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ADVANCED
MOTORCYCLISTS**

NEWSLETTER 69

Apr - Jun 2022



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Chairman's Chatter

I owe an apology to Richard Watson, Richard was the undisputed winner of the group ride Karting Event. Yet the picture that I managed to take and post to Facebook was of him not smiling, making Richard appear a somewhat disappointed winner which wasn't the case. The event was a real fun day out (thanks to Simon Jeffery for organising) and Richard used all of his advanced rider training to "destroy" the competition. So, I'll take this opportunity that the "Chatter" allows me and correct that mistake by including the image of the winners podium: Richard Watson 1st, Dave Grant 2nd and Tony Curley 3rd.



Dave Grant, Richard Watson and Tony Curley

This year is already shaping up to be a busy one and I hope that you have been able to take part in the Group/Rookie Rides and the Rider Development Evenings. After all the Zoom meetings it was great to be able to get together at the first Rider Development Evening with guest speaker Tony Haywood from Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (and DAM member). Tony gave a Biker Down presentation which included: practical

steps that we can take to manage a road traffic incident, hands-only CPR, appropriate helmet removal and how to apply the "science of being seen". On the evening Adrian Veale introduced the new Observers: Pete Wright, Dave Grant, Daniel Knight and Brian Lee (Brian couldn't attend the evening as he was on Blood Bike duty). Congratulations to you all and welcome to the Observer corps.

Don't forget that details for upcoming Rider Development Evenings, Group Rides and events can be found at www.devonadvanced.com With all this talk about upcoming events...



Adrian Veale (Chief Observer), Pete Wright, Dave Grant and Daniel Knight

I look forward to seeing you on the road!

Nathaniel

DAM Chairman

P.S. Last but by no means least, the DAM 40th T-Shirt Competition has received several entries but this is now your last call. Send your submission to Nathaniel.goss@gmail.com before April 17th.



Search for Devon Advanced Motorcyclists and at www.devonadvanced.com

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Hello. I am aware that I follow in the footsteps of well-proven previous editors and I thank them for all their continuing advice, especially Jill and Nat. I have always really enjoyed reading the DAM Magazine under Jill's editorship so it is with slight trepidation that I undertake the job.

Spring is here; I love seeing the wild flowers appear in the hedgerows and enjoy the changing sights and smells, from primroses and garlic to meadowsweet as the months progress. These are a precious few weeks when the Devon hedgerows are at their best and from a bike you get the full experience being so close up.

It is probably the best time of year for biking, not too cold or hot and much to look forward to. Future events include Wales, the Pyrenees, the IAM skills day at Thruxton, NDAM on 20th April in South Molton, special IAM training days on 9th and 10th April and more. Please keep checking the website as the info in the newsletter only lists regular events.

I hope the magazine is what you want, please let me know of any ideas you have and keep sending in the articles. Thanks to everyone that contributed. Thanks also to Tony Matthews for the cover photo that conveys the fun of being part of a ride in our precious landscape; please send more photos everyone.

Could I remind members to 'like' or respond to DAM Facebook posts? I don't really understand (or want to) but it helps Alan G with the marketing, it's an easy way to promote DAM and helps the cause. Thank you.

Most importantly, Betty has reminded me it is DAM's 40th birthday on 16th April. Life begins etc. What a great achievement. Happy birthday. XX

For Sale & Wanted: Please use our Facebook to sell anything from Bikes to unused ear plugs anything Motorcycle. Our Facebook page is under-used so please get chatting on it and we might attract some new members.

ENHANCED ADVANCED RIDING AND THE TAIL OF THE PURPLE SQUIRREL



By John Millgate and Simon Jeffery

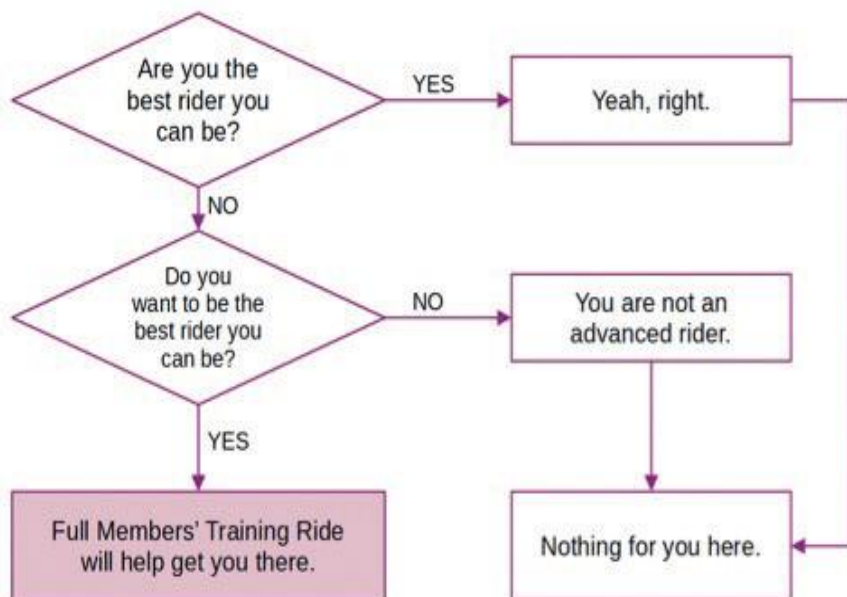
DAM offer a range of rides and training events to encourage its members to continually develop their riding skills. On the third Saturday of each month, there is a training day aimed at full members.

