

Winter 2023

FULL CHAT

Newsletter of Somerset Advanced Motorcyclists

Group No. 1241



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Front Cover: Dave Wilmott and Jez Martin heading up to Princetown on Dartmoor during last year's Cornish Camping weekend



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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS (& Rearward Reflections!)



Literally teetering towards the deadline as I write this, we've certainly had an inauspicious start to the year weather wise. I've not been out on my bike since the 2nd December last year, due to one or two "mobility issues" as they are known in royal circles. My cancer had got to the stage of creating a crack in my right leg, which the lovely orthopaedic surgeons pinned for me on 3rd January. Not a walk in the park (or anywhere, come to that) but home now and making gradual progress. 2023 might even see me back on a bike, who knows?

The year may be interesting in biking terms, but with the rather fixed planning and thinking of the motor industry, maybe not so much that as more of the same. Global issues are still massively disrupting supplies of new bikes and their factory add-ons, whatever the manufacturers would have us believe to get us to walk into the dealerships. This will keep the used market strong and in some ways a better place to be: why not buy that barely-used bike on which someone else has already waited for months to get the tricking up sorted out? There are certainly some models coming through with a lower base price from the major manufacturers, although reading about the new Honda Hornet, I was disappointed in the sus-



pension spec, as I invariably am with Hondas. You can buy it relatively cheaply but honestly, the first thing I'd want is a decent suspension set up, think of it as a donor bike for that. On the upside, it's short(ish) so a more manageable proposition for the short/weak of leg. I guess if you do buy a used bike with an aftermarket suspension upgrade, it's worth having it checked over by someone like Mark Hammond, to ensure that it's suitable for your own needs – unless you are a bone fide suspension guru in your own right. Mark's



skills have transformed the handling of the last three bikes I've bought. Once again I wish you all safe, skilled and joyous motorcycling in 2023, and my continued thanks to all of you who have shown me your steadfast friendship and the courage to drop by and see how the old wreck is doing. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue, the deadline for the next one is 15th April, 2023.

Gina Herridge

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Happy New Year to you all. Well, another year has started and at this time I have no real news, which in some part is a good thing. It means to me at least that the group is ticking along on an even keel. The weather is rubbish, but if you are an all-weather rider then it makes no difference. All I do these days is come home and wash the bike, to the amusement of the neighbours. We have a full events list and an upcoming event is the South West Peninsula Spring Ral-

ly. This has always been well supported which is down to the hard work put in by Jez and many others. I am going to retire this year from work so that I can spend more time going out on club rides and being more involved where I can. It will be strange not to have to get up and go to work, even if it is just to the office down the landing. So hopefully I will see more of you in the coming year.



Martin Surrey

SAM NEWS

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.



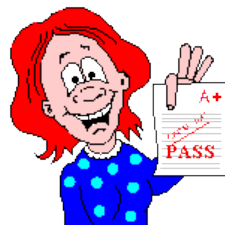
The minutes of previous Committee meetings can be obtained from the Secretary on request.

Committee Meetings



CONGRATULATIONS!

to the following
members for
passing their
IAM tests:



Chris Ley on 11th November riding a Kawasaki Versys 750. Chris was observed by John Eggleton and Rob Malton and achieved a F1RST.

Louise Antell on 13th November, also achieving a F1RST. Louise was riding her Honda CB500F and was observed by Jules Cooper.

Fiona Gilman on 20th November, riding a Honda Rebel 1000, and observed by Lindsay Wilson.

Mark Bevington on 3rd December. Mark was riding his Honda CBR Fireblade and was observed by Colin Reynolds

William Eccles, also on 3rd December, who achieved a F1RST whilst riding his BMW 1000RR. William was observed by Bob Muckett.

Shaun White on 8th December. Shaun achieved a F1RST riding his Triumph Tiger 1200, and was observed by Jim Donnelly.

John Felton on 8th December and observed by Martin Hember. John was riding a Honda CBF600.

Lee Wright on 9th December. Lee was riding a Yamaha FJR1300 and was observed by Lindsay Wilson.

Chris McCollum on 6th February, riding his Suzuki GSX-S1000GT. Chris was observed by Georges Dupuis and Martin Surrey, and gained a F1RST.

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

IAM Inform

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

South West Peninsula Spring Rally

The 14th SWPSR will be held on April 1st 2023.

The object of the Rally is to complete various stages, collecting answers to clues on your travels. These answers and points decide the award achieved.

As usual, we have a team of professional caterers to provide breakfast options as well as the hot meal upon your return to HQ.

We have moved the HQ back to Long Sutton Village Hall this year.

Start and Finish Control – Long Sutton Village Hall, Martock Road, Long Sutton, Somerset TA10 9NT.

Entrants must sign in at Start Control between 08:00 and 10:00 hrs, and return to sign out between 17:00 and 23:00 hrs.

AWARDS

Gold Award – approx.. 400 miles. 15 unmanned checkpoints and 3 manned checkpoints

Silver Award – approx.. 300 miles. 12 unmanned checkpoints and 2 manned checkpoints

Bronze Award – approx. 150 miles. 9 unmanned checkpoints and 1 manned checkpoint

Lands End Award – This award is supplementary to the other awards. To achieve it, you must:

- Complete the Gold Award
- Visit Lands End, and have your Control Card stamped by the Lands End Hotel as confirmation you visited Land's End (which does not count as a Checkpoint!)

