



**DEVON  
ADVANCED  
MOTORCYCLISTS**

NEWSLETTER 80 Jan - Mar 2025



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## Chairman's Chatter

**Richard Whybra**

Dear Members,

It is with great regret that I announce this will be my final address to you in our esteemed magazine. Due to professional and personal circumstances, I will be stepping down from my position as Chairman of our distinguished group at the AGM in April. Having lived, worked, and ridden in Devon for over 35 years, we are fortunate to have some of the most picturesque and excellent biking countryside in the UK at our doorstep, which I will sadly miss.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the committee and members for their support during my tenure, it has been an honour and privilege to serve as your Chairman.

As spring progresses and we look forward to summer and warmer weather, as always we have a variety of rides and events scheduled for everyone to enjoy so please show your support by attending as many as you are able to, I wish you all a fantastic riding year and look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

Ride Safe

**Richard**



# EDITORIAL

**Diana Percy**



This quarter's cover photo is of DAM member Jo Carter, looking super cool and like she means business! Thank you.



By the time you read this, we will be in spring! Hurrah! Thanks to Motolegends for allowing me to publish the article on motorcycle jeans. I hope we will be able to wear them soon.

This is only a bike mag (IAM/DAM bike mag notwithstanding) so it is rare to be able to include something as powerful as Paul FitzHenry's account of his European trip with his friend, Strido. It brought home what an important part of our lives biking is, so very much more than a means of transport. It forges and binds friendships; this particular account of a motorcycle journey is a wonderful tribute to a friend. Biking is an adventure and all the heart-in-the-mouth moments here described bring that home – they had a fair few! I have also marvelled at the infrequency of petrol stations in France. And (sigh) those Spanish bikers who are so lovely....the helpful guy at the port who mended the gear lever is an example of this.

Next issue we will be hearing from a new Chief Observer and from some new committee members and roles. In the meantime, welcome to all, and thank you for your contributions. That goes for everyone who submits, or has submitted, articles or pictures to the magazine. If you have a high-resolution portrait shape photo that might be good as a magazine cover, do please send it to me at [magazine@devonadvanced.com](mailto:magazine@devonadvanced.com).

**Diana x**



# **DEVON ADVANCED MOTORCYLISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 30 April 2025 7.00pm.**

**To be held at The Swans Nest, Exminster, Exeter, EX6 8DZ**

Notice is given of the above meeting to receive accounts and reports, elect trustees, officers and other committee members and to discuss business of an annual nature. The evening will include a quiz and Legacy presentations.

Trustees, Officers and committee members retiring as per the rules: Richard Whybra (chair), Catherine McKinley (secretary), Brian Lee (treasurer), Nick Tucker (committee member), Les Mosco (committee member), David Mudge (Trustee), Philip Pike (Trustee), Terry Dormer (Trustee). All the above are prepared to stand again for election to their existing posts except for Richard Whybra (Chair), Brian Lee (Treasurer), Nathaniel Goss (Marketing lead), Jill Payne (committee member).

Nominations are invited for any of the above positions and for committee ordinary membership on a form available from the Secretary ([secretary@devonadvanced.com](mailto:secretary@devonadvanced.com)), to be returned no later than 7 days prior to the meeting. Nominees, proposers and seconders must be full DAM members.

Proposals of an annual nature must be received by the Secretary no less than 7 days prior to the meeting, showing the name and contact details of the full members proposing and seconding.

Apologies to the Secretary [secretary@devonadvanced.com](mailto:secretary@devonadvanced.com) or 07713 141892

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# The Michael Whitfield Legacy: 2 years of successes

## Les Mosco

It's 2 years since DAM Members started to benefit from the generous Legacy left in Michael Whitfield's will, of £32,400 to be used for the benefit and training of DAM Members. What has been the result? First, let's thank the DAM Committee for setting the overall direction, and Brian Churchward, Les Mosco, Phil Pike and Rodney Rayner who formed the Legacy Committee to work the detail and Brian Lee who as DAM Treasurer manages the finances. And, most importantly, the DAM Observers (not least our CO Simon Jeffery and Observed Rides Coordinator Ian Puce) who delivered Members' training for those aiming at the F1rst standard and the Westfield Skills Days (especially Rodney Rayner for leading on these) and the IAM Masters Mentors and Examiners who delivered their parts in the big upsurge in demand from DAM, we kept Adrian Veale and Shaun Cronin especially busy as well as others including Mentors from beyond Devon. The result of all this has been a big increase in skills and qualifications amongst DAM Members and well done to all who've participated, whether passed or not, all have gained increased knowledge and riding abilities. Apologies for any errors or names missed from these lists (a curiosity is that DAM is not automatically informed by IAM of all F1rst/Masters passes, so unless the individual positively updates the DAM Legacy on their outcomes, we may not always know), but the following are to be celebrated:

F1rst Qualification: Diana Percy, Simon Iskander, Ben Wills, Bob Watson, Tim Redman, Les Mosco, Jill Payne, Andrew Robertson, Andrew Layton-Hill, Pete Adams

Masters Taster: Bob Robinson, Brian Strong

Masters: Cat Mckinley, Ian Robins, Chris Buxton, Ian Holten, Chris Uzzell, Tony Gray

Masters with Distinction: Dave Grant, Trevor Burridge, Polly Jackson, Dave Strickland, David Page, Nigel Bond, Mark Fouache, Martin Pierce, Darren Evans, Les Mosco, Chris Kingsley.

