

Spring 2021

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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Front Cover: Kaye May on Countisbury Hill near Lynmouth,
offering us a taste of freedom to come in the coming months.



FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



As we take the baby steps out of the third, and for me, most draining lockdown, it seems almost too good to be true that we are allowed out on our bikes, and to see at least a couple of our friends at a time. My feeling is that just about every one of us is uncharacteristically fragile, and prone to acts and reactions which we would not recognize as part of who we think we are. I've hardly done a journey on the roads where someone has not behaved in an appar-

ently erratic or aggressive way, and I've tried to build that extra allowance for unpredictability into my own riding plans, always taking the more cautious of two possible approaches. Equally, I've made mistakes of my own

and seen very considerate driving from other people which has got me out of potential trouble. The YouTube blogger, Reg Local, has done an excellent piece on mistakes on the road – how to deal with those from others as well as your own. Search YouTube for “How to deal with mistakes” under Reg Local.



In other news, lockdown seems to have taken more of a toll on my health than I anticipated: My breast cancer has returned in multiple sites and geriatric care homes are no longer a concern for me. My oncologist has said that I should make it through another 2-3 years with appropriate treat-

ment, but already I'm finding that my confidence in lugging my bikes about is getting shakier. At present I'm just so glad that all my friends in SAM, and SAM itself, have been a part of my life for the last 23 years or so. I'm not the slightest bit precious about anyone mentioning this to me, neither will I mind if it's a topic you prefer to avoid.



The deadline for contributions to the next issue is 15th July; many thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue. **Gina Herridge**

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Looking back a few months I did not think I would be sat here now writing my first Chairman's Chatter for Full Chat. What a few months that has been! It is very evident that we have been through some changes at a club officer level, I can honestly say that it is something I never want to have to go through again (and I am sure the people involved all feel the same), but we are where we are, and it's great to see there is some light at the end of the tunnel, time to move onwards and upwards. As you know we have just held our AGM for 2021, I am hoping when this is published that the minutes will be available for anyone that was unable to attend the Zoom meeting - hopefully this will be the last AGM we have to hold via Zoom. We have a newly elected committee that I am sure will work together to do the best for the club that we can over the next year. I would like to thank the last committee and officers for all they did for the club during 2020/21.

I know not many of you will know me that well so thought I would introduce myself a little more. I am 36 and live in Minehead- it's a lovely place to live, even if the travel to get anywhere decent can be tiresome at times. I have lived in Somerset for the past 16 years. I work for Openreach as an Operational Manager and have worked there for 14 years now. Crikey, that makes me feel old writing that down!



I have included a picture of my Puppy Misty 8 months old (white German Shephard) as I know a lot of you have seen various shots of her as she tries to jump on me while we have



been on Zoom meetings, she does like to be involved, so thought I would introduce you all officially, and so I am not picking favourites I have also included my other dog, Storm (Alaskan Malamute).

As for riding I have been riding bikes since I was 16 and started off on a moped (don't judge). My first 125 was an Aprilia AF1 sports Pro, I loved that bike, but it seemed to spend more time in the garage than on the road as they couldn't get the oil mix right, until eventually the engine decided to eat itself while I was riding along the A303. I passed my DA test back in 2014 and had a number of bikes, before ending up with a BWM R1200 GS (old before my time, I know) - I am on my second one of these now. I do spend a lot of time on two wheels as I am usually out with a group of mates most Sundays or riding for the Freewheelers EVS Blood Bike group, and most holidays are on my bike - in Wales, Scotland, Spain, a long weekend in Cornwall or going to the Isle of Man for the TT. It seems that I have booked this more times than I have actually been as the last 2 have been cancelled due to COVID, but I'm hoping 2022 will actually go ahead. In terms of COVID and our club, we are starting to come out of lockdown for the third and hopefully final time. Since the 12th of April we have been able to restart some of our activities. Our first bubble rides happened on the 18th April with 6 rides in total setting off, which is a great number for our first day of ride outs. Observed rides have started again, and some buddy observer training/ refresher rides. Hopefully there will be more lifting of restrictions on the 17th of May so we will be able to move another step closer to getting back to normality.

I have been very surprised at the number of new associates I have seen being passed to the club from IAM over the past few weeks, 6 in the last 2 weeks. This is great for us as a club, and I hope this continues. We are

running very healthily as a club at the moment, but if you do have any ideas or suggestions that you think we could introduce, or do better, then please do speak to your newly elected Member's rep, Janet Short.

I look forward to meeting more of you out on some club rides soon.

Kev Colmer



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SAM NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS!

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:

Paul O'Connor on 24th April, riding a BMW F800G-SA and observed by Simon Greenwood

Barry Smith on 4th May riding a BMW S1000XR.