Note: Manned Checkpoints are only open from 10:00 until 18:00, so you will need to plan your journey carefully.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! Visit the SAM website for details.



BIKE REPORTS

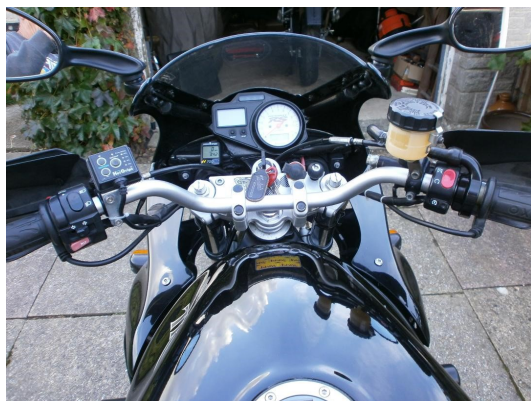
20 Years with a Triumph Sprint RS

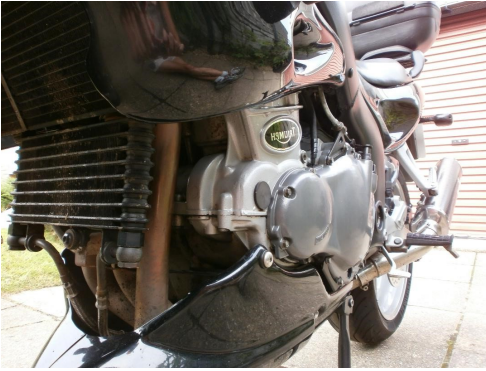
This was actually my second RS, the first - a yellow model - bought new in 2000 was sold when someone offered me a good price. This coincided with Bransons, who had a Triumph dealership in Gloucester, re-importing a few from Canada. As Roy, a friend in Cheltenham, was going to buy one as well, we had the pair for a bargain £5,000 each. VU03RZR was registered on 3/3/2003 and soon became my new 'VFR'. Honda's 750 had, until then, been what I considered the best all round motorcycle, having toured both at home and abroad on one for the last decade. This did not occur straight away but after few modifications.



The yellow RS had remained standard and I found it a bit restricting trying to look around when touring, specially on tight mountain roads. I fitted an LSL higher handlebar conversion to the black one in early 2004 which cost £190.00, I also fitted a Scottoiler during the first year, some R&G crash bungs and some Oxford heated grips. Bransons serviced the bike during the warranty and also fixed an oil leak from the crankcase, this meant returning to Gloucester but I did get to explore the docks there.

Having other bikes to ride meant that it was not until May 2005 that the first major service at 12,000 miles was done, by me, now that





the warranty had expired. The valves needed a couple of shims changing, but on these engines it only requires fitting a tool to hold the valve down whilst the shim is swapped. Unusually for a modern engine, shims have needed changing at 24,000 and 48,000 miles though not at 36,000 or 60,000 miles. Other Triumphs I have owned have been ok - after the first valve adjustment - for many miles. Most other service items are fairly



straightforward but, every time I removed the fuel tank I had a job to re-fit it. This turned out to be a common problem with the Triumph plastic tanks which 'swell' as the material soaks up the fuel. I found that by removing a small amount of metal from a couple of points on the frame this was no longer a problem. Over the 20 years and 60 odd thousand miles, I have had to replace some parts. The first major one was when the instruments started playing up. I had run out of fuel on the Isle Of Man when I failed to realise the warning light had failed, eventually the speedo failed and as a new one was £800 at the time I utilized a cycle computer until a second hand unit turned up on eBay. The next major failure happened riding through Hambridge in pouring rain when the bike gradually died electrically and I had to ask Maggie to bring a spare battery out to get me home. Turned out the alternator brushes had seized, which I had never seen before, but they were solid in the holders and the whole unit had failed. Again eBay came to the rescue quite cheaply as I found the same unit was used in many Japanese cars. The ignition switch also started playing up but I managed to strip it and repair the contacts with some solder.

Service parts so far: 14 tyres, 2 chain/sprockets, 3 sets of front and 4 sets of rear brake pads, spark plugs and filters as per schedule, although I replaced the air filter with a K&N washable one. The RS is fairly good on fuel, averaging about 58mpg, and the fuel warning light comes on at 220 miles.

In recent years the RS has tended to be my 'winter' bike and, despite a less than rigorous cleaning regime, has not suffered too much apart from some of the alloy fittings losing their paint.

A few years ago I bought another (orange) RS for when the black one goes bang, the starter motor clutch is well known for both failing and requiring a full engine strip to replace, but so far I have just robbed parts from it to keep my other Triumphs going. Hopefully, it will stay that way for a while longer.

