

Spring 2022

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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Front Cover: SAM Members finally able to enjoy Welsh roads again during Rob Bartlett's ever-popular Welsh Weekend



FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



What an excellent biking Spring it's turned out to be. Not overly warm, granted, but I'd definitely rather ride over dusty roads than muddy ones. Our friends on the land have been taking advantage of not having the fields waterlogged to catch up on ploughing and drilling; I've even seen a couple of first cuts of silage. All of this activity keeps us on our toes: the huge agricultural rigs can appear anywhere, and very often occupy the entire road, especially when

entering and leaving gateways. We can encounter a road entirely covered in dirt anywhere, as well as the machinery responsible for leaving it there. Good weather also brings out other people to enjoy it, and walkers of all ages, cyclists and horses appear with the sun. As the vegetation on the verges bursts into life, our view of the tarmac shrinks, and the distance we can see to be clear goes with it. By the time the next issue of Full Chat appears, we'll all need to be carrying water to ward off dehydration.

Every time I write one of these pieces I wonder if it's going to be the last one, but my health has only deteriorated minimally since January. I'm on a bit of a weekly roller-coaster with the effects of chemo, but hey... Great credit and thanks to the excellent care I've had from the oncology team and St Margaret's Hospice. I'm also very grateful to those of you who give generously to St Margaret's, and those who contribute to Yeovil Freewheelers to help support the NHS. My SAM friends are massively important to my sense of wellbeing, too. I get a huge lift from seeing those who drop in on me and stay in touch, and feel so grateful that we are such a friendly and supportive club.



I am always concerned that my health will have an impact on my ability to ride at my best, but my re qualification ride for Masters/Masters Mentor/LOA on 21st April could not have gone better, so it seems I don't need to hang up my boots just yet. Many thanks to those who have contributed to this issue of Full Chat. If you have not yet sent us anything, please consider it. Email either tullochg@aol.com or gina-bromage@googlemail.com A photo of you to go with the piece (preferably with bike) and any other photos you have relevant to the subject always make for a more interesting read.



The deadline for the next issue is July 15th, 2022. **Gina Herridge**

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

For those who do not know me, I would like to introduce myself as your new Chair of SAM.

My name is Martin Surrey. I have been a member of SAM for over 12 years and I have qualified as a National Observer. At present, I am riding a BMW K1600 (*Ed – really Martin? I thought it was still stuck on the production line in Berlin!*)

I have been motorcycling since the early 70's, and whilst in the police force I went to the road traffic department. I qualified as an advanced motorcycle rider/car driver, spending 14 years in that department, retiring in 2004. Since then, I have run my own company

teaching people with disabilities computer programs so that they can do University courses and stay at work.

My views on SAM as a group are very straightforward in that we are lucky that the group has a lot of very knowledgeable members that are happy to help when needed. The C&T meets are well attended and there are lots of weekend (*Ed – and weekday*) rides that are always good for a laugh.

I feel there is more that we could do to make the group even better, and in the coming months I hope to put forward some suggestions. Well, that's enough about me - after a couple of years where

things have not been great, it's time to get out on our bikes and enjoy, so I will hopefully see more of you out on the weekend rides soon.

I will be looking at streamlining the committee meetings as I do not like long meetings unless they are productive, as all that happens is that we go around in circles. So most committee meetings will run for about an hour only, after which instead of everyone just going home, we might be able to stay and have a chat over some refreshment.

We are also looking at having a BBQ mid to late summer and inviting other groups, so that we can have a cross-group social and chat and see what others do. I hope to get out once my new bike has arrived and see more of you.

Martin Surrey



SAM NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS!

to the following members for passing their IAM tests:

- **Keith Simmonds on 25th February.** Keith was riding a BMW 1200GS, and was observed by Martin Hember (with support from Andy McKay and Bob Muckett).
- **Adam Leeds on 26th March,** riding his BMW S1000XR. Adam did the majority of his training with Kent Advanced Motorcyclists, where he was observed by Nev Smith, capped off here in Somerset with Georges Dupuis.
- **Rod Pearce on 16th April.** Rod was riding his BMW S1000XR and was observed by Dave Parker.
- **Stephen Pope on 20th April,** riding a Honda CB1300. Stephen was observed by Mike Collins.
- **Richard White on 23rd April.** Richard was riding a Triumph Tiger 800 and was observed by Andy Spiers.
- **Alan Southwood, also on 23rd April,** riding his Kawasaki 1000. Alan was observed by Lindsay Wilson.
- **David Burns on 27th May,** achieving a F1RST. David was riding a Triumph Bonneville, and was observed by Richard Pearse.



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

CONTACT DETAILS

If your contact details change (especially email address), please inform 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 can be obtained from the Secretary on request.

Events Coordinator—Introduction

Hi all. My name is Trev Watts and I have recently taken over the Events co-ordinator role for SAM from Jez Martin.

I am now entering my 3rd year of motorcycling having passed my test in Jan 2019, not that I didn't ride before then - a 100cc Yamaha RXS for travel to and from work 30 years ago and a rather sickly Honda CB200 about 42 years ago! It was a comment from Mrs W in mid-2018 that made me think about riding again, and the rest as they say is history. I joined SAM in March 2019, and having really enjoyed the rides



that I have been on, I thought it was time to assist where I can. As Jez was stepping down from the events role, I volunteered for it. As a group, SAM has an active membership with many events throughout the year : short 'Off the cuff' rides; our green rides; longer half or full day amber and red rides; weekends away in Wales and Cornwall.