The purpose of these rides is to allow members to maintain and further their riding skills, based on a thorough knowledge of Motorcycle Roadcraft and, of course, the Highway Code.

Without continual training and refreshment, it is natural that riding skills deteriorate over time. The longer ago you took your advanced riding test, the more likely it is that your skill level has dropped below standard.

Perhaps you have ambitions to take your Masters or become an Observer. Keeping your riding up to scratch via the Full Members' Training Rides will set you in good stead for these.

How do I decide if Full Members' Training Rides are right for me?



What to expect on a Full Members' Training Ride

Although these are run as small group rides, every participant gets a 'go at the front' with an observer following. During the ride you also have the opportunity to follow (and therefore learn from) the other participants. At the refreshment stops we encourage a group discussion. This enables all riders to learn from each other... discussing the good and the bad themes of the ride without dwelling on any individual's mistakes.

Each training ride has a particular theme and the route chosen reflects that. Recent topics have included winter riding, overtaking, (not) skidding, and bends.

What can you teach me about bends, for example?

A common discussion point on the Full Member Training Rides is being able to deal with bends safely, smoothly and briskly. The best riders seem to 'glide through' the twisties with apparently no effort; other struggle. Some differences between advanced riders and enhanced advanced riders are:

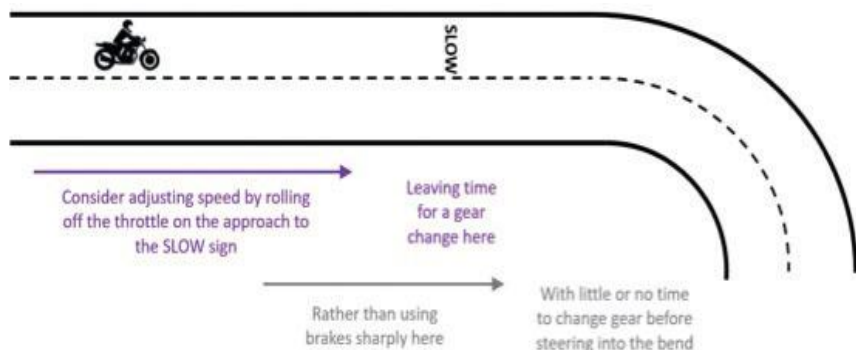
Keeping vision up

The aim is to look into far distance to enable the smoothest route through a series of bends to be identified and planned well in advance. Being proactive in looking far ahead requires determination and practice... even a momentary lack of concentration can result in the focus reverting back to the natural 'mid-distance' zone.

A technique shared by a participant in a previous ride is to use the 'purple squirrel'. The idea is to imagine there is a purple squirrel running along the top of the hedgerow ahead of you. The squirrel is always running away, and only just in sight... in fact often you can only see its tail as it tries to disappear beyond the limit point. Just as you think you have got it in sight, he puts a spurt on and nearly gets away again. But you follow, keeping his tail just in sight. Trying to keep the squirrel in sight forces your vision well ahead... the pre-requisite for planning a smooth route.

A real appreciation of 'slow in, fast out'

How slow? How early? When is okay to accelerate through and away from the bend? A common problem is an 'eagerness' to get to the bend, which results in sharp braking and little time to change gear in preparation for the exit.



Something you can check for yourself next time you are out riding: where the bend has a white painted 'SLOW' sign in advance, it is often the case that the location of the SLOW sign is exactly where the limit point stops getting closer. In terms of the systematic approach to riding (IPSGA), this point should therefore be the transition from 'speed phase' to 'acceleration phase' (of course leaving a moment to drop down a gear if necessary). The use of the 'SLOW' sign in this way is just one way of assessing a bend: it shouldn't be used in isolation, but rather consider it an additional tool in the 'information armoury'.

Can I come on the next Full Members' Training Ride?

Yes. Mark it in your diary for the third Saturday of each month, or keep alert for the group email notices. Alternatively email trainingrides@devonadvancedmotorcyclists.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you next time.

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

PLEASE ALWAYS check the **website** or event co-ordinators for up-to-date information.

Also please double-check times after clock change. www.devonadvanced.com

Date	What	Where
April		
Sat 2	Rookie Ride	See website for details.
Sun 10	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Sat 16	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Weds 20	Rider Development Evening NDAM	Tyres: Coaching Inn, 5 Molton.
Sun 24	Group Ride	8:30am for 9:00am start.
May		
Sat 7	Rookie Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Sun 15	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Thurs 19	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
Sat 21	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 29	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start.
June		
Sat 4	Rookie Ride	See website for details.
Sun 12	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start. TBC - See website for details.
Sat 18	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 26	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start. TBC - See website for details.
July		
Sat 2	Rookie Ride	See website for details.
Sun 10	Group Ride	9:00am for 9:30am start. TBC - See website for details.
Sat 16	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 17	DAM 40th	TBC
Sun 24	Group Ride	8:30am for 9:00am start.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Associates: Nick Turner, Tony Hawes, Robert Bull, Sean Connolly, Jasper Sehrt, Ian Davey, Jeff Skinner, John Sheffield, Chris Gaskell, Tim Garrett, Hamish Forward, Paul Hedden, Edward Nash, Tim Charlton, Geoffrey Hearn and William Ritchie.

