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Devon Advanced Motorcyclists

NEWSLETTER 62

Jul - Sep 2020



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Vice Chair's chatter

I think that you will all agree that we are living in most interesting times. I never remember myself a time in which our history was so full, in which day by day brought us new objects of interest, and, let me say also, new objects for anxiety. – Joseph Chamberlain



Hello,

The past hundred days have certainly been “interesting” and as I sit down to write my first Chairman’s Chatter the country is beginning the first steps towards a “new normal”. What life will look like after the loss of so much, for so many is difficult to see; but from the determined actions of groups and individuals distributing PPE, medicine and meals within the community I am hopeful of that new normal.

During the lockdown most of the club’s activities had been suspended, now with it being relaxed the Observers are now recommencing training and will be contacting Associates with guidance on how those sessions will be arranged. Group rides have restarted with a maximum of six participants (including the Pilot) and if you have not Piloted before this is an excellent opportunity to give it a go! So, contact the group rides co-ordinator Rodney Rayner groupridescoordinator@outlook.com for further details as I am sure he would love to hear from you.

As the government guidance changes the club will review other social activities including the AGM and how the training evenings are held. If you (virtually) attended the Science of Being Seen on Facebook please can you provide feedback to the committee. Also you can take part in the DAM 2020 Devon Challenge which will provide an opportunity to get out with or without a group of friends, contact Ted Gameson ejg33dam@gmail.com for an entry form.

I appreciate as bikers we might feel that a good part of the Summer seasons riding has been lost – but as I stare out of the window into the darkened rain filled afternoon sky with the forecast of storms over the weekend, looks like it’s business as usual then!

I hope to see you on the road.

Nathaniel



It's raining as I write this, I think the polite way to describe it is "Murphy's Law". After the gorgeous weather during lock down, now as we are allowed out a bit more the weather turns. Nick has been very busy keeping the bikes turning over, batteries charged and a lot of maintenance. Thank goodness the spare parts shops have been working behind closed doors, as nuts, washers, fork seals, sprockets and a myriad of other "Nibbies" have been popping through the door, keeping him busy and me making a brews for the worker. We have had two seats covered and I have managed to get my crash helmet

back from Bridge after languishing there for eight weeks.

After all Nicks diligence I went out on "Steve" our 350 and snapped the clutch cable! There followed an eventful ride home, that I better not elaborate on in public. TCP was needed when we got home!

My first ride on the Suzuki was mad too, only a few miles, not far from home. What was I doing, waving to other motorcyclists, admiring the views and riding like a crab. I had to give myself a talking to "Concentrate". That was better, it is so good to be out again though.

This last week cafes have started to open and the all important toilets. Things are starting to improve.

As for holidays abroad many of us have been disappointed, but things are looking a bit brighter on the horizon.

Events are still severely disrupted so look at the web site for up to date information on runs.

The AGM is still delayed, the Committee are hopeful of having the meeting in the not too distant future. Work is ongoing on a new web site which should be online soon.

My thanks to all contributors to this Mag. I will be in need of material for the next Mag if you have any nuggets please send them to me.

The front cover picture is our vice chairman's bike on a lovely clear road somewhere in Devon. If only it were always like this.

Jill



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and at www.advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk**



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Neil Cornish

Jim Drysdale

Paul Foster

Mike O'Meara

Marc Smith

Richard Agnew

Bob Fellowes

Nick Evans

Jeremy Bloomfield

Tony Jones

Ed Jewell

Jack Hughes

Alan Ebbage



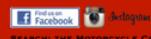
Calendar of Events is still disrupted at time of print
Please see the Website for up to date information.



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WHAT'S ON **REGULARLY** ARRANGED BY DAM?

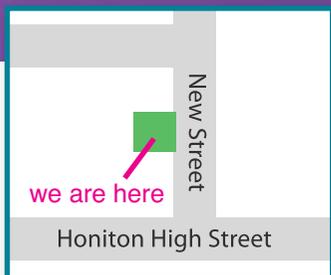
ALWAYS check the website or event co-ordinators for up-to-date information, especially with the uncertainty of future COVID-19 restrictions.

Date	What	Where
July		
Wed 1	Fish and Chip Ride	6:00pm for 6:30pm start. Moto Services
Sun 5	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Sun 12	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Wed 15	Fish and Chip Ride Rider Development	6:00pm for 6:30pm start. Moto Services 7:00pm Swans Nest Inn, Exminster
Sat 18	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 26	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start
August		
Sun 9	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sat 15	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Weds 19	Rider Development Evening	7:00pm Swans Nest Inn, Exminster
Sun 23	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
September		
Sun 13	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Weds 16	Associates Forum	7.00pm Swans Nest Inn, Exminster
Sat 19	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 27	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
October		
Sat 11	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sun 17	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Wed 21	Associates Forum	7:00pm Swans Nest Inn, Exminster
Sat 18	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 25	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.

Run Leaders always needed Please contact Rodney Rayner.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Jill,

I read Simon Jeffery's article – "Advanced Riding Topics #1 – Using the Other Side of the Road" with a great deal of interest, and a little unease.

Early in my driving career and after a couple of incidents, I enrolled on a Police driving course, given for the general public, and I can remember the police driving instructor saying to us "Make full use of all the road available to you". He also added that should an incident occur on the 'wrong side of the road' then the "full book would be thrown" – so I'd been warned as well.

In Simon's article, the definition given of off-siding is "crossing the centre-line markings (solely) in order to extend a view". And, "When is it acceptable to off-side?" Answer "Never".

I understand exactly the tenets of what Simon and IAM are saying but I'm not sure that the argument has been advanced quite correctly. For "Off-siding" I have also heard the term "Sightseeing", or "Wrong-siding". For me, it's using the 'wrong side' of the road – and this next is important – for the collection of information one doesn't actually need. It's always wrong precisely because it adds to one's risk, however little, without benefit. But this principle also applies to any positional movement regardless of the position of the white line. Hazards can be missed and we all do make occasional mistakes. Mistakes 'over there' carry potential for much more serious consequences. Facing an oncoming vehicle on the wrong side is not a good idea, and leads to the conundrum of 'who does what' when other road-users are correct in not actually expecting to see one there. I 'get' all of that. But it is 'just' an integral part of the risk assessment which we train riders to get right.

