

Summer 2021

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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Front Cover: Mike Shand exiting Hillbrush Mere on the recent Summer Saunter SAM Green Ride



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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



It's not so far been the hot dry Summer of sticky tarmac we might all have hoped for, but hey, at least the wet days are long...

My health issues have spurred me to take action about the height and weight of the beautiful and beloved Valentino (Ducati Multistrada 950) and he's been sold as a part-ex on a somewhat less gorgeous looking KTM 890 Adventure. Victor, as I've named him, may not be nearly so lovely to look at, but his weight is lower (saddle tanks) he handles even better than Valentino, is a tad narrower, lighter and is an absolutely fantastic bike to ride. He was supplied by Motocorsa, in Gillingham, whose service I can't fault, although they are to some extent victims of their own success: I collected him on 15th June, and have just dropped him off for the earliest they could do the first service, 13th July. The general supply issues we are suffering nationally (anyone else noticing the empty shelves in parts of the supermarkets?) are affecting new bikes too, so I can't get hold of the top box, lowering kit, auxiliary spotlights, connector for the heated seat or heated grips I've paid for, with no idea when they are going to come. At least it's Summer. Anyway, we went straight to Wales for 4 days after having his engine bars fitted by Peter and Tim Radford. (Fortunately they are aftermarket and we were able to source them easily. I hope I won't regret going with the OE extras instead of getting those aftermarket too.) The trip to Wales was brilliant. The weather, forecast to be very wet, actually stayed dry the whole time, right up until we



got home, and I had the chance to gel with the bike on the super Welsh roads. Can't wait to get out on him for some SAM training and rides.

Latest update, Motocorsa managed to sort the heated grips and seat at the service, many thanks to them. Rather less positively, now that the riding modes have automatically updated, "Road" became a manic supermoto type mode with a ridiculously snatchy throttle response and hunting everywhere in the usable rev range. As it's an "intelligent" system (huh!) it's smoothing out a bit with some more use, and there's always "rain" which is perfectly civilised. Could really do with something between the two, but I'll investigate the fancy electronics package I've bought with it and see what I can figure out. I need an option to just switch it back to "running in"!

For those who are interested, the palliative treatment I'm being given seems to have stabilised my condition to an extent, and I'm feeling reasonably well most of the time.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue, the deadline for the next one is 15th October, 2021.

Gina Herridge

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Hello all once again, I can't believe how quickly 3 months flies past and here we are again with another Full Chat. It seems like lots has happened since I last wrote to you all. We have now finally moved to Stage 4, or as it was called Freedom Day, with the removal of most social distancing. I am hopeful that this will be the beginning of the end of the pandemic for us all. But I say that with bated breath, as the cases of the new Delta variant seem to be ever increasing.

In terms of the club there have been lots of events, as we were previously used to - several group rides, a slow riding skills day and some Observer training to mention a few. I would like to thank all the people who lead the rides for us, and of course everyone that organises the slow riding days and the Observer training. I know how much of a time-consuming task this can be.

Martin Surrey led a number of volunteers to support the St Margaret's Hospice cycle event on the 18th July and reports are it went very well without any issues. Thanks to Martin and to the team of volunteers, it's great to show our support for such a worthwhile charity.

Looking forward there are 2 big events coming up at the end of August and

beginning of Sep-
tember

Firstly, we have
The Big Biker
BBQ, organised
by Callum Bremner.
This must be
one for all to look
forward to. Callum
has done a sterling
job and has driven
a hard bargain. He
has managed to get
the location (Long
Sutton Village
Hall), a band (I'm
not sure who they
are, but trust that
Callum will have



sampled some of their music!),
and a BBQ. The SAM Committee
agreed that, after the isolation and
lack of events over the last 15
months, it was essential to offer
members the opportunity to meet
up and enjoy a social occasion
together.

This means we can provide all of
this for free to members and their
partners. What more can anyone
ask for - a free BBQ, party and
banter with the great people we
have in the club.

We have managed to secure an
Alcohol license with the Hall, so
the great news is we will be able

to sell some drink to aid in the
merriment of the day. I have vol-
unteered to run the bar, so I intend
to keep this as cheap as possible,
but make sure you come along
with some change to spend. If you
have any special requests, please
let me know and I will do my best
to see if we can accommodate, no
promises! I will make sure I bring
some non-alcoholic refreshments
for the designated drivers among
us. I just hope I estimate the
amount correctly, worst situation
would be to run out! I will try to
make sure that doesn't happen,
but equally I don't want to have

loads of left-over stock at the end of the night, so we will see how good my estimation skills are! I am hoping this will be a roaring success and we can see this added as a regular feature to the events calendar at the end of summer. My only other ask is, yes, it is free, there is no charge, but as always we will be collecting any donations on the night for our chosen charity! So please, if you can, bring some change along. Secondly, on the 11th of September we have the Southwest Peninsula Rally, which is always well looked forward to. I unfortunately won't be able to take part this year, as it clashes with my holiday. I think all my biker friends from Minehead may have arranged the holiday, so I don't drag them along again as last time we did the gold with Lands End. I still get comments from some of them about how far it was to this day. So, thanks to Jez for all his work in organising this, and the rest of the team. I won't say any more other than fingers crossed..... as

I don't want to put a curse on this one.