Members: Mike Bridges (transferred from Bristol), Belinda Barton, (returning DAM member), Derek Facey, (transferred from London)



Congratulations to the Test Passes

Associate

Graham Hirst
Stephen Parker
Stephen Woodward
Kevin Millage
Ian Sayers
Jonathan Cook
Jim Webster
Michael Price

Observer

Barrie Dennett
Ian Holten
Martin Rushworth
Martin Rushworth
David Page
Simon Jeffrey
Gareth Taylor
Dave Cooper

CORNERING IN THE RAIN

By Tim

Cornering in the wet is one of the motorcycling skills [confidences] that is handy to have under your belt - you will definitely get more enjoyable riding time if you are not as worried about the occasional downpour. The key is in understanding just how good modern motorcycle tyres are, trusting them and riding in a smooth, confident and relaxed manner; the chassis and

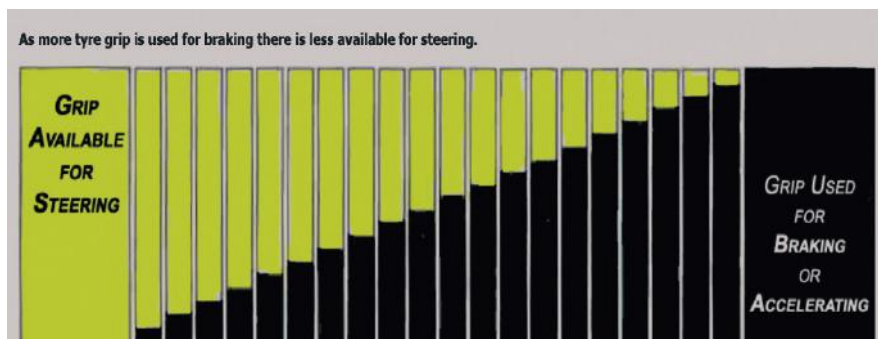


tyres will provide optimum traction and since you are relaxed - the smile will remain ;-)

Modern tyres are far more capable than many think. [Including me, however, as part of my journey to becoming an advanced motorcyclist I learned that all is not as it appears]

Motorcycle tyres are softer and stickier than passenger car tyres and use multiple compounds to help maintain grip in a variety of conditions. Maintaining them at correct pressures is important so that the sipes can work effectively [The grooves and channels cut into the tyre serve to evacuate water quickly out from under the tread. The very narrow cuts, called rain sipes, expand as the tyre tread flexes, forming an area of low air pressure inside the siping cuts, pulling water into the sipes thus providing a dryer contact between the tyre tread and the road.]

Now, we all understand that the amount of grip we get is directly related to the contact patch, the material of the tyre and the road surface - which gives us a level of working grip. Grip is affected by things like road surface, mud, oil spills, leaves etc. The graphic below indicates the trade off you make when expending the available grip by changing your velocity or your vector.



The Tyre Grip Trade off - from Motorcycle Roadcraft

We all “know” that grip is reduced when it is wet, but do you know how much grip the modern motorcycle tyre actually loses? Do you know just how effective modern tyre design and compounds can be in the wet?

In 2010, tests showed the average motorcycle tyre had a friction coefficient of between 0.9 - 1.36 in the dry, and we would expect it to be reduced in the wet. This magical friction coefficient describes the ratio of the frictional force resisting the motion of two surfaces in contact to the normal force pressing the two surfaces together¹. The grip on the front and rear is not necessarily the same

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/science/coefficient-of-friction>

- accelerating means more weight on the rear, and so more friction; braking means the weight moves to the front. With even weight distribution you have optimum friction [which translates as grip].

What I wish to convey is the fact that your grip levels have probably not reduced by the amount many of you may believe - consider these test results conducted in 2010²:

- On dry, hot rolled asphalt, the motorcycle tyres tested produced average peak friction coefficients between 1.1 and 1.3.
- On wet, hot rolled asphalt, the same tyres produced average peak friction coefficients between 0.99 and 1.36.
- On the dry, stone mastic asphalt, these tyres produced average peak friction coefficients between 1.1 and 1.25. There was no speed dependence in these values.
- On the wet, stone mastic asphalt, the motorcycle tyres produced average peak friction coefficients between 1.0 and 1.15.

I bet you never thought that in a worse case you could still have 90% of your dry grip! No, nor did I! And tyres have improved since 2010! These tests were published, so I am inclined to believe the reports, not only in the warm and dry and so I trust my tyres a little more.

Look at the claims around the Michelin Pilot series of tyres - I definitely have more confidence in the wet with these on my bike and I don't think it is all psychological. [Other tyres from different manufacturers are also available - tyre choice is personal.]

The road surface/condition also has bearing on how much physical grip [or friction] is available. Is the tarmac worn smooth, covered in wet mud or leaves, or is it icy? Patently these things have impact and don't get me wrong, I am not advocating throwing yourself into the corner with gay abandon. The trick to cornering remains just the same as it does in the dry: enable the chassis to do the work for you, remain relaxed, maintain a steady speed through the corner - fundamentally you should use the "slow in, steady out" mantra, maybe just a little more slowly as it is likely that the rain is making observation more difficult.

- Maintain positive throttle - if you use the throttle to maintain a constant speed through the bend, constant speed maintains the weight distribution evenly on the tyres - and so maximises the grip.

² <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/braking-capabilities-motorcyclists-literature-review-nathan-rose>

- Do not corner in an overly cautious manner - riding in a tense cautious manner will place you at risk since you are not creating optimal conditions for tyre grip - and if you are panicked you will more likely upset the equilibrium of the bike and inhibit the suspension so that it cannot do its job. That is when things go wrong.

Good observation skills will mean that you will have entered the bend at the correct speed with the correct gear - always aim to be smooth on both the brake and the throttle. Sudden or violent inputs will unsettle the bike.

