

Summer 2019

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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|------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
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Front Cover: Matt Towill keen to be first to get to the pancakes on the recent "Ride your other Bike Pancake" ride.



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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



Long days, warm dry tarmac, you have to love summer on a bike. I've always hesitated a bit to ride to Scotland, because although the days are even longer at this time of year, the tarmac is less guaranteed to be warm and dry. In any event, we couldn't resist the temptation to tag along with Lisa and Jez on their trip around the North Coast 500, and set off on 30th June. Half way

through a brilliant trip, Valentino, my 68 plate, 6,700 mile Ducati Multistrada, began to run very roughly, and then suffered a catastrophic loss of power. Within minutes, my trip was over, and instead of swooping over to Ullapool and Applecross, I was waiting in the rain for a rescue truck. To think that I barely listened to the point of sale details of Ducati Assist, which came as part of the new-bike package. Some 36 hours later I finally made it home, to the small consolation that it is at least still summer here. Valentino only made it as far as Manchester Ducati, which I hope will prove as efficient as they sounded on the phone. Meanwhile, I have reason



to be grateful that no one wanted to buy my Yamaha Fazer 800, which at nearly 40,000 miles, has yet to miss a beat.

Many thanks to all for their contributions to this issue of Full Chat. If you are thinking of sending us something, please go ahead and take the plunge - don't forget the photos to go with your piece. Deadline for the next issue is October 15th, 2019.

Gina Herridge

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

I decided for this edition to share with you some recent successes we have had as a club, but also to air some of the challenges that we face as a result of those successes, and to encourage all members old and new to join, in what I hope will be, a healthy conversation about how we evolve as a club.

The major success I want to share with you is this year's Mo-toFest and the recruitment of 20, yes! 20! new members to the club – you can imagine the panic on Paul Dyer's face when informed of such a large number at one time to try and allocate Observers to! Welcome to all of our new members, I hope you will enjoy your riding with us and the journey you have embarked upon to become Advanced Motorcyclists, I

hope you will find us to be a welcoming and friendly club.

A huge shout out to Roger Moffat and the team he assembled to man the stand and cope with the tech challenges of IAM RoadSmart. Once again the use of our own credit card reader proved it's worth – it just seems so much more reliable than the ones the banks issue. Well done all concerned!

There is a serious issue that we face as a club when we recruit so many people at one time, however; as all of our Observers are unpaid volunteers, and whilst we have 39 active Observers and a few more in training, I count 94 Associates listed in our database. Now some are on breaks and some will decide that Advanced

Riding is not for them, but that still is a ratio of greater than 2:1 for Associates to Observers, so there is a capacity issue here and Paul's concerns are merited. Training more Observers is part of the answer, but it takes time to train our Observers (from both the Trainee Observer and





the Training Team). In the meantime, some Observers will want a break, and we keep recruiting.

Clearly we are victims of our own success and we will need to be imaginative in how we manage future recruits to ensure that they get their training under way in a timely fashion. The Committee and I would be very interested in your views on how we might meet this challenge.

Another challenge that concerns me at the moment is how we keep the small club feeling when we have become rather large (I count 251 fully paid up members on the database). I'm sure all of the members who regularly attend our Ride Outs will have noticed how many people now attend the Green rides, giving us further challenges in the logistics of those rides:

- finding destinations that can cope with a large number turning up for Tea and Cake (or full English Breakfasts!).
- attracting new ride leaders, who have to plan for splitting the ride in order to reduce our footprint on the roads.
- recognising everyone!

In my other role as Events Co-ordinator, I am always keen to recruit new Ride Leaders, but with the popularity of these rides, leading your first ride

has become much more daunting and complex. I want to thank all of our current Ride Leaders for doing what they do – the events calendar is often cited as a reason for choosing this club over others – we can't do it without you. Again, I would love to hear thoughts and ideas on how we deal with these challenges to ensure that the club continues to be the one that people choose to join.

I also wanted to share with you all another piece of success that came in my email the other day, and this is a statistic upon which the club and it's Observer cadre should be hugely proud. According to IAM RoadSmart records, we achieved a 98% pass rate over the last twelve months!

That is an amazing achievement, so a huge shout out to all of our Observers for their time, effort and dedication to get their Associates to the standard required. To our current Associates, listen to your Observer – the evidence suggests that they might just know what they are talking about!

Jez Martin

SAM NEWS



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

to the following members for passing their IAM tests:

- Mike Collins on 30th April, riding a BMW R1200GS. Mike was observed by Andy Spiers.
- Andrew Kynaston on 9th May, riding a BMW R1200GSA and observed by Rob Bartlett.
- Jamie Simmonds on 13th May. Jamie was riding his BMW R1200GS, and was observed by Lisa Parsons.
- Matt Griffin on 27th May, riding a Suzuki GSZR1000L4. Matt was observed by Martin Hember.

- Andy Hall on 31st May, achieving a F1RST. Andy was observed by Steve Joyce, and was riding his BMW R1200GS Adventure.