Barry was observed by Jez Martin.



A big thank you to Simon and Jez for their help in assisting Paul and Barry to achieve these results.

REMINDER TO ALL OBSERVERS:

Could you please ensure that you let me know (Tullochg@aol.com) when one of your associates passes their Advanced Test, so that their success can be included in the following issue of Full Chat? This should include their name, the date of the Test and the bike they were riding—their successes will give confidence to other new associates, whilst bike details is just something that we're all interested in, demonstrating the broad church of machinery within SAM!

Members' Soapbox

Please let me introduce myself as a new member of the SAM Committee. At the recent AGM I put myself forward for the role of Members Rep. It's a new role on the SAM Committee, to be the voice of members for all things IAM and SAM. If there are any ideas, suggestions, or issues members would like raised on their behalf, I'm your contact. The role was created for you - SAM members. Without Members, there is no SAM. The aim is to make SAM the best of the best for ALL members. We are already an active group but there must be lots of ideas out there in the

wealth of knowledge among our members.

I have a few ideas, but there must be plenty more fantastic ideas and suggestions among our group, so let's hear them. Email me with anything SAM related, good or bad. Hopefully, lots of splendid stuff will come flooding in.

In the meantime, enjoy every ride, with the IPSGA mantra and the words of our industrious observers in our heads. Hope to meet many of you over the coming months, on SAM rides and at Thruxton Skills Days – they are awesome!

Janet Short, Members Rep. 2shorts@btconnect.com



CONTACT DETAILS

If your contact details change (especially email address), please inform sammembershipsecretary@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 previous Committee meetings (held at The Lamb & Lion, Hambridge before Covid restrictions, and then via Zoom Conferencing) can be obtained from the Secretary on request.

IAM Inform

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

BIKING NEWS

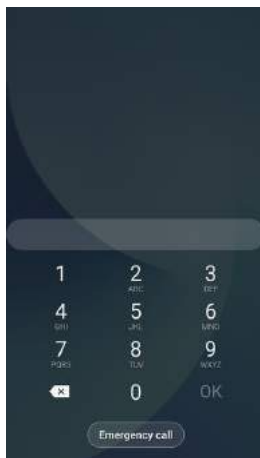
ICE

We've all probably heard about **ICE** – In Case of Emergency. Over the years there have been several ways of storing your contact details so that they can be used in an emergency.

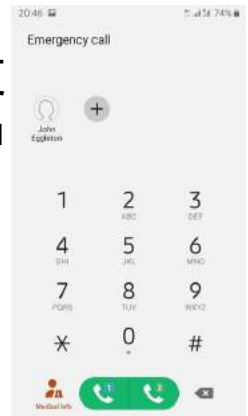
Hopefully you (or anyone else) won't have to use it but here's a really simple way of storing your details on a mobile phone which allows anyone to access them without being able to access anything else.

Apparently it works on android and i-phones.

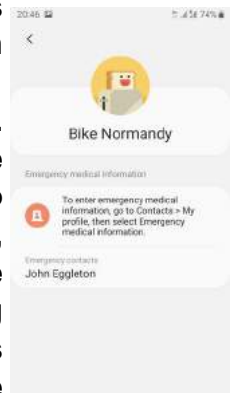
1 - Swipe your phone (Ed—from a locked screen) and you'll see something like this. Click Emergency Call.



2 - In the bottom left corner click Medical Information



3 - This takes you to an Emergency Medical page. Of course you'll have to enter the info, which can be done by going to Contacts then My Profile and select the Emergency Medical info.



John Eggleton

Insurance & Hire Bikes

As most of you know I purchased a new R1250RT and picked it up on 16th April from London.

On the 17th I went out for a ride with a couple of SAM members just to get a feel of roads with bends. We set off and went to Porlock and returned to Taunton on our way home.

We came back into Taunton and along Wellington Road, and whilst filtering, a car just pulled across the road in front of me. Lucky for me one of riders had his web cam recording and it was all filmed, that proved I was not at fault.

Anyway, I then called the claims company to record the accident as my nearside pannier was scratched, no other damage.

I was informed by them that they would need to pick up the bike and have it for about 6 weeks to fully inspect and make sure there was no other damage. But do not worry, they said, we will hire you a bike, which will be a Honda, and I could have any size up to 1000cc at the 3rd party's expense.

I told them that my bike was road worthy and did not need to be sat in a garage for 6 weeks. They insisted that that is what needed to be done, and went on to give all



the sales talk about warranties and doing the repair properly with OEM parts etc etc.