Any positioning on the road is a balance of risk and safety. And one of the commonest reasons to change position is to "extend a view". Whether it is 'solely' or whether you also do something else at the same time which is beneficial, by changing position, is immaterial. The key point is what one expects to do with the information gained, which must have the potential to help ride planning and safety.

So for me, the real rule is this: ANY change of position must have been assessed as providing better information likely to be needed for ride planning, and without compromise of safety (or legality) in gaining it (There are other reasons, too, for moving position, such as managing hazards..).

I have been in a situation where there is something solid like a lorry-container parked on the left which I cannot see under, over, or around either side, and without shop windows to help with reflected images. Under this rare circumstance, I would, where I can see it appears initially safe to do so, "cross the centre-line markings (solely) in order to extend a view". And I'd do this as early as possible, so that my view is as long as possible, returning to position 3 should a vehicle appear in front. I would be 'Off-siding, solely...." for the collection of information I did actually need, but seems to be disallowed by the IAM definition. Simply put, I will position my motorcycle in any position anywhere on the road, to gain the information I need to plan my ride, provided that I have assessed it to be safe (and legal) to do so. The key is the need for the information, balanced against the risk, care, safety and legality issues in gaining it.



My objection is also the use of the word 'never'. The point to make is that we train Advanced Riders to have observation, risk assessment and ride planning skills of the highest order. We train them to be 'thinking riders'. It's why we use the "It all depends" response to many road circumstances in training and discussion. For me therefore, the use of absolute terms makes me very uncomfortable in the context of our training ethos.

I suspect that in the end, the issue is more about semantics, rather than any matters of substance, but as it stands, in my view, the argument is not quite fully made in the article. Roll on the next instalments

Ted

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BIKE TEST - THE NEW TRIUMPH TIGER 900

Those that know me will be aware that I love my Tiger 800. So when she was in for a service the opportunity arose to try out the new Tiger 900. Let's see what the difference is and what has Triumph done, to better the great all rounder in the 800.

If you research the new 900 there is lots of information of how they have changed the crank timing and firing order to improve the bike. So how does it differ. A first casual look around the bike I must say it looks very similar. Perhaps a little taller and a bigger tank but other than that, not much change to the 800 concept. I am not surprised at this as the 800 is such a competent bike.



So let's throw a leg over and crank it up. First thing you notice is the larger TFT screen with its multiple setting for appearance (as per the 800). Press the starter and the difference in engine is very evident.

Triumph claim that it sounds and performs much more like a twin. So let's find out.

Pull out of Bridge and wow what a difference. The 900 has a lot more low down grunt. Yes a bumble through Alphington and it's all very pleasant in 2nd or 3rd gear. It is easily controllable to ensure the speed limits are adhered to, with little effort. Out on the open road then this thing really does perform. It will pull from 30 MPH in 5th and pull hard it does. You can also tootle



along in 6th with little drama. And yet with a flick of the right wrist it's off with a lovely exhaust note which is so different to the 800. Dare I say it's more like riding the Africa Twin, but better? On over run it has a very nice burble from the exhaust and it does have more engine braking than the 800. More importantly the

"whine" is gone. The 800 and my Trophy before it produced a running whine which made the bike sound like a turbine. This is now long gone.

The gearbox (like the 800) is a dream. No clunk into 1st and a nice click click as you slip up and down the gears. So there I was behind a truck not really hunting for an overtake but the opportunity presented itself. No need the change down just give it a small twist and we were off and the overtake completed.

I do find my 800 a little buzzy on the motorway. So much so I changed the front sprocket, which has reduced the revs at 70 by 500. No problem with the 900. At 70 MPH it is rotating at 4100 rpm and sounds lovely. The handling is great a quick run up through the Teign Valley Confirmed this. Stopping is also good with Brembo units on the front and a good rear brake with plenty of feel.

I did notice that the screen was smaller than the 800. However this did not seem to make any difference. There was no buffeting from the screen and whilst I kept it in the tallest setting it produced a comfortable on what was a warm sunny day.

So to sum up how did I find it? I one word - great. Triumph have done a great job on improving the 800. I loved every aspect of this bike. Light, agile and yet would tour all day. I did not look a fuel consumption specifically but do not see it much different to the 800.

I have done a direct comparison to this new beast with my current 800. However if you are looking to move to an adventure type of bike then you must try this. The new 900 would hold its head up with all the competition. Would I buy one? Yes I think I have found my next bike when I am ready for a change

My thanks go to the Team at Bridge Motorcycles for making the bike available to me. Model tested - Triumph Tiger 900 GT Pro.



DAM trip to the Spanish PYRENEES, May 2021.

I'm planning a DAM exclusive trip to the Pyrenees for late May 2021.

Out and back via Plymouth/Santander

10 days (9 nights, of which 7 nights are half board in Spain).

2 nights Bierge, 2 night Lavorsi, 2 nights Canfranc, 1 night Pamplona.

All information is on the tour Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/536318013660509/>

If you are interested to join the adventure please log in and request to join.

All updates and information will only be on the tour Facebook page.

It'll be a great trip, the roads are incredible.

Rodney Rayner

Tour organiser.

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Advanced Riding Topics – Grass Roots – The Perspective of an Amateur Rider

Following Ian Pruce's excellent lead in Newsletter 60, when he talked about the pre-ride checks (or "grass-roots") for both himself and the bike as an advanced rider, I thought I would like to develop the theme further from my own perspective. So, I want to talk about what Advanced Riding means to me, on the road, not as a Master's Mentor or an Observer, but as a mere Associate-turned-Advanced Rider by virtue of a very mediocre pass.

The very first thing to say is that safety transcends everything. There is no virtue in grinning up at the pathologist from his slab, so I try never to take unnecessary risk. "If in doubt, stay back". One of the hardest lessons I learnt (and am continuing to learn – this learning thing is never done) is discretion – it's the opposite of the 'red mist'.