- Paul Corthorn on 14th June, riding an Aprilia Tuono 1000 and observed by Steve Layzell.

- Helen Moriarty on 19th June. Helen was riding a Triumph Tiger 800 and was observed by Jez Martin.



- John Elton also on 19th June, riding his BMW R1200GS and observed by Martin Hember.

- Jamie Hobbs on 15th July. Jamie was riding a (restricted) BMW F650GS, and was observed by Kevin Colmer.

- Mark Timbrell on 22nd July, achieving another F1RST. Mark was riding his Triumph Explorer XRT And was observed by Martin Hember.

- Rob Dolan on 29th July, riding a Triumph Tiger 800XRT and observed by Richard Pearse.

- Graham Humphreys on 1st August. Graham was riding a BMW R1200GS, and was observed by Mick Hill.

- Dave Pape on 3rd August, riding a Triumph Explorer 1200 and having been observed by Martin Surrey.

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

Congratulations also go to:

- Ian Wilson, who passed his member's reassessment on 5th July. Ian was riding his BMW R1200GSA, and was supported by Steve Williams.
- Marcus Ackerman also submitted himself for a member's reassessment, on 13th July. Marcus achieved a F1RST riding a Honda ST1300.
- Ben Everard, who passed his Masters with Distinction on 1st May, having been mentored by Rick Stowell.
- Gary Crook who also passed his Masters, on 15th June.

CONTACT DETAILS

If your contact details change (especially email address), please inform **samembershipsecretary@gmail.com** 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 Lamb & Lion, Hambridge on 5th June 2019, can be found on the SAM website.

IAM Inform

The IAM RoadSmart weekly bulletin, 'Inform' can now be accessed via a link on the SAM website under 'Helpful Links'.

Leading a SAM Ride

As mentioned in Chairman's Chatter, we are always keen to attract new Ride Leaders, who can share their favourite roads with other SAM members. Anyone who has passed their Advanced Test can lead a ride—all they need to do is contact Jez Martin (Events Coordinator) and give him details of a date (ensuring it doesn't conflict with existing rides in the Events List), time, meeting point and Grade of Ride (check 3rd last page of Full Chat for clarification of these). If you're not sure what to do, most existing ride leaders are more than happy to support you in the planning, marketing and route design. They can outline the things to consider when

developing and executing a SAM ride, ensuring the Club's responsibilities for safety and organisation are taken into account, thus ensuring that all ride participants get the maximum enjoyment out of the event.

Sample documents (Ride Sign-on Sheets and Ride Brief template) can be found on the SAM website, in the members' area. That just leaves you to determine the route—and, of course, the breakfast/coffee stop! So come on, what's stopping



you? Take the next step in your riding development, and help to keep our (already rich) Events List as interesting, enjoyable and varied as possible for SAM members.

BIKING NEWS

MAG



Update from SAM's MAG rep, Rick Chubb

Rick has once again forwarded an article from Kevin Williams of Survival Skills, as published in MAG's bi-monthly "The Road" magazine. This time the subject is on turning vehicles and junctions.



Look for Turning Vehicles ... but where?

Kevin Williams looks beyond the simple intuitive to explore the reality of why accidents really happen . . .

It's long been known that the most common kind of collision involving a motorcycle is one that happens at an intersection, between a car and the bike, usually when the rider has priority. This collision causes a significant number of injuries and fatalities on both urban and rural roads. But what's less well known is that we're often looking for the car in the wrong place.

Intersection collisions happen wherever powered two-wheelers (PTWs) and cars and vans share the road. They happen in the UK, they happen in Europe, they happen in the USA, in Australia and New Zealand, and in Thailand.

So what that tells us is that we're not looking at driver standards or even driver behaviour, but human error.

And we know what that human error often is - they are often 'looked but FAILED to see' (LBFTS) collisions because in many cases - but not all - the driver looked and didn't spot the motorcycle. They account for around one-third of all car - bike junction collisions.

For many years, the main focus of research on these collisions was into motorcycle conspicuity - after all, the obvious conclusion was that if riders weren't seen, then getting them to use day riding lights, wear fluorescent or reflective clothing and a white or light helmet would reduce the risk of these crashes.

However, as I've explained previously in this Science Of Being Seen (SOBS) series, neither lights nor clothing have had the predicted effect - intersection accidents are just as common as they ever were.

I've also pointed out two other causes that motorcyclists must be aware of:

- * looked and COULD NOT see - in between one-fifth and one-quarter of collisions, the bike wasn't where it could be seen at some point in the run-up to the crash

- * looked, saw and MISJUDGED speed and distance - in around one-third of collisions, the rider WAS seen but the driver initially thought there was time to get clear of the bike's path. This tends to happen on higher-speed roads.

We can be more careful with our position to help drivers see us, and we can slow down to help drivers judge our speed better. But that still leaves one question. If WE are to avoid LBFTS collisions, just where should WE be looking?

Let's remind you quickly of my background - self-taught, sixteen years as a courier in and around London, trained as a basic instructor in 1995, started running post-test training in 1997.