I let them carry on and booked the replacement bike which was going to be an African Twin. I then had the BMW serviced a couple of days later and nothing was found untoward, the bike was road worthy, which is what I thought.

I then called up the claims company and told them that as the bike was road worthy and the only damage was a scratched pannier there was no need to have the bike taken away. They could send someone to see it if they wished, even though they had all the pictures and video. I also stated that in my mind I was playing a part in a deception by allowing them to take the bike, for which they

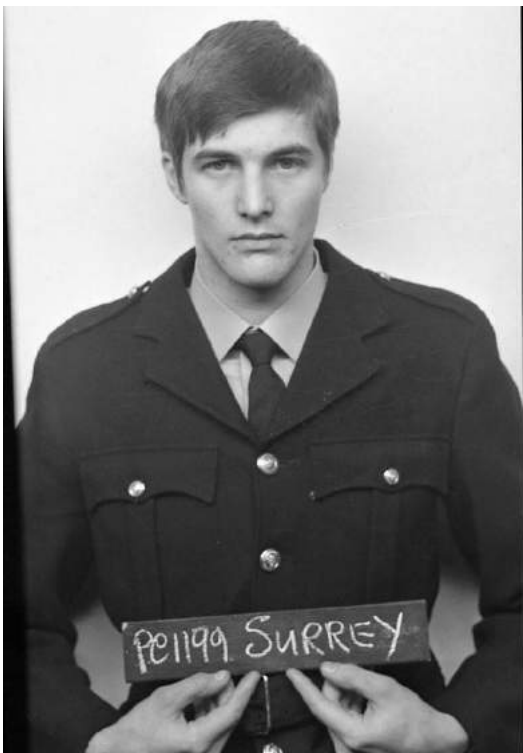
would tell the 3rd party that the bike was not road worthy and need to be taken away, in my mind even if there was no offence then morally it's wrong.

They then said well if we are not going to hire you a bike, they would not be going to continue the claim.

I asked them for the 3rd party's details, which they provided, and the call was terminated.

I called the 3rd parties ins and explained what had gone on and my thoughts. The first thing they said was Thanks for being up front and honest. They have now taken my details and evidence and I am just awaiting their reply.

I relayed this story to a fellow rider



in London and before I could say too much he said did they want the bike for 6 weeks and was it ***** company. I affirmed, he stated that they did the same to him, his damage was just a scratched fairing. He said that he let them have it because he had another bike. When the invoice came in for his repair, he had to confirm that it was correct before his insurance would pay for it and the cost of the hire bike was £9000 for 6 weeks hire. Is it no surprise that insurance premiums are high?

I think there are a couple of things here to remember.

- Don't have an accident.
- Be careful if you are told you have to have a hire bike.
- Make sure someone in your party is recording it.
- If you are told you must have a hire bike, go straight to 3rd party's insurance and tell them why.

It may well be that if people do this then these companies might go out of business or Ins companies will start to query the invoice and ask for evidence that a hire bike is really needed.

We can always learn.

Martin Surrey

BikeFEST

How to turn your 'track day refugee' into a COVID secure BikeFEST in five easy steps.

START POINT



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3



FULL CHAT

13

SPRING

STEP 4



STEP 5



RESULT



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Nigel Short



Batteries—What's the Answer?

In 2011, on a dark, December evening, I donned my helmet, sat astride my 2008 700cc Honda Deauville, pushed the starter-button and heard the feared 'click' from the solenoid indicating no turn-over of the engine. Yep, the battery was flat, no warning, it worked perfectly hours earlier that evening, as it had done since 2008 when I bought the bike new; 53500 miles previously. The journey ended after I called my recovery service who jumped the battery, started me and I made it home (...don't stop that engine ANYwhere). Many of us have experienced similar I guess, or maybe not? In fact, since that 2011 failure I've had three other batteries fail on me with three-year-old well-maintained bikes (along with



a few Honda wheel and steering bearings, time for another story perhaps?). A pretty poor record I'd say.

My worst battery failure was, having ridden to Portsmouth one torrentially wet evening (ever felt the satisfaction of riding 70 miles in torrential wet, dark, heavy traffic and done it safely? Its a great feeling!). I pulled up outside my hotel anticipating the morrow's ferry to Santander. On attempting to restart the 8 year-old Beemer R1200R - not even a 'click' this time but still no starting. This was more confusing as the read-out LCD vomited all sorts of coded messages which confused me and the recovery fitter completely; and the motor failed its jump-start sur-



gery. After I'd waved my mates on the ferry away and been recovered home to Somerset, the LCD messages led me to consider all sorts of electronic wizardry and a voltage check on the battery - all to no avail. In desperation I bought a new battery thinking I'd start with a clean slate as the starter *had* turned the motor over lazily a few times in the previous week. It blooming worked, new battery, problem fixed - ferry and mates gone!! Hindsight would have been really useful although sadly not in stock that night.