I am keen to grow our events list. We all have our favourite roads, cafes,

and viewpoints in and around the South West, and I am sure that if you like the destinations and roads, so will many others in SAM. Therefore, can I ask if anyone is interested in leading a ride to please get in touch. It can be a bit daunting at first plotting and planning a ride, but the club has a wealth of knowledge and experience - it is considerably more straight forward than you may at first think. There are club members who have led many rides who are more than willing to assist you planning and delivering your first ride. We have a few 'POD' ride weekends planned for the summer, with a maximum of 6 riders per pod, these are great as first ride leads. The traditional areas for SAM rides are along the A303 corridor, Cartgate, Ilminster and Podimore, lets also start rides at new points around the area and bring new venues and routes to the annual calendar. So, if you wish to lead a ride, get in touch, there is loads of help and guidance if you need it, 1 ride a year, 1 ride a month, the choice is yours. Email SAM Events somersetadvancedevents@gmail.com or give me a call on 07713772209.

Trev Watts

A Day Measuring Somerset

I had resigned myself to not finishing Steve Schlemmer's challenge this year when I had a message informing me my new garage door would not be fitted on the 18th March after all, and I therefore had the day free. Having just taxed my Royal Enfield, and with sunny weather forecast, I decided to head north and find the final six things to measure in the Exmoor area.

Taking some of my favourite local roads through Wrangway and Holywell Lake, I was following a pick up truck, and of course he met a car and decided to reverse. As I have experienced this before I had left a big gap, but still wondered if he had seen me. I sounded my horn,





which is quite loud on the RE. No, he had not noticed me from his reaction! On to Wiveliscombe and Bampton, I arrived at the St James church in Upton to measure part of the porch. Then on to Rodhuish to measure the finger sign post for F----- O-- ? Had me wondering but found it. Then on to Selworthy and after searching for a while I found what I needed and decided to sit in the churchyard for a picnic, with the wonderful view of Exmoor in full sunshine.

Further along the A39 and right to Allerford ford and footbridge, well known to anyone who has joined Matt on his Fords Run each year. On again to Malmsmead to measure a signpost and then return a few miles and take the B3224 to Exford Bridge, another favourite on the Fords Run. That completed my 16 measurements for this year, so I headed back to Wheddon Cross, Wiveliscombe and - after a quick break at the view point next to the re-built Wellington monument - I was on my way home.

As I have said before, if you need an excuse to get out on the bike during those winter days and see some new places, this is as good as any.

Rick Chubb

Measuring Somerset - 2022/23

If you like the sound of Rick's adventures above, why not give it a try yourself? This year's challenge is now open, with the deadline for completed forms next year's SAM AGM. The entry form is contained in the next 2 pages, and once completed, should be returned to Steve Schlemmer (details on the form). Just remember a tape measure and a pen!

SOMERSET ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

Measuring Somerset 7 – 2022/2023.

Entrant's name:

The locations are the sites of railway stations in longitude order between Gillingham and Lynton. To save space I've omitted all vowels, spaces and punctuation from the names. Take a tape measure, visit each location and measure or estimate the size of the feature described.

You do not have to enter private or closed areas.

Of course, you don't have to visit the locations in order. So that we don't disagree on accuracy, pick my answer closest to your measurement or estimate.

There is a safe stopping place at all locations.

Please ride and park safely.

Location: Feature (Sizes in millimetres unless asked otherwise. Dia.= diameter)

1 **TMPLCMB**: Estimated height, in metres, above the pavement of the very tops of the two highest lampposts on the footbridge.

a 7.2 b 8.7 c 10.2 d 11.7

2 **CRNMR**: Height of the square, brick pillars at the car park entrance gate.

a 3040 b 3240 c 3440 d 3640

3 **CSTLCRY**: Volume, in m^3 , of each of the common corner stones in the exterior walls of the station building.

a 0.006 b 0.009 c 0.012 d 0.015

4 **MRSTNMG**N: Thickness of the Network Rail Access Point Information notice at ST 59998 22378.

a 3.5 b 5.5 c 7.5 d 8.5

5 **CHRLTNMCKRL**: Section of the green-painted, metal gate posts to the station site.

6 **CRWKRN**: Radius of the curved roof edge on top of the old red telephone box beside the bus shelter.

a 700 b 950 c 1200 d 1450

7 **LNGPRT**: Estimated weight, in kg, of the utility pole at the entrance to Station Court, given 1.5 metres in the ground and wood at 640 kg/m^3 .

a 100 b 130 c 160 d 190

8 CHRDJNCTN : Section of the single, reinforced concrete gate post on the west of the road between Chard Crossing and Old Station House. a 255x255 b 200x250 c 200dia d 200x200
9 HGHBRDG : Estimated area, in m ² , of the teardrop-shaped, planted traffic island in front of the station. a 132 b 155 c 178 d 201
10 BSHPSLYDRD : Width of the 'STAFF ONLY' signs at the entrance to the car park. a 325 b 365 c 405 d 445
11 WLLNGTN : Area, in m ² of the Network Rail 'Private Property' notice, on the west side of the road, at the north end of the bridge. a 0.162 b 0.144 c 0.126 d 0.108
12 STGMBR : Gap between the square concrete posts of the pedestrian gateway leading to the platform. a 1300 b 1500 c 1700 d 1900
13 WSHFRD : Diameter of the metal handrail up the stone steps to the platform. a 25 b 35 c 50 d 75
14 DNSTR : Width of the exterior base of the chimney breast on the west end of the station building. a 1680 b 1980 c 2280 d 2580
15 BRSHFRD : Section of the spear-headed uprights in the old metal railings at Dulverton Sidings. a 32x32 b 25x25 c 15x15 d 12 dia
16 STNSTY : Standing on the bridge, estimated width in metres, across the track bed, between the platform edges below. a 7 b 8 c 9 d 10
You don't need to have all the answers for a chance to win. When you have some, or all, of the answers, and at the latest by the AGM, in Mar or Apr 2023 tba, let me know your answers or let me have this table with your answers marked. The winner will be the first drawn, at the AGM, from the highest scoring entries.
Steve Schlemmer, Dinham, Honiton Road, Trull, Taunton, TA3 7JR
steve.schlemmer@btinternet.com 220321 Measuring Somerset 7

SAM Rides - Reminders

SAM's rides are one of the main outlets for riding enjoyment for members. They only exist because members (who have passed their Advanced Test) have taken the time to plan, organise, advertise, manage, lead and control rides for the benefit of other members. These ride leaders share their favourite roads and cafes, and ensure that such events are organised in a safe and controlled manner, such that attendees get the maximum benefit out of the ride (also a useful part of an associate's training) and the general public are able to appreciate the standard of riding from an advanced club like ours.