For that odd mistake, the modern bike facilitates reasonably firm braking with or without ABS. Brakes work best with the bike upright, so aim to use them that way - plan ahead. Slow in, steady out. Aids such as ABS will reduce your speed at the optimum rate for the road surface and will reduce your progress more quickly than just rolling off the throttle i.e. engine braking.



Don't get too close!

It is important to practise braking both in the wet and the dry - develop a feel for and understanding of your bike and how it will behave. Try with front brake only, rear brake only and both brakes together - if you understand your bike's capabilities you are less likely to be surprised. The more confidence you have in your feel, the easier it will be for you to ride with a positive throttle through the bends when it is wet. If you are braking before the bend and you feel the bike trying to break away, ease off the brakes, allow the wheels to turn more freely and control will return - then you can reapply the brake, squeeze gently, load up the front wheel again and then steadily increase the pressure - something you probably already do in the dry.

As you get more accomplished, you will find yourself more relaxed, reading the road ahead and better able to actively look for the surface with the most grip.

Avoid metal, tar lines, paintwork and other polished surfaces on the road. If you must cross any of these, aim to be upright. Achieve that and you are more likely to stay that way.

As your confidence grows, you will find yourself riding in a much smoother manner and so gaining much more enjoyment. Bikes are not just for the summer - with the right clothing to keep you warm and dry, they can be just as much fun in the winter too.

Winter clothing reviews are available in all the bike publications - go for the best your budget will allow - you will not regret it.

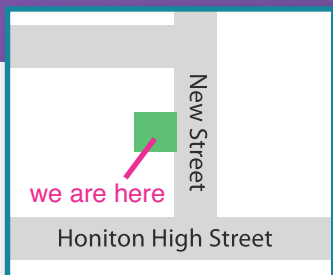
Understand that allowing the chassis and suspension to do their work is very important - recall the article you will have read about motorcycle control? "Full Control", (on the website, Ed.). Speak to your observer [now friend] if you don't have this - it is an excellent read and covers the physics of motorcycle control in more detail than I have time for here. I urge you to practise the techniques described within it both in the dry and also the wet. Hopefully, you will - especially now you have a little more faith in the grip levels available to you from your road tyres.

Ultimately, modern tyres are a marvel of engineering and can be trusted much more than you believe. Try it out - slow in; smooth and steady out - and don't forget the smile. :-)



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CELEBRATIONS AT THE DAM AGM, NOVEMBER 2021

We had the pleasure last year of awarding three trophies to those who the DAM committee and the DAM Chief Observer feel have gone above and beyond with helping support the aims of the charity.



The John Truelove trophy was awarded to Luke and Alex at WeLoveTechnology. This trophy is given to those who are, but not necessarily, members of DAM and who the committee feel have done an exceptional piece of work to help the club. John Truelove was a founding member of DAM (40 years ago) and it is in his memory this trophy is presented. Luke is pictured here, accepting the award at the company's office in Bovey Tracey. WeLoveTechnology has been instrumental in proactively supporting us with the redesign of the DAM website as well as a range of other technological improvements to aid the running of the club.

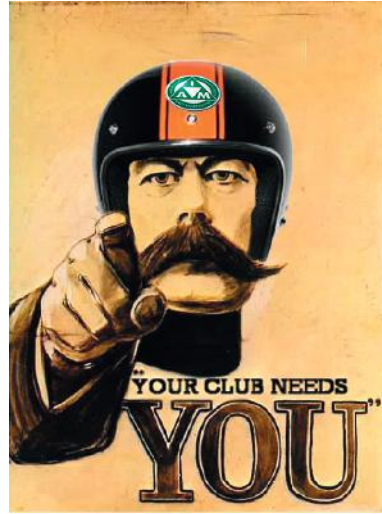


The John Colin Ivison (JCI) trophy was awarded to Alan Goran, Marketing Officer (on the left of this picture). This trophy is awarded annually to any member of DAM who the committee feel has helped develop the club and its activities in the most positive and effective way. John Ivison was a

long-standing member of DAM. Alan Goran has worked tirelessly over the past 12 months, along with other DAM members, to promote DAM to the Devon biking community. The DAM Observer trophy was awarded to Martin Rushworth (on the right of this picture). This trophy is awarded annually to an Observer who the Chief Observer - Adrian Veale – believes has given the greatest commitment to the role over the preceding 12 months. The award for 2021 was awarded to Martin in recognition of the sterling work he has been doing to develop and promote DAM in the north of the county.

Apologies for the delay in including this article in the magazine. However it was only at the 'Biker Down' Rider Development evening in February that two of the trophies were actually handed over, in person by the Chair, Nat Goss.

PILOTS NEEDED



**Calling all Full
Members**

**Do You Enjoy
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Ever Considered Piloting One?

**The Club needs your
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No previous Piloting experience necessary.

Rides can be of any distance and on any day. Just ride your favourite route.

Please help your fellow members and contact:

Rodney, Group Rides Coordinator at groupridescoordinator@outlook.com

If you would like more information I'm happy to help.

Rodney Rayner
Group Rides Coordinator.

***And following on from this, we have an
article about how to help your pilot!***

IT DEPENDS ARTICLE #347

Marking Junctions on Group Rides

This is an article for DAM members who participate in Group rides and Rookie rides. It provides guidance and suggestions (for riders and pilots) on safe and effective junction marking.

IAMRoadsmart has issued guidance on group ride organisation, including on how to mark junctions (see reference below), however this article considers only the topic of marking junctions.