Westpoint Skills Days: too many to mention, with over 80 Members attending one or more such days.

Observer Training: the Legacy covered the costs for 5 additional Observers to be trained and kitted up in 24/25, on top of the initial 5 funded through normal DAM processes and then treated all 10 equally and didn't name "Legacy Observers". So, DAM and its Members now benefit from these additional Observers in our team.

There are more than 20 DAM Members still benefiting from Legacy-funded training as I write, and we look forward to adding their successes in the near future. And for those who participated but didn't pass on the day, don't worry as you will have gained extra knowledge to make you a safer and better rider. From all of us, thanks to Michael Whitfield.

## Les Mosco

Legacy Committee Chair

# Legacy Experience

Tony Gray and Manda Stone



Following last month's article by Adrian and Louise another pair of late developers, (Tony's term not the editor's!) Manda and Tony were prompted to share their story and support from the Legacy funding.

Tony writes: I am just happy and proud to have been backed with legacy funding and to have achieved Masters standard. My story and my partners' Manda Stone is very similar to the couple in the last issue's article who went from novice to Advanced in a short time. We did the same and it is only 3 years ago this month that we both first sat on a 125 on our 2 day CBT training at West Point, neither of us having ever ridden before. We love it and tour and train as much as we can. At 60 (Manda) and 69 we have discovered a fantastic way of life and thank DAM for facilitating our passion.

We have done lots of touring: 3 weeks in Northern Spain, 3 in Brittany, 3 upcoming in May in Portugal), several trips to Norfolk, Kent, Shropshire, Cornwall, Sussex. Our bikes are Tracer 7 GT (Tony), Tiger Sport 660 (Manda).

I would add something about the learning experience at an older age which fascinated me as a career teacher and school Principal. At whatever age, learning a new skill is emotional (some positive highs and some very uncomfortable lows) It is gradual, doesn't follow a steadily improving path, and requires resilience above all else from the learner and the input of a skilled and sympathetic teacher. We both were lucky to have fantastic observers in Dave Cooper (Tony), and Catherine McKinley (Manda).

Their limits of patience must have been tested severely when presented with two such inexperienced, older, hopefuls. Of course, they dealt with each pratfall or is it pitfall, expertly and sympathetically. I didn't believe Dave when he described Position 3, counter steering, and the concept of 'progress' and yep I can overtake on a motorcycle! Heroes both of them.



# 2024 CHIEF OBSERVER QUIZ OF THE YEAR

## ANSWERS TO DECEMBER'S QUIZ

On reflection, none of these really surprise us.

OBSERVER FACT	OBSERVER NAME
1. I fell off the summit of the world's 12th highest mountain.	Richard Thorns
2. I have been known to shout out 'I love Thomas the Tank Engine' when asleep in a hammock between torpedo racks.	Graham Hirst
3. I have often been mistaken for Alex Higgins (despite my maximum break being 4 points).	Les Mosco
4. At the age of 11, I was stopped by the police for exceeding 30mph, whilst enroute to my cycling proficiency test.	Mark Fouache
5. I'm an amputee.	Martin Rushworth
6. I have 3 Weetabix for breakfast every morning.	Richard Wiseman
7. My first job was as a dolphin and killer whale trainer at Windsor Safari Park: my nickname is "Flipper."	Andy Burden
8. Whilst in the middle of the Masai Mara, I changed a clutch on a land rover belonging to some midshipmen from Dartmouth Naval College.	David Mudge
9. I occasionally slide a bit of chocolate down the back of the wife's underwear when she's asleep.	Stuart Taylor
10. I am a member of the British Boomerang Association (membership number 77).	Hector Vass
11. I can ride a unicycle.	Andrew Pratt
12. I once missed a whole day by sleeping through it.	Darren Evans
13. I spent a week on a nudist beach in Skiathos	Andrew Robertson



# CARPE DIEM - THE OLD GEEZERS TOUR AUTUMN 2025

**Paul FitzHenry**

My name is Paul FitzHenry (everyone calls me Fitz) and I am going to retire in early 2025 along with a very good friend of mine (real name Mark though I call him Strido). We were both experienced riders however we made the (mature) decision to take the advanced riding course as it is our intention to do lots of touring during our retirement. We both became members of DAM and signed up for the Advanced Rider Course here in Devon. Unfortunately, just after Strido had completed his first session he was diagnosed with stage 2 pancreatic cancer and decided he would concentrate on his treatment while putting his training on hold. I carried on with my training (under the guidance of the incredibly patient and hugely knowledgeable Ian Pruce) and passed my test in September. Not long after this Strido was given the very sad news that his cancer had spread, and he had 12 weeks left to live. On hearing this news I went straight down to see him and we went on a really good ride around the South Hams stopping for lunch in a very nice restaurant in Dartmouth. We got talking and Strido said to me "Fitzy, you will still go touring next year, won't you?" Well, I thought about this statement and then took another look at my friend before saying "Of course I will, however there is no reason why you and I can't tour now before you get too ill". So, after much discussion and persuasion, I booked two tickets on the Plymouth to Santander ferry for the coming Sunday evening crossing. Strido became more and more excited and positive about the trip during the couple of days we had to prepare and, before you knew it, we were boarding the ferry on our way. I have to say now that neither of us had toured before nor indeed had ridden for more than a few hours in one day, so we were definitely touring virgins that's for sure!