It must be noted, however, that the Events List (that is published just before New Year for the following year) is planned well in advance, and things can (and do) change. Holidays, illness, weather, work and family matters can all influence the ability of a ride leader to offer their ride, so **PLEASE DO NOT JUST TURN UP FOR A RIDE BASED UPON THE ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED EVENTS LIST!** Once a ride leader knows he/she is able to conduct a ride, they will advertise it to all members via email, and possibly (but not always, as not all members use this medium) Facebook. This will confirm the day, time, meeting point and grade of ride. Once this has been published, then (unless specific weather or health issues arise) the ride can be assumed to be "Live". The SAM website should also be updated with the final ride details, but again, our webmaster may not always be able to update this in time (especially for short-notice rides), so **PLEASE USE EMAIL NOTIFICATION FOR CONFIRMATION OF A RIDE HAPPENING.**

With the large number of members now in SAM, it is not uncommon to see a large number of riders turn up for advertised rides. We aim to restrict Groups to 15 bikes, so if more than this turn up, the Ride Leader needs to find an additional Ride Leader and Tail End Rider to lead a 2nd Group. For this reason (and also out of pure courtesy to the Ride Leader), **PLEASE TRY AND NOTIFY THE RIDE LEADER IN ADVANCE OF YOUR INTENTION TO JOIN A RIDE.** In this way, they not only know who to expect, they can also ensure the refreshment stop is set up to cater for the number of riders, and they are able to arrange a 2nd ride leader/TER where numbers require.

REMEMBER— Rides are arranged purely voluntarily by Ride Leaders for

the benefit of SAM members, so please try and make their job as easy as possible.

FINALLY...

Due to GDPR rules, only a limited number of key people have access to the member's database of email addresses etc. Ride Leaders are not part of this group. Ride invitations are sent out centrally, not from the Ride Leader. So, if you wish to contact the Ride Leader, **DO NOT "REPLY" TO AN EMAILED RIDE NOTIFICATION, AS IT WILL NOT GO TO THE RIDE LEADER!** The Ride Leader will include their contact details in the body of the email text, use this to contact them.

By working within the above, it should make the Ride Leader's task easier, should encourage more members to lead additional rides, and avoid wasting time for all members. Leaving more time to join in with one of the numerous SAM Rides this year. **Ed.**

IAM Inform

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

KIT REPORTS

Forcefield Body Armour

I know others have experienced knee armour that just won't sit right, and having this problem, I decided to try these as a cure. Sourced from E-bay for about £30 new, they just pull on, and although they came with velcro straps, I find they fit fine without. In use I don't really know they are there as they mould to your shape once warm. So, a good result.

Rick Chubb



RIDE REPORTS

Pancake Express

The excellent turnout for this event each year brings with it a couple of issues for yours truly. Firstly, with between 20 and 35 bikes turning up over the past 15 years, there's always a requirement for a 2nd ride leader and tail end rider. Secondly, with all riders and their pillions returning to Chez Tulloch at the end of the ride for a pan-



cake breakfast, it's only fair that I do my bit to support Alison with the preparations, to ensure no one goes away hungry or thirsty!

Some heavy rain overnight before this year's event saw 3 late cancellations, but we still had 17 bikes and 2 pillions turn up in the rain at Cocklemoor Car Park in Langport for an 07:00 departure. After an additional briefing (on the drop-off system) for 1st time SAM Group Ride attendees John and Mike, and splitting into 2 Groups, we headed off for an enjoyable

80 mile wander through East Somerset. Some of my favourite roads followed, through Sherborne, Wincanton, Charlton Musgrove, Gillingham, Mere, Longbridge Deverill, Maiden Bradley, Gare Hill, North Brewham, Bruton, Wyke Champflower, Castle Cary, Keinton Mandeville, Somerton, finally ending in Wearne (gpx file of the route available to anyone interested).

Whilst it was wet, it didn't bother most riders who had donned their waterproofs (remember Wayne, leathers aren't very waterproof...!). What it did, though, was keep a lot of traffic away, making for very

Flippin' heck, Alison!



quiet roads. The amount of rain the previous night ensured that the grease and oil from a long dry spell had been washed from the surface, resulting in roads that provided plenty of grip, adding to the fun.

Matt Towill kindly led the 2nd Group, and by 10:00 we were all safely back at Chez Tulloch, where Alison already had a stack of pancakes waiting to be attacked. Matt's partner Francine provided valuable assistance in the kitchen, making sure mugs were continually being topped up, whilst Alison continued to produce pancakes and toast until folk stopped eating!

Unlike almost every previous year, the sun remained well hidden this year, so we ended up sheltering inside and in the archway to avoid the rain. No one seemed to mind, though, demonstrated by the £157 of donations for St Margaret's Hospice.

Graham Tulloch



First time out for Mike (L) and John (R), being looked after by Francine

Spring Fords Run

After a two year break The SAM Spring Fords Run returned on 18th April. Twenty riders assembled at Norton Fitzwarren for the 2022 event. Our



route took us over the eastern shoulder of Exmoor to our first ford at Billbrook. This ford claims to be the longest in England at 90yds and always a test with its stony surface. Then past Minehead to Allerford, a short ford with a

paved surface. After climbing Porlock Hill we dropped into the valley of the East Lyn river and to a tricky ford at Robbers Bridge; only a few of our group tackled this one. As with all the fords on this ride there is a dry



route adjacent. Our refreshment break was at the Buttery Cafe next to Malmesmead Ford, always a favourite. A delightful narrow moorland lane through Slocomslade and Tippacott and two minor fords brought us to the B3223 to Simonsbath, Winsford Hill and Dulverton and the Fords Run highlight of Bury Ford crossing the River Haddeo. Our return leg took in our eighth ford at Bulland Lodge and dispersal at Milverton. Being a SAM Red Ride I think we covered most Exmoor road types! **Matt Towill**



South West Peninsula Spring Rally

“So, shall we do it this year?”