Central to Advanced Riding is Control, total control being the aim at all times. In the mnemonic 'IPSGA', the Speed, Gear, Acceleration part is the natural smooth planned follow-through from what could be regarded as the most important bits – "Information", and "Position". These two are inextricably linked. Your road positioning absolutely determines what you can see, and can't see, and what you might reasonably expect to see soon. An example – if you're too far left on a left-hand bend, you might see the field entrance with its muddy slick too late to prevent trying to corner on it. But even if you have correct positioning, observation is so important. It's not just about seeing, it's also about understanding what you're seeing means. Which is where the 'what if's' come in.

Talking about 'what if's', I always used to harangue my learner-driver offspring years ago with "Expect the Unexpected" and it's stood the test of time. Something might just be stationary and fully blocking the road after the next bend. I've come across a combine harvester, filling the road completely and very stationary, and recently a bus turning slowly round just around that corner and very out-of-sight. Recently I've had to dodge a flying piece of exhaust pipe, and separately, an errant propeller shaft which fell off a flat-bed, all at around 60 mph. You need the earliest sight of things by optimal positioning. Ringing always in my ears is "Stay away from the hazards", and your positioning is also key to hazard management. So you know the law about pedestrians? "They will always veer and walk off the pavement (or side of the road) into the road timed to perfection exactly as you pass". They always need a wide pass as you cannot guarantee that they've heard or seen you.

Exploring 'Information' a bit more, one of the most useful acronyms Ian gave me in tuition, was 'TUG' – Take, Use Give. Take' is about observation. You can't

ride at all without information, so the gathering of the maximum amount of information relevant to what you're doing is absolutely and completely crucial. I'm better at this now than I was, but still know I can improve a lot. I know one should know what speed limit applies at all times, but at times in a ride I will challenge myself, not just about the speed limit applying, but also whether I can remember where the last limit sign was. You can think of plenty of other tests too, I'm sure. One slight 'information' digression is Satnav's. These can sometimes provide additional relevant and advance information which you may not be able to gather any other way, so I know how to use mine and generally have it on the bike and functional. Yes, they can distract, but isn't advanced riding about being able to prioritise sources of information and then use them appropriately?

The next stage for me is also absolutely key. It's Using the information. What you do with the information, the actions you take, your risk analysis, your planning, and your riding skill levels are all key to the outcomes on the road. Different riders even with similar skill levels and the same information might assess risks and plan their ride lines a little differently. I don't have a problem with, at times, having to stop very quickly (yes I know before you point it out, that if I'm being tail-gated I slow down – that's all information I use as part of the ongoing risk assessment process). Stopping quickly and safely might be a little uncomfortable at the time but it means I have my risk assessment right – others might prefer a little more comfort in their assessments. Observing how others assess the risks and plan their lines is one of those things that makes group riding so much fun. But you do need good riding skills too, to be able to enjoy your riding – things like knowing how quickly one can stop in the dry, in the wet, even in a corner – basics like HOW to stop safely – what the road surfaces and weather conditions mean for grip levels, and so forth. This grasp of basic bike handling skills is so important that for relative newbies like me, it is necessary to practice and seek specific tuition. I gulped and took the old Deauville on a track day. We did slow and fast riding, emergency stopping, and, yes, skidding both front and rear (all in controlled conditions). I dropped it, as did many of the others, but you soon get over injured pride, and what I learnt has been so valuable, that I really need to do another. I also think that off-roading would add to my ability to better understand and broaden the limits of my riding ability on road. So many of these skills cross all sorts of boundaries.

Looking backwards to emphasise the point, in my training, I was constantly being harangued by various Observers for late positioning. What nobody fully understood, least of all me, was that there was a reason for being out-of-position, and it was my lack of bike-handling skills. Specifically, I was uncomfortable with cornering, say, on an outward-sloping camber. I just didn't have the skills to do confidently what my Observer was asking me to do. Acquiring these skills safely, preferably under tuition in a controlled environment, is so valuable in developing

skills as an advanced rider. I could have done this on the road but it just would have taken a lot longer.

The last thing in relation to information is the 'G' part – 'Give'. There are many ways to give information, not least, positioning the bike to indicate intention. Along with light signals it's one very effective way of showing respect and consideration for others on the road, and unsurprisingly perhaps, receiving the same in return. I often increase the gap to the vehicle I'm following to allow others to carry out turning manoeuvres without the need for me and others following me to stop. Riding with consideration and a degree of humility are major points of advanced riding for me.

Does the bike you ride make a difference? The stock answer is no it doesn't. Remember the old saying "A bad workman blames his tools"? Well, this is not quite my experience, which might point toward my continuing lack of skill. I don't have much experience compared to some DAM members, so I've not ridden many bike types, but I think it does. My old red Deauville was a good faithful and much-respected workhorse, but like the old horse, it seemed at times reluctant to behave and had to be 'driven'. And it fell over few times – it was remarkably top-heavy. I got used to that - eventually. And I learnt to pick it up single-handed without putting my back out. When I got the RT I found it hard to believe the difference – both shaft-driven twins, of very similar weights and dimensions (yes actually). Whereas the Deau had to be told where to go, the RT just seemed to go where you looked, no fuss. It just seemed hard-wired to me, and it was fun. Or am getting to be a better rider? All I do know is that I don't seem to have positioning problems now, and I'm safely enjoying every minute I'm on this bike. Somehow it seems to instil confidence, good order, and a sense of control that I never quite had with the Deau.

The final bit of advanced riding, I have to say, I find to be rather alarming. It's about learning just how much I still don't know. It seems that the more one learns, the more there is still to learn.....



Whatever, without DAM I really wouldn't have developed the skills to enjoy riding a 1200cc bike safely. Thank you for tutoring me, and thanks to all friends for being so much fun.

Oh, and yes, I occasionally ride with just one pannier box...probably because I know how much some people value symmetry...

Ted.

The Final Part of Colin and Jaquie Holt's USA Road Trip.