The RS was never a popular bike for some reason, but has been one of my favourites, out of over 60 bikes owned over the last 50 odd years. **Rick Chubb**



Honda NT1100 - Initial Thoughts

Having reported in the last issue that I'd ordered an NT1100, delivery took less time than I expected, and on 18th November I picked it up from Bridge Exeter. The journey home showed just how easy it is to bond with this bike, the riding position being just about ideal and the handling very easy. Varying the revs on the short journey up the M5, I was conscious of the importance of the breaking-in



procedure - not entirely necessary with modern machines, but essential for an old engineer!

Performance (using up to 4,000 revs, with occasional gentle throttle burst up to 5,000) was smooth and easy. However, turning off through Henlade with its extended 30mph speed limit showed a major issue, in that it was impossible to maintain a steady 30mph on the flat. A quick call to Bridge received the response that it was PDI'd and that it would have been perfect when supplied - must be me then! They suggested I put some more miles on it ...

Subsequent rides have shown that everything I read about the NT prior to purchase are correct - it's

comfortable; the wind protection from the windscreen is superb in the highest position, but easily adjusted lower if desired; the riding position is spot-on, and makes it so easy to ride; the power is more than adequate and fluid (albeit it needs 4000 revs in order to make any reasonable progress); the engine vibration is noticeable (after the Explorer), but eventually convinces you this must be character; the gearchange is smooth and with well matched ratios; instruments are clear and comprehensive, and the brakes and handling are inconspicuous at this stage of running in, so must be well matched. The downsides? In cold weather

your hands freeze badly (this being the 1st bike I've had in 19 years without hand guards); torque is OK, but a bit lacking (again after the Explorer), so needs full use of the gearbox; the amount of controls on the handlebars is indeed excessive, albeit most of them aren't needed except to change the trip computer; the indicator switch is too low down on the switch unit (compared to every other bike I've ridden), so I'm continually pressing the horn; the various display options and riding modes for the

instruments are a bit unnecessary for someone who dislikes electronics; and the fuel gauge graduation is virtually useless.

Most importantly, the problem of slow speed running remains. Bridge have had in it, checked it over, and pronounced the bike to be perfect (so it really must be me, then!). Their technician did suggest that setting the engine braking to Low (there are 3 user-defined settings for engine power, engine braking and traction control) may improve things—he was right, it did slightly, but only by re-



ducing the surge when the fuelling cuts out, due to the lower engine braking. So it didn't cure the problem, only disguised it slightly. Unfortunately, this lower engine braking setting can only be done in one of the 2 user-defined engine modes, making the 3 default engine mode settings redundant whilst this problem remains.

Interestingly, engaging cruise control (at 36mph in 4th, the lowest I can achieve with it) totally eliminates the issue, but gently opening the throttle to match this speed, and then disengaging the cruise, results in the surging coming back.

Because of this erratic running at low throttle openings, I have been reluctant to ride it much, instead using my trusty Tiger 800, which delivers perfect fuelling and throttle control - not the best advert for a new bike! Using it for any SAM Observing is therefore an impossibility, which is equally disappointing. However, as I'm still waiting for SHAD to manufacture a suitable mounting plate for my Christmas present of their excellent adjustable 46-58 litre topbox, this probably isn't too much of an issue, as I don't travel lightly!

It's booked in for its 1st (600 mile) service this week, so I'll give Bridge another chance to sort it - current experience with them suggests, though, that I'm going to be left disappointed, but I'm keen to be proved wrong. Interestingly, user forums for the NT have shown none of the slow speed/minimal throttle issues I've experienced, which suggests there is indeed a problem with my bike, that apparently Bridge's computer can't detect.

So in summary, the NT1100 is a great machine, and an ideal size/weight for me (and probably many others too), it holds its weight low down and it has superb balance. It's definitely in a different league to my old Explorer (which I expected, as its significantly cheaper), and my initial experience of Honda's service backup has been extremely disappointing. I'm sure I'll quickly adjust to the more "sensible" aspects of this bike - if, that is, they can fix it.

Oh, and it's easy to put it onto its standard centre stand!

Graham Tulloch

600 mile service update - bike has once again been checked and given 100% positive health check. Sales person advised that a big 1100cc twin is unlikely to be able to hold slow steady speeds.....(!). He then suggested trying it in low power (Rain) mode—I did, and the problem disappeared for all bar the last mile of the trip home! TBC....

RIDE REPORTS

New Year's Day Ride

It was New Year's Day, the weather forecast was actually not too bad, 12°, low windspeed and light cloud. What a start to the year. We were 12 bikes including Graham's brand-new Honda NT 1100, such a shame to get his new bike wet and dirty! As we pulled away from the meeting point at Podimore and rounded the end of Yeovilton runway, we were confronted with a 300 yard stretch of completely flooded road - what a

start to the ride. All, though, survived with dignity.

From the lead, my mirror sometimes showed four or five bikes but sometimes only one or two. As a ride leader I'm often conscious of the possibility of losing some of the bikes perhaps due to poor junction marking. Amongst our 12, we had three associates, one who had not previously used the drop-off system. The secret seems to be advance planning:



choosing the route and pre-riding with junction marking in mind, and confidence that keeping just one rider in view behind is enough. Within 10 miles and half a dozen junctions, everyone settled in well. Today this was not to be a problem.