Membership in the club has been ever increasing with a steady trickle of new associates, and today I have seen there have been a number of new test passes and revalidations, so congratulations to those people.

Our next Committee meeting is planned for some time in September - I am working with Andy to confirm the date, but fingers crossed this should be our first face to face meeting for well over a year. Please remember all are welcome at committee meetings, but clearly if there are any COVID restrictions in place at that time, we would need to follow them.

Until next time, stay safe out there, enjoy the beautiful weather we have been having (there should be some more of the same very soon) and hopefully I will see most of you at the Big Bikers BBQ. Big thanks to everyone who gives us their valuable time to assist with the running of the club.

Kev Colmer



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SAM NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS!

to the following members
for passing their IAM
tests:



Taz Keal on 24th May, riding her Triumph Street Triple 675 and observed by Lisa Parsons.

Howard Groves on 17th June. Howard was riding a BMW K1200RS and was observed by Alistair Gee.

Chris Heal on 26th June riding a Triumph Tiger 800. Chris was observed by Jules Cooper.

Bill Sterry on 16th July, riding his BMW R1150GS and observed by Michael Collins

Mike Hodges on 18th July. Mike was riding a Suzuki V-Strom 650 and was observed by Wayne Timbrell.

Luke Monk on 25th July riding a Suzuki Bandit 1200. Luke was observed by Martin Surrey.

Matt Dickerson on 7th August riding a Yamaha MT07 and observed by Pete Churchill

Joseph Green on 8th August riding a Kawasaki ZZR1400 and observed by Martin Surrey

And not forgetting Bob Muckett, who subjected himself to a voluntary re-assessment and was awarded a F1RST on 25th July. Bob was riding his BMW R1200RT.

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

A warm welcome to all new SAM members. Perhaps a new Associate member would like to keep a diary report of their observed rides, group rides and IAM test? It would make an excellent article for Full Chat (along with some photos of course! - Ed).

I am pleased to report that I have received a few excellent suggestions and am in the process of writing them up for the Committee. I will keep members updated – watch this space.

Why are we members of SAM? The IAM rider course to begin with for most of us.

There are many reasons we re-

new our membership each year. Some continue their training with the IAM Masters programme, while others train to be observers, lead group rides, and a few provide excellent presentations during the winter months at SAM's C&T sessions. In addition, there is the amazing team that run the Slow Riding Skills days and set up the SAM stand at shows offering taster rides. One of the reasons I joined the SAM Committee was to give something back to SAM for all and more of the above. Maybe a few members would like to do the same. How about leading a ride, volunteering as a TEC or to

be on the SAM stand at a show? There are always lots of 'old' members to guide anyone willing to volunteer!

Keep ideas and suggestions coming, anything SAM related.

Meanwhile, keep aiming to be the best, analysing every ride to arrive at your destination with a small list of improvements for the next ride!

**Janet Short,
Members' Rep**

2shorts@btconnect.com



**Happiness isn't
around the corner.**

It is the corner.

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'.

Bike to Bike Comms - Guidance

Previously, SAM has had a formal training syllabus, with 3 levels, to qualify Observers to use bike-to-bike comms with associates. This syllabus followed higher level IAM guidance on the issue.

However, recognising the greater use of bike-to-bike comms using Bluetooth headsets rather than the older radio sets, IAM RoadSmart issued new guidance in April 2021.

The IAM RoadSmart Radio Procedures Manual (dated April 2021) can be

found on the IAM RoadSmart Website.

https://iamwebsite.blob.core.windows.net/media/docs/default-source/dashboards/running-a-group/radio-procedures/radio-guidance-v1-150421.pdf?sfvrsn=16a1f75c_2

or in the Observer's area of the SAM website.

Following this new guidance, SAM has now ceased the previous radio training and qualification regime.

However, it is still thought prudent to provide some guidance on the optimal use of bike-to-bike comms during an Observed session, recognising the particular dynamics in play during such a ride.

There will no longer be formal, recorded radio training within SAM.

However, all Observers will be provided with the updated RoadSmart guidance and some clarification advice.

Observer to associate Bluetooth use:

Both parties need to be happy with the use of bike-to-bike comms. If either isn't then it is not appropriate for that ride. Even with mutual approval, the associate should be specifically empowered to stop you talking if they are finding it distracting or unhelpful.

The primary sources of navigational instruction are still a route brief before the ride and use of Observer indicators to direct the associate. This ensures good use of rear observation. However, where directions might be complex, use of voice commands from the Observer is appropriate, improves safety and reduces confusion. Directions are to be clear, unambiguous and timely.