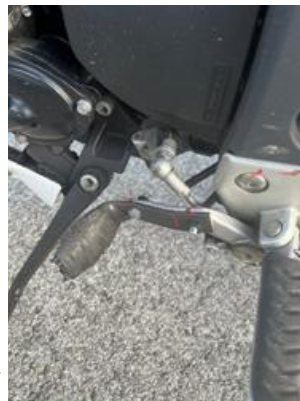
I organised everything so Strido could just relax and enjoy the whole experience, and I decided that we would not book our accommodation until the afternoon of each day so we were not tied to a time or destination. I was considering the route and had decided that we would head north into France to start and then Strido told me he had never been to Italy (turns out he hadn't been to too many places in Europe at all!). This got me thinking as my sister-in-law lives an hour outside Venice so I started to plan to get to her.

## **Day 1 – Ferry trip and arrival in Santander (Monday 28th October)**

The ferry trip was great with lovely weather and a flat sea. We had invested in two very good Satnav devices and I spent part of the voyage to Santander planning our route and deciding which crossing through the Pyrenees we would take to get into France and then head to Italy.

There were about 20 riders on the ferry and, by sheer chance, Strido and I

became the first ones to disembark. This turned out to be much more of a chore than a blessing! I was leading and going along steadily looking for the way out of the port when disaster struck as I entered a mini roundabout and did not notice the diesel spill that was all over the edge of the roundabout. The back wheel disappeared from under me and down I went with the bike and all my luggage spread across the road. Luckily everyone following saw this and managed to steer around the spill which at least meant I was the only one with the problem. Strido stopped and we started to pick the bike and my luggage up when he spotted that my gear lever had snapped off which is far from an ideal thing to happen at the start of the tour! Luckily for me (and the tour) a very helpful Spanish dock foreman (who turned out to be a biker too) spent some time with us trying to track down a replacement part. It quickly became obvious that this was impossible probably because my Tiger 1050 was born in 2008 which makes getting parts very challenging. Our new friend did not give up though and he organised for one of the dock mechanics to take a look to see if he could come up with a temporary solution. We followed him to his workshop where there was some head scratching before Strido came up with the idea to fabricate a new arm which could be bolted on to what was left of the gear lever. The mechanic did this marvellously and an hour later we were back on the road with my new 'temporary' gear lever working like a dream.



Due to the time lost for this incident we decided to change our plans and stay in a hotel in Torrelavega, which is just outside Santander, so we could regroup and start afresh in the morning. It was while I was booking us in to the hotel that Strido realised he had left one of his diabetic meds on the side at home. Not too much of a drama as these must surely be available in Spain so all we had to do was find a pharmacy. Given that it was 9.30 at night by then this could prove challenging however the very helpful receptionist at the hotel gave us directions to a pharmacy which she believed didn't shut until 10pm. We managed to find this with 10 minutes to spare and bought the missing meds to complete Strido's stock of pills and potions.

### **Day 2 – Torrelavega to Jaca**

Not a great start to the first full day of the tour as Strido forgot he had his disc lock on and promptly fell off as he tried to pull away! From all the various adjectives I could hear I'm guessing that won't be happening again any time soon! We set off for the Rioja region which we intended to cross to get ourselves nearer to the Pyrenees. The weather was glorious and set the theme for most of

the trip, something we felt truly blessed to have as we were going whatever the weather threw at us! Having decided that we were going to avoid motorways as much as possible we soon found ourselves climbing up through our first mountains of the tour and the scenery was spectacular (we were to experience even more spectacular views later in the tour but had no idea about this at the present time). We climbed through the cloud layer and came out to views of the mountain tops poking up through the mist. This leg was pretty uneventful as the roads were in great condition and there was little traffic about, however we did have a 15 mile stretch which tested our brakes and also our nerves! About 230 miles into the day we followed our Satnav (A TomTom which was absolutely brilliant especially giving us the locations of the petrol stations on our route among other great features) off the main road and on to a lane which led into some more mountains. The lane became more and more like a track which had us worried for a while until it linked with a tarmac road which was nearly two lanes wide. We followed this however we soon found that the Spanish road workers were carrying out a patching job on various lengths of the road and they seemed to delight in leaving a layer of loose gravel all around the area where they worked. The first time we came across this we both nearly came a cropper however we managed to manoeuvre our way through without having a tumble and then realised there were many of these patches so we quickly became adept at both recognising the imminent danger and riding our way through them. The whole experience lasted for about 15 miles and was not the most enjoyable time in the saddle!

We made it safely to Jaca and found our hotel where we soon found that the whole area was gearing up for Halloween big style! I spent part of the evening planning our next leg and quickly realised we were going to have to up our game in terms of daily mileage if we were going to make it to Venice and still be able to get back to blighty in the two weeks we had allotted for the trip. I decided we would cross the Pyrenees using the Bielsa pass which led to the Aragnouet tunnel into France.