“Well, I think so - I really enjoyed it last year!”

“Let’s plan a route, then”.

“Well, me being new to England, you can decide...”

“OK....”

(Later. Much later. A good route is worked out on the kitchen table and we are ready.)

“I have a route that will take us to different places this year. We did do Exmoor and the coast last time, so how about West Somerset and Devon as far as Okehampton and Dartmoor?”

“Sounds good”.

Bike POWDER checked over the day before, and the tank is full. All good to go.

Come the day and we are fully signed in and off by 9.30am, sheets all collected and set up for the bronze level. First stop Dunkeswell. Long avenues of tall old trees speed by. I am using a combination of marked-up map and satnav. We are both landscape freaks, loving the play of nature and light across the countryside, so already there is much



to appreciate as we ride on the long flat B roads between the A358 and the A303. First question in the bag - the contact telephone number from the Methodist Chapel – elated - and off again to Whimble.

“I’m dying for a wee”, asking at the shop for a loo, but no luck. But we record the distance to the car park from the square - question two. Hanging on to my bladder. Next, it’s an emergency stop at Exeter Services for a coffee and an empty of the other end.

The weather is holding up, with luck. A perfect day for riding.

The next two hours or so...

“Wow, these woods and this amazing winding road - the land-

scape is so spectacular!"

"Some of the woods might be primary woodland - very ancient" (this is between Longdown and Postbridge).

"The change from woodland to wild moor is breathtaking as the scenery opens out!"

"Let's stop for a photo!"

"Look at the sun and showers across the horizon, playing on the newly opening greens of the coming Spring"

"Let's stop for a photo!"

"This trip provides a great chance to taste the landscape close-up in



all its variety - especially at this exciting time of the year, as the colours return to fields and meadows, trees and hedges. It's a deep delight."

"Let's stop for a photo! I want to cherish this memory long after the ride".

Postbridge - sandwiches in the company of the Clapper Bridge; a

happy Labrador in the river, some hikers and wild dark clouds, but no rain. Doing a small sketch. Then off. We could stay there all day, but there are quests to follow and Okehampton is next.

"Let's stop for a photo!"

More wonderful B roads after doing the manned checkpoint over a cuppa and a bun. Lapford for petrol and great directions to the village hall for the defibrillator number. Some SAMers there, just pulling out - a wave and then off. The roads getting smaller and more full of holes, to Butterleigh, which gave us the name on the bench. I wonder about Harold Baker's story... then away we go again. The afternoon is wearing on but the scenery never fails to lift our spirits. Every corner gives us a new vista.

"Let's stop for a photo!"

The most striking part is the sky -

the play of showers and light on the horizons all around us. We don't get wet. Thankfully. Another corner, more delight...

"Let's stop for a photo!"

Sampford Peverell comes and goes, information retrieved and on up the M5, Taunton and back to base for our fantastic veggie supper and report back. Just under 240miles of rich sights and experiences. This is what the rally is all about. Our highlight was the ride up from Exeter to Dartmoor through the woods and then onto the moor; and the sheer variety of countryside we saw. We mostly took winding B roads and despite numerous potholes, there was only one road that was technically demanding – down into Butterleigh. We covered a range of road, from motorway to farm track, and everything in between. Very satisfying to navigate all successfully and made for the attractiveness of the rally.



We proudly collect this year's mugs and neck scarves, and relax in the drama of an extraordinary sunset. A huge thanks to all the organisers for putting it together so efficiently. Amazing.

"So" we say when home an hour later, "would it be fun to do it again next year?"

"It would indeed!"

Roll on April 1st 2023, and hopefully two more mugs on the shelf.

Oh, and a few more photos.

Paul Crummay and Sylvie Reck



A comfortable rider is a safe and happy one! (Part one)

There have been major advances in motorcycle electronics over the years, but little attention given to providing an adjustable riding position. It is still very much a case of one size fits all.

Harley have always been a bit different, their accessories catalogue is the thickness of a telephone directory (remember those), designed to part you from vast sums of money!

The riding position on my Street Glide Special is fine if you are of moderate height, however for the those with longer legs, it can be uncomfortable. The problem is that your knees are set higher than your hips, which causes a slouch position and stresses the lower back.

It was clear that I needed a seat that sat me considerably higher than standard. The answer came in the form of a bucket seat from a Harley Police bike. I found a new one in the US and had it sent over.

I have to say, the seat is the most comfortable I have ever sat on. It provides excellent lower back support and is also independently sprung; it even has a pre-load adjuster on the spring! It also sits me around six inch-



es higher up, great for visibility.

Of course, this meant that the standard handlebars were now too low. A pair of after-market 12-inch meat hooks (aka ape hangers) were duly sourced and fitted, the result is what you see here. I am particularly pleased with the design of these bars, in that the wires from the switch clusters and heated grips are fed internally through the bars, for a nice clean look.

There is considerable leverage with these bars, such that it is like having power steering!

The whole idea of this exercise was to have my shoulder, hip, knee and ankle joints as close to 90 degrees as possible, with a straight back. For me this is the ideal touring position when riding at a moderate pace, all complemented by a big screen to keep the wind off.

I have recently carried out some performance mods on this bike and hope to try them out soon, on an IAM skills day at Thruxton. Happy days!