When marking a junction the aim is to give timely and effective information to other group riders about the direction of the ride ... and to do so safely and legally. This means choosing a place to stop (mark) where you do not obstruct or confuse other road users, yet provide sufficient and clear information to your fellow riders.

Remember the other riders in the group will already be vigilant for markers at all junctions. It is therefore not always necessary to reinforce your presence by use of lights, indicators or arm-waving. Indeed to do so can be confusing to other road users. Consider for example if you are a driver approaching a junction and see a motorcyclist is hi-viz clothing, with hazard warning lights on, waving vigorously to the right ... what message does that give?

The term 'quiet efficiency' is often used to describe the advanced riding standard. It also applies to the system used to mark junctions ... doing the minimum necessary to achieve the aim.

Here are some common questions and answers about marking junctions.

Q1. When marking, should I obstruct or direct other road users?

No.

Q2. Should I always stop where the pilot indicates?

It depends. It is your own responsibility to judge where the safest and most effective place to stop is. The pilot may have a different view on safety to you, or indeed you might have miss-interpreted the pilot's intentions about where to stop.

Q3. What if there isn't a safe place to stop?

It depends. If you consider there isn't a safe place to mark the junction then do not stop. It is better to have the rest of the ride going in a different direction, than to put yourself in danger. Remember the pre-ride briefing will

have described the route destination and refreshment stops, so other riders will be able to find their own way there if necessary.

Q4. Is it okay to stop on a pavement?

It depends. The Highway Code (rule 244) discourages the use of pavements for parking (and it is illegal to do so in London). If it is a quiet area, and you can use the pavement without obstructing pedestrians then you may consider it appropriate to stop on the pavement for a brief period.

Q5. Should I mark at the entry or exit to a junction?

It depends. Often marking the exit is better because you can simply mark the junction with the position and direction of your bike with no other signalling required. Where views are limited, turns are tight, or the road conditions too fast, marking the junction well in advance could serve as an initial 'warning'. The exit could also usefully be marked in these circumstances.

Q6. Should I use indicators or arm signals?

It depends. In many cases the position and direction of your bike can be sufficient. If you use indicator lights be careful not to confuse other road users. If you use an arm signal do so with a steady point and avoid waving arms excessively.



Q7. How could using indicators be confusing?

For example, if you have pulled over to the left to be advance marker for a right turn. Enough said.

Q8. Should I use hazard warning lights?

It depends. In the normal course of events this should be unnecessary. The highway code (rule 116) says these are to be used to warn others that you are temporarily obstructing other traffic (which of course you won't be – see Q1 above), and 'never to use them as an excuse for dangerous or illegal parking'. Consider: if you feel the need to use hazard warning lights, you should also consider whether you have chosen a good place to stop.

Q9. May I stop in areas with white diagonal lines (hatched areas)?

It depends. If the area is bounded by a solid white line: no, unless it is an emergency. If the area is bounded by a dashed white line, then it is certainly legal to stop there if it is safe. Such hatched areas can be particularly useful to mark junctions in urban areas where the traffic is slow moving, for example on the approach to traffic light controlled junctions, or small roundabouts.

Q10. Should I mark an 'obvious' straight ahead?

It depends. Often this is not necessary. However, bear in mind what is obvious to you might not be obvious to others. If there have been no junctions for several miles, and you get to a 'straight across' roundabout, it may be helpful to mark the junction to provide reassurance to following riders... but remember this may not be safe on fast trunk roads and dual carriageways.

Q11. Are the considerations the same when marking roundabouts?

It depends. For mini-roundabouts and small roundabouts, the considerations are largely the same. For larger roundabouts where the whole junction is not visible on the approach, it may be possible to mark the route around the roundabout with a number of markers.

Q12. Should I mark the exit (slip road) from a dual carriageway?

It depends. If the pilot has described the route sufficiently in the pre-ride briefing, this may not be required. If such marking is required be aware that there will be fast moving traffic, potentially changing direction 'at the last minute'. Stopping at the immediate entry to the slip road is likely to put you in significant danger. Instead, consider stopping well up the slip road, where there is room on the shoulder and where the traffic speed should be lower.

Q13. How long should I mark a junction for?

It depends. If you have waited for more than 15-20 minutes without any other rider passing, consider retracing the route to the last junction you saw a marker. If that marker is no longer there, then it is likely you have taken a wrong turn. In which case, make your own way to the route destination or refreshment stop.

Q13. Where can I get more information?

IAMRoadsmart has issued guidance on group ride organisation (https://17d557e4-9fcb-48ad-a91f-0c918aff83b7.filesusr.com/ugd/b47183_3cb6c652320b40d482b0ac41e24479e2.pdf). This includes a section on marking junctions.

Alternatively, contact the Group Rides Co-ordinator (groupridescoordinator@outlook.com).

Or ask the ride pilot at the start of the ride.



The storm warnings flashed every time we checked our phones. There was much deliberation about how wise it was to head north but the hearts won and I ate three pancakes for pudding the night before for extra ballast. Seven of us gathered at Severn View Services nestled between Dudley and Eunice. Martin and Andrew were sharing pole position with John, Andy, Terry, Jim and me trying to keep up. Our first stop was Chepstow Castle - one of the Western Section Photo Challenge Points. We then headed up through Devauden and Trelleck to Wonastow Cross near Monmouth for the second and last official picture of the day. We stopped at Hay-on-Wye for lunch (outside in the sunshine) via Rockfield, Newcastle, Norton Skenfrith, Pontrilas, Hardwicke and Cusop, then Rhos-Goch, Kington, Presteigne, Crug, Llanbister, Clatter and a tea stop at Llanbrynmair (previously the Machinations Cafe but now the village store) where they were just closing but turned round and made us very welcome. Next Cemmaes, Dolgellau, Rhyd and into Beddgelert just as it was getting dark. 276 fun miles. Most of our group were in the Tanronnen Pub but some of us took the Glanafon Apartments across the road. As we settled down for dinner in the pub, linking up with Elvina, Sally and Brian and others attending the rally, we realised how good it was to be back - enjoying the company and chatting about the day - an abundance of spring flowers, stunning scenery and mostly dry twisty roads.