A damp Mount Vernon, to the North of Seattle, became the starting point for the journey southwards to San Francisco. The bike hire company had requested a service be undertaken upon reaching the city of Portland, and had been included into the itinerary, but on telephoning ahead to confirm this arrangement the fact that this would occur only three days riding from the end of our journey and upon confirming that the mileage and tyres were within operating limits, we were advised that the service was unnecessary, thereby negating some extra mileage and adding an additional days riding to the trip

Crossing the bridge from the mainland onto Wisbey Island and catching the ferry from Fort Casey across the inlet got us to the historic town of Port Townsend, used as a location for many films including 'An Officer and a Gentleman' this was also our entrance to the Olympic NP which covers most of this peninsula. The route southwards followed the edge of Diablo Bay, passing through small waterside towns, with lovely wooden lodges clinging to the shore, whilst to our right thick pine forest stretched up towards the Olympic mountain. At the lower end of the park sits the city of Olympia, the state capitol of Washington, our stop for the next three nights. We upgraded our choice of accommodation to a hotel for this stay. Though seemingly not too far from the centre, the walk was not so straightforward and we became thankful of the free hotel shuttle service.

Heading Northwest out of the city for a day trip, involved riding through the logging town of Aberdeen, quite a grim town with buildings harking back to more prosperous times. The landscape of the countryside beyond became dominated by large areas of forestry, some recently felled and other at various stages of regrowth. It failed to be as scenically impressive as previous routes, in part because we had been spoilt by the incredible natural scenery we had previously witnessed, but also because this is so man made, Diverting towards the coast we located an interesting settlement called Pacific Beach and parked up alongside a black Triumph. Upon disembarking, a local chap standing nearby began asking about the RT, acknowledging he owned the Triumph and also the nearby shop. This is where we enjoyed a coffee and an interesting chat about his exploits and how the bike had been acquired as a payment for undertaking some decorating. The whole town seemed to work on the barter system. He sold kites in his shop and we purchased a couple as gifts for our grandsons before bidding farewell and riding back to Olympia. The following day we opted to spend only our second day during the tour off the bike and caught the free hotel shuttle bus into the city centre, viewing the Senate buildings before enjoying the delights of the farmers market and waterfront. The city had made it's fortune from past involvement in the logging industry and parts had seen better days, with other areas badly damaged in past earthquakes, but there is now a huge amount of

regeneration taking place, and this is further enhancing this friendly colourful town.

That evening whilst involved in interesting conversation with some locals at the hotel bar I got around to trying some top quality bourbon whiskey, as recommended by the barman. From the perspective of a whiskey drinker it was very enjoyable. Overall, the US does have a very restrictive policy to drink driving but everywhere we went the bars all seemed to have large car parks and they are well used.

The route back towards the ocean involved riding across the scenic Willapa Hills with a family of racoon crossing the road ahead of us at one point. The coastal road south is exceptionally beautiful and surpasses the Big Sur in so many ways, with beautiful historic white lighthouses dotted along the coast making excellent vista points for viewing the craggy shoreline. At Cape Kiwanda we came across a fantastic beach protected by amazing offshore rocks, with people snowboarding down the massive sand dunes to the north and a brewery next to the shore to the south making it quite an idyllic setting. Long steel trellis road bridges span the wide estuaries and lead on into our final new state. On entering Oregon, traffic signs announce the requirement for motorcycle riders to wear helmets, the only state visited that this was mandatory, although some riders seem to wear helmets so small that it seems to defy the definition. The coast

road continued to provide amazing views and we were fortunate to spot a herd of migrating Gray Whales. There are also numerous Sealion caves dotted along the coast but having already seeing numerous of the massive creatures in San Francisco harbour we opted not to stop. The coast is regularly broken up by areas of extensive sand dunes extending a fair distance inland providing a sharp contrast to the ragged rocky sections.

The trees bordering the road began getting much taller and broader as we entered into areas of redwood. The manager of the Crescent Bay Motel suggested a route through the Jedediah Smith Park that had been a location in the Star Wars film 'Return of the Jedi'. This is a first gear crawl along a 16 mile gravel track that weaves its way through the forest. None of these timber giants have been felled to facilitate an easier route. These trees are many centuries old, immense in size dominating the landscape and it is all the better for that, and there is definitely a sense of just how small you feel in comparison to these giants. Another suggested visit was to a redwood that it possible to drive through, it had unfortunately been created by butchering the opening to allow the large station wagons to be able to pass through, and was a bit disappointing.

The Avenue of the Giants further south, travels for many miles parallel to the main freeway and makes for a very impressive diversion, travelling through more extensive redwood forest. Stops were taken to survey some of the felled trunks at the roadside and marvelling at the immense girth these trees achieve. This is

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also a good place for viewing wildlife but thankfully none of the local beasts were available to jump out from behind a tree giving any unsuspecting motorist little time to react.

Entering back into California involved crossing a manned stateline and we became more aware that the tour was coming towards its conclusion. Along the roadside there are numerous attractions proudly boasting to be 'world famous', most involving the use of the redwood, and it seemed that practically everywhere along this road was renowned in some way. Turning off the freeway onto the beginning of Route One the road became a route that certainly deserves some praising as it meanders through the coastal hills with a surfeit of bends and no straights to speak of. Probably the best biking road of the tour and pretty much devoid of any traffic. This mountain road ends by bursting out onto the coast and turning 90 degrees southwards giving superb shoreline vistas on the journey to Fort Bragg. Following another recommendation a visit was made to the towns glass beach composed of sea eroded bottles from decades of old rubbish dumps that had been placed along the seafront. The sea had broken into the pits and over the years transformed the bottles into multicoloured pebbles, an impressive bit of recycling.

Visiting one of the towns craft breweries a conversation was entered into with a brewery worker, enjoying an after work drink at the bar, and we were rewarded with a sample of a stout ale that had been matured in bourbon barrels for a year. It normally costs \$20 a glass to buy and tastes of absolute nectar. Quite an amazing beer.