Careful timing of comms is essential to avoid distracting the associate



when he/she should be focussed on hazard management.

Commenting on learning points is not recommended, far better to stop the ride and discuss face to face. However, brief positive comments, if well timed, are advantageous eg “Well done on that bend.”

Be aware of the possibility for confusion. “Go” can sound like “No” and vice versa. For safety issues a clear “Wait” is recommended and should be discussed with the associate in advance.

Commentary from either the Associate or the Observer should only be used with prior mutual agreement, as this is a potential source of distraction and interference with observation, anticipation and planning. An Observer may suggest commenting on his own demonstration ride but this should be kept short.

Bluetooth Top Tips:

Try to ensure you know how to pair headsets before you commence. Wasting 20 minutes in a fruitless attempt to connect 2 headsets doesn't put either party in the best frame of mind for the subsequent ride.

In situations other than Observer to Associate, bike-to-bike comms use is at the agreement of the riders involved, but the points above remain applicable. Badly timed comms are a source of distraction and comms should be limited to directional control, safety issues or a decision to stop the ride.

Conclusion

It is acknowledged that the use of radios can be beneficial when riding and enhance the experience, but it is important that they are always used correctly, appropriately and with due regard for the safety of all road users. The extent to which they should be used should be appropriate to the riders concerned, and allow a trainee to implement the techniques described in the course documentation.

Jim Donnelly



Interphone Tour unit, as used by many SAM Observers

On Your Marks! Get Set! Stay Put!

We are all familiar with the drop-off system aren't we? Well it appears that we aren't all familiar with some of its principles, so please follow this story and you might just learn something.

I was picked as Tail End Rider on a Green ride a couple of Sundays ago - chosen on the morning so I only knew the end point, not the route. The briefing included the usual question "Does everyone know the drop-off system?" Those who didn't were paired up with a SAM full member who did. All good so far. We would have markers all along the route, so everyone would know where to go, turn by turn.



On the ride an associate had a "moment" so pulled into a lay-by with their SAM partner. I came across them and naturally stopped to find out what the issue was and we carried on after about 10-15 minutes. We were on a road that led to some traffic lights which formed a T-junction, but there was no marker! Cue a slight panic and the 3 of us went left then stopped after realising there were no markers along that route, which had included some obvious junctions and roundabouts in the first mile or so. We eventually found our way to the end point thanks to Google Maps on my phone but no markers were in place on the remaining route either! They had all given up waiting after 25-30 minutes.

On another group ride, last week, the briefing about the drop-off system was again a little sketchy as it was an Amber ride so everyone could be expected to know it. On this occasion I was the rider whose bike broke down, but I wasn't the TEC. It happened as I marked the slip road off the A30 dual carriageway towards Budleigh Salterton and there is a roundabout at the bottom with 3 exits, none of them marked! The TEC stopped and tried to bump start my bike (starting issues) but had to leave me to be assisted by the AA (diagnosis new battery) but he was not best pleased about the lack of marker off the roundabout.

So where did the drop-off system go wrong? What can we learn from these 2 episodes?

The marker from the traffic lights had seen a rider like me - wearing a high -viz vest and with 2 spotlights on the bike - go past him and assumed he



hadn't been seen, then decided after a few minutes to go back up the route in case he was wrong and try to find me! As he is a newish member I didn't recognise him going in the opposite direction, and would not have expected to see someone from the group doing that anyway. So the junction was left unmarked by the time we arrived.

The reason for the unmarked exit on the roundabout off the A30 is unknown but the road to Budleigh Salterton had been mentioned in the brief so it was a reasonable assumption for the TEC to head that way. However it could have been one of the others...

So what should we all remember to do in future when we are marking a junction on a group ride?

1. Do not leave your mark until the TEC collects you, no matter how long you have to wait. Call the ride leader if you think you have been waiting too long. I can remember in summer 2019 having to wait at the side of the A350 for over an hour because of a breakdown in the group behind me and I could not get a phone signal, but I followed the rule. Stick at your mark until the TEC collects you.

2. Only the ride leader should go back along the route to find out where the issue is. Everyone else should stay in position.

Anyway the nub of this missive is that all club members should fully understand that the drop-off system not only includes marking junctions correctly and safely but that the other 2 points I have listed above are equally as important. Break one link in the chain and the whole system breaks down.

Ride safe everyone. **Ken Octon**

BIKING NEWS

Museums



Do you want free museum entry?

Do you want to help preserve the heritage of British motorcycle engineering?

If Yes then think about joining the British Motorcycle Charitable Trust. For a mere £20 per annum not only do you feel warm and fluffy for helping to preserve our motorcycle heritage, you also get free (yes FREE) entry to a wide range of motoring museums including:

- Haynes (Sparkford)
- Sammy Millers Museum (New Forest)
- National Motor Museum (Beaulieu)
- Brooklands (Weybridge)
- Manx Museum (Isle of Man)
- Bovington Tank Museum (Guess where?)
- Jet Age museum (Gloucester)

and many, many others - most have cafes so an ideal location for a sunny



day ride out.