Currently I run the same (on probation for a second chance), R1200R which is now ten years old and doing well. I also run a 750 Honda Integra scooter (five years old). I cover about 6000 miles on each annually and both have now had the replacement battery therapy, both after letting me down. I keep one or the other on a Swedish CTEK battery

charger/conditioner continually live and charging. The Be-em has had periods of up to two months without use, and the Honda never more than about 4 weeks - until lock-down.

The point I wonder is that despite our batteries becoming longer-lived, less maintenance-dependent (remember topping up the acid in each of the six cells and vaseline-ing the terminals?), I reckon they have become more unpredictable and more prone to fail without warning. What's the answer? Tell me please.

What occurs to me is that on any 'previously loved' bike, with unknown battery provenance, should I immediately install a new battery or, with a bought from new, should I change the battery on its, say, sixth birthday every time? That policy is not supported by my BMW K series experiences which in-





cluded a K100RT commuted for 74500 and 4 years, K75RT, commuted for 116,500 miles and eight years, all without battery problems. Renewing a perfectly good-seeming battery is of course expensive and presents issues of poor sustainability but would preclude a very inconvenient break-down. Is there another way, am I missing something?

Answers on a post-card please (remember them?) **Andy Hall**

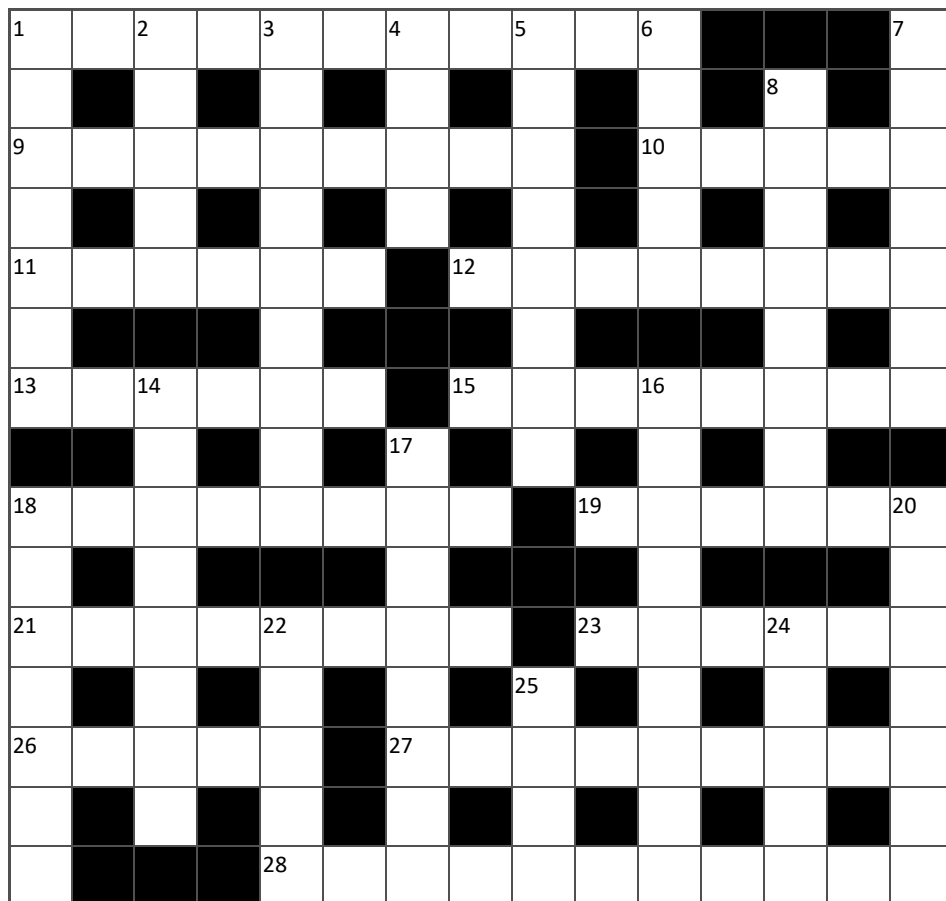
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

As I write this, we are hopefully heading out of our 3rd Coronavirus Lock-down. We've been able to enjoy a couple of cluster rides (of 6 bikes/people) within the Government and IAM RoadSmart rules, which were well received by those who were lucky enough to grab a space. Fingers crossed the continuing easing of lockdown arrangements will shortly allow us to arrange Group rides of up to 30 people (in 2 Groups, of course, to avoid inconvenience to other road users). Jez Martin, our events coordinator, is currently working with potential ride leaders to develop an Events List for the latter half of the year, so keep a close eye on your emails/Facebook over the coming weeks to see what delights await us. I am sure it will seem strange initially, but hopefully we will soon be back to the variety and frequency of SAM Group rides that many of us used to enjoy so much.