At breakfast the following day we met an expat Yorkshire couple in the area buying property. They had previously lived in the town of Paradise, which had been burnt to the ground two years previous, losing everything in the fire, but it had not dampened their desire to remain resident in California and extolled the virtues of their lifestyle in the US..

Our last touring day took us further down the coast as the redwood forest became replaced by the vineyards of the Anderson Valley that covered the rolling hills between the coast and the freeway. The Labor Day holiday weekend was starting and on approach to Santa Rosa the amount of traffic increased greatly, with the opposite carriageway at a standstill for many miles. Nearing San Francisco a final fuel stop was made before heading across the bridge towards Berkeley and onwards via the Bay Bridge to access Treasure Island and return the bike to the rental company. We had covered a total 5943 miles since leaving five weeks previous, and apart from a few pounds of air pressure in the rear tyre the bike had required no further attention. It had carried us through searing desert heat, heavy mountain rain, stretches of appalling road surface and faced animal encounters. It has given me a lot more respect for what the R1200RT is capable of. Removing the luggage and returning the bike to standard I bid it farewell.

This road trip certainly exceeded all our expectations. The people we met along the way were extremely friendly and helpful, and many had very interesting stories to relate. Americans openly display their political allegiances on a personal and business level, but I did not enjoy the bigoted and racist rhetoric that the politicians spout on the media. I hope British politics does not go the same way. That can also be said of television, as the US version is particularly awful, hundreds of channels with many displaying hour long programs that are basically advertisements. Programs are continuously broken up by attempts to sell medicines or recommend claiming compensation amid numerous fast food enticements. European involvement, dating back only just a century in some areas, has had a massive influence on western US, and residents cling to this pioneer spirit, even in non tourist areas and as somebody raised on Cowboy films and Wild West TV series it regularly felt like travelling through a movie set. The landscape is spectacular and beautiful and the geology on show displays just how much this planet has changed and is continuing to change. Ecologically Americans have quite an ironic attitude to recycling. Hotels have numerous notices regarding water and towel use, but serve breakfast with plastic crockery and cutlery. The wildlife is utterly amazing, diverse and magical, with an incredible variety on display most days as we travelled along.

Supreme thanks go to David Grist at HC Travel whose arrangements for the bike hire were faultless and came with plenty of useful tips and information.

The US is a very large country and we were not trying to break any distance records, so we had to be selective on our choice of attractions and places to visit, therefore some were missed on this occasion. We enjoyed this tour so much we are returning next year for a shorter period of time, but long enough to fill in some of the gaps.



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On Saturday morning, due to the Hot Springs not opening until 10:00 and the local council charging very heavily for the privilege of a dip, plus a massive queue to get in, we decided to give them a miss and enjoyed an al fresco breakfast before heading to Springs Junction for coffee. It was such a lovely ride down through the Lewis Pass in Hanmer Forest Park, all in sync, nice bends through a valley bottom with high mountains either side - magical. At a stop at Maruia Falls the cicadas were very, very loud. Weird how you never see them except a few dead ones and I really don't fancy them even if they are considered a superfood. We continued north to the end of Highway 65 and turned left on to Highway 6 through Inangahua Junction and to Berlins Cafe for a break. You have to be mindful stopping for photos as the roads have soft verges, even the viewpoints are often deep gravel. We carried on through Lower Buller Gorge and Fox River to the Pancake Rocks in Paparoa National Park and then to our motel at Punakaiki - a lovely wooden lodge in easy walking distance of the beach with private balconies overlooking a rain forest listening to the sea and star watching.

Sunday morning saw us setting off north along highway 6 through Charleston to the seal colony at Cape Foulwind (lovely name). A footpath in the cliff guided you along - free of charge. In the car park we met some curious and friendly wekas. These are flightless birds about the size of a small chicken who show no fear of people but are sadly at risk. We moved on to Carters Beach for breakfast. The sea mist meant the views were restricted but it was still atmospheric. We stopped again at Westport for fuel. The roads were so quiet and we were the only ones on the beach - bliss. We then set off back the way we had come yesterday through Lower Buller to the Buller Gorge. A swingbridge and comet line (zip wire).... it just had to be done. Lunch was taken at Murchison with the temperature up to 32°. A photo opportunity presented itself at the viewpoint at Tapawera, then on to the Hotel Nelson at Nelson - another grand day out finishing with a swim before dinner.

Monday was scheduled as a free day so we kitted up and headed off to Collingwood via the coastal road, Kahurangi National Park and a walk up the Hawkes Lookout. Coffee at Ngarau Caves in Takaka Hill where the mountain tops peaked above the clouds. Nick showed us what was in store on the sat nav - lots of wiggles :-) - and the road surface was perfect. There were road works but everyone was patient, even with 15 min waits...well the signs do say that NZ roads are different and allow extra time! There are lots of hops and apple trees in this area, alongside the vines. The ride back was awesome, so bendy and so very quiet. HC Travel had chosen fabulous accommodation for us, mostly motels

where you can park right outside, spacious, clean and comfy. There was usually food available nearby and we were generally located on the edge of busy towns or in small villages.

Tuesday morning arrived and it was time to leave South Island. We'd had a ball but there was plenty more to see up north. We stopped for coffee at Havelock by the harbour, apparently the mussel capital of the world. Another coffee stop at the notorious Slip Inn, it was too early to try their Cider. The roads were again beautiful quiet twisties (apols if I am repeating myself!) with good surfaces and forest and mountain landscapes. Marlborough and Ngakula Bay were stunning and on to Picton for the ferry. At home we have 'Merge in Turn' signs - over there it's 'Merge like a Zip' - nice.

We had to tie our own bikes down and were suitably embarrassed when Trevor and I we were called back to re-do - failed! Being used to Brittany Ferries sorting it all out and the lack of proper ratchets and just greasy ropes, our faffing about held the boat up nicely - whoops! It was cooler and cloudy as we entered Wellington and headed to the Mercure Abel Tasman Hotel. This was in a busy part of the city but good secure parking and just a few paces to local cafes and restaurants.