### **Day 3 – Jaca to Albi (France)**

After brekkie we retrieved our bikes from the hotel underground car park (no disc lock incidents today!) and, after carrying out our usual checks, I realise I could do with an oil top up. No great drama as there was a garage very conveniently situated just on the edge of town so we stopped there and I topped up with oil. We got back on the road and had only gone a couple of miles when something made me look down to check where my oil filler cap should be. It took me a few moments to realise I was looking a hole in the engine casing where the filler cap should have been and there was hot oil spraying over my leg and boot! We turned around quickly and headed back towards the garage all the time scanning the ground for the missing cap. Strido stopped as he through he

saw something on the opposite carriage way while I carried on until I got to the garage where lady luck shone on me as the missing cap was still on the ground right where I parked the bike to top up the oil!. Not quite sure what we would have done if we hadn't found it but maybe it's best not to dwell on that for too long! I caught up with Strido who told me that what he thought was the oil cap was in fact a live rifle bullet so he left it where he found it and we headed off both wondering why such a thing would be lying in the road gutter!

We hadn't seen the weather forecast so didn't realise much of Spain was about to suffer monsoon type rain which made the news big time when Valencia was flooded really badly. Luckily for us we only caught the most northerly part of this awful weather however we still had about an hour and a half riding through torrential rain (not a bundle of laughs as I'm sure any rider will attest to). We came out of the rain just as we start the climb up to the Bielsa pass and when we passed through the Aragnouet tunnel we came out into glorious sunshine and beautifully warm weather. (As I mentioned previously we were blessed with this perfect weather for the whole trip until we got to Paris but more of that later.)



We stopped to take some photos at the first layby we came to as we made our way down the French side of the pass. As we got ready to get riding again Strido spotted something metallic in my tyre, on closer examination it turned out to be a thin triangle of metal which had managed to embed itself 'edge on' in my rear tyre. I got my pliers from my tool kit and then (foolishly it turns out) pulled the offending article from my tyre only to be greeted

with a loud hissing so I very quickly replaced the metal where it was happily sat before I interfered with it. At this point any experienced (or even semi-experienced it turns out) tourer would simply break out the puncture repair kit and do the necessary. Unfortunately, neither of us 'virgin' tourers had even considered what would happen if we had a puncture (and truth be told I didn't at that time even know it was possible to mend a puncture while on the road!) so we had no means of repairing the problem. We rode slowly to the next town where we found a tyre garage however he had no bike tyres though he could pump up my rear tyre to get us further on the road. A very helpful electrician (also a fellow rider it turns out), who happened to be stopped by the garage and spoke perfect English (my French is pretty good but it does make life a lot easier when the natives also speak English), chatted with us about our problem and offered to direct us to a bike specialist in Saint-Gaudens which is on our route and about 90 minutes away. We thanked our new friend and headed off

to get the puncture repaired. We only had to stop three times to put more air in the tyre which was pretty good going I thought. We reached Saint-Gaudens and found the Yamaha garage we were looking for. The owner was extremely helpful (another biker for sure) and an hour later we were back on the road and me with two new tyres and instructions to 'run them in gently for about 100 km' (this turned out to be no problem as we covered this distance in the first part of that afternoon!)

We were running behind our ideal mileage for the day so we decided to hop on to the motorway to get us on a few miles (I have to say not all the French drivers were as patient as they could have been with two old geezers who were perhaps not moving quite as fast as the rest of the traffic on the motorway). We did this until we reached Toulouse where we jumped back on to the minor roads to skirt the city and then head to Albi which is a cute little French town about an hour beyond Toulouse and where we stayed that night.

#### **Day 4 – Albi to Valence (Halloween day)**

As we were packing our gear back on the bikes Stridos V Strom decided it preferred to be horizontal and it fell gently against a tree we were parked near. As it turned out this was pretty much the only drama of the day as we rode about 300 miles up and down mountains and through national parks in glorious weather, fantastic scenery and smooth roads. We were happily scooting along on one of these roads when it occurred to me that the little symbols showing the location of the next petrol station were not coming up on the Satnav and at the same time I also notice my fuel gauge was not showing as many symbols indicating fuel as I would have preferred! I needn't have panicked as we did make it to the next fuel station with 20 miles left in the tank which is ok but cutting it finer than I was comfortable with!

We made it to Valence and eventually found the hotel I had booked that afternoon (actually we found the hotel quite quickly however it was on the other side of a park and there was no easy way to navigate a road to get to it!) We went out for dinner and quickly found we were probably to only humans within a radius of 5 miles who did not have Halloween costumes on – I honestly didn't realise the French were so big on the event!

#### **Day 5 – Valence to Biella (Italy)**

We started early as I wanted to get a good way into Italy to give us a shout of making it to my sister-in-law by Saturday evening. We started off in low cloud which stayed with us for the first few hours. During this time we came across a road closure with absolutely no diversion signs at all. We consulted our Satnav map and decided to take a very small lane up the mountain the start of which was just off the main road. This was an extremely twisty and turning route going ever upward through the trees passing the occasional homestead but

otherwise no sign of life. We continued for quite a while until we came to farm where the lane turned into a gravel track. The Satnav told us the 'road' went on for a sort while then started to come back down the mountain however neither of us particularly wanted to descend down a gravel track for miles. We were just turning around when a lady came out of the farmhouse and explained that the gravel track only lasted for a couple of hundred metres then it was tarmac again. (I noticed a Honda bike in her garage so yet another fellow biker who helped us out). We continued along the gravel track until we came out of the trees and we were rewarded with what was probably the best view of the entire tour! We were above the clouds now and we looked out over a perfectly white 'landscape' of fluffy whiteness with half a dozen mountain tops protruding through under a perfectly clear and gorgeously blue sky. Naturally we had to stop for a short break to take this in and enjoy our 'luck' for coming across the road closure and making the decision to take the little lane as a detour.