The route took us over Yeovilton moor to Marston Magna; a nice, clear and challenging road to Sherborne and a wiggle bypassing the perennial Sherborne roadworks and traffic lights that seem to have been there now for years (what IS it all about?). Having taken the Dorchester Road we shortly turned left onto the A3030, towards Kings Stag. The roads in this part of Dorset always seem light for traffic with few 30 and 40 mph limits and with good corners and nice quick bits where the bike can be opened up carefully. I often choose this direction when I lead a SAM ride.

Having enjoyed the A and B roads and encountered a fair bit of standing water, and of course debris, we reached the A30. It was now time to take some smaller, un-numbered roads which demand concentration and restraint if they are to be ridden fairly quickly and safely. Making progress in a safe, legal way was a great deal of fun for me and my thirteen year old boxer-twin.

Being New Year's Day with no pub or café open for the usual natter at the end, mince pies and tea in my garage and front yard was a very sociable end to the ride. Marge (and Ricky my Christmas guest), made us all feel very welcome and there were lots of bodies, Goretex, helmets and bikes, all smiles and natter for about an hour.

All together, and despite the need to cook 25 mince pies and sweep out the garage (New Year you understand), being a ride leader is very rewarding, not least because I get to meet and chat to the new members, some older (long-standing) members I may not have previously met, and of course some of my old SAM mates. So well done to those who rose early and attended, we all had a great time. Let's look forward to a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year with a lot of good, safe mileage together. Now to clean the bike..... **Andy Hall**



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Control & Technique

"The Human Factor"

Sat. 11th Feb. 2023

10:00 @ Othery Village Hall

TA7 0QU

SAM Amber Ride

"Tor, Gorge & Combe"

Wed. 15th Feb. 2023

10:00 @ Southfields Services

Led by John Ridd

Bristol Classic Bike Show

Sat. 25th & Sun. 26th Feb. 2023

Bath & West Showground,
Shepton Mallett

Control & Technique

"Cornering"

Sat. 11th Mar. 2023

10:00 @ Othery Village Hall

TA7 0QU

SAM Green Ride

"March Mosey On Down"

Sat. 18th Mar. 2023

09:30 @ Podimore Services

Led by Roger Moffatt

SAM Green Ride

"A Winter's Shakedown"

Sun. 12th Feb. 2023

09:30 @ Southfields Services.

Led by Dave Parker

SAM Red Ride

"Checkpoint Charlie"

Sun. 19th Feb. 2023

09:00 @ Cross Keys, Norton Fitz.

Led by Rob Bartlett

SAM Amber Ride

"Winter Midweek Meander"

Thu. 9th Mar. 2023

10:00 @ Total Triumph, A38

Led by Trev Watts

SAM Green Ride

"Boing Boing Spring"

Sun. 12th Mar. 2023

Details TBC

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



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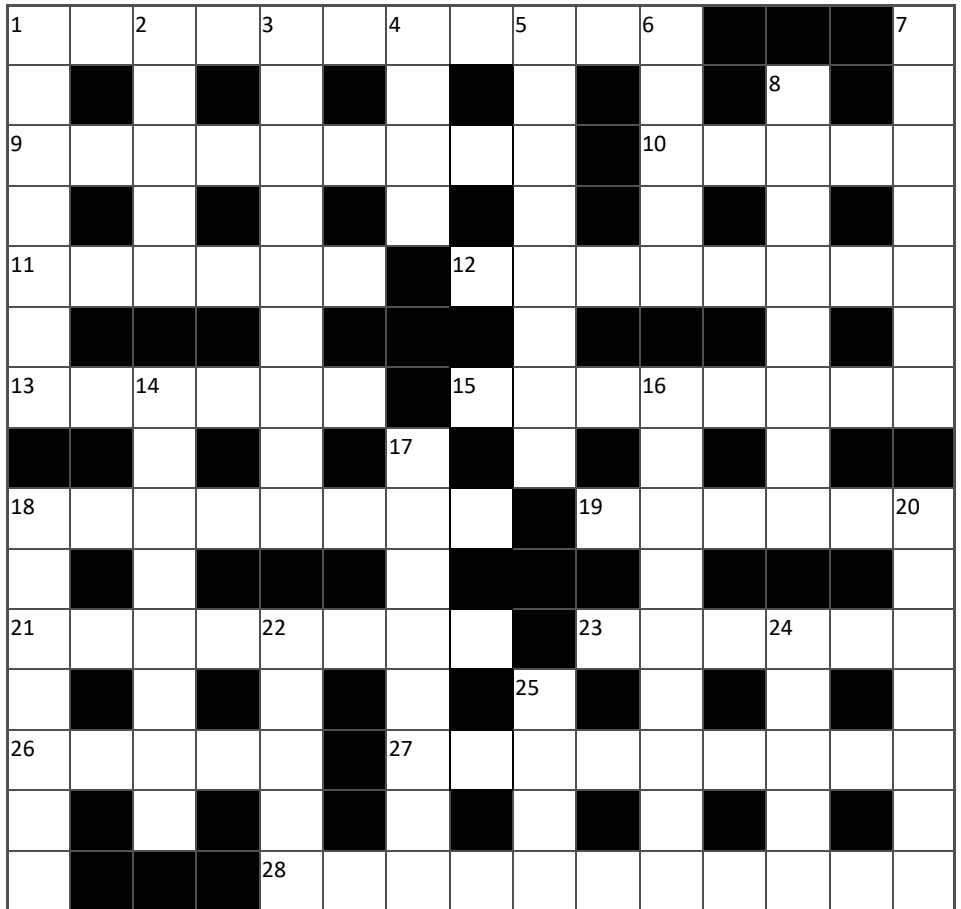
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CROSSWORD