Wednesday had a soft Irish start - some mizzle as we set off up the main Highway 1. We had coffee at Otaki in the BP station in the hope things would brighten up. We sidestepped on to Highway 57 and then on to a minor road to Pahiatua for lunch. A welcome relief from the traffic on Highway 1 and the scenery reminded us of Telly Tubby Land. We carried on through Pongaroa where it was drying out and getting twisty again. The scenery varied from moorlands to forest and then the wind came up - oh was it blowy - all hanging on very tight. We passed through the Puketoi Range, and a gorge and on to Weber and north to join Highway 2 at Dannevirke. At one junction Jill was left unattended for a few minutes and she managed to pull four nice chaps from Yorkshire riding Triumphs - atta girl! Pleasantries and advice swapped. We were staying at the Quality Inn, Napier in Hawkes Bay and it was good to smell the sea again and the roads were lined with palm trees - a beach walk before deep fried ice cream... well you have to try it.

An early Thursday morning walk to the Poppy Café for breakfast, then off to Lake Rotorua Hotel at Rotorua. At a coffee stop at Tarawera in the biggest manmade forest in the world, there was country music battling with the cicadas as we sat outside enjoying the view - trees - lots of them! We had lunch at Lake Taupo. A stop at Rangatira Park and on to Huka Falls on the Waikato River before a dash to our accommodation (spotted hot springs on the way) for a quick swim and scrub up for our Tamaki Maori Village Experience at Tumumui. This included ceremonial rituals, performances, singing and some audience participation (the lads did the Haka and I was volunteered for a ball game). The meal was delicious too.

Friday and off to Coramandel through twisty gorges to Bethlehem for coffee.

Then Nick had a puncture caused by a large nut and bolt, nut end inside the tyre! The hire company organised recovery by the local BMW dealer. We were able to sit in the shade, go shopping and relax until the wagon arrived to take the bike away. Mount Motorcycles from Mount Maunganui were brilliant - a new tyre was required and with a quick turnaround we were able to head off again on the coastal road to Whangamata Wharf where we stopped for a needed break and watched all the locals enjoying life, swimming and boating. We arrived late at our destination of the Anchor Lodge in Coromandel at 2030. The ride was stunning - no chance of getting near top gear. There are lots of islands on the Coromandel Peninsula and in the evening light it was just beautiful. Just in time to kick off the bike boots and head for dinner as they eat early here.

Saturday morning and a quick dash up the hill for some island photos (Manaia) and then 90 mins on a beautiful wiggly coastal road to breakfast at Thames - my riding companions know how to spoil me! Hugging the shores of Wilson Bay, Kireta, Tapo on route 25 (Kaiiua) - wow! The only road hazard was a 'gobble' of turkeys floundering across the road which made for some interesting lines and braking. Occasionally the roads do go from tarmac to gravel with no warning so be mindful and take the correct turning! There were more stunning coastal wiggles past Miranda, Whakatiwai and Matingarah to Kawakawa Bay for Ice Creams and a play in the sea. Next we had to brace ourselves for a very different riding challenge - negotiating State Highway 1 through the metropolitan area of Auckland, the only motorway in New Zealand. Nick took the lead as he could see the exits and lane splits coming up on the sat nav. He was impressed with the riding formation behind him and how we managed to stay together through this complex highway with its myriad of junctions - we turned off at exit 398 and there were many more to come. It was the first real traffic we had seen and a bit of a shock after having so many roads practically to ourselves - I was just grateful we got out alive and on to Manley and our overnight stop at Whangaparoa Lodge - time for a dip in the warm calm sea before dinner. The motorway had been really busy with many lanes and much lane swapping by the locals but I was able to glimpse the city and kite surfers in the bay. Everyone has a role in these holidays - Jill and Nick had spent hours researching HC Travel's routes in infinite detail, sorting fuel stops, restaurants, cafes and wiggly diversions. Jill loves maps and leading...Nick being satnav backup for when it got complicated. I was wing (wo)man and chief photographer - sorting this report and a photobook on my return. Trevor, the newbie to the group, decided he was going to keep an eye on me - unnecessary, of course, but lovely to be spoilt!

Sunday, and time to head further north on Highway 17 to Orewa, then rejoin Highway 1 to Warkworth and petrol at Te Hana, leaving Highway 1 on a minor road for coffee at Mangawhai. We carried on along the coastal road through Langs Beach to Waipu where we rejoined Highway 1 (Twin Coast Discovery

Highway), on through Whangarei then turning east on Russell Road which hugs the coast. We stopped at Helena Bay and took a break at Teal Bay where a lovely local lady gave us chilled water melon.... what a scrappy bunch we must have looked but she chatted happily to us. The beach was beautiful and after a short stop to appreciate it we rode ten miles north to Oakura for lunch by the sea. It warmed up to 31 degrees on the lovely wiggly road to Parekura Bay and on to Russell for the ferry across to Paihia and the Averill Court Motel in the Bay of Islands. The HC Travel book said that lorries and cars didn't like this road as it was so twisty - so of course we loved it!

Monday morning we took a boat trip round The Bay of Islands stopping at Urupukapuka Island for coffee, a viewpoint walk, ice creams and a paddle (even though we had seen a sting ray in the shallows). This was a 4 hour trip with good commentary, where we saw lots of wildlife and the most amazing scenery. The islands are stunning and we were so lucky with the weather. In the afternoon Jill and Nick decided they wanted to chill so Trevor thought he'd take me out. I was looking forward to relaxing and enjoying the scenery. He made a cunning plan with notes in the sleeve of his jacket. I dutifully sat quietly on the back (yes really). We visited the Waitangi Treaty Grounds then rode through a golf course where some cadets were on parade. Then somehow (don't ask cos its still a mystery) we ended up going south on the main highway instead of north on the nice twisties. After a while the pilot twigged and we went back to Paihia (yes we were spotted by the others) to start again. There was still no sign of the promised chocolate factory treat, but we did eventually end up at Matauri Bay, which was beautiful, where we had a cold drink and laughed ourselves silly. He did well on the way back too until he rode right past our accommodation - more laughs as we shared our tales. It is refreshing to find someone with no more navigational skills than me - guess he was missing that sat nav. We finished the day with a walk along the beachfront with dinner overlooking the islands.