Way back in 2002, I attended an early BikeSafe course with the Metropolitan police. And one thing that I was really shocked to learn was that 50% of all fatalities happened at intersections.....but not in the way I was expecting, either from my experience dodging taxis in London nor from my instructor training.

The killer crash wasn't caused by the usual 'driver pulls out from the side road without seeing the bike', but the OTHER possibility; the killer crash at junctions happened when an oncoming car turned across the rider's path INTO the side road.

A few times I've been asked for evidence to prove that. Of course, other than the notes I brought

home, I didn't have any. Until now.

I'll refer you to a paper entitled: "A different perspective on conspicuity related motorcycle crashes". Published in 2014 by a group of researchers from the Netherlands, it's based on Dutch police data.

They were actually looking at a slightly different problem. They wanted to see whether:

"acknowledging the differences in exposure - car drivers indeed fail to yield for motorcycles more often than for other cars."

And what they found was interesting:

"Our crash analysis suggests that car drivers do not fail to give priority to motorcycles relatively more often than to another car when this car/motorcycle approaches from a perpendicular angle."

In other words, car drivers have the same 'sorry mate I didn't see you' SMIDSY collisions pulling out in front of other CARS as often as they do with bikes...

...which might throw some light on why making bikes more conspicuous hasn't worked as well as predicted.

But they also discovered there was one situation in which the approaching motorcycle was sig-

nificantly MORE at risk than another car.

And that was when:

"...a car makes a left turn (this is in Holland), and fails to give priority to an oncoming motorcycle. This specific crash scenario occurs more often when the oncoming vehicle is a motorcycle than when it is a car."

Now, think back to my Met police figures. This was precisely the collision they flagged up.

But it's actually quite a rare crash in numbers terms. Far more vehicles pull OUT from the side road than turn ACROSS the rider's path from the other direction.

So the implication is that it must be a much bigger crash.

Why?

Partly because it's (more or less) head-on - the other vehicle is moving diagonally towards the bike, so there's more speed involved.

Partly because we don't see it coming - no-one tells us about this crash so we're looking in the wrong place, towards emerging vehicle on our left rather than at approaching vehicles which might be about to turn.

And partly because it comes out of the blue - there's little chance of braking and shedding speed.

Put it all together and it explains the seriousness of the collision.

So, remember ...

...it's not just the side turning you need to check for turning vehicles, it's the stream of traffic coming towards you too.

For more on SOBS, visit <http://scienceofbeingseen.wordpress.com>

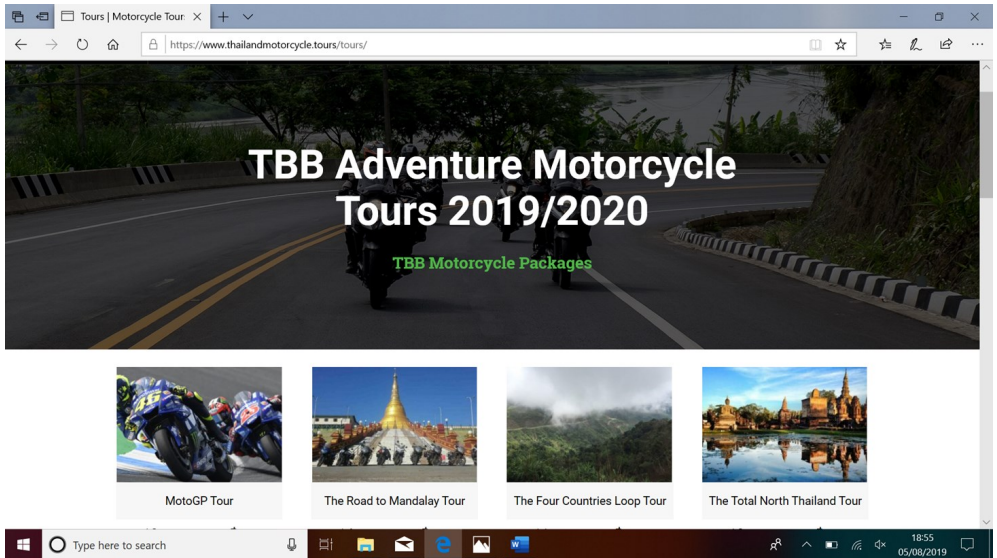
A different perspective on conspicuity related motorcycle crashes, de Craen, S., Doumen, M. J.A., & van Norden, Y. SWOV Institute for Road Safety Research Accident Analysis & Prevention, Volume 63, February 2014, Pages 133-137. Kevin Williams. Survival Skills Rider Training ...because it's a jungle out there

Thailand Motorcycle Tours



SAM member Marcus Ackerman and his wife Tik work as freelance motorcycle tour leaders in Northern Thailand and have negotiated a discount for SAM members. The area has spectacular scenery, an amazing network of roads, gorgeous Thai cuisine & smiley,

friendly locals. What's stopping you! Full details of all their tours can be found on their website, www.tbbtours.com.