Graham Tulloch



CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 There may be no rich man as out of keeping with the age (11)
 9 Slide a new church into a dale (9)
 10 Massive insect follows soldier (5)
 11 Tiny bit drunk (6)
 12 Funny film; Ruth jovial (8)
 13 Connecting face on pipe funnel, again Grace emptied (6)
 15 In headland's lee, Pin goes dormant (8)
 18 Sailing thing upset after cay to the west (8)
 19 Agree, disheartened about river furthest from the earth (6)
 21 Accompany Italian and play along (2,4,2)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

- 23** Very much times 50% (2,4)
26 and **20** Motorcycle for Prince Harry for example (5,7)
27 Deadlock; past its best on China? On the contrary (9)
28 Team followed but diverted (11)

Down

- 1** Separated; made from a component (1,4,2)
2 Inca war dance holds prize (5)
3 Lad confused in height of forward illumination (9)
4 Former working church (4)
5 Some dined, I bled – uneatable! (8)
6 Power sounds like a small contribution (5)
7 Table-cricket side supports spectators (7)
8 Foxing graduate with very loud fish (8)
14 Mischievous behaviours entrances (8)
16 My sea hemp potion brings on breathing difficulties (9)
17 Disinterested, dune ibis' last beds uncovered (8)
18 Dairy products churn Roy's gut (7)
20 See **26**
22 The Parisian follows, volunteers anecdotes (5)
24 A player with the wind on the wrong side (5)
25 Huge tub with sulphur in (4)

Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

Solution to Winter 2021 Crossword

Across: 1 Liaison, 5 Braided, 9 Wind chill, 10 Lever, 11 Enemas, 12 Corroded, 13 Submit, 15 Anna Ford, 18 Academic, 19 Abates, 21 Absentee, 23 Groove, 26 Dirge, 27 Beautiful, 28 Nyerere, 29 Admired.

Down: 1 Lawyers, 2 Annie, 3 Socialise, 4 Nail, 5 Balloons, 6 Adler, 7 Divide out, 8 Derided, 14 Brasserie, 16 Arboretum, 17 Likeable, 18 Abandon, 20 Spelled, 22 Niece, 24 Offer, 25 Data.

BIKE REPORTS

Triumph Trident 660



Well, lucky me to get my hands on a new Triumph Trident 660.

A couple of mates are in the market for a middleweight and this one comes in at a very competitive price here in Asia, and they asked my opinion.

For anyone who does not know me, I started biking at 14, have been around and riding bikes since then pretty much

every day be it commuting, dispatching, camera bike rider, limo bike rider, touring UK/Europe and have been pretty much permanently based now in Northern Thailand for the last 12+ years, venturing back to the UK when possible to train/see family plus ride my shared ST1300. Now in my 50's I have owned far too many bikes - let's say 55+ from 50cc to 1300cc, and covered quite a few kilometres and miles here and there.

So The Bike! This is only my personal view, check out the huge list of bloggers & reviewers for full specs, and the Triumph pages.

This bike feels small but punches above its medium weight! As soon as you swing a leg over it you do kind of tuck into it with your knees gripping the tank and feet up a bit. I am 180cm and around 90kg and can get both feet firmly on the floor.

Pushing and walking the bike around is a doddle and the turning circle is not too bad. The seat at first felt pretty firm and slanted forward, but after a 200k ride gave no real problems and you can shift around a bit if no pillion on back.

For this style of bike of course someone small can hop on the back with pegs not too high, but lack of anything to hold onto means you will need

the aftermarket grab handles.

My wife was eyeing up my love handles so it was a solo ride this time.

Jumping off my Vstrom 650 with its plush seat, soft suspension and so-so brakes this was going to be a totally different ride. Start it up and you're rewarded with a lovely sound from the exhaust pipe and triple engine.

Snicking into first is a doddle with easy smooth shifting up and down, and no false neutrals during my ride. Getting into neutral being easy to find when needed. Nice positive gear box, instruments clear to read even in the bright sun light and sharp at night - you can adjust the brightness, but none of the switches are back-lit for night riding if that's your thing. LED lights all round with a headlight that gives a good spread of light. Minor grumble is the flasher (ie high to low beam) is an on/off one, and easy to leave on high beam If you don't press it again.