Across

- 1** Teen's enigma rebuilt locomotive (5,6)
9 Bearing some resemblance to Alan Suago, maybe (9)
10 Open space in a wood running lad easily encircled (5)
11 Abundance of mineral aggregate after delay reversed (6)
12 Fast car and boat sung about over Dover (8)
13 Reproach concerning Britain, United Kingdom and England (6)
15 Commit and leave (8)
18 Young singer in church sphere, including one over start of year (8)
19 Short dromedary Egyptian sun god made into Brownie® (6)

CROSSWORD (cont.)

- 21 Disturbing a left limb in opening of gate (8)
- 23 Ella did work in North America, initially for another woman (6)
- 26 Starting air-conditioning could reach across African capital (5)
- 27 Moderate ease (9)
- 28 Sailboarding turns uniform right following in front of gale (11)

Down

- 1 Show-off ruined raw eggs (7)
- 2 Message from Neeson, say, raised after Echo (1-4)
- 3 Bond movie's small, high sail (9)
- 4 Either way it's midday (4)
- 5 Slagged off, lagged missing first letter (8)
- 6 Large bird or headless dog (5)
- 7 Some slob read the width (7)
- 8 Cover the French at home in China (8)
- 14 Resilience could be bouncy – ya! (8)
- 16 Vera Pound re-invented garage door (2-3-4)
- 17 Water jet, fine to medium for high hill (8)
- 18 Hat? Cap? I cooked flat bread (7)
- 20 A cad or bounder bagged a criminal (1,3,3)
- 22 Cat's cry climb without aim (5)
- 24 Saddam, for example, internally ran all queries individually at first (5)
- 25 Beers from leaderless region of UK (4)

Solution in next issue

Many thanks to Steve Schlemmer for submitting this Crossword Puzzle.

Solution to Autumn 2022 Crossword

Across: 7 Fanciful, 9 Chance, 10 Hake, 11 Innovation, 12 Iguana, 14 Cynicism, 15 Emblem, 17 Jet-lag, 20 Strength, 22 Barley, 23 Meditative, 24 Wane, 25 Bottle, 26 Knee-deep.

Down: 1 Harangue, 2 Ache, 3 Africa, 4 Scavenge, 5 Particular, 6 Across, 8 Lunacy, 13 Abbreviate, 16 Engraver, 18 Guernsey, 19 Shrink, 21 Tremor, 22 Brewed, 24 Wade.

MEMBER'S ADVENTURES

Morocco

I had originally planned to go to Morocco last year but the tour company went bust. Thankfully I had paid the deposit with a credit card. I looked around for a surviving and reliable tour company and settled on Globe-Busters. I had planned to take my steady Triumph Tiger 900 Rally Pro but after a visit to Total Triumph and too much time obsessing about big is beautiful, I seemed to have acquired a Tiger 1200 Rally Explorer. I rode this bike to Switzerland and Italy in June and I really appreciated the comfort and power on long days and whilst crossing the Alps. That power, comfort, and endurance comes at a price, and an extra 60kg makes it a bit of a beast if one is a little tardy, keeping it upright and moving it about manually. However, the 315 mile range adds a level of smugness over the less than 200-mile riders.

We all met up at Portsmouth for the 2 night ferry crossing to Santander, 16 bikes in total: 1 Triumph Rally Explorer; 1 Triumph Rally Pro; 2 Triumph Tiger GT Pros; 1 Triumph Speed Triple; 1 Triumph Tiger 1200 XRT; 1 KTM 790 Adventure; 5 BMW R1200 GS Adventures; 1 BMW R1200 GS; and 1 21 years old Kawasaki ZR1100-C4, ridden by my room-mate, who was known as Kawasaki Dave. The 2 tour leaders were riding a Triumph Tiger 1200 GT Pro and a Triumph Tiger 900 Rally Pro, as GlobeBusters is affiliated with Triumph. The tour leaders were very experienced, the leader had started his racing career racing scooters, and had taken part in the London to Beijing tour. His assistant has ridden around the world as a solo female rider, and between them they brought a depth of knowledge and fun to the whole adventure. There were 2 pillion couples, with a third joining for the return trip back through Spain. A Swedish rider on a BMW R1250 GS Adventure joined us in Santander and 2 riders on hired BMW R1250 GSs joined us in Mona, Southern Spain. The average age (not counting me at 78) would have been early 60s, most being men apart from 1 female second in command, 1 very experienced female rider and 3 female pillions. There was a good cross section of society and we were all kept grounded by one pillion from up north who could see the funny side of any catastrophe. The biggest problem with meeting up with a new group is trying to remember their first names. Name badges would have helped?