Please mention SAM in any enquires/bookings.



1-3 clients normal tour prices

4-7 clients 5% discount

8+ clients 10% discount

Anything you can't find on the website, contact Marcus on **07763 012232**.

KIT REPORTS

MotoPressor Tyre Pressure Gauge

Having a tyre pressure gauge that you can rely on is vital to most of us—after all, it's up there with a stanley knife and a phillips screwdriver as the most-used item in your garage (I counted - I had 44 inflatable tyres with schrader valves!). Like many of my generation, we started out with a chrome/plastic coated pencil gauge. And whilst they may not have been entirely accurate, once we'd compared them with a variety of other gauges (including fore-court ones), we got a reasonable understanding of whether it was +/- 2 or 3 psi from a potential accurate reading.



Into the 90's and digital gauges became the norm, and I went through a couple of them, the most recent one calibrated by a friend in Goodyear to prove its accuracy. This one satisfied me for the last 20 years, but its rigid structure and end-on head made checking bike tyres difficult—the body of the gauge fouled the hub/disc/chain unless a 90° valve extender was used.



I've now finally found the ideal solution for all my needs, supplied by none other than our local resident tyre maintenance expert, Dale Stote at Bike-Seal (see advert back cover). Dale supplies a MotoPressor tyre gauge (by Rocky Creek Designs for those who like such things!). The needle display is sensibly restricted to 60psi (meaning typical pressures are squarely in the centre of the display); the connecting hose is

flexible, so it can access almost any valve; the valve connector has a secure clip, ensuring you don't lose 1 or 2 psi every time you try to fix the gauge to the valve; and the robust housing has a brass deflator valve, allowing you to accurately let out any sur-

plus air to achieve your exact requirements. I have just compared it to my other gauges to determine its approximate accuracy, and I am happy that it is as accurate as I could wish. Not cheap at £16, but definitely a great piece of equipment. **Graham Tulloch**

RIDE REPORTS

Ride Your Other Bike Pancake

An eye problem led to me having to cancel our usual Pancake Express ride in May – unfortunate, as this is usually a very popular ride (as well as being a good source of donations for SAM's nominated charity). Once I was allowed to ride again, it was almost time for another annual event, the "Ride your other Bike" ride, so it seemed sensible to combine the two – and so "Ride your other Pancake" was invented.

The weather was good all week, but Saturday morning was very different, with heavy rain starting around 8am. I am sure some visitors to Southfield Services thought that we were having a competition to see how many motorcyclists could fit in the doorway of Burger King, as we all huddled out of the rain!



Several members who had planned to attend with their older machines cancelled on the morning, due to the poor weather. My GT550M needed a bit of a wash, so it was up for it. Other machinery included Rick's CB750F2, Ian's Thunderbird, Helen's XJR1200, Rob's XV1600 Cruiser and Paul, Ray and



Andy's Scooters. It's great to see such a wide variety of bikes (as well as all the modern stuff, of course).

Once all 21 riders had signed on, it was time to leave – and the rain stopped! With a light wind quickly drying up the road surface, it didn't take long

before we were all enjoying dry, clean tarmac through Horton and Bickenhall to Taunton, before heading back through Othery to Wearne.

Needless to say, all bikes performed perfectly – as they say, bikes like to be ridden, not kept in a garage.



On arrival, Alison had a stock of pancakes ready and waiting, and it didn't take long for everyone to fill their plates and sit out in the sun whilst yours truly ensured that cups were never empty.

By the time everyone left for home, 90 pancakes had been produced, but more importantly, a magnificent £246 was raised from donations for St Margaret's Hospice. So a big thank you to everyone who turned up, and gave so freely to a worthy cause. Hopefully next year I can keep both rides in the calendar.

Graham Tulloch

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SAM Red Ride

"Early Breakfast Run"

Sat. 10th Aug. 2019

07:00 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Rick Chubb

SAM Green Ride

"Relaxing Evening Ride Out"

Wed. 14th Aug. 2019

18:30 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Rick Chubb

SAM Green Ride

"Where Ever The Road May Lead
Us—The Sequel"

Sat. 17th Aug. 2019

13:00 @ Podimore Services

Led by Andy Hall

SAM Red Ride

"Uncle Ricky's Roller Coaster Ride"

Sun. 18th Aug. 2019

08:30 @ Cross Keys, Norton Fitz.