Nigel Short

BIKE REPORTS

Honda Africa Twin CRF1000L Adventure Sports

I often wonder about what would be in my “dream garage”. Which cars, which bikes, which bits of kit.... Sadly, I don’t get to indulge these dreams overly much because I’m limited to a single garage which is stuffed full of family bicycles, toboggans, paddleboards, exercise equipment, home building supplies, freezers, and a bit of space left in the middle for my motorcycle! As much as it would be nice to have more than one, space sadly gets in the way. I therefore need to make sure that the one bike I’m able to accommodate can do pretty much everything I need it to do. Being on the taller side and enjoying longer trips out, an adventure-style bike tends to suit me best, and I’ve had a few different ones over the last 12 years since I obtained my bike licence.

For the last 8 years, that space in the garage has been filled with “Dora”, my faithful old 2014 Triumph Tiger Explorer. The Explorer was purchased brand new and we’ve been on plenty of adventures, including some tour-



ing, an Iron Butt E2E Gold, and training for (and passing) my Masters. A particularly special journey was taking my dad as pillion on a 3 day Wales road trip to celebrate him overcoming prostate cancer – two big chaps and all their luggage was a hefty load for the Explorer, but it handled everything with ease. Over the years “Dora” had become a trusted companion and riding wise had just become an extension of me. On many occasions I’d thought it was time to upgrade or change, but a short blast out always convinced me that “why did I need to, this bike does everything brilliantly, why even consider changing?” Well, the need arose in Wales this year when the exhaust hanger of the alloy frame snapped off, allowing

the exhaust to drop off and damage the catalytic converter. There were no safety implications but it could have been different on the motorway, and suddenly I had a fair old problem. Any repair route seemed destined to significantly harm the value of the bike. Fortunately I had Bridge Motorcycles’ lifetime warranty and whilst they wanted to sort it out for me they weren’t prepared to weld the bike up. They offered me full market value in lieu of the repair and I immediately went shopping in



their showroom.

The bike that caught my eye was one I'd been admiring every time I saw one on the road. The Honda Africa Twin CRF1000L Adventure Sports. Bridge had a used one in very good condition in stock, and a short test ride later the deal was done. Well, in my head it was done about 5 minutes into the test ride....!

The Africa Twin has been around in various forms for some years but the modern incarnation arrived in 2016 as Honda's response to the BMW 1200GS, Triumph Explorer and their ilk. It sported a 998cc parallel twin, LED lights, switchable ABS and balanced lightness and torque to keep up with its more powerful competition. In 2018, it was upgraded to feature electronic riding modes, improved intake and exhaust system, and torque control. The Adventure Sports model added better wind protection, a larger fuel tank and longer suspension travel. It was this Adventure Sports model that I had my eye on.

The test ride was a revelation. I always knew that my Explorer was a heavy old machine but I hadn't realised how dated it would feel when compared to a more modern machine. Everything about the Honda felt more refined. The clutch, light and smooth. The brakes, light and strong. The gearbox, quiet and precise. The steering, light and agile. I keep using the word light – weight wise the bike is a bit lighter than the Explorer but it's not just the physicality of the weight, it's how it manifests itself in the controls too.

One thing that had always been a nagging concern when I was eyeing up the Africa Twin previously was the loss in horsepower. And not just a small loss – we're talking about a reduction from 135hp to 94hp. That's a 30% drop in power with only a 6% drop in weight. I enjoy a spirited ride as much as many other members, and I was concerned about the Honda's ability to deliver on that.

The test ride, and all my subsequent





rides, have largely banished that concern. Yes, in certain circumstances you notice the reduction in power – for example at motorway speeds, some use of the gearbox is needed for a quick overtake whereas the Explorer would pull strongly even in 6th. However, in all other circumstances it simply doesn't feel less powerful. The delivery is torquier and punchier and when in the appropriate gear it's a very responsive machine.

There are various rider

modes which adjust the throttle, engine braking and torque depending on the circumstance, e.g. touring, gravel, etc. I haven't had the chance to use the off-road modes but the settings are certainly interesting to play around with. Being able to adjust the level of engine braking is probably the most useful one to me following the Masters training and trying to be at the right speed at the right time without the need to use the brakes.

The previous owner certainly kept the bike well, and it shows little evidence of the 12,000 miles it had been ridden before it arrived into my care. I confess I'd probably got a little bit slack with the TLC on my Triumph so it's back to giving this one a proper clean and ACF50 on the exposed bits before the winter!

I'd been expecting the bike to be "vibier" than the Explorer which had been a concern as I do suffer from numb hands from time to time, but in reality, aside from a few vibes from beneath the seat under strong acceleration, the vibrations are remarkably well damped and comfort is not sacrificed in any way. Indeed, it's actually easier to ride stood up on the Africa Twin compared to the Explorer due to the higher bars, which is good news for my achy knees after a few hours.

Overall build quality seems excellent and I'm confident the exhaust won't

be falling off any time soon. The word I keep coming back to is “finished”. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my Triumphs but there have always been a number of areas where it felt that there was an air of “that’ll do” about the finish and detailing. I don’t get that impression with the Honda, where even things like the cable routing appear to have been done with significant care. The paint finish is lovely and I’ll need to make sure I keep it looking that way!

There’re a few things that I’ll have to learn to live with. Having not had to worry about chain maintenance for 8 years, going back to a chain flicking oil/grease onto the bike isn’t entirely welcome, but the bike has a long guard which minimises flickage. It’s also equipped with a Scottoiler eSystem 3.1 which I’m gradually learning the ways of. I’m not entirely sure I’ve mastered it yet but I’m sure it will come with time. After a clean, it’s a case of getting back into the routine of brushing and cleaning the chain, then applying a lube before it goes back into the garage for however long it will take before the next outing.

I was also surprised (I shouldn’t have been, if I’d done my research thoroughly!) to find that despite the tyres being labelled

“Tubeless” the rims of the pre-2022 Africa Twins are not sealed, and so the tyres contain tubes! Changing a tube on the side of the road seems a fairly daunting task with tyres this size so I’m intending on getting Bike Seal put into them which apparently isn’t as effective as on tubeless tyres but is a lot better than not having it in them, and hopefully will help me to avoid a lengthy roadside wait for recovery. Honda have changed this in the very latest model so it may be that in time I can look to replace the rims with sealed ones and ditch the tubes. Overall I’m absolutely delighted with the bike and enjoying how much more modern and refined it is than my previous one. I hadn’t intended to change, and had the weld not failed in Wales I’d still be perfectly happy with my Explorer, but under the circumstances it’s all turned out very well indeed.