Checking in at Portsmouth was unnecessarily complicated as they required us to check in with our cabin mate (who we hadn't met at this stage) and they required me to return to check in 3 times, necessitating an about turn in a narrow lane in front of a huge number of bikers whilst dreading an embarrassing drop!

The ferry was new and comfortable, and the Bay of Biscay was calm both ways.

We met up with our Swedish rider just outside Santander and headed to the Picos Mountains. I latched on to the tour leader and found myself exploring the capabilities of my bike's new features, switching into sports mode for the first time and using the quick shift-

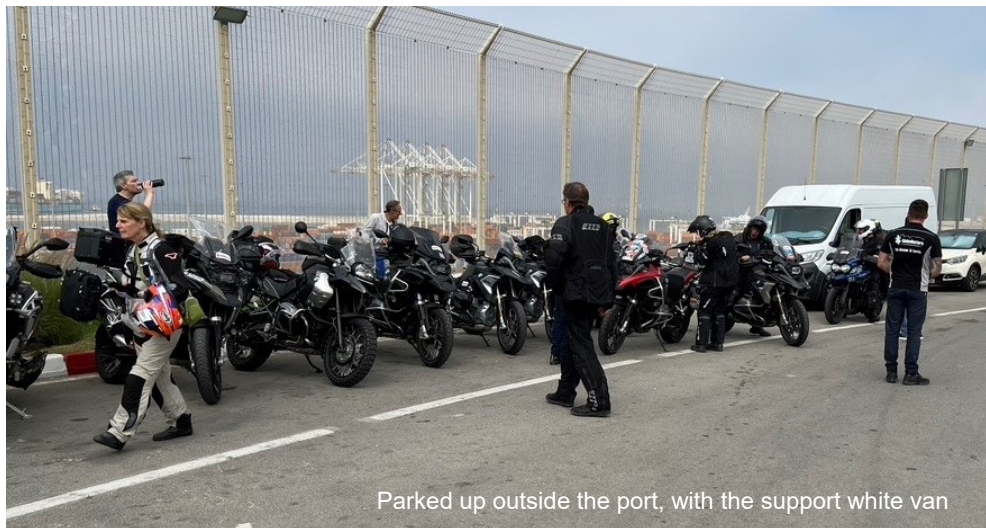


er combined with the front brake, which also applies the rear brake, whilst cornering ABS saves you from over exuberance. Riding behind an expert down a series of hairpins whilst The Flight of the Valkyries is playing in ones headset is sublime, and reminded me of training with Jez. The Tiger 1200 Rally Explorer is a kind of Swiss army knife and has no problem keeping up with its more road orientated GT Pro.



Our first night stop was at Salamanca, the second at Llerena and the third at Mona. The routes were selected with the minimum of motorways and main roads, and the maximum number of National Parks and twisties. You had the option of riding solo, as a loose group or following one of the leaders

for a more exciting ride without the need to navigate. GlobeBusters provided a GPS micro chip with the route for Spain and Morocco plus route cards for each day.



Parked up outside the port, with the support white van

We left Mona for the ferry at Algeciras via the toll motorway and the crossing to Port Tanger Med. The ferry is somewhat old and the car deck was wet and oily and covered in tie down humps, just the time to be riding a top heavy bike. We spent the crossing filling out forms that we knew no one would read, and once off the ferry we had to hand in our original V5s to get a temporary import card that you have to guard with your life. We set off to Chefchaouen experiencing the whole gambit of Moroccan roads in the first few miles - smooth tarmac roads, dirt tracks, donkeys, camels, and that



quaint old French rule of giving way to vehicles coming from the right even on roundabouts.

Mopeds swarm like mosquitos and the only way to survive is to embrace the challenge of combat riding.

Chefchaouen was a great first stop as walking straight from the hotel into the main

square we realised how friendly the locals are, which is unusual in Africa and in a Muslim country. It was as though their life depended on our continuing custom and later we realised that the police were universally turning



ing a blind eye to our misdemeanours. Maybe the government realises that Morocco has become the motorcyclists' playground of choice and that we bring in a huge amount of revenue. Whatever the reason let us hope it continues. We were woken at 0500 by the first call to prayer by a loud speaker in the hotel car park.

The next day we rode to the Atlas mountains via Roman ruins at Volubilis, where I demonstrated how not to exit a boulder covered dirt car park. As we climbed into the mountains we ascended into cloud and then rain which is not what you expect in a North African country.

For hotels out of town we had group meals in the hotel. You can get alcohol at tourist hotels, the lager is passable, but Moroccan produced wine? That was something else!

Next morning we descended through the clouds and rain towards the desert proper and the sand dunes at the edge of the Sahara at Merzouga. That night we took a one hour camel ride to a Berber tent for a meal, slept in a tent and watched dawn rise over the dunes. It sounded rather Disney to me and I was going to pass re travel insurance exclusion but I'm glad that I relented as we all got caught up in the atmosphere, especially dune jumping at dawn.

The next day was a day off and a group went dune riding on KTMs with a Dakar instructor. This was a definite exclusion as I wanted to finish the tour.