Friday brought the predicted strong winds so we decided to be sensible (not a word normally associated with our group) and chill out and walk. That is apart from Jim who could not resist the urge to ride and started a new trend of riding from one closed



cafe to the next closed cafe - he returned safe but hungry. Our stroll up the Aber Glaslyn was cold, wet and wild - struggling to stand at times we were glad we had chosen this option. Hail made the village very picturesque for a while. The apartments were excellent for gathering everyone in the warm and enjoying plenty of tea, coffee and a light lunch. We spent another cosy



evening in the pub and I think most of the rally attendees were together. The campsite had closed but the Prince Llewelyn Hotel had opened at the last minute so all catered for.

Saturday was bright and less windy so, along with Bob Brackets Bensley, we headed off for some more photo challenge points. Andrew planned a route but he failed to avoid slush in the road, snow on the verges and temperatures of 4 degrees.... My expectations of a day's play are always high! Firstly we went to the seaside - always a winner with me - Harlech and Barmouth stunning with wild seas. Dolgellau, Arthog via Abergwynant to the National Trust Car Park at Llynneodd Cregennan. Now, coming in from our end was quite a challenge... narrow, twisty, steep, hairpins, gravel, potholes etc - but the circular route took us back to Dolgellau without any scary girlie moments. Coffee at Cross Foxes then Rhosdylluan, past Bala Lake, A4212 and B4501 to Cerrigydrudion, Ruthin



and the next photo point St Beuno's Spirituality Centre at St Asaphs. The track up to the sign was too much for one bikeit's ok Bob we won't tell them it was yours that needed a lie down. Then to Colwyn Bay Motorcycles and back via the lovely A548 to Llanrwst

and one of my favourite roads from Capel Curig to Beddgelert - I like to slow down and really enjoy the colours, the snow capped mountains and the lakes - each time wondering when I will see it all again. So many lovely memories in this part of the world. 162 miles of fun and another gathering in the Tanronnen for dinner.

Sunday and fond farewells as we all headed home. The predicted wind and heavy rain promised a challenging day and there was much checking of maps and forecasts to pick the safest route avoiding high ground and exposed bridges. 10.5 hours and 303 miles later I rocked up safely on my drive. Leaving at 1000 with Andrew at the helm 7 of us headed south.... Gellilydan, down the A470, Mallwyd, Cemmaes and coffee at Llanbrynmair again. Caress,



Dolfor and the A483 to Llanbister, the A44 to Leominster. Elms Green, Hope-Under-Dinmore, across to Burley Gate, through Trumpet, Dymock, Newent, around Gloucester to Benthams, Stroud, Tetbury, Malmesbury, Chippenham, Lacock, Melksham, Westbury, Warminster, Mere and finally the A303 and A30 This circuitous route was to avoid floods, road closures, an accident and the potential to be blown off....We managed lunch at the Pembridge Cafe where we advised those in charge to remove the cushions from the seats before we made them all soggy. At one point the flood water was up and over my helmet and down my neck but Storm (my R) ploughed on through - guess I should have gone a bit slower....

Everyone reported safe landings agreeing it was an epic ride and the following day I had a phone call to check I wasn't suffering from PTSD... I was able to reassure them the only thing I was suffering from was a very grubby bike And it still is!

Thanx again to everyone for making it a memorable few days and to Dave and Steve for the photo challenge which took us to some new and interesting places.

Helen Beer



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The Saga of Black Ogre

Ted G

If you read my 'Letter to the Editor About Nothing in Particular but a Lot That's Important' you'll know that on a whim I bought this ageing classic bad buy BMW F800, with no SH, 4 previous (careful?) owners, soggy tyres, flat battery and a coolant leak! I paid too much for it, too. This is the continuing saga of Black Ogre – a story of pitfalls, passion, perseverance, and – pleasure.

No service history didn't necessarily mean no service, but with just 5600 miles on the clock, it wouldn't matter if it did. Piecing together what history I had - the bike's display told me it had missed the July 2020 service, but it must have 'seen' either a BMW workshop, or specialist in July 2019. It clearly had been serviced as the engine oil was clean, and has stayed that way. MoT records showed it had failed an MoT in 2017 for seized front brake callipers and scored discs which was consistent with the tyre date codes showing the front had been replaced in 2017 – the rear was original (2013!). More of this later. Bleached operating buttons added to my suspicions that it had spent time outdoors probably neglected & stored in a bog. The rear tyre showed little wear but 'chicken strips' 75 mm wide! The bike had been ridden upright at 30 mph and most unlikely to have ever been thrashed. Mechanically it seemed pristine.