Tom Moore



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SAM Green Ride

“Wednesday Wander”

Wed. 8th Jun. 2022

10:00 @ Cross Keys, Norton Fitz.

Led by Andy Bourne

SAM Cornish Camping

Weekend / SWPSR Recce

Fri. 17th—Sun. 19th Jun. 2022

Cross Keys, Norton Fitzwarren

SAM Green Ride

“Pizza Express 3”

Sat. 25th Jun. 2022

15:00 @ TBC

SAM Green Ride

“Wednesday Wander”

Wed. 6th Jul. 2022

09:30 @ Horton Cross, Ilminster

Led by Andy Bourne

SAM Green Ride

“Tour of Avalon”

Sun. 17th Jul. 2022

08:30 @ Cockle Moor Langport

SAM Slow Riding Skills Day

Sun. 12th Jun. 2022

10:00 @ Bridgwater College

TA6 4PZ

SAM Green Ride

“Twisty Thursday”

Thu. 23rd Jun. 2022

Details TBC

“Coast to Coast”

Sun. 26th Jun. 2022

Details TBC

SAM Slow Riding Skills Day

Sun. 3rd Jul. 2022

10:00 @ Bridgwater College

TA6 4PZ

SAM Green Ride

“Rivers and Bridges”

Sun. 10th Jul. 2022

09:00 @ Cartgate Services

SAM Green Ride

“Pizza Express 4”

Sat. 23rd Jul. 2022

15:00 @ TBC

Please check your email and/or the SAM website nearer the time for confirmed details of all of the above



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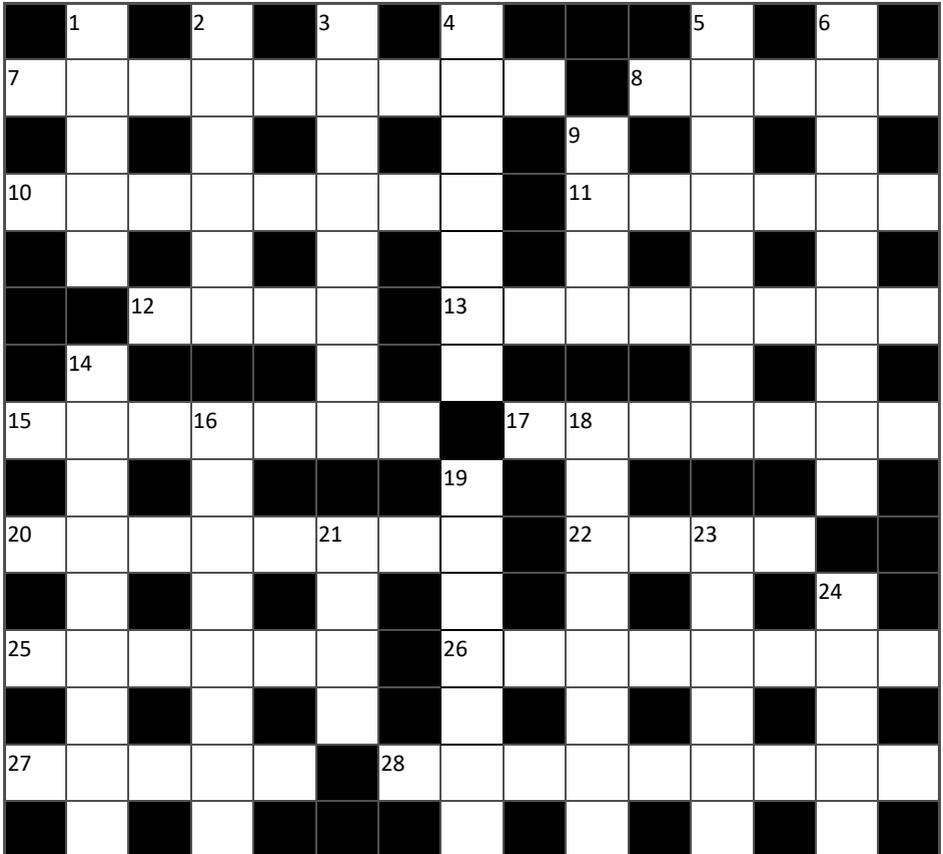
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CROSSWORD



[17 is a loose theme for about half of the answers]

Across

- 7 Theatrical about leaving? On the contrary, take a break under canvas (2,7)
- 8 Transport spirit to the audience (5)
- 10 Boats sit badly around dale, east to west (8)
- 11 Place surrounded by sea, or away from the sea north to south (6)
- 12 French drink calcium and iron (4)
- 13 Rider supplement (8)
- 15 Notices of fines credit alien second (7)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

- 17 Travelling around to university, call (7)
- 20 Begin ingredients of chef's tart offerings (5,3)
- 22 European anger in island member (4)
- 25 State sank as troubled (6)
- 26 Voyage's corridors (8)
- 27 Flexible British end Yen (5)
- 28 Drop in to go to the lavatory (3,1,5)

Down

- 1 Bread dough (5)
- 2 Amal AG, distributed in Spanish city (6)
- 3 Nothing very quiet – one National Trust competitor (8)
- 4 Odd empty union useless Una left (7)
- 5 One that lies back in park queue. Right? (8)
- 6 Shunting, sent train passing (9)
- 9 Left one member droopy (4)
- 14 Go under. Tune to find flights (3,6)
- 16 At the road's edge, check on the radio, team (8)
- 18 So a verse travels abroad? (8)
- 19 Good time to travel from the summit (3,4)
- 21 River of zero usefulness (4)
- 23 Engineer, aide or crew member (6)
- 24 This material is dug up (5)

Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

Solution to Winter 2022 Crossword

Across: 1 Examination, 9 Geography, 10 Peers, 11 Ice Age, 12 Concerti, 13 Hubble, 15 Advisory, 18 Hundreds, 19 Locker, 21 Sciences, 23 School, 26 Oiled, 27 Insulated, 28 Egg and spoon.