Look at

<http://www.bmct.org> -

you can join online and membership cards take about 3 days to arrive. Join now and be ready for the Summer!

Jim Donnelly



What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

Having been frustrated waiting to leave on a self isolating (solo) motorcycle trip to visit France, Switzerland and Italy, by the UK being awarded an amber rating, I decided to follow my youngest son's lead and do The North Coast 500, riding my Tiger 900. I waited until the weather forecast gave Scotland a dry spell with a hint of sun and booked hotels around the route.

I set off on Thursday 10 June on the first leg, a modest 240 miles up the M5/6 to the Travelodge at the Lancaster Services on the M6. This was the first time that I have ridden my Tiger 900 on a long trip and this bike has an unusual design for a triple cylinder engine to give it more power at low revs which makes it vibrate through the pegs at motorway cruising speeds. I wanted to ride past the notorious M5/6 junction before stopping for fuel and the traffic was thankfully flowing freely, so I refuelled 10 miles north of the

junction. I should have stopped for a longer break but with only 60 miles to go to my first motel I pressed on. Whilst cruising at 70 mph the cruise control cut out and I became focused on trying to re-engage it, as without cruise control the whole trip was going to become seriously tedious. What the bike was trying to tell me was that my right foot was resting on the brake lever which automatically disengages cruise control and of course engages the brakes. The vibration through the foot pegs and lack of activity had sent my right



foot to sleep which, combined with new stiff boots that are weighted forward just enough to activate the brakes, then heated the brake caliper and fried the seals.

I arrived at Lancaster Services with no rear brake and called the RAC. The patrolman arrived within 30 minutes, and with both of us calling all the bike shops within a 50 mile radius we discovered that none carried any brake spares, and that the bike would have to be recovered to Taunton. I was already booked into the Travelodge, so the pick up was arranged for 8am Friday morning. A car recovery truck duly arrived but it was only going to



take me to the edge of this company's boundary, which would be the first of a relay of recovery trucks to get the bike to the Taunton Triumph dealership and me home. I was dropped at the Lymm Service Area Manchester with the promise that the next vehicle was on its way and would be there in 30 mins, this was at 9.30am. I was dumped next to the drive by rubbish bins in the McDonalds overspill car park. After an hour I phoned the RAC which is not easy as you have to use an app to arrange breakdown assistance and you should only phone if you are broken down in a live motorway, and they would prefer that you call the police first. After negotiating an endless menu I eventually spoke to an operative who assured me that

a vehicle would be with me within an hour. The hours ticked slowly past as I observed the life of a McDonalds car park - van drivers who couldn't be bothered walking 100m to the toilets, dog owners that were letting their toilet-inclined mutts too close to my luggage, enormous people that could barely walk and an endless stream of divorced parents handing over their children. After a number of frustrating calls to the RAC I discovered that my onward recovery had been given to a specialist motorcycle transport company that didn't take passengers! This van driver arrived at 3pm and he told me that he had received the task in the morning when he was in Anglesey. I had been having a problem with the RAC taking the bike to a Triumph dealership on Monday as it was too late on Friday, so I called the van company and arranged weekend storage and delivery on Monday. Sadly they couldn't even get this right and delivered it on Saturday afternoon, miraculously just before the dealership closed. Having arranged the bike recovery in the morning the RAC seem to have forgotten about getting me out of the car park to my home, so it came as a bit of a surprise when I pointed this out. I was offered a

taxi with a £400 excess or a hire car. I took the hire car option and I was called by the hire car company, Europcar, to be told that they could not get a car to me until 6pm as they had to thoroughly covid clean it. I told them that as I was sitting next to an overfull McDonalds trash can, I was happy to take a car unprepared as I was fully vaccinated. The car turned up at 5.30pm, I left at 6 and got home at 9.30pm.

One goes through life paying a fortune in insurance which is supposed to swing into action when you have had an accident or breakdown and seamlessly look after you, so why didn't the RAC send the specialist motorcycle recovery van and the hire car directly to the Travelodge M6 Lancaster Services the next morning rather than send an inappropriate recovery vehicle and abandon me in a car park for 8 hours? The RAC have only just, after almost 2 months, replied to my complaint offering me £40 compensation which is £5 per hour for an 8 hour wait! Having worked for an airline I know that the customer care department is tasked with not admitting liability and only paying the minimum compensation. I would have been happy with a simple sorry and although I have been

with the RAC since 1995 and paid a small fortune to them over 26 years I consider their service to be shoddy and cheapskate. Moral of this story, don't wear new boots for a long march and don't let your feet go to sleep first. This mistake was very tedious and exceedingly expensive. **Chris Mutton**

Do I Need A New Bike Every Time Time the TFT Screens are Updated?