We came down the lane and back on to the road which led to Grenoble. We made our way cross the city in what was probably our most boring part of the ride as we were constantly stopping at junctions and roundabouts while we made our way across the city. This we did eventually and we were soon getting into the serious mountains of the alps where we enjoyed superb views and great riding for several hours before we crossed the border at Claviere to get into Italy. I was being ambitious now and booked our accommodation for the night in a very small village called Quassolo however, when we turned up we could not find the hotel at all as our Satnav was guiding down a very small lane which led to only two properties neither of which looked to be occupied. We did eventually find a very helpful elderly Italian man who also spoke perfect English and who told us one of these properties was indeed the hotel and he knew this as this was the ONLY hotel in Quassolo! We tried again and, even though I went into the property and 'searched' in the darkness, there was no sign of life so we abandoned the idea and I rebooked us into a proper hotel in Biella which was about another 40 minute ride (it was well past dark by this point and my friend needed something to eat to help his blood sugar levels). The hotel turned out to be superb and we had a great nights rest with them even letting us park the bikes on the wide pavement right outside the glass front of the hotel.

### **Day 6 – Biella to Asolo (where Lynne my sister-in-law lives with her partner Stef)**

While at breakfast we got talking to a German couple who were on a bike tour of their own (though only for the weekend which apparently was a bank holiday in Germany and Italy). They were flabbergasted (and suitably impressed) when we told them we were in Santander on Tuesday morning – not bad mileage for two old geezers!



The engine management light on Stridos V Strom was coming on so we found a Suzuki dealer to take a look only to find they were shut until the Monday due to the bank holiday weekend. As luck would have the light went out on the way to the dealer so we decided to crack on anyway.

It is 280 miles to Asolo so we decided to break it into 50 mile chunks with little breaks on the way. This went well

though when lunchtime came we found ourselves without too many choices so I introduced Strido to the joys of McDonalds which apparently he had not suffered enjoyed before!

We had continued to avoid motorways however Lynne advised us that there was a brand new stretch of motorway on the way to Asolo which hardly anyone was using due to some misunderstandings regarding the toll. We took her advice and found ourselves practically the only vehicles on a brand new stretch of road for about an hour and a half which was great fun.

We arrived in Asolo at 5pm on Saturday 2nd November which was a pretty good achievement for two touring first timers though I have to say the idea of 24 hrs off on the following day did appeal mightily!



### **Day 7 – Venice**

We had decided to take the Sunday off from riding and took the train to Venice where Lynne joined us as we became proper 'grockles' (tourists) wandering around the city taking in all the sights including lunch near (not in!) St Mark's square and a water taxi ride back to the train station in the afternoon.

### **Day 8 – Asolo to Bellagio**

We were sad to leave our hosts and enjoyed coffee and croissants before heading off on our trusty steeds. We hit the empty motorway again and enjoyed another smooth and traffic free ride. This turned out to be a good thing as we then had to endure a very painful hour and a half going round about a million roundabouts as we skirted Verona – the decision to avoid motorways has a price sometimes that's for sure!

We did get past Verona eventually and then we made it to Lake Garda where we rode along the bottom and up with West side until we stopped for lunch

at a little town called Salo which was right on the edge of the lake. We had intended to ride up the full side of the lake and then head West however time was against us and we wanted to get to Lake Como before nightfall. We made it to the southeast corner of Lake Como and followed the narrow road all the way up to a beautiful little town called Bellagio which was nestled right at the top of the land before it turns South West again. We had booked a very Italian apartment which was on a tiny cobbled street instead of the Hotel Bellagio which looked fabulous but probably cost the same as the GDP of a small country to stay in!

### **Day 9 – Bellagio to Montreux**

We left Bellagio just after dawn and followed the little road back down the southwest side until we hit a more major road which took us to Lake Maggiore where we stopped for coffee and pastries beside the lake at a pretty town called Lesa. We followed the lake around until we had to turn West to head for the Simplon Pass where we were going to cross into Switzerland. Before too long we passed the Italian border guards who appeared very happy to see two old English geezers leaving their country pretty much as we found it. The Swiss borders guards seemed happy enough to let us in so we headed up the pass where we were treated to the most spectacular views which we again enjoyed in the most glorious weather. We stopped several times to take piccies of what can only really be described as true Switzerland – rolling green hills, snow-capped mountains, cows with bells and smooth twisty roads through it all.

We made it down the mountains to a town called Visp where we stopped for lunch and a stretch of the legs. It was still quite a way to get to Montreux but we decided to go for it as we really fancied the idea of waking up on the edge of Lake Geneva. We made it at around 6pm and quickly found our hotel which was centrally located and made it easy to find a nice restaurant for dinner. This we did and we enjoyed a lovely meal only to find that none of our cards would work when it came to pay the bill! Naturally the manager was called and he didn't seem to believe that problem was with his machine and not our cards! The only solution was for me to wander the streets in search of an ATM where I could withdraw the cash and then return to pay the 'ransom' to rescue Strido from the clutches of the Swiss restaurateur (never a dull moment on this tour!). Having successfully achieved this we then unsuccessfully tried to find the statue of Freddy Mercury which apparently stands at the edge of the lake.