Led by Rick Stowell

SAM Green Ride

"Mad Dogs and Englishmen"

Sun. 25th Aug. 2019

09:00 @ Kelways Inn, Langport

Led by Andy Spiers

SAM Green Ride

"Dorset Dog-Leg"

Sun. 1st Sep. 2019

09:30 @ Podimore Services

Led by TBA

SAM Red Ride

"Exmoor Hairpins Ride"

Sun. 8th Sep. 2019

08:00 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Matt Towill

SAM Committee Meeting

Wed. 11th Sep. 2019

19:30 @ The Lamb & Lion,

Hambridge TA10 0AT

SAM Amber Ride

"Wilts Wander"

Sun. 15th Sep. 2019

09:30 @ Podimore Services

Led by Hugh Beamish

SAM Green Ride

"September Evening Run"

Wed. 18th Sep. 2019

18:30 @ Ilminster Little Chef

Led by Tom Moore

SAM Amber Ride

"Woody Bay Express"

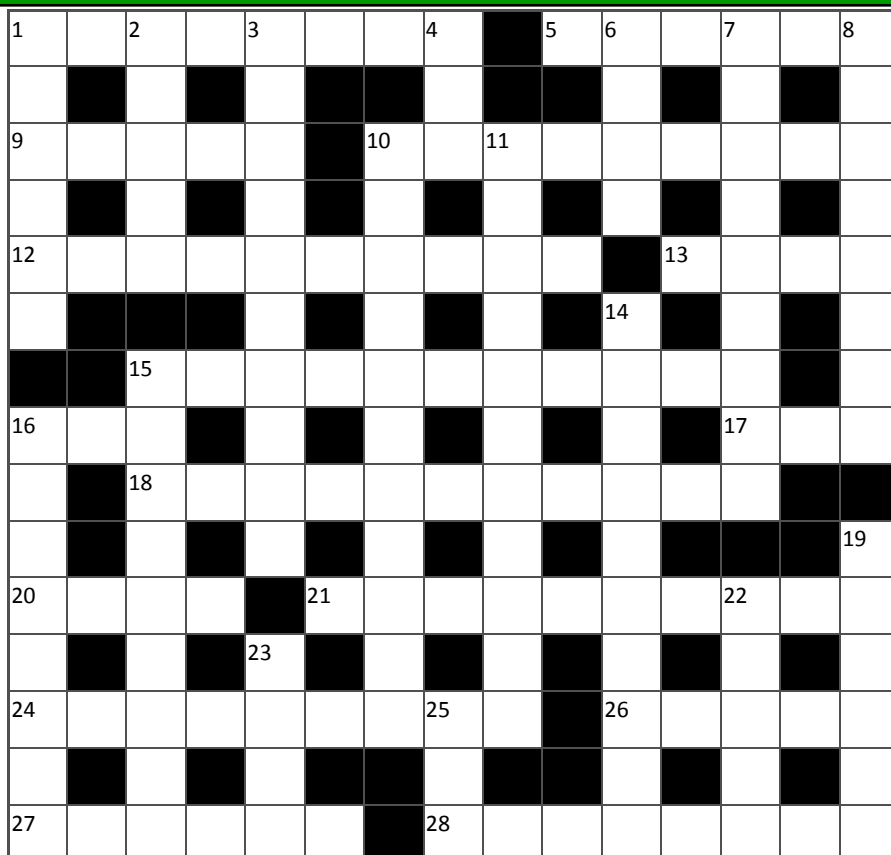
Sun. 22nd Sep. 2019

09:00 @ Cross Keys, Norton Fitz.

Led by Richard Pearse

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

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Boy after former bird is outside (8)
- 5 Dashboard from extreme right wing article replaces saint (6)
- 9 Letter from high explosive in Island bike race article (5)
- 10 Membrane feature of type of petrol pump (9)
- 12 Ace clot imp changed to make complex (10)
- 13 North Briton Squirrel maker – timeless (4)
- 15 What SAM member did after selecting right gear – went faster (11)
- 16 Cry abbreviated expletive (3)
- 17 Aged Honda tourer with side off – not good (3)
- 18 Change, about in the middle row (11)
- 20 Created servant by the sound of it (4)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

21 Hit riches with half American cigarette on front end of BSA (6,4)

24 Teens seen redeployed in a state (9)

26 Den back after time's test (5)

27 Up on your bike (6)

28 Remanufactured before cycle declined to include it (8)

Down

1 Tempt whole with constant not resistance (5)

2 100,000 Btu of heat Hermes held (5)

3 Reissue true place (10)

4 Garland biblical priest reordered (3)

6 At first, alternating current helps eliminate pain (4)

7 Luck academic stumbled over (7,2)

8 Let in and owned up (8)

10 What SAM member sometimes does after choosing right position – slows down (11)

11 Change local option (11)

14 Harshly has his trident lying (10)

15 In a band one diva's deserted (9)

16 Robin's bigger, sporty brother's sword (8)

19 Was in front after sum putrid (6)

22 Window from Ace and Atom builder with alpha to omega (5)

23 Bank list (4)

25 Listener beheaded bear (3)

Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

Solution to Spring 2019 Crossword

Across: 1 Velcro, 5 Springer, 9 Stable Door, 10 Knee, 11 Faceless, 12 Fidget, 13 Kepi, 15 Exercise, 18 Bedstead, 19 List, 21 Wyvern, 23 Increase, 25 Snag, 26 Guided tour, 27 Sheepdog, 28 Saddle.

Down: 2 Extra, 3 Cable ties, 4 Opener, 5 Slow-speed riding, 6 Rarefied, 7 Naked, 8 Elevenses, 14 Every inch, 16 Collected, 17 Teenaged, 20 Screws, 22 Eagle, 24 Skull.