I did the trivial things, filled the coolant reservoir, blew up the tyres, charged the battery, checked the things I could check and tried riding it locally. Not only did it start and run well, but I could manhandle it easily in the garage, too. Already equipped with BMW panniers it now needed a top box, so I paid online for a largish Shad box from Freaklizard who then told me that it wasn't in stock. (This will become a theme.) Not to worry, sir, we will send you the very nice top-of-the-range expanding 58 litre box for the same price; this is bigger than the huge RT box and big enough to swallow easily my three year old grandson... The F800 has no 'pockets' unlike the NT or the RT, which do, so I needed a tank bag. But how did it fix to the bike? Discovery learning it's called - nobody tells you this stuff. I needed an F800-specific mounting plate. With this lot fitted I set off for Mid Wales to give the bike a real test. Black Ogre never missed a beat. It was proving to be a lively and fun companion, happily overtaking about 30 cars up the Bwlch Oeddrws (where ? !) near Dolgellau. (But I wouldn't catch the two aggregate artics on the descent that had been holding up this lot - those boys knew their road !).



As the bike seemed good, I thought it time for a specialist's view on my

purchase so took it to Graham Parsons in Taunton for a full service. Imagine my amazement, when, after re-sealing the leaking coolant joint and giving it a full 'going-over', he could find nothing wrong apart from disturbing the resident spider, its considerable web, and some leaves in the intake and filter! So now I set about cleaning up the poor bike's alloy warts, and putting paint back where it was missing.

I could also think about the needed mods. F800 ST or GT owners know that the stock screen is 'pants', as I found out in Wales where my head and neck ached from wind buffeting, and my ears even with earplugs were assaulted by the roar. So, a new screen was ordered (and, you've guessed, was unavailable for 2 months!). It was on 'back-order' from Germany.

Next, protection - a drop could damage one or more of the bike's array of fairings & Derek B in the club had done this. So, I paid online for some nice R&G crash bungs and bar ends from Freaklizard, also unavailable. "Not to worry, Sir, but R&G are redesigning the F800 bungs, and we'll send the kit out when we have it," (yes, two months !). My hope of completing the mods before winter just wasn't going to happen.

Next, navigation. I have a bunch of small Garmins for other uses and one of these (2.2" screen) had taken me to and from Alpirsbach in 2017. Bitchy things, these small Garmins can blank just when you need them most, as when I approached Trier on the Autoroute. As I had a Nav 6 from the RT, and I'd found out that my bike was pre-wired for it, would I 'love it or list it?' So, how do I fix the Nav6 to the bike? Well I didn't have a Nav 6 cradle, so ordered one, & then I needed to fix the cradle to the bike - is it standard or bike-specific (discovery learning again!). So, fingers crossed, I ordered the (BMW) bracket. Job done, so I thought. BMW had other ideas...

Then the fun really started! With all the Tupperware off, after much bending, cajoling & cursing, on went the Madstad screen - this was not a kit which 'fell into place'. Next, before fitting the crash bungs I thought an inventory check of the kit was needed - and 2 essential spacers were missing. Now what? A quick call to R&G yielded apologies, and two spacers were packaged with APC Overnight, weren't they? Two weeks later no parts had arrived. APC had lost the original package. Two spacers arrived by Royal snail Mail two days later - but another 17 days were lost, in addition to over 2 months for the redesign. While waiting, I decided to fit the BMW Nav bracket kits. Easy, yes? Try, no. I found that the 4 M4 bracket bolts which I did have, were to screw into 4 specially-threaded M10 handlebar bolts, which I didn't have. They were not included by BMW in the bracket kit ! (discovery learning again!)... Ocean BMW saved my sanity, sending me the bolts in 48 hours for just (!) £27. Then something went right - the Nav 6 worked first time after I'd joined the correct

connectors out of the choice of 4! Then something went wrong – the bracket was too floppy and had to be removed, and disassembled, to tighten it up...(discovery learning again). The crash bungs fit on a frame bolted to the four top engine mounts, so I removed the two rearmost bolts – easy. But the two front bolts are over the exhaust header, and of course they



were seized. Expecting these to be chrome steel bolts, I got out my release oil and “scaffold tube” and promptly sheared off the first mild steel one. I think I might have cursed. So ‘Rain’ and then flu stopped play. Would I, could I, should I? (drill and tap it myself, that is). Nah, I swallowed pride, fessed up and took the bike naked with bits flailing or tied up, to Graham who extracted the 4th bolt complete, drilled out and re-threaded the offending sheared one, and then assembled the bung kit completely wrong! At home, I took the kit apart again, drilled and sawed out the inner fairings (and there’s a story to that too), and hoped that I could get the bolt back in the rethreaded hole. To my real relief, I could! A long haul, but now the bike, with lots of cleaning and polishing, was almost complete. All I needed to do was replace that blown headlight bulb – often the simplest task can be the hardest as I was adamant I wasn’t taking the fairings off again to replace a bulb – it might have been quicker!

The last major thing, now I was happy with the bike, was to replace the rubber. The need for this was forcibly driven home to me on the Group Ride of 23rd January. Websites and opinions will vary in their advice in relation to maximum tyre age for safe running, but as an advanced rider you’ll know that the key is how the bike feels and handles in a variety of conditions. The F800 was fine in the dry on its old rubber. But the roads were cold and damp, the tyres were cold, the salt glazed in places, and the old rubber was hard. It sounds obvious now, but on those damp salty roads, the bike was handling like the unsafe liability that it was. It was all over the place, out of shape on a couple of bends, with, I felt, a real risk of some unintended rough stuff. I put the mantra, “Ride your own ride” seriously into practice. I slowed down, smoothed up, all the group passed me except the Sweep, but I kept that bike on the road and reached Tiverton safely. It taught me a lesson I’ll not forget, that when conditions become demanding, you need good rubber, which doesn’t only mean good tread depth – 8-year-old tyres will not do. Take ye good heed, friends!