Do you remember your first time on a bike? Mine was in 1978 on a Puch Maxi (a 49cc step through chicken chaser) in a field. What a feeling. What freedom? What excitement. Fast forward to my 16th birthday and at 00:01 I was out on my own bike. Again 49cc, only 4 gears, might have gone up to 45mph given a gentle downhill, no corners and a following wind, no rider aids whatsoever, not even grippy tyres!



Despite all the negatives (or the lack of positives) they were very happy, simple cheap times on 2 wheels, when the journey and the experience was so much more important than the destination. Riding around in circles seemed the perfect way to spend an even-

ing or a weekend.

Recently, I've been lucky enough to have more than one bike so have been able to branch out a bit, starting to buy and ride old English classic motorcycles – Triumph Bonneville and BSA Goldstars and the like. Riding old bikes has taken me



right back to teenage experiences. A ride to WestBay on a 50 year old, air-cooled parallel twin at 50-ish mph is far more enjoyable than the more progressive ride on any of the newer bikes. An open face helmet allows you to smell the countryside and the slower speeds allow you to be part of the countryside rather than just passing through it.

Sure, there are a few things about old bikes you need to be aware of:

- Kickstarts can be hard work on a bike that isn't well set up or where you haven't worked out the knack for that particular bike (they're all slightly different).
- They really do need a POWDERSS check and rolling brake test before every ride as things vibrate loose and sometimes fall off.
- The brakes aren't that good, so the Observation, Anticipation and Planning we are all used to is even more important on an old bike, to factor in the extra braking distance.
- You do need to ride with some mechanical sympathy – if you're ham-fisted you'll break them! Gear changes are nice and slow and do need some effort to match revs – no quickshifters fitted here.
- Sometimes the gear lever is on the wrong side of the bike – and even more confusingly, the gearshift patterns vary between bikes some are 1 down 4 up, others are 1 up 3 down!
- They might leak a bit of oil (or burn some) but this is more a reflection of previous poor maintenance / assembly than a certainty. I've got 3 that don't leak a drop (mind you, one needs its own drip tray every time you park it).
- You will need to have a bit of mechanical knowledge (or start to gain some) to keep them going, but this is very satisfying (way better than



having someone else plug your BMW or Triumph into a computer for you).



So why do I buy / ride them?

- Sense of history and connection with previous engineers, riders, racers and social context of when they were made. Lovely old, simple engineering.
- Which means, they're relatively simple to maintain and cheap to fix. Parts are readily available and advice and specialists from Owners' Clubs mean help is always available if required.
- In turn this gives a sense of pride that you understand how your bike works and how to fix it when it goes wrong – as it probably will.
- Every journey is an adventure. Will it start? Will it make it to the café? Will it start for the journey home (probably not if there is an audience)? A completed ride is truly satisfying and reflects the time and effort you have put in – it's more of a partnership than a modern bike.
- They make people happy. No one waves at me on my FireBlade, everyone waves at me on a Bonneville and people want to talk about it and take photos. If I ever leave the Goldstar parked up there is always a crowd around it when I get back.

- They make me happy – every journey ends with a smile and a huge sense of contentment. Priceless.
- They don't need MOT or tax so little hassle and minimal expense.
- They are increasing in value – so not only am I not suffering depreciation, the value of the garage contents goes up every year. (Better than the 0.1% on any savings account).
- They smell lovely, especially the ones running Castrol R. Most modern bikes just smell of warm antifreeze.
- You don't need to replace them every year to have the latest version of everything – in fact, once used to older bikes, you begin to look backwards rather than forwards. Older flat tankers are now the adverts I look at most.
- They are green! The natural resources and energy required to make them have all been absorbed over the last 50 years. It is permanent recycling.

So, would I have a classic bike as my single form of transport? No, of course not! Most will struggle to keep up with modern traffic above 50 mph, have nil rider protection (fairings or rider