Next day we rode to the Todrha Gorge and the Dades Gorge loop. This was optional as the Dades Gorge was a rough jeep track, not so much gravel but bed rock and very lumpy. The street Triple put a stone through its rear tyre and my hydraulic clutch decided to have a reoccur-



rence of its air in the hydraulic pipe issue. With us being at 8000 ft, and the trapped air being less dense, the clutch was dragging and I was catching up the main group down the hairpins with an inconvenient drop off on one side. We made it to the valley and the hotel at Boumaine du Dades.

Onwards to Marrakesh and a day off where the Street Triple had its tyre slit fixed (it got it all the way home to Sheffield) and my bike was taken to a back street mechanic who vacuum bled the clutch for £7.50. It's still OK but I'm told by Triumph that it is a known problem affecting about a third of all Tiger 1200s! Meanwhile we were taken by bus to see the sights although most of us bailed after lunch for a beer beside the pool.

This hotel had underground parking with a sharp left turn at the bottom which was manageable going down but somehow had become a legendary problem over our day off. The hotel staff had spilt water down the ramp and helpfully threw sand over the water. Our deputy leader got herself wedged against the wall and the next rider hit the wall end with his pannier and dropped his bike. Several riders (including an ex-police instructor who

was not part of our group) got our leader to ride their bikes up. The trick was to make sure you were straight at the bottom and not over think the challenge.

We left Marrakesh for the Atlantic coast at Essaouira passing the area of goats in trees. Whether goats ever climbed in trees is debatable, but now every tree has little platforms with goats on, and at least they are well fed and safe from a goat tagine.



Essaouira is a touristy seaside town but a pleasant stop, although not for Kawasaki Dave as I discovered a suspicious puddle under his bike which was caused by his radiator guard rubbing a hole in the core. We tried a quick fix with araldite but this wouldn't hold so the old bike went to Fez in the van where another back street mechanic soldered up the hole, allowing it to make it back to Liverpool. I was somewhat miffed that the hotel didn't appreciate me using their marble wall to panel beat the aluminium



pannier (from the hotel ramp pannier dented incident) back into shape.

From Essaouira we headed south stopping for lunch on a hippy beach where there were a few stoned surfers enjoying the local weed. We managed a swim in a not so cold Atlantic – well, warmer than Corn-

wall. We stayed overnight at Taroudant which is so memorable that I can't recall being there. Then on the next day to the Cascades d' Ouzoud over a stunning pass which was one minute sweeping bends with silky smooth tarmac and the next a jeep track with missing sections of surface and sheer drop offs.



After Cascades d Ouzoud we rode to Fez and another day off with a tourist tour around a local very smelly (they use pigeon poo to cure the hides) leather tannery of cow, goat and camel skins, plus a mosaic workshop. However we again opted to return to the hotel to cool down in the pool.

On our last day in Morocco we left the hotel

early to ride back to the Tanger Med for 12.00 in order to change Dirham into euros (10 Dirhams to 1 Euro) and check in and clear customs for the 2pm ferry. Clearing passports and customs in Algeciras was a matter of trying to beat the trucks to the barriers and then riding back to Mona along the toll motorway. We had just joined the motorway when our deputy leader - rapidly passing us in the outside lane - had her chain break. She made it to the hard shoulder cutting across us and was eventually recovered to the Triumph dealer in Malaga.





We started to feel deflated as we made our way back through Spain over the next 3 days. Although the roads were testing and the countryside interesting, we were coming to the end of what had been one of the most exciting, well organised and friendliest tours I have been on. Our last day in Spain took us over the Pecos mountains again. The previous day the temperature had been 25°C, but as we left early that morning it was 9°C and dropped to 4°C over the hills, it was a rude awakening

that we had returned to Northern Europe.

There is something unique about motorcyclists that we can get on regardless of age, experience and social economic grouping. We have forged a friendship through combat but only if you count night riding swarmed by unlit mopeds, donkeys and camels as war.

Our longest day was 265 miles but averaged 200 miles with plenty of coffee and lunch stops. We started at 0830 and we were finished by 1700.

I found the Triumph off road experience very useful for riding on gravel. One of our riders lives on Guernsey with a max speed limit of 35 mph and he certainly didn't have a problem with some of the rougher tracks or faster roads. This type of tour relies upon the quality of the administration and the natural leadership and experience of the tour leaders. Hopefully this is the normal standard for GlobeBusters but I will find out on my next tour as I am now addicted.

Chris Mutton



Winter Riding in the sunny Canaries

Four of us - Martin, our partners and I - took a flight out to Gran Canaria in November to sample the riding courtesy of 'Canary Motorcycle Tours' based in Vaciendario. This is very close to the airport and 20 mins from the popular beach resort of Play Del Ingles, where we stayed for a few days. Weather was great with temperatures bouncing between 24° to 28°C.

A bit of drama with the hire car not materialising when we landed ended well by working out that the taxi made it cheaper, so a short transfer up the dual carriageway the next morning to Martin and Joy's (the British owners) bike lockup was made after brekky, arriving for 08:45.

We took our gloves, scarves to prevent sun burn on our necks, kevlar jeans and Rev'it mesh jackets, opting to travel light and using their helmets for the two days riding.



Insurance was obtained prior to departure with 'Navigator' that allowed us to ride motorcycles over 125cc and covered both of us for the whole trip for about £36 including £5M cover and repatriation.