Standard mirrors that don't vibrate, give a good spread of view and don't just show your elbows. I'm liking the look of Triumph's aftermarket bar end ones from stock photos, and they would clean up the looks even more. Now on the looks front it's growing on me and it's definitely a bike you need to see in the flesh, plus sit on and test. I think even if you're over 6ft you could manage on it as long as you wiggle about and are looking for a slightly sporty feel.



The bars are slightly tipped forward; personally I would raise them a bit but they do offer good feel to pop in and out of traffic without being too wide, and give good leverage to steer the bike about.

The fit and finish looks good and at this price point one can only be impressed. For anyone who is lucky enough to live in Chiang Mai you know what delightful roads we have on our doorstep, with a variety of road surfaces from race track smooth to highly polished to crumbling and pitted, so it was interesting to see how it handled.

I am no expert when it comes to suspension but the non-adjustable front suspension gave no problems on a variety of surfaces – it steered neutrally, did not dive, and inspired confidence and rewarded a confident hand but also cosseted if feeling lazy. The back suspension for myself was set up a bit too hard but I did not fiddle with the standard settings and after a few kilometres I started to get into the swing of a firmer ride. It does suit a more committed rider and comes into its own on, say, the Samoan loop. For anyone getting off a sports bike there would be no problems, it's just this rider getting used to a softy ride on adventure style bikes.

Now to the star of this package, the engine! It's an absolute beaut, with plenty of roll on power from the word go. Come up to a tight uphill hairpin and it will grunt its way around even if you're in a higher gear than you thought, having not checked out the gear indicator or just feeling lazy, going down the hills just line up the corner, use the engine with a touch of the brakes and you can really get into a confident groove.

The brakes have plenty of feel, the front does its job being not grabby or sharp, can't complain about the back either.

The stock tyres gripped during a hot day with smoke filled air and ash, branches and the normal hazards Thai roads can present us, only a couple of times I noticed the traction control kick momentarily in. But it's getting into the hot season and most of us know how fun some of the roads





can get.

Personally I like the more basic style of bike with less rider gizmos - ABS, traction control and a couple of rider modes etc is enough and keeps things simple. I think you grow into this style, and compared with its rivals (say the Honda CB650 that you just get on and go, but that sometimes can feel boring, or the fruity but slightly flighty MT07, or the Z650 that to me just feels a bit raw, or the lovely engine in the Suzuki SV

range but getting dated in looks), this bike is a pretty polished allrounder in most departments.

Like all riders, if I could I would have at least 5 styles of bikes parked up at my disposal for different needs. This bike is being marketed at all levels, be it new rider, experienced or getting back into bikes.

I think if it does it for you on looks and price you won't be disappointed. I'm always happy to natter over a coffee. I really did not want to hand the key back.

Pros: - Long service intervals; competitive price (309,000 baht); real world useable power; simple but easy and modern instruments.

Cons: - I am not in the market to buy yet; be nice to get grab handles as standard; some small tie down points to add soft luggage easily would be helpful (but Triumph does have its own tank bag and rear bag on offer); few small tingles through the pegs around the legal limit.

Huge thanks to the team at Triumph Chiang Mai for trusting me with this well prepared and immaculate little winner.

Marcus Acreman

Our Choice of Bike

Back in spring 2018 I took the plunge and bought a base model Triumph 1200 Tiger (nee Explorer). Fortunately we all have different criteria when it comes to which bikes we chose to ride. It makes for endless conversations about our various choices. I rode the Tiger all that summer including a trip to Germany (Nurburgring), but it just didn't give me that confidence and "yes" factor. Like all modern Triumphs it was well finished and excelled on mile munching.



So in the autumn I had to admit defeat and the Tiger 1200 had to go. At the time Fowler's were selling new KTM 1090 Adventures for a shade under 10 grand on the road, a bargain. I took the Triumph to their premises in Bristol and a deal was done. A few days later I rode home on my new KTM 1090 Adventure and within a few miles I was grinning from ear to ear, the right choice had been made. My right choice

would have been someone else's wrong choice, of course! Three years later and I still love the KTM. I have just fitted a pair of Continental Trail Attack 3, they suit the bike and myself very well.

Hopefully we will soon be able to ride out together unrestricted and spend endless hours discussing our choice of motorcycle, choice of tyres and pass on our ex-





periences to help others make their own informed choices. **Matt Towill**

MEMBER'S ADVENTURES

Bike Hire in Spain

We have thought about taking the bike across to Europe and exploring for quite some time but as yet haven't got round to it. For several years we have had walking holidays in the mountains of the Costa Blanca region. We always go during November to take in the Moto GP at Valencia, it also breaks up the winter a bit (the weather is usually warm and sunny in Spain at this time of year). Prior to our trip in 2017 I came across a bike hire firm located in Calpe so of course looked into it.