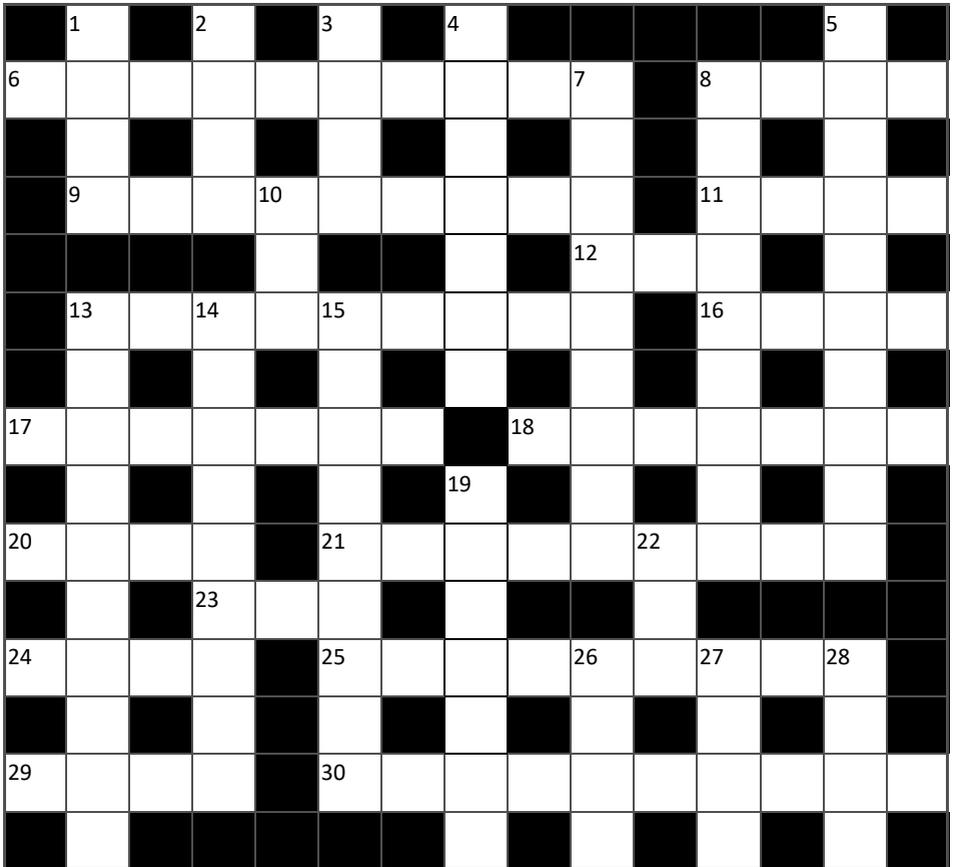
aids), are not comfortable for long journeys and cannot be relied upon for regular distance riding.

So, to cover all of that, there's also a pair of late 90s VFR800s (about £1000 each) parked in the garage which do everything perfectly, even at over 70K miles!

It doesn't need to be expensive or shiny or new to be fun. If you want a look, a chat or maybe even a ride on a classic bike give me a shout.

Jim Donnelly (Geeky lover of all mechanical things old and smelly)
07960 812688

CROSSWORD



[6 is a loose theme for about half the answers]

Across

- 6 Season when Gershwin said 'the livin' is easy' (10)
- 8 Immerse yourself in this year's Wimbledon (4)
- 9 Electronic random number indicator equipment Women's Institute (South East) initially asked for sunshine (5,4)
- 11 1 reordered without clothes (4)
- 12 Polish type of walnut, but not right back (3)
- 13 'Fruit' sounded 'inter' to the listener (9)
- 16 Name, first to last, the last word (4)
- 17 Alternating current, twice current, once when forms shrubs (7)
- 18 Exercise: read about hotel for each person (3,4)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

- 20 Short opposite number is mate (4)
21 On holiday abroad you may need to do this to explain yourself (9)
23 Burly, undressed, visiting spider needs this (1,1,1)
24 One cold journalist is frozen (4)
25 Mini dent, I calculate, contains the same (9)
29 Study about common era (4)
30 Possible holiday transport – fine craft (6-4)

Down

- 1 Sandy feature 11 changed (4)
2 Warning from topless females (4)
3 Complimentary release (4)
4 Holiday destination (a river) I organised (7)
5 Holiday destination, not near or far, not west (6,4)
7 Seasonal frequency first lady back around two unknowns (5,4)
8 She burnt a different person after 8a perhaps (9)
10 24 less 500 needed to cool your drink (3)
13 Resort, repack – back to traveller (10)
14 Of vision clear; of skies clear blue (9)
15 Al bin Izar goes nuts for a wax (9)
19 Essentially a hatter, but mad (2,5)
22 Greek letter in half of Delphi (3)
26 Puppet device (4)
27 Holiday destination with 80% of diving equipment (4)
28 Do nothing in a farmhouse or cottage (4) Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

Solution to Spring 2021 Crossword

Across: 1 Anachronism, 9 Avalanche, 10 Giant, 11 Tiddly, 12 Mirthful, 13 Flange, 15 Sleeping, 18 Yachting, 19 Apogee, 21 Go with it, 23 By half, 26 Royal, 27 Stalemate, 28 Sidetracked

Down: 1 A part of, 2 Award, 3 Headlight, 4 Once, 5 Inedible, 6 Might, 7 Gateleg, 8 Baffling, 14 Archways, 16 Emphysema, 17 Unbiased, 18 Yogurts, 20 Enfield, 22 Tales, 24 Aback, 25 Vast.

RIDE REPORTS

Summer Saunter



At last, this was the first time (for me) since Lockdown #1 that more than 6 bikes could meet up together, and we ended up with 15 at Cocklemoor, Langport in half decent weather. Having briefed the group, and run through the drop-off system for the members that had not been on a SAM ride before, we set off for Seven Bends with Georges Dupuis ensuring the group stayed together.