Day one I was as-

signed a V-Strom 650 with my wife Tina, Martin on a Versus 650 with Janet. Though very similar machines, later turned to be very different bikes: the V-Strom perfectly suited to two up riding with better, roomier ergonomics and engine/gearbox better matched to the terrain; the Versys a much sportier chassis with higher pegs, closer bars and tighter gearbox due to its lower mileage.

This was our first trip abroad riding on the wrong side, and found it to be a great way to introduce one's self to riding abroad (yes, I know, been riding all these years and not left the village, all work and no play!)

Our trip started after taking on some fuel at the local garage, and we routed anticlockwise around the island taking in the vast banana plantations, stopping regularly for photo opportunities and coffee. The roads not being too crazy, the locals letting us out of junctions and generally respectful road manners.



We then negotiated the famous GC-200 coast road. A very technical but stunning road that winds its way south on a cliff edge framed by the Atlantic surf down below.

Our tour guide was a friendly Spanish chap called Jorse who rode an old 'oil head' GS with over 120K

miles on it and did a great job of keeping us entertained. He's been riding for years, including a trip from southern Spain to the Nord-cap.

Day two followed a similar theme, but this time we were both on V-Stroms.



We wormed our way up the many volcanic hairpin mountain roads to the centre of the island with stunning forest routes, finishing with great views across to Tenerife.

Local food was sampled and Jorse did a great job of negotiating a fixed price for everyone that included drink, meal and cake. We visited coastal fish restaurants and mountain view establishments, nothing hurried or rushed.

ing hurried or rushed.

In no time, we found our way back to the hotel and spent the remainder sampling some beverages and absorbing some much needed sun.

CMTours can offer a complete accommodation package with bike hire, or you can sort your own digs out like we did – there are plenty of YouTube videos online to view. We paid about £130 each day with pillion, fuel and their insurance, and as expected we got the full sight, sound and smell experience.

Wayne Timbrell & Martin Perry



CAPTION SUGGESTIONS PLEASE!



I'd welcome your suggestions for a Caption to go with this photo of

Tom Moore's dog Ferdy.

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

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KIT REPORTS

SHAD SH58X Topcase

I don't travel lightly, and - for observing in particular - I welcome a decent topbox to hold my books, folders, wet weather gear etc. The Honda option for their NT1100 has 2 problems for me: 1, it needs a key to open it every time, not just to unlock

it (think mid-ride debrief, stop in a layby, switch off, remove key from ignition, open box...); and 2, Honda charges over £500 for it! My intention was then to source a Givi one, but they, too, require a key to open them every time, so another non starter. Eventually I found out at the NEC Bike Show that SHAD boxes only need a key to lock them, not to open them, so I opted

for their excellent SH58X expandable unit. The lid of the case has 3 different settings, offering between 46 and 58 litres (two full face helmets) depending on the setting, and a colour-coded infill is also available. All this for under £300. Unfortunately issues with their mounting plate for the NT caused them to be removed from sale last November, but hopefully will be available again this month, so I should be able to fit it soon.

Graham Tulloch



Summer2022 Caption



This issue's suggested caption (of Gina & Peter Herridge, and Tim Radford, during their recent holiday in Spain) comes from Dave Parker:

Tim: "Hey, Pete, I'm done with tea and coffee - it's beer o'clock!"

Peter: "I'm on it, Tim"

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.

Furlong Tyres: 01935 425888 Paul
A303 Motorcycles: 01935 507620 Bunny (Dave)



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TAILPIECE #22

In the early noughties, the rider and his pillion were on an organised tour of the Alps and northern Italy. The tour included a guided visit to the Ducati factory. One of the 30 odd participants was riding a quite unsuitable, but stunningly beautiful, Ducati 916, the model that a few years earlier had redefined the superbike. At the bar, in the evenings before the visit, it was agreed that the 916 owner would lead the tour into the factory, ahead of a couple of other Ducatis and the rest of the group.

Regrettably, two days before the visit, the 916 broke down. Unable to have it repaired locally, the devastated owner used his recovery agreement to repatriate the bike. He decided to continue the tour, and hired a car.

That evening, at the bar, overcome with disappointment, he openly cried. Instead of leading the devotional procession on his iconic sports bike, he brought up the rear in a tiny, 2nd generation, Nissan Micra.

As if this wasn't painful enough, adding insult to injury, and without considering the owner's deep feelings, one-by-one the other, dozen or more, sports bike riders sidled up to him and, in various ways, said 'hey, now you're in a car, mate, would you carry my luggage?'

The Micra was soon struggling round the route each day, packed to the roof with tank bags, back packs, throw-over panniers, tail packs and roll bags.



Spot the difference!





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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.

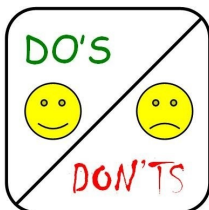
Take care, remember the presence of a group may intimidate other road users.

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.

CONTROL & TECHNIQUE SESSIONS

Don't forget **SAM's** C&T sessions, which take place at Othry Village Hall on the 2nd Saturday of the month, from November through to March. These offer the perfect opportunity to come out on a Saturday morning, with or without your bike, and share hints and tips with other members.