Tuesday and we loaded the bikes for the final time. Nick had sorted a great route to Auckland that avoided the motorway - top man! We took a comfort break at Opononi (famous for the tame dolphin named Opo), through the Ti Pikinga Scenic Reserve to Waipoua Kauri Forest and Tane Mahuta the biggest tree in New Zealand where we had coffee from a roadside stall. Riding through the forest I could see why they call it The Land of the Long White Cloud - as I looked up through the trees all I could see was blue sky and a fluffy cloud. We had lunch at Gum Diggers Cafe at the Kauri Museum in Matakoho before a little stint on Route 1 and then the 16, for more huge grins down to Helensville and in to Auckland. The staff at the rental shop had gone on a rescue mission (we know about those) so we chilled in a cafe before handing over the keys and going to the Quality Hotel in Parnell. We had covered 6500 fun kilometres. We had booked the Orbit

360 revolving Restaurant in the Sky Tower for our final holiday meal. We watched the sunset and the city light up with a mocktail called Cuddles on the Beach - wonder what the cocktail would be called....

Wednesday –last day. An early morning walk in the park, then we watched a group from Paradise Tours setting off on their adventure as we headed to the airport. Our heads were full of wonderful new memories and we'd had an absolute ball. Customs was fun - I was searched and had to remove my bike boots - nobody actually keeled over but after 3½ weeks of constant use it was not nice... and the holey sox have now gone...

Thank you for making it a great hollibob - and Jill - where next????



Jill. Trevor. Helen. Nick.

Plans are in hand for the 2020 A.G.M. which will be held in accordance with the constitution and Gov. guidance regarding the Corona virus pandemic at some time before the end of October. DC

DAM



Devon advanced Motorcyclists

DAM 2020 Devon Challenge

The DAM 2020 Challenge is a new full riding-season-long event, which is open to all DAM members. It gives you an opportunity for fun and riding practice, with, or without friends, getting to know the far corners of this lovely county.

The idea is to visit each of the 30 points listed, some of which have featured in recent DAM calendars. You will visit the lowest and highest roads in Devon, the furthest East, West, North and South, and lots of other points of interest.

Visit each point within the season which runs from 1 April to 31 October 2020, and prove (by photo, or gpx track) that you and your bike have been there. Where a point is remote from the road, a photo of you and your helmet at the intended checkpoint will suffice.

Completers will be given a certificate. A small prize will also be awarded to the Associate (as at the time of entry) who successfully completes the challenge first within the season. Other prizes will be at the organisers' discretion.

For an application form (entry is free) please see the website, or e-mail ejg33dam@gmail.com

Good Luck
Ted

ADVANCED RIDER COURSE

The ***IAM RoadSmart Advanced Rider Course*** that DAM offers is the route that bikers can take in order to pass the ***IAM Advanced Motorcycle Test***. It is the same course that is provided by IAM affiliated groups all around the UK. The course costs just **£149** and includes:

- A joining pack.
- The IAM RoadSmart's course book (which is also your logbook).
- Your first year's membership of DAM and the IAM, initially as an Associate and then as a Full member once you pass the Advanced test.
- Training for the Advanced test by Nationally qualified Observers.
- The IAM test fee.

That is a pretty impressive package when taking into account the relative cost of commercial training packages. All IAM Observers go through a rigorous training and qualification process which makes them a truly professional body of people. The ***Advanced Rider Course*** is based on the Police System of Motorcycle Control and is second to none.

How to enrol on the Advanced Rider Course

There is a straightforward mechanism for becoming a member of both the IAM and DAM:

- First of all, you join the IAM by buying an Advanced ***Rider Course*** and paying the fee (above). You can do this directly by going to their website:

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/advanced-rider-course>



If you speak to a current member of DAM when you meet them out with our Mobile Display Unit, they can help you with this process there and then.

- Once the IAM have enrolled you, they send you a Welcome Pack which will include your training/logbook. DAM is also informed and we too send out a club Welcome Pack. This has a questionnaire, some other forms, this magazine, a DAM membership card, and a white plastic DAM badge for your bike. You will also be politely requested to offer a **donation** of £70 towards your Observer's mileage expenses. This will give you up to 6 sessions with your Observer plus a check ride with a highly experienced National Observer.
- Once you have returned your questionnaire you will be allocated an Observer for your training. This is done through the **Observed Rides Coordinator**, who will ensure your answers to various questions are matched as far as possible, eg. geography, availability and so on.
- On average Associates pass their test after about 5 observed rides, taken over 5 months. This means you could take a little less time, or a little more, but overall you can expect to get around 20 hours of on-road training, covering nearly 300 miles. The minimum time tends to be around 3 months and the maximum nearly a year. A lot depends on your availability and the amount of time you spend riding and practising between observed rides with your Observer.

Once you pass your test

Well done, you have passed your IAM Advanced test and whilst this is a significant achievement, it goes hand in hand with earning the honour of wearing and displaying the coveted IAM (green) membership badge. This clearly identifies you as a fully assessed Advanced rider and holder of the IAM Advanced Motorcycle Test Certificate.

However, as it says in the Police manual, Roadcraft: "In the period following training, riders can get into serious difficulties because they overestimate their new abilities . . . There is a risk that your new found skills and confidence will take you into situations which you may not be able to handle .

Perform your own risk assessment, analyse your own riding critically and ride within your known limits". Ask yourself " if I were to do this ride again, what would I do differently". There is no such thing as a perfect ride, so

maintaining a critical appraisal of your riding is an ongoing process. In that respect, being a member of DAM has many advantages. Enjoying the benefits of DAM membership DAM offers a number of training events both centre based and more recently road based. Combined with social activities, these will continue to be helpful to you as you continue to hone your skills. The diary dates for most of these events are on the DAM Website and in the What's On page of each magazine.