BIKE REPORTS

Honda CB750F2

The first CB750 came out just about the same time as I left school, so by the time I could afford one they were on the last model of single cam design, and the other manufacturers had brought out what were probably better bikes, but I wanted a CB and found this one at the old Vincent and Jerrom dealers in Taunton. I have the original receipt for £1,190 plus £20 road tax, dated 5-1-80 when it was just over a year old (reg. on 15-12-78) so nearly 40

years ago.

Since then it has gone through periods of being a "sports" bike with a three quarter Rickman fairing and race bars fitted, but in later years being returned to naked but with a pair of Jota bars fitted to achieve a comfortable position. I think the original bars went onto another bike.

A few years after buying it I did think about trading in as I wanted a Yamaha FZ750; trade in values were hardly anything and eventu-



ally I decided to keep the CB and bought an FZ privately. The Honda was used on and off but in the last ten years has only been on the road twice, the last time in 2014 when it was used for the likes of "Ride your Other Bike" and the classic "Coast to Coast". After use it has always had the fuel drained and oil put in the bores and fuel



tank, and the exhaust bunged up to minimise damp getting into the engine, otherwise it just gets cleaned and covered up and forgotten.

As it is now old enough to be classed as historic, I decided it might as well be used again (free tax and MOT exempt) as it would only cost according to use, fuel etc. So after getting it re-registered, a new V5C from the DVLA, I dragged it out from the back of the garage, washed out the tank, added some fresh fuel, fitted a new battery and after spinning it over a few times until the oil light went out I pressed the starter. It started after a couple of tries and smoked for a while (the oil in the bores), but soon settled into its normal noisy tick-over. I fitted some new Avons as the old tyres were 10 years plus. I also had to fit a repair kit to the rear master cylinder, otherwise it has just had a good check over and some fresh oil and filter.

So far this year I have done the rides mentioned plus a few short runs. These engines are noisy, mainly due to the primary chains, but once above 2,000 revs they're not too bad. The controls are heavier than modern bikes and the brakes need more effort, but if you take it easy it's still an enjoyable bike to ride. I plan to keep it "taxed" now and use it when the weather is fine and add to its present 55,000 miles.

Rick Chubb

Honda Africa Twin DCT

Until recently I had the same view as Pete Gurl (*one of SAM's founding members—Ed*) about mechanical things, bikes in particular - KISS!! Keep it simple stupid. That is partly why for the longest time I had owned a KTM 950 Adventure, carburetors and no fuel injection, it ran as smooth as a cashmere codpiece. I could also fix most of it myself, and I would argue that the grin factor of this machine is second to none. After owning two of them for the best part of 8 or 9 years I kinda felt like a change, being a bit old fashioned I don't really like the futuristic stick insect look, you know sharp lines and bug like eyes for candles. I was always a fan of the 750 Africa Twin to look at but the handling was a bit pants if you tried to push it through the corners.

For me the new 1000cc version retains the looks of the old with the more



rounded lines and slightly old fashioned bits, like the two rads up high like a dirt bike. Of course it has to be Honda's red white and blue! I had seen a few on the road and thought yeah looks good. I contacted Bransons to ask for a test ride; which they said was fine, but they only had the automatic version to demo. Typically for me, I didn't want to wait for the other one to come in and the salesman said other than the auto gearbox the bike is the same, so I thought why not, in for a penny in for a pound. Well I have never ridden an automatic bike before, not even a scooter; when I started riding I had a Yamaha FS1E. The rep explained the controls and off I went. I am glad he told me to select the sport mode over the D for drive mode - it's more like D for dull, simply because it changes gear way too soon. In sport mode you get a much better feel from the bike and I have to say that the

auto gearbox and the gadgetry that goes with it is so clever that you sometimes swear it reads your mind - wouldn't take long in my case I hear you say, but nevertheless the point stands. The handling is pretty darn good, maybe not quite as flickable as the KTM, but slightly better than the Tiger in my opinion.

I am writing this from Spain which is the Honda's first major test and I have to say that fully loaded it is great and more comfortable than the Katoom. Of course the bike has loads of other trick bits, ABS, traction control and other things that I don't understand, but for me a bike is all about how it feels and handles, and a little bit how it looks. And I have not been disappointed, sure the auto takes some getting used to but actually it works seamlessly and does bring something to the party. I like it.

Tim Radford

Cruisers & Scooters?

With such a rich variety of bikes in our membership, it would be good to hear the views of owners of some of the more unusual machines. An increasing number of cruisers and scooters is evident on rides, so what about telling us about them? How do they compare with "traditional" sports/adventure/tourers? Let us know—with pictures, of course. And don't worry if you don't have a cute dog as a pillion, like Tim Radford's Honda!