There was a good selection of

bikes available and we went for an 850 Triumph Bonneville as a comfortable bike suitable for a leisurely ride through the mountains. On arriving to pick up the bike we were very impressed by the selection of bikes and immaculate condition they were all in.

We used our own gear except for helmets. Kevin, who owns the bike hire firm, made sure that we had comfortable, nicely fitting lids. We weren't very familiar with the Calpe area so Kevin and Lynda kindly suggested that we followed

On the Bonneville in typical Spanish weather for November



them out of town in the direction we intended riding.

The main N332 runs roughly parallel with the coastline and through Calpe. We headed north for a few miles and then turned inland. We passed through the village of Jalon and meandered through several more villages in beautiful lowland countryside. We made our way back towards the mountains, no need for maps or satnav, the mountains were standing very high in the distance so we just took the roads that seemed to lead there. The first area that we ascended was on the north side of the Bernia Ridge, plenty of concentration was needed on the winding road. A lot of the hairpins were very steep with severe camber, I suppose to take rainwater away.

At the time of the trip I was riding a Ducati 748 and Monster 1000 at home, so it was nice to try a bike with a completely different character and I have always admired the Bonneville family of bikes.

The following year we were very much looking forward to our day on the bike during our holiday. Kevin and Lynda had sold the Bonneville so we went for a Honda NC750S. Once again, we headed inland in roughly the same area but decided to go a bit further before heading west towards the mountains.



The Honda on an empty
Guadelest road

When we did change direction, it was on a winding and undulating road through amazing, scenic countryside. The bike seemed to seldom be upright as we went through left then right corners. Most of the village names started with Ben, such as Benirrama, Beniaia, Benissili, Benillup etc! It made it a bit confusing when we stopped for a break and chat about the ride. We headed back via Guadelest which is a spectacular town but usually very busy with tourist coaches. As it was late in the day it was quieter than previous visits. On the many tight bends I found

my boot was often scraping the tarmac, I like to think it was brilliant cornering right to the limit but more likely the Honda didn't have a lot of ground clearance.

For our 2019 holiday we decided to have a longer trip. We arranged bike hire for a day quite early in the holiday and this time went for a Triumph

Tiger 800. I found the riding position very comfortable and the wide-ish bars made cornering smooth and easy. Jane thought it was an extremely comfortable bike and we covered a lot of miles with frequent breaks to admire the scenery or stop at welcoming rural cafes. We enjoyed it so much that we went back the following week for another day on the bike.



Kevin is very keen on KTMs and has a good selection. I really wanted to hire the KTM 790 Duke as I had read so many good reviews. Jane looked a bit unsure about the pillion seat, or lack of it so we once again went for the

Tiger, no hardship really. We headed for a large reservoir, Embassament de Beniarres - as a lifelong angler and also keen on bird life I am drawn to lakes and rivers. This was a great place to sit for a while and have lunch.



From the reservoir we headed further inland in a north westerly direction before going back towards the coast. On the way back we were gradually climbing into a mountainous area with low cloud becoming heavy drizzle. At this time of year the olives are being harvested and unfortunately the Spanish farmers had left a lot of mud on the roads. I found it quite tiring riding through all these hairpins when the roads were so slippery. We made a small detour to



the Aitana Safari for coffee and soup sat by the log fire.

After our break we both felt refreshed and luckily we headed away from the wet and muddy roads, having an exhilarating ride all the way back to Calpe.

If you are holidaying in the Costa Blanca region, we highly recommend Lynda and Kevin for bike hire - there are a lot of options and they couldn't have been more helpful. Their com-

pany is Tours on Two Wheels and they have an informative website offering several different options for bike hire.

We were very disappointed not to have our holiday in 2020 and looking through the photos made us both keen to go back this year.

David Matthews

BIKING MEMORIES

Half a Century on 2 Wheels

On 20th February 1972, aged 16, my Dad took me to collect my new Puch Maxi, carefully saved up for – JHW 670L. Phew, so quick. I'd worked in a garage washing cars the previous summer and an "older" lad – age 20 I guess – had given me a lift on his 180cc or 200cc – awesome.

But all that was knocked aside by the arrival in the garage of the local Postie on a brand new turquoise Honda CB750 (this was August 1971) with four, yes four, silencers. I remember patting the engine – yikes!

The Puch led on to a Yamaha 100cc twin with a rocker gearshift. I kangarooed and lurched through Bristol (no training) on my 17th birthday - SMW 12J I think. It was horrendously bodged and had pencil stubs as battery fluid plugs.

I got over it and treated myself (more sav-



ing) to a new Honda CB175 NHT 118L, electric start. Everything worked, but actually quite boring and a disappointment.