### **Day 10 – Montreux to Avalon (France)**

Today it was all about the ride itself which was just the best ever. All the other days have seen us go through wonderful scenery and beautiful towns/villages but today it was all about the roads. We had mountains early on then lovely French countryside however the vast majority of the ride was on billiard table smooth tarmac with long straights interspersed with mostly gentle bends



(some hairpins of course!). The only times we had to slow down was for the numerous small villages (and occasional larger towns) we passed through. The speed limit in the settlements is 50kmh (around 30mph) and 90kmh (around 60mph) on most of the open roads, it's not crazy fast but the smooth road makes it so enjoyable.



We set a target of reaching Paris tomorrow night so halfway there today would be great. As the afternoon went on we could see we were on target so I booked an apartment in a town called Avalon. The apartment was called 'La gite du Sorcier' which did not click with me at all until we found the front door and walked up the 3 flights of stairs to the door of the apartment – we were greeted by a large dementor figure which hung over the door and stared down the hallway! I started to get the idea and this was confirmed as we opened the front door and stepped into what can only be described as Harry Potter world! The whole apartment was Harry Potter from top to bottom and all the decoration/furniture etc was so authentic it was amazing! The owners had obviously gone to a huge amount of trouble to make this apartment as HP like as they could and they succeeded big time.

We had parked the bikes in the little square near the apartment along with several other vehicles however we luckily read the small print of our booking which told us there was a market in this square every Thursday which set up at 6am. We went down there and moved the bikes before we retired for the night which proved to be a good move as mine would have been in a cheese stall if I had left it there over night!

Luckily the beds were very comfy even if there were in 'dorms' and we slept well with no sign of any owls or other weird creatures.

### **Day 11 – Avalon to Versailles**

I woke up and used the 'marauders map' to find 'the room of requirement' before we packed up and looked for brekkie somewhere. We got on the road and carried on in the same vein as we rode yesterday, flat smooth roads and gentle bends. This continued for the first half of the journey however the second half definitely changed as we drew nearer to Paris and the traffic increased dramatically. We navigated our way through the traffic to find our hotel which was a stone's throw from the Palace of Versailles. After booking in we went for a walk around the palace (well the grounds actually as building shut at



6pm). The architecture and scale of the place was awe inspiring and I found it hard to imagine how many people and how much materials went into creating something this massive.

### Day 12 - Paris



We decided to take today off and to visit Paris as we were within striking distance of Caen where I had booked our ferry ride back to Angleterre on Saturday night. We took the train from Versailles and got off right beside the Eiffel tower. From here we were proper grockles doing all the sights including the tower itself, the Louvre, the Champs Elysees, Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame and of course the hop on – hop off bus!

A great day relaxing among the very friendly Parisians enjoying their city and food.

### Day 13 – Versailles to Caen

You would have thought we would have a nice relaxing start to our last day in France but oh no, we were up at 6am, brekkie at 6.45 and on the road by 7.30! The idea was to beat the worst of the traffic getting out of the suburbs of Paris and it worked pretty well with the only downside being the weather. As I mentioned earlier we enjoyed fantastic weather for the vast majority of our trip but it did change when we got to Paris. We did not see the sun again and spent a lot of the day travelling in mist and light rain. This didn't deter us as we made our way to Arromanches to start a mini tour of the Normandy beaches and area. Strido had not seen the D-Day sites so it made sense to try and fit in a visit to a few of these while we were in the area. We travelled along the coast stopping at various sites including Arromanches-Les-Bain, Longues-sur-Mer and Colleville-sur-Mer (the site of Omaha beach and the huge American cemetery).



We then visited Bayeaux for dinner before heading to the port to catch our 11pm ferry. We thought the excitement had stopped however there was one more 'event' left to experience – just as we arrived at the ferry and joined the queue to get aboard the ship the police turned up in force with blue lights flashing all over the place! They were everywhere for a while and it turned out there was some sort of incident which kept them busy for an hour or so before we were eventually allowed to board the ferry.

## Day 14 Caen to Home

The crossing was smooth, short, uneventful and landed us in Portsmouth at 6.30am – back on home turf and riding on the correct side of the road! The trip along the A35 was dry if chilly and we made it back home in good time albeit tired from lack of sleep on the ferry.

### Afterthoughts.

All in all, it was an amazing trip helped mightily by the fantastic weather we were lucky enough to be blessed with. Strido stayed with it the whole way and I can honestly say I can't remember him doing anything but smiling at any point of the tour! We left in a rush and were not as prepared as we could have been however lady luck shone on us as we managed to get over what was thrown at us without too much drama.

Unfortunately, Strido succumbed to his illness on 4th March which is incredibly sad however he was talking about the tour to anyone who visited him right up to his last few days, I guess that says it all for what the trip meant to him.