Down: 1 English, 2 Atone, 3 Irregular, 4 Alps, 5 Icy roads, 6 NSPCC, 7 Hastily, 8 Yearbook, 14 Bone idle, 16 Isosceles 17 Adhering, 18 History, 20 Reladen, 22 Nudge, 24 Outdo, 25 ISBN

MEMBER'S ADVENTURES

The Devon Pasty Challenge

Something we should try.....

The above sentence started a challenge that took several hours to train for, along with both the mental and physical honing of a top athlete entering an Olympic final.

Allow me to explain.

Inspiration comes from many places, friends and colleagues, lifestyle needs, a book or a piece of music. Sometimes it comes from a couple of blokes on YouTube! I got a message from John Ridd, my partner in this challenge, that went something like.... 'Have you seen the latest video from *****?' 'No' I replied, 'not yet, going to watch it when I get back home'. 'You will smile, it is something we should try'. My immediate response was 'Oh no!!'

And so, with those words ringing in my ears we set about, 'The **DEVON** Pasty Challenge'.

The Cornish will have you believe that they invented the Pasty as something hearty and wholesome to be taken down into the tin mines to keep the miners fed during their hours of toil below ground. I can't find any real reason

why the people of Devon may have invented it but it all goes to add drama and suspense to a story! The only reason I can think, as someone from Essex, is that it is a bit of gamesmanship between the people of the 2 counties, the people of Devon have their Cream tea (Cream or Jam first? Do you have butter as well?) and the Cornish have their Pasties, so both have tried to steal their neighbours key food item.

Anyway, to the challenge.

Planning began in late September for an early October execution of the challenge, as you can see we were putting a lot of effort in to this, my training regime was in place the day before the challenge began as I had promised myself not to spoil my appetite, though I had to laugh as my good lady wife asked me if I fancied steak pie for tea the night before this took place!

We had a list of bakeries scattered across Devon that we believed may have made their own Pasties, the first shop opened at 0730 and the last planned stop was a shop that closed at 1800. We met at Golden Arches in Cullompton at

0715 as that seemed like the thing to do, (I did say there was a huge amount of planning involved). The only thing we didn't do was indulge in a Double Sausage and Egg McMuffin breakfast, the coffee went down well though.

And so, we begin.

The first outlet was a short ride away in Cullompton, we parked up and walked to the shop. We had a choice, home made or pre-prepared? Cricky we hadn't planned to make such decisions so early in the day! After a bit of debate, homemade it was.



First Pasty consumed before 8am and we were off again, heading to Tiverton and the second outlet of the day.

After parking up again we walked to the shop only to arrive 5 minutes before they opened!

Would this put a dent in our plans? Would we be able to visit

all the planned outlets? We didn't really care too much; the sun was breaking through and there was no rain to be seen. The advice here is that as the kids were going to school in Tiverton keep out of the town, it is busy. Anyway, I digress.....

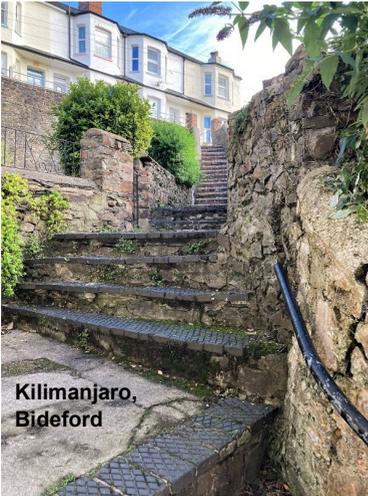
Sarah's assistant opened at 8.30 and we were on to Pasty no. 2. Unfortunately, though baked on the premises it wasn't made on the premises, which was what we had planned to sample, but hey ho to



ensure a good comparison we had one anyway and to be fair it wasn't bad at all.

Pasty no. 2 out of the way we carefully threaded our way out of Tiverton and on to the A361 to head toward North

Devon and the next outlet in Bideford. Parking along the river we had an uninterrupted view across the River Torridge which has its source miles away near Meddon in North Devon and is also the route for the rRvers Lew and Okement to find their way to the Atlantic end of the Bristol Channel, or is that the Bristol Channel end of the Atlantic?



This next outlet was some way from where we had chosen to park (that was daft) and involved a climb that would challenge even some of the most famous climbers in history, Kilimanjaro would have been a suitable training venue for this one! Motorcycle gear and steep steps are not a good combination. The descent was a breeze though. The choice of Pasty was vast and included the Famous Big



Bertha, we knew straightaway that Bertha was a challenge too far in herself, and we just went for the medium traditional. We had already burnt the excess calories off climbing the hill, well steps, to reach the shop.



Preparation is the key to any meal. Bideford waterside.

Another Pasty eaten and off we go once more this time heading in a south westerly direction along the A386 and then the A388 to Holsworthy and our next venue. The roads were not too bad, there was some debris from the recent rain and there were also a few potholes. The weather was warming up and the breeze was starting to drop all was good in our part of Devon.

The ride down to Holsworthy was pleasant with not a huge amount of traffic and we quickly found our next stop.

As we rode down, we said that as we were able to 'eat in' here then we would take the weight off and have a cup of tea with the Pasty, but after ordering we were told that the Pasties were still in the oven and that they would be about 45 minutes, I think we both had the look of scolded children and said that we would just have the tea. Now as any SAM member will know that once settled with Tea or Coffee the conversation starts and time flies, by the time we were ready to leave we were told it was only another 5 minutes to wait for the main event to come out of the oven. So, the

5-minute countdown began. It was (sort of) worth the wait as the Pasty came with green and red stuff, now this was something new and threw us a bit but agreed that this was the healthiest Pasty we had as it had said green and red stuff with it.



