 10th February and 10th March sees the last 2 of these popular events for this winter, both at our excellent new venue, Othery Village Hall. In February, Gina & Peter Herridge will host "Cornering", and in March, Graham Tulloch will be hosting "Group Riding". Come along and contribute to the discussions, and enjoy the excellent bacon and sausage baps on offer.