For me the tour gave me the chance to spend some quality time with my friend while showing him what touring on a bike is all about. We shared the experience together and I wouldn't have missed it for anything. My advice for anyone contemplating something similar is DO NOT wait, get going even if you're not fully prepared as you will get by either by your own wits or with the help of the many bikers who are out there and who are more than willing to give you a leg up if you need it.

## A Rider Development evening with Shaun Cronin Regional Service Delivery Team Manager



# Invite to a Trek

## by Trekker (a DAM member)

Blackpool, May 1987: I was taking part in my first “navigational exercise”, or trek. This involved a ride of 240 miles around Lancashire, Cumbria, Durham and North Yorkshire, stopping at a number of points en route to answer clues.

Friday entailed riding to Blackpool (from Essex) to our accommodation for the weekend – Pontins! After scrutineering, we were given a list of map references and set to work planning Saturday’s route using Ordnance Survey (OS) maps. Eight six figure map references had to be plotted for each of the morning and afternoon sections, and the shortest route between six of the references worked out for each leg. On Saturday morning the competitors set off at one-minute intervals. For those of us wanting to ride with the other two members of our team, it involved waiting down the road until they had left at their allocated time slot. A clue was answered at each reference point, and marshals were waiting at various points to sign our answer sheets. It was all rather serious.



**About to set off – 1987**



**Cluestop - 1987**

Tiverton, September 2019. Still trekking, and I finally got around to organizing a trek, the first one based in Devon. The treks are part of a series of four per year; one in Northern Ireland, and others in various parts of the country depending on who organizes them. (Of course we didn’t know then, Devon was to be the last trek until 2022.)

Times have changed since 1987. Map references are sent out in advance so you can plot the route in the comfort of your own home, leaving Friday evening free for a few beverages. Clue locations are still set using OS maps, but you can use online versions of the maps, the OS App, and even satnavs. No longer do I need to try and read an OS map while riding up a mountain. It is not necessary to find the shortest route, so no more muddy lanes, and the route is limited to 220 miles. The events now are based at hotels, hopefully an improvement on Pontins, and there is a presentation dinner on the Saturday evening. To make up for this easy life the clues are generally set by someone with a suitably deranged mind.



### Morning leg clue, 2019

Competitors began arriving in Tiverton on the Friday afternoon from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The first job was to do the tie breaker. Examples over the years have included guessing the number of knobbles on a knobbly tyre, identifying the bike from a recording of it starting up, and guessing the weight of the organizer's bike apparel. Before dinner there is a short briefing and question and answer sheets are handed out.

On Saturday morning, trekkers were supplied with bottles of water and emergency Mars bars – I did also offer fruit but the take up was rather limited (i.e. one person). Competitors generally ride in teams of three, and can set off at any time, provided they get back for dinner. My route took in Dartmoor in the morning with a lunch stop back at the Fisherman's Cot in Bickleigh, then back out to South Molton and Exmoor in the afternoon. The route may have been slightly ambitious, although I blame my deranged clue setter for the somewhat extended time some trekkers had spent at the clues. The advice is, if you can't find the answer in 15 minutes, carry on. Each team is required to submit their 6 best (most confident) answers for each leg, morning and afternoon. Most treks will generate random groups of bikers standing around looking very puzzled and trying to read padlock serial numbers, the number of nuts and bolts on a sign, or any other information available at the question location that might possibly provide an answer. This has been known to include asking a passer by, and explaining to the local vicar that we're not Hell's Angels.



### Afternoon clue, 2019

On Saturday evening everyone had returned safe and following dinner we went through the answers to the clues to much derision. Team and individual awards were presented, with a special prize in the form of a chocolate orange to the person who took the healthy fruit option for their snack.

If this sounds like a fun weekend, please take a look at this website for more information on Treks and an event in September based in Peterborough. Hosted by Milton Keynes Advanced Motorcyclists, this trek is open to IAM club members. [mkamtrek.co.uk](http://mkamtrek.co.uk)

See you there?

# BMW Club Rhino Rally - Snowdonia - Feb 2025

Helen Beer



This annual rally gives some of us the opportunity to start the Western Section Photo Challenge - searching out some interesting locations while wiggling our way around Wales. The forecast was wild and mild - should be fun! Leaving home at 0730 I met up with Graham, Rob, Andy, Terry, Sue, Martin and Andrew at Glos Services. We managed to tick off 5 photo points on our journey to Beddgelert...firstly

Shobdon Airfield (the cafe here was good), The Battle of Pilleth signpost near Whitton, a letter box and phone box near Adfa, the Memorial Hall at LLangynog (with a welcoming coffee stop at the New Inn) and lastly the remains of a railway bridge near Arenig. Remember it's not always about the destination but the journey and the scenery and technical roads certainly make it all worthwhile. 303 mainly wet miles brought a bit of havoc with my electricricker - my sat nav refusing polite requests and my heated jacket controller skipping merrily from sizzle to off with nothing comfy offered in between - hopefully things will dry out overnight.