Had to move up the scale and bought my first RD, a purple air cooled 350 (WFH 114M) – awesome x10 – no brakes in the wet, Japanese nylon tyres, whiskering plugs and lots of decoking. It flew. I remember trying to get 100mph in one particular 30mph limit in Bristol – looking back, cringes.

The RD400 came out and I had one of the first from Fowlers in Bristol (LTC 366P). I hadn't the cash for the alloy wheel upgrade but it was a lovely turquoise – another flyer

which, with my Craven topbox, high bars and a light front end, made control a challenge.

My buddy had a CB550, and I had an urge for a Yoshimura end pipe and a Rickman fairing, so we did a deal and I acquired PDG 500 R. Smooth and cool, but it needed revving, and disc brakes were optional in the wet. I remember keeping this for 85,000 miles until house buying and getting married appeared.



In the late 1970's some mates (mostly with British bikes, but one good mate with a Ducati 750S kickstart, fab) and I went to the Isle of Man a few years running. Having pitched a tent there and got rained out, some forty years on I still cannot understand why adults with disposable income and a brain would ever want to camp when hotels exist? Why? What's the point?

Our bikes were craned over one year, with all the fuel drained out. It was a great biking scene and



in those days there were specials (Dresda/Rickman/Egli and later Harris and other monoshock frames) as well as the lunatic fringe (Gold Wing café racers and road legal Yamaha TZs). I returned a few years ago, by plane, and the only variation was to see who had the biggest rear tyre...!

After a long gap, I came back with a couple of lovely Ducatis, a 600SS and a 900SS. I wanted a BMW and bought an R1100s, part exchanging my 900SS - on the way home thinking I've made a mistake, but soon got into the boxer groove. A GS followed (had to be done...) and then my buddy Marcus Ackerman came back from Thailand to see his Mum and said you must join SAM and take your test.

I joined up and was soon being closely followed by a crew of great people – Callum, Gina, Graham and Hugh. After my trial ride Nathan said why do you keep taking your hands off the bars – I get bored! Had some great sessions with Callum, pulling me over to say “what the f*** are you doing – concentrate”! It's difficult not to be complacent after 47 years, but absolutely essential to focus.

I've had a couple of great holidays in Thailand, riding the Mae Hon Song loop and into Myanmar, and the Golden Triangle with Laos and Myanmar, such great people and roads.

I was one of the first to pass the Advanced Test after lockdown last July, and am really pleased to have done so – thanks Peter!! **Tony Nares**



FOR SALE

Various Items

Marianne Dalgaard, our previous Full Chat Editor, has recently gone through a garage clear out, and has the following items on offer, FREE, to a good home.

1 x Oxford Sports Lifetime Luggage - 'Hump back" - magnetic tank bag.



1 x Blue bike cover with two small holes - one front left, one front centre



1 x Bike TEK Pro III Motorcycle Battery charger & Maintainer



1/2 bottle of Muc-Off



**Contact Marianne at dalgaard76@gmail.com.
Collect only from Norton Fitzwarren.**

Winter 2021 Caption



Thanks to Rod Coles who came up with the following Caption for the Winter 2021 photograph :

“Can I please borrow your hat, my head’s cold?”



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CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!



I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo, taken at last year's (PRE-COVID!) New Year's Day "Resolution Shuffle" Green Ride, featuring our Merchandise guru Nathan Beesley and our Membership Secretary Dave Parker.

Suggestions to me at Tullochg@aol.com, we'll publish the best one in the next issue.

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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TAILPIECE #16

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

During a French national fuel blockade a few years back, the rider and his faithful pillion were heading towards the Ardennes to avoid that boring first day down through NE France. As they approached a key town on the route they saw plumes of black smoke nearby. On the outskirts, their way forward was blocked by gendarmes who directed them back to the North. Stopping to consult the map showed no easy alternative route because of the network of canals and rivers. The protesters had chosen their site well.

Not quite knowing what to do the rider turned around and returned to the blocked road. The gendarmes were nowhere in sight. Then the rider spotted them behind a police van having a fag break. Quickly, and unmolested, he chose the planned route where, in a few hundred yards, he arrived at the barricades of burning pallets and tyres. There was no obvious way through. He stopped.

After a few seconds the smoke parted to reveal a young woman who could have been straight out of *Les Misérables*. She looked at them; they looked at her. The rider raised his visor and gave his best imitation of a Gallic 'whatever' shrug as seen in '*Allo, 'Allo!*' It seemed to do the trick; the woman beckoned them forward to where there seemed to be a zig-zag way through the flames and smoke. Holding their breath against the acrid fumes and heat they were quickly past and away.



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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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