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NDAM'S 1ST UPDATE 2022

We currently have 5 associates in training up here, and two test passes since our last magazine update – One with a Pass, the other a F1RST Pass, Well done Kevin and Steve!

Both the NDAM WhatsApp group & Facebook page continue to be busy, and we have grown again from 80 to 103 members on our NDAM Facebook page!



NDAM also continue to train two more local observers, Tim & Woody who are now almost ready to be assessed and signed off, watch out for the next update!

We now have at least 12 local bikers waiting for Spring to start their IAM ARC courses,

today being the 1st March, we will soon be very busy again! (And we have a Young Rider starting called Hayden this month who lives in Braunton)

Chivenor Army Commando Base – Well, as you can imagine with recent news the lads have been deployed. So unsurprisingly, no update from the Regiment for this issue, but our thoughts are with them all.

Great News - The Coaching Inn in South Molton have agreed to host 'DAM Training Evenings', our first one is booked for Wednesday 20th April – 'Michelin Tyres' with Ian Tollett. This new venue is in addition to the Swans Nest in Exminster.

A BIG thank you to all the new and recent 'NDAM members' who are supporting the Group rides, Rookie rides & our Observer team up here - Steve, Robin, Andy, and me.

Regards

Martin Rushworth

North Devon Team Leader.





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 Advanced Rider course book. DAM is also informed and we too send out a club Welcome Pack. This has a questionnaire to help us assign you your Observer, some other forms, plus a lot of information about the club. 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 & Club Officers December 2021

Chairman: Social Media: Nathaniel Goss E: nathaniel.goss@gmail.com		Group Secretary: Catherine McKinley E: secretary@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk	
Chief Observer: Adrian Veale E: avdamcso@gmail.com		Acting Treasurer: Dave Cooper E: dac.jec@gmail.com	
Marketing/Events Co-ordinator: Alan Goran alan.goran@ymail.com		Group Rides Co-ordinator: Rodney Rayner E: groupridescoordinator@outlook.com	
Newsletter Editor: Diana Percy E: dianapercy9@gmail.com		Webmaster: Nick Tucker E: webmaster@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk	
Rookie Rides Co-ordinator: Dave Mudge david.mudge@environment-agency.gov.uk		Membership: Barrie Dennett E: membership@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk	
Observed Rides Co-ordinator: Trevor Olding M: 07738 580 992 E: trevor.olding@gmail.com		Rider Development: Tony Curley E: tony.curley@btinternet.com	
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 <i>Advanced Rider Course</i> immediately.		Other Committee Members: Steve Hyde Brian Churchward	Trustees Nathaniel Goss, Martin Rushworth, Catherine McKinley, Dave Cooper

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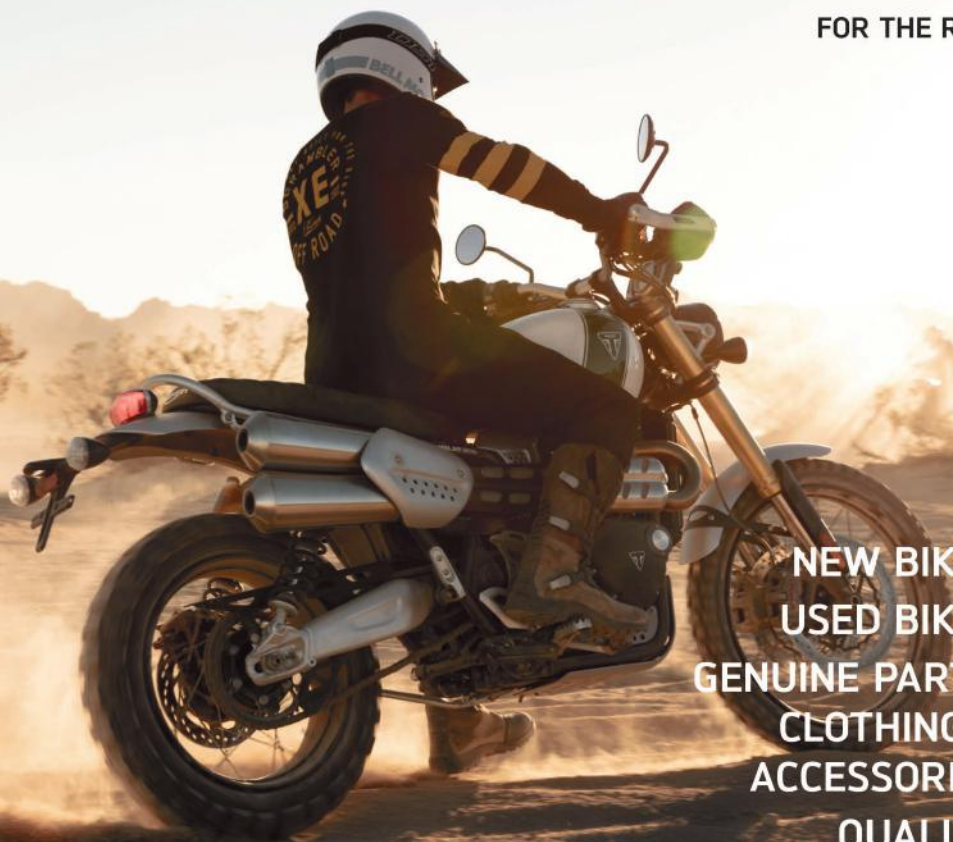
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