MEMBER'S TRIPS

Back (to Spain) at Last

Over the years Maggie and I have visited a few places on the bike, including Ireland, France and Spain, the latter becoming our favourite due to the weather, empty roads once clear of the coast, and of course the brilliant roads of the various mountain ranges. Overall, due to its close proximity to Santander and varied countryside, the Picos De Europa mountains have become our destination or area to pass through on every trip to Spain. Recent years have, for some reason, seen us miss out on any bike rides abroad, so last winter I mentioned to June and Roy, long-time friends we met at the TT in 1990, that I fancied a return to the Picos. A plan was laid with the main points being a maximum 150 miles a day and to stay in the Picos area for the whole trip.

After picking up a Brittany Ferries brochure at the NEC, we picked our dates and decided to book the first two and last two nights near to Potes which is about 75 miles from Santander, this gave us a discounted price if booked before the end of Feb. which we did. A further five nights were booked via Booking .com, who I had not used before but worked out well.

Sunday 14th April found us meeting Roy and June at Exeter services for a coffee, before heading for Plymouth, and a fairly quiet ride through the city to the ferry terminal. After a chilly wait to board we were soon settled in and enjoyed the crossing to Spain with a couple of Dolphin pods sighted and a calm Bay of Biscay.

Monday as we approached the coast we saw the snow-capped



mountains, we wondered what weather we would encounter over the next 10 days? The roads out of the port seem to change each time we visit, but we were soon on our way and followed the coast for a change, until we got to Pesues where we took the N621 inland following the Rio Deva and its gorge inland to Potes and the 5km to Lon, a small village up a dead end road. Lon is just off the CA185 which terminates at Fuente De and only has a few houses the hotel and a small church, perfect if you want to get away from things. Weather wise, our first day had given us a biblical thunder storm, forcing us to take cover under a filling station forecourt, at least now it had dried up.

Tuesday after a good night's sleep, (no rocking, clean mountain air and plenty of wine), we rode up to the cable car at Fuente De. It still amazes me how far away the other end is, and how fast the cars pass each other half way. 3mins 40 seconds top to bottom, or vice versa. The top station is 753 metres above the bottom station, and the cable length is 1420



metres. Stunning scenery and lots of snow at the top, a wire mesh platform for the brave and an information centre and café, well worth the €17 cost. Back to the bikes and to Potes for lunch, then up to Puerto De Piedrasluengas view point, a great road but piles of poo to remind you of the possible presence of cattle. Back at Lon I sat out on the balcony in a T shirt enjoying the warmth after the morning's snow.

Wednesday left Lon and followed the N621 to Riano, stopping at the Mirador De Llesba for a photo, then at Riano for fuel and coffee, and as is the norm in this area, a piece of cake included, all for a euro and a half. Twisty, quiet roads all the way, and after another

er café stop, we arrived at Cabanaquinta. A couple of problems with language before being shown into our apartment by a lady whose English was on a par with my Spanish (I am learning). Great place though, with bread, cheese, ham and a home made cake provided by the owners.



Thursday a day off the bikes today, a wander round the town then a long walk along the river finding old industrial remains and both the main road and railway line washed away by recent flooding. An evening in one of the bars where they serve the local cidre by pouring from a bottle held high

into a small glass, entertaining if a little wasteful.

Friday should have been a short ride to Pola De Somiedo, everything seemed fine until we crested a hill to find a sprawling city in front. How did Oviedo get there? After a coffee and asking directions at a garage, I got lost



again before deciding to take the A66 motorway south. I hate motorways, but, when there is hardly any traffic and you can safely admire the views, and you climb over a mountain pass and go through long tunnels that curve,

I can put up with it. Back on track we find the road to Pola including a bit of off road and a great switchback mountain pass. Our hostel was compact but clean and with friendly owners (as they all were). On exploring the town later we found many people gazing at the hills above. On enquiry, we were shown the scope screen by one of the crowd. A wild bear and cub happily romping on the mountain slopes. over the two days stay we were invited to share these views by several people, quite a thrill when you realise just how rare wild bears are in western Europe.



Saturday lovely sunny day, so we took the bikes down the valley to Belmonte De Miranda for a coke, then returned, dropped off the girls and had a little exploratory ride, you know, I wonder what's up that road. Well, nice road, gets narrow, very twisty, a few houses, very narrow, steep tracks in all directions, time to turn round and get back for a beer. That evening we enjoyed a meal at one of the local bars, on asking for the bill and waiting a while, we were presented with 20 euro change ! We eventu-



ally managed to explain that we had not yet paid !

Sunday after breakfast and another spot of bear watching, we re-traced our route up and over Puerto De Somiedo, to the C623, C626, then around the banks of Embalse De Robla, then past many coal mines to our one night stop at Valdore, not much there but good rooms

and restaurant and a walk along the river, and of course a bar.

Monday just after leaving Valdore we passed through Cremenés, which looked like a place to stay in the future. On to Riano and a coffee stop. One of our favourite places because of the views, the roads in all directions, including the N621 being brilliant apart from some frost damage in places. A few bikes stopped for re-fuelling while we had our break, but not much other traffic.