After some grumbling about the cost, we mounted up and headed further south, I thought we had failed in our planning when we passed a sign that Welcomed us to Cornwall. We rode for a few miles before we then returned to our Devonshire hunting ground.

Next stop was at Lifton, a place I had never heard of until carrying out the in-depth research required to complete this challenge.



A fresh, made on the premises Pasty with plenty of filling. That's no 5 out of the way.

I must admit that I was starting to get just a bit fed up with Pasties, but a challenge is a challenge, and the show must go on.

And go on it did to Lydford on the A386. Now, we had frequented this establishment earlier in the year when we were out on one of our jaunts, last time it was the sausage roll that had our attention, but today was the pre ordered Pasty's turn. It did not disappoint; it was far and away the biggest of the day and would have fed a family for a few days with careful portion management.



Our next port of call was planned to be in Teignmouth, we had a fantastic ride across Dartmoor, with only the odd dozy sheep wandering into the road and a horse trying to get clear of our way. After negotiating the traffic delight that is Newton Abbot, time was getting on and the next Pasty shop was closing in 5 minutes when we were 10 minutes away so that was never going to work. We decided to push on to our last (thankfully) shop of the

day in Dawlish. The traffic was so much heavier than we had encountered for most of the day, and I personally was pleased that we had kept away from South Devon for the best part.

And finally..... we arrived in Dawlish. We parked up, did some more walking, and purchased the last one of the day. Hopping back on the bikes we headed to Dawlish Warren and found somewhere to park.



That was it. 7 Pasty outlets visited, 235 miles covered home to home, some great chat, some superb roads, and some decent Pasties. Each Pasty was between £2.50 and £5.00 and most were excellent value for money, tasty and worthy of a mention here.

The video that inspired this challenge was by Lamb Chops Rides, check it out on YouTube. Lamb Chops and Teapot One had a good day in Cornwall by the look of it as we had a good day in Devon.

Some of the things that we learnt during this challenge were:

- Have a Blood biker with you, it makes finding places that much easier (they are used to it)
 - If you are chatting as you are riding keep an eye on the Satnav, it will save some dodgy detours
 - Dedication to your training regime is key to success
 - Hill climbing in motorcycle gear is not easy
 - Remember that a side salad with a Pasty does make it healthy
 - It will save money in the long run as you will not want much to eat for at least the 24 hours following doing something like this
 - Not all ideas are good, and you can have too much of a good thing
- Look at all the signs that say the best Pasty in Devon and take what they say with a large pinch of salt, many of the outlets visited sold the best

Pasty in Devon but not as voted for by SAM Pasty tasting team.

Did we find the best Pasty in Devon?

We believe that we have found one of the best in Devon, but not on this trip. We found that when we were on the SWPR in September and that Pasty was the judging reference for all those that we have sampled on this day out.

I am not sure that we want to name the outlet concerned as the last thing we want to do is turn up and find the carpark full of SAM members eating the Pasties (and the Sausage rolls are excellent too).

So let's get a list together of everyone's favourite Pasty in Devon, narrow it down to the top 6 and arrange a Pasty-off for the summer of 2022.

There has been mention of the next challenge, we will keep that under wraps for now, but I do think it will be another gastronomic delight!

Trev Watts and John Ridd

CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!



I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo, taken near Mount Snowdon on the recent SAM Welsh Weekend.

Suggestions to me at

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

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{advert submitted by the Editor on behalf of a friend}

Free — (ish!)

I have a pair of Pirelli Phantom Sportscomp tyres that need re-homing.



They came off a 2019 Triumph T120 that had covered about 800 miles.

If anyone is interested please get in touch.

All I ask is for you to collect them and donate to the Air Ambulance.

Thanks, **Trev Watts. 07713772209
or missegain1@gmail.com**

Winter 2022 Caption



This issue's suggested caption (of Rob Bartlett at a SAM Slow Riding Day) comes from Nigel Short:

“Oh dear, L5/S1 has just popped out”.

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 #19

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

Returning from a visit to friends in Germany, the rider and his pillion took a turn through the Vosges mountains staying at Moto-Hotél du Col de Bussang, a simple, bikers' stop with a warm welcome and good food. You'll know you have the right place when you see the rider's SAM beanie hat nailed to a beam in the bar.

As a fan of 'Allo 'Allo! with its wonderful accents (and its recurring theme of the coveted van Klomp painting of The Fallen Madonna with the Big ...), the rider enjoyed the host's, and other guests', delightful mangling of English and his own disreputable French and German. It turned out that the Dutch proprietor was also a fan of the programme and after a good few beers he took the rider to one side and said 'listen very carefully, I have something special to show you in the cellar.'

The hotel is built into the rock of the pass; the cellar walls are bare rock and it is divided into smaller spaces for beer barrels, wine racks, freezers,

spare furniture and so on.

In the furthest corner, in a dark recess, the patron stopped and, after a dramatic pause, flicked a switch. A spotlight picked out a painting; it was the sought-after van Klomp.

In the 'Allo 'Allo! series, there were numerous forgeries of the original, and the rider could tell, at-a-glance, that this was clearly a reproduction.

It was not a flat canvas, rather, the painting was stunningly rendered in very real, bulging 3D. And yes, they were big.





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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.

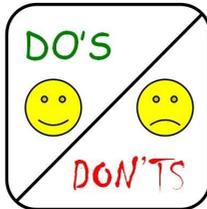
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

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 speak to any SAM officer, or click on the link on the "SHOP" tab of the SAM website.

SAM SLOW RIDING SKILLS DAYS

The first of these ever-popular (and extremely valuable!) events takes place on Sunday 12th June at Bridgwater & Taunton College on Bath Road, Bridgwater TA6 4PZ. Open to all riders, come along between 10:00 and 16:00. Pre-booking advisable (look out for booking details)