Considering many riders were relatively new to SAM group rides, the pace was excellent, a testament to the ability of the whole group. The ride flowed through Butleigh Woods and The Charltons before heading up White Post Hill to Sherborne in order to negotiate one of my favourite roads in the area, the B3145 to Wincanton. Skirting round the edge of the town, we passed the Racecourse before turning right for Charlton Musgrove and Hunters Lodge, leaving a short hop along the old A303 to our breakfast stop at Hillbrush, Mere. (I think I'll rename this ride as the "Tour of the Charltons", as we passed through Adam, Mackerell, Horrethorne and Musgrove on our route).

Having been to Hillbrush several times before, I was slightly concerned that the high cost of breakfasts could be off-putting for some (not an issue for me with my traditional coffee and cake), but the need to pre-order the afternoon before meant that at least prices were known in advance. I shouldn't have worried though, as the quality of the food, and the excellent spacious surroundings of the café (adjacent to the brush factory, and including a brush museum for customers to walk around) meant that many in the group were already planning their next visit!

The weather changed just before our arrival at Mere, and by the time we left we were greeted with heavy rain and slight surface flooding for our swift return via the A303. This didn't dampen the mood, though, and the enjoyment of a great ride with good company and happy riders.

The future (of group rides) is looking good again.

Graham Tulloch



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

After nearly 18 months where our usual hectic timetable of events had to be cancelled, we are now hopefully seeing the green shoots of recovery out of Covid-19 restrictions. A planned Events List for the 2nd half of 2021 has now been put together, and can be found on the SAM website under the "Events" tab.

Note, however, that some of these are purely at present diary dates, and still require ride leaders to step up to organise the ride - these can be identified through the lack of ride detail. Hopefully volunteers will come forward before the events.

However, with all rides, the ride leader will ensure all members will be notified in advance of the event with confirmation details, together with any restrictions on booking or maximum numbers allowed. These may be necessary in the short term, while cafes and refreshment stops get back to more normal ways of working.

If you intend joining a ride once it has been advertised on email (and usually on Facebook), then please make sure that - in addition to satisfying any requested sign-on and attendance requirements - you notify the ride leader in advance, so that they know how many riders to expect, and are able to make sure the catering arrangements suit the attendance.

If you change your email address, please ensure you tell the Membership Secretary, otherwise you will not receive any details.



BMW Alternator Belt Change

Many bikes have the alternator driven off the end of the crankshaft. This is not possible on the BMW boxer engine due to the design.

On these bikes, the alternator sits above the engine and is driven from the crankshaft by a rubber belt, like a fan belt on a car.

My bike is a 2006 GS with 39,000 miles on the clock. The service schedule at the time recommended a belt change at 36,000 miles or four years, whichever came first. For later models, the schedule changed to 24,000 miles or two years.

Looking through the service schedule on my bike suggested the work had never been done, so I thought I ought to investigate.

While I could have got a dealer to do the job, the task looked reasonably straight forward and so it proved.....more or less!

Removing the front cover reveals the belt, which is held under considerable tension between the crankshaft pulley and alternator pulley. Both pulleys are fixed and there is no tensioner to slacken off. This should be interesting, I thought!

As I would need to turn over the engine with a wrench on the crankshaft nut, I removed both compression spark plugs to facilitate this. The secondary plugs can be left in place.

Having popped off the spark plug covers, it is essential to use the special tool to hook out the stick coil/HT leads from the spark plugs. Nippy Normans and other outlets sell this tool.

The spark plugs are deeply recessed and I didn't have a plug spanner that would fit; so I improvised with a long slim socket, a 3/8ths to 1/2inch adaptor, an extension piece and then a wrench on the end.



Now that I could turn over the engine, the next task was to remove the old belt. I cut a section of plastic ice cream carton into a strip

(salted caramel works best!) and by turning the crankshaft nut (clockwise, from the front), trapped it under the bottom pulley. This releases the belt from the grooves in the pulley. Then it is just a case of hooking off the belt with a screwdriver. The belt is under considerable tension and will go flying across the workshop when released!



As you can see from pic 2, the belt is just starting to fail on the outer edge. The next job was to work out how to fit the new belt. Whilst pattern parts are available, I always prefer to fit OE items where possible. The BMW part no. for this bike is C12.31.7.681.841.

There is a special BMW tool available for fitting the new alternator belt, but it costs a fortune and I have never seen one for sale in the UK, so time to improvise.

I studied some You tube clips, all of which made the job look easy and it was clear that some had been edited! And there were some real bodeses too.

It is impossible to just push on the new belt by hand, due to the tension and you really need three hands, one to turn the crankshaft pulley nut, one to guide the belt around the bottom pulley and one to stop the belt coming off the top (alternator) pulley.

Anyway, this is how I did it :-



Hunting around my workshop, I found an old water tank spanner that just happened to be the correct size to fit over the crankshaft pulley. I then flattened it out in the vice, so that it would act as a guide for the new belt.