- **Rider Development evenings.** Held on the third Wednesday of every month. These usually have a guest speaker, on a general interest subject to the motorcycle group. Additionally there may be a presentation from a member the Observer team, On aspects of the Advanced Rider Course. These are not just for Associates during training, they are useful evenings for Associates and full Members for updating knowledge and current best practice. Additionally an Associate forum is held on a bi monthly basis. These are aimed specifically at Associates in training, with no fixed agenda, addressing issues raised by Associates on the night. These sessions are held by One National Observer and One Local Observer.
- **Rookie Rides.** The first Saturday morning of every month. Not full-blown Group rides, but a marvellous place to become comfortable riding in a group and practising your new found skills. Both Associates and Full members can attend Rookie Rides.
- **Group Rides.** Wherever possible these are organised on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month. The diary and the website will show what's planned. These are longer rides than the Rookie Rides so you need to be confident with longer distance riding in groups. They are also an opportunity to learn about being a "sweeper" on a ride, or even a "pilot". They are for Full members or very experienced Associates only.
- **Improver Sessions.** These can be organised on an ad-hoc basis through the Chief Observer. You will be allocated a very experienced National Observer and have a full observed session. The aim is not simply to ensure your riding is still to test standard, but rather to help you enhance any area you feel needs greater skill. You will be supplied with a full ride report for future reference. There is a small donation for your Observer's fuel and it is payable directly to the Observer on the day.
- **Full Member development Group Rides.** These are advertised on the DAM website Calendar. Organised and run by two Observers they offer

coaching and development in a group environment.

- **Masters Training.** This is provided by IAM RoadSmart accredited Masters Mentors. With the test being conducted by a IAM Staff Examiner. You should contact the Chief Observer if interested, or details of the Masters test itself can be viewed on the IAM RoadSmart website.

The test requires a very high riding skill indeed. There are two levels to the Masters programme. Pass and Pass with a Distinction. You will also need a complete and thorough understanding of the Highway Code and the Police Training manual "Motorcycle Roadcraft", as this will also be examined. It is suggested that you should have considerable post-IAM test experience prior to commencing the Masters Program. This program is developed and marketed as the very highest level for a civilian (non-Police) test.

- **Become an Observer.** From time to time DAM is in need of new Observers to maintain it's numbers and Observer teams. You will be trained and assessed by DAMS Local Observer Assessors, to IMI accredited standards. Following completion of your training and assessment you can take pride in being one of the most professional Advanced Motorcycle coaches in the UK. You will then be placed into one of DAMS geographically based Observer teams, where you will be supported as you start to train and develop your own Associates. The IAM insures all its Observers (for volunteer Observing on the road) as long as they remain a member of the IAM and the Group. Your Observer classification and there are two, Qualified Local Observer, Trained and assessed within the group. Qualified National Observer, trained within the group but assessed by a IAM Staff Examiner. This is recorded along with your other membership details on the IAM database.

Interested in being an Observer? If you want to develop yourself further, then how about training to be an Observer and pass that knowledge and skill on to someone else? It's not easy and there are IMI recognised competencies that you will be Trained and Assessed against. Observer posts are not available all the time, as DAM only requires a certain number to fulfil its obligations to Associates on the Advanced Rider Course, but if you are interested you should make application in the first instance to the Chief Observer. If DAM is in need of new Observers, you will be invited for a briefing session where the role and commitment will be outlined to you. In terms of Guidance you will need to:

- **Be an excellent rider.** This means a Full member, preferably with a F1rst pass or with some post-test experience or further training. Remember that while observing you need to maintain a very high level of personal riding , primarily looking after your and the Associates safety, while at the same time Observing an Associate in terms of progress with the Advanced Rider Course log book.
- Have a thorough knowledge of the Highway Code and the Advanced Rider Course material. More experienced National Observers will also need to have a thorough knowledge of the Police manual Roadcraft, as well as supplementary material.
- Be an excellent communicator with a real empathy for the Associate and the task at hand. To this end you need to be a conscious competent, which means you know what you are doing and why you are doing it.
- Be able to identify objectively what your Associate does well and what they could do better. You then need to be able to give a constructive debrief session beside the road and at the end of the session, culminating in a concise, well-written ride report. The task is to instruct and enthuse your Associate so they are keen to learn more and keep working at their skills and knowledge until they too are ready for their test.
- Be available for a long term commitment to quality rider training. Not all advanced riders are capable of being an IAM Observer and there is no shame in that. Some extremely experienced Police Class I riders are fantastic at their job, but do not necessarily make good instructors either. However, if you think you have what it takes to be a top class Observer with the IAM and DAM, please make contact and discuss it further. A lot is on offer. Make the most of it and enjoy your skills to the full.

Adrian Veale
Chief Observer, Devon Advanced Motorcycles



Committee and Club Officers 2020

<p>Chairman: Tim Carter E: timcarter0956@btinternet.com</p>		<p>Vice Chairman: Social Media: Nathaniel Goss E: nathaniel.goss@gmail.com</p>	
<p>Group Secretary: Dave Cooper E: dac.jec@gmail.com</p>		<p>Treasurer: Edward Gameson E: eej33dam@gmail.com</p>	
<p>Marketing/events Co-ordinator: Simon Jeffery M: 07768 697 446 E: sjeffery@synseer.co.uk</p>		<p>Membership: Barrie Dennett: E: membership@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk</p>	
<p>Newsletter Editor: Jill Payne E: jill@kickstart-club.org.uk</p>		<p>Webmaster: Nick Tucker E: webmaster@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk</p>	
<p>Chief Observer: Adrian Veale E: arv-biker@tiscali.co.uk</p>		<p>Group Rides Co-ordinator: Rodney Rayner E: rodneyrhr@aol.com</p>	
<p>Rookie Rides Co-ordinator: David Tripp M: 07775 813 676</p>		<p>Other Committee Members: Steve Hyde Brian Churchward Betty Nott Catherine McKinley</p>	
<p>Observed Rides Co-ordinator: Trevor Olding M: 07738 580 992 E: trevorolding@blueyonder.co.uk</p>		<p>If you are a new associate member please contact Trevor as early as possible, preferably by email, even if you don't intend to start your Advanced Rider Course immediately.</p>	



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