Stopped for a photo at Puerto De San Glorio, a place we first heard cow bells in Spain, back in 2000. Then down through the countless bends back to Potes. A cool coke in town before returning to Lon for our last two nights.

Tuesday not sure what the weather was going to do so rode into town for a wander along the fast flowing river with its old bridges and many old buildings, although much of the centre was destroyed during the war.

As it was staying fine we rode up to the view point at Puerto De Piedrasluengas again. This time we met the cattle, four on one side, one on the other side, of course he had to join the others! Very cold at the top, about 20 degrees lower than in town, but stunning views and



enjoyed the bends. Back to the hotel for a last night meal.

Wednesday woke up to rain, we had been extremely lucky since our first day of rain. Most of Spain had suffered flooding or heavy snow but it had missed us. By the time we left it was nearly dry so I took the road down to La Hermida, then right towards Rionansa and Cabezon. It really is as twisty as it appears on the map, with some very tight hairpins. a great way to finish the trip before finding the motorway back to port.

Very windy in Santander, had a wander around then watched the Pont Aven return. A bit of hanging around but once on board we found our rooms ready and settled in, wondering if the wind would mean a rough crossing?

Thursday well it was a bit choppy but by the morning it had calmed down and by mid-day we were on deck in the sun. On arrival in Plymouth we were surprised to find our car deck contained only a dozen bikes. Not one other vehicle. Normally the boat is solid with cars, lorries and hundreds of bikes. I don't know what was on the other decks but we assumed that with Brexit supposed to happen while we were away, many

were wary of traveling. I had been told there were only about 400 passengers, (it will carry 2,400). Once through customs we had a pleasant ride home in sunshine, saying our goodbyes at Exeter services.

I think we achieved our goal, only 881 miles door to door. Happy pilgrims, thousands of bends, so happy riders, little traffic, varied scenery, sun, snow, wildlife and the friendly people of the Picos Europa Mountains.

Both Roy and I took our Honda NC750s, for such low bhp. bikes they handled everything without complaint, two up with luggage, mountain passes, 130 kph on the A66, even on the fairly steep up-hill bits. No complaints from behind and only a slight drop in mpg to 78.

Three days after our return, the Pont Aven had an engine room fire. Unfortunately for those on board, she returned to France for repairs, leaving passengers with a long journey to Spain and no return ferry. We were indeed very fortunate to have enjoyed such good luck all round and my sympathies if you were on that sailing.

Rick Chubb

TYRE DISCOUNTS FOR SAM MEMBERS

SAM members are able to take advantage of discounted tyre supplies from 2 local companies, on production of your IAM RoadSmart membership card. **Furlong Tyres** in Yeovil and **A303 Motorcycles** at West Camel (near Sparkford) are well known to many existing members who can confirm the quality of service and products these suppliers offer. Due to the variety of products and add-on services involved, specific discount percentages cannot be listed, but give them a ring with your requirements and you can be sure of a competitive quote.

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Spring 2019 Caption



Thanks to Alf Bagshaw, who came up with the following Caption for the Spring 2019 photograph :

“OK Tom, you may have a red cape, but Clark Kent didn’t have red hair!”

TAILPIECE #8

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

It was late afternoon and the rider was making good progress South from Modena, through the mountains towards Montecatini Terme on fabulous, sinuous roads used for testing by Ducati. After the summit, the route used a secondary road. There was barely a straight between the sweeping curves, tight turns and hairpin bends. As a bonus the road had just been surfaced, the beautiful black-top was bounded with crisp, new, white lines at each edge – the rider felt like Rossi on his home circuit.

The rider soon realized that the ribbon was just wide enough for two lanes and sure enough he quickly came to the flagman protecting the truck crew who were painting the centre line. They had just finished a section and were standing, looking down the hill, admiring their artistry. At each break in the centre line they had precisely placed a small red cone. In the afternoon sun, the view of distant hills, cypress trees and white buildings with red roofs, really was a picture -perfect scene.

The rider was called through and a few corners later met a bus coming up, sweeping from side to side, scattering and crushing the cones and transferring white paint as garish graffiti across the pristine tarmac.

CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!



I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo, taken at the recent "Ride your other Pancake" SAM ride. Suggestions to me at Tullochg@aol.com, we'll publish the best one in the next issue.

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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.

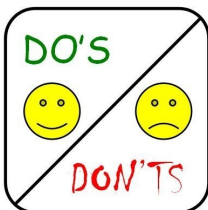
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

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.

Committee Meetings

Every member of SAM is welcome to attend these, which are held at The Lamb & Lion in Hambridge. Please feel free to join in, give us your thoughts & ideas, put forward your suggestions on how to further improve our Club. Or just enjoy a night out.

SOUTH WEST PENINSULA SPRING RALLY—4th April 2020

Our planning for this ever-popular event is now in full swing, so it's time for you to start your own planning - get the date in your diary; are you going to participate in it as an entrant, or as a helper? If you're entering the rally, who are you going to do it with? Which parts of the south west peninsula would you like to explore? We'll have some checkpoints there! Watch this space for more details.