I did not have a metric socket for the crankshaft nut but did have a 1 and 5/16th socket that fitted perfectly.

Next, I aligned the new belt over the top pulley and drew it down to the bottom pulley, quickly fitted the water tank spanner guide in place, before the belt moved and then quickly ratcheted the crank shaft nut round (clockwise from the front), all with my right hand, while pushing on the other side of the belt with my left hand, to stop it coming off of the top pulley.



After the second attempt, it was on!



Spark plugs back in (hand tight and then a quarter of a turn with the wrench) and engine started.

The belt was running nice and true and there was no wear (ovality) on either the crankshaft or the alternator pulley bearings. Good news.

Finally, the front cover was fitted and we are good to go for another 24,000 miles.

Nigel Short

MEMBER'S ADVENTURES

Iberia by Bike



During the summer of 2019, I had passed my full motorcycle licence six months previously and I was enjoying my Honda Hornet. For the past five years I was working in Bristol for a large corporate recruitment firm and I was in need of some soul-searching. My motorcycle licence was the answer and I was going to make the most of it.

I left the job and planned a rough route through France, Spain and Portugal, to take on the challenge of Iberia by Bike.

I have my dad, Andy, to thank for the introduction to IAM and Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists (SAM). He'd been urging me to complete the course since passing my test, as he knew the value of it firsthand, being a member and a Blood Biker volunteer each week. Initially reluctant, as I thought I could ride, like any 25-year-old upon passing their test, I visited an open session and signed up for the course (mainly because dad offered to pay!)

I wasn't to know how valuable the teachings would be, not only for my first tour abroad but continuously learning and adapting. My observer, Andy Spiers, was brilliant. I headed to the first session on my new Honda Shadow VT750 having been sold the reliable shiny chrome dream from the sales garage, part exchange for the Hornet. I stopped to get fuel en route. First lesson learnt on my advanced course - don't put diesel in your motorbike!



Iberia by Bike is a non-fiction travelogue from Work Desk to Wild Camp that follows my two-month journey through France, Spain and Portugal, with little more than a tent and my 'particular' travel companion.

I wrote the book as I noticed a large number of people like myself fall into a rut of being a slave to the



system to support a lifestyle that doesn't always hold the happiness and meaning that it falsely advertises. My hope is to show young people that it doesn't have to be that way. The freedom of the open road through southwest Europe was my journey. People can find their own with a nudge. It is achievable to pursue other paths. Roughly 6,200 miles travelled in 65 days.

I think this is a book that most riders would enjoy, whatever the age or background, as it provides detailed routes for new tourers and descriptions that experienced tourers will recognise. There are humorous mis-



ery, especially in the current climate where touring abroad isn't happening for most people.

You can find my two-wheeled journeys on Facebook and Instagram under @amerryrideround and

#iberiabybike#amerryrideround hashtags.

Jim Merryfield

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Ian Wilson

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Spring 2021 Caption



Several contributions to this caption, thank you everyone for making the effort.

Best of the bunch came from Alf Bagshaw, who came up with:

Nathan Beesley and Dave Parker modelling the new addition to the SAM Clothing Range, the “Siamese Beanie Hat”.

CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!

I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo, of members Bob Muckett and Jules Cooper. 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.

The rider never did work out what had happened; it remains a mystery to this day. He was touring down through France on his BMW R1200 RT, with another rider when, passing through a long village he spotted a French police car partly hidden in a driveway. Then he saw a single French police bike, an Authority spec BMW very like his own. Remarkable because they always seem to travel in pairs. Just after a long sweeping bend with the village exit sign in sight a motorcycle cop stepped calmly into the road: shirt sleeves, aviator shades, long black leather boots, fire-arm at his hip. He waved the rider down and pointed to the roadside.

The rider was confident that he had not been speeding and that his recent riding behaviour was good, however, a wave of guilt and trepidation washed over him. He had heard of massive roadside fines and of riders left beside the road having had their licences and bikes confiscated. He duly slowed down, stopped, found neutral and turned off the ignition.

He now saw the second bike behind a hedge and the second cop, as flustered as the first was cool, rushed over to him. "Non, Non!" he shouted and leaned across the rider's bike, turned on the ignition, thumbed the starter button and said "Allez, allez ... vite! You ... go... now!"

The rider needed no second invitation, he snicked the bike into gear and pulled away. It had happened so quickly his riding pal was still behind him. The incident was replayed over dinner for many days but no sensible explanation emerged. Clearly they had stumbled across some sort of operation and been mis-identified. Or maybe the cop admired BMWs? He could certainly start one quickly.



Photo courtesy WikiZero



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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.

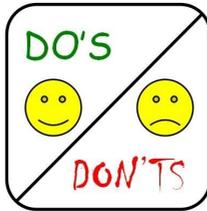
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

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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