Friday morning was wet and very wild so we hunkered down with coffee and banter before doing 132 miles in 4 hours with no breaks to get two photos - the Conquering Hero Community Centre near Rhewl and the Moel Arthur Hill Fort Car park near Nannerch. 70% of our time out seemed to be on goat tracks - seriously focusing on the limited tarmac with just a quick glance at the passing spring flowers. We were joined for dinner by other Rally attendees - Shaun, Colin, Cliff, Alan, Garth, Frank, Robert and Ann. Saturday came bright and

sunny - so after a quick early walk to Gelert's Grave we headed out in 13 degrees and had one of those very special days. Firstly was the peace statue at Gorsaf (well hidden in the shrubbery), then Beaumaris for coffee and a photo of the Lifeboat Station. Onwards to the Nant Gwrtheym Heritage Centre - what views and what a hill - 2 pillions hitched a lift back to the top. Lastly was the Cader Idris Car Park at Dolgellau via the Harlech Coastal Road - just stunning. 4 more

[www.devonadvanced.com](http://www.devonadvanced.com)

photos done and 144 cracking miles. Elvina, a local friend, came along too - first time she'd been a pillion in 10 years and thoroughly enjoyed it all... well that was what she told me...

Sunday and several braved the storm home but a couple of us decided to stay longer (the benefits of retirement) - while they battled the wind and rain we checked out the local cafes and generally relaxed. All reported a safe return with no photos and some kit malfunctions.

Monday was a lot brighter and an early start for the 306 mile journey home with 2 photos along the way. The road junction near Clywedog Reservoir - we took one of the Llanidloes options for coffee and then the phone box at Nant y Maen. Llyn Brianne was stunning. A final cuppa at phone box at Nant y Maen. Llyn Brianne was stunning. Baffle Haus and home as dusk fell.

A great few days, nearly 900 miles and the end of an era - we have been to the Tanronnen Inn in Beddgelert for many years but Alun and Jill are taking their much deserved retirement and the pub is due a refurbishment..... so many fantastic memories.





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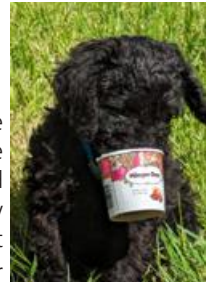
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# Dear Denzil.... DAM's very own Agony Uncle.

## Agreeing without Realising it

Dear Denzil, the author of an article in the previous edition (Round the Bend) is mistaken about the IAM RoadSmart requirement for extreme positioning on the approach to bends. He goes on to explain his preferred approach, emphasising the overriding requirement to consider safety first, and listing several such examples. He seems to miss the point that this is exactly what the advanced riding standard is. Yours, ADAM Reader



### Position

Advanced riders must be able to:

- Position correctly on the approach to a bend
  - Safety must not be compromised when positioning for a bend
  - Advanced riders must be able to achieve the correct position smoothly, without destabilising the motorcycle, generally:
    - In a right hand bend - a position towards the nearside will usually afford a better view but be aware of nearside hazards
    - In a left hand bend - a position towards the offside of lane will usually afford a better view, be particularly aware of potential conflict with oncoming traffic
  - The presence of other road users may affect position, either on the approach or through the bend
  - Physical features such as junctions, or changes to road surface may also require a change of position
  - In areas with lower speed limits, a more central position within the approach lane may be preferable, as extreme positioning may cause confusion to other riders and drivers.

### Position

You have great flexibility in positioning a motorcycle.

Use this flexibility to compensate for your increased vulnerability as a rider. Consider four things when positioning your machine for cornering:

- safety
- stability
- getting the best view
- reducing the tightness of the bend.

### Safety

Safety is the overriding consideration. Position yourself so as to minimise your risk of coming into conflict with other road users. Look out for hazards to your nearside and oncoming traffic to your offside. Be mindful of the width of your machine.

Always be prepared to sacrifice your road position for safety.

Dear Adam, I agree. The following are extracts from (the Bends and Cornering chapter in) the Advanced Rider Course, and the Bends chapter in Motorcycle Roadcraft. Both confirm the overriding requirement to put safety first. It seems that the author does indeed agree with the advanced riding standard though perhaps doesn't realise it (yet).

## Getting Back into Shape

Dear Denzil, I was entertained, surprised and confused by the article 'Trail Braking and Getting Out of Shape' in the previous edition. I thought I knew what trail braking was, but now I'm not so sure. Yours, Atta Loss.

Dear Atta,

1. Trail braking is the technique of continuing to apply brake pressure through the initial stages of steering around a bend.
2. Applied correctly, it can give a Moto GP racer an advantage of 0.026 seconds per bend, safe in the knowledge that he is close to being the best rider in the world and has the highest specification tyres on a near-perfect road surface.
3. When I see this technique allegedly being applied by riders on the public road, what I actually see in most cases is plain old late braking.
4. The technique is not consistent with IAM RoadSmart's advanced riding standard, which requires the phases (Position, then Speed, then Gear, then Acceleration) to be applied in order.
5. By all means learn this racing technique: but don't fool yourself into thinking it is either necessary or safe to use it on the public highway.

# Motorcycle Jeans.

[www.motolegends.com](http://www.motolegends.com)

**With summer coming some of us may be considering buying protective jeans so I asked Motolegends.com if we could share their article.**

**Many thanks to Motolegends.com for allowing us to publish this.**

Before I get into this, let me explain why this review isn't technically about the best motorcycle jeans of 2023 (Ed. still relevant in 2025); and why, in reality, I think that it is!

The truth is that we don't do all the riding jeans out there. Just about every brand does biker jeans these days, and obviously we don't offer every brand on the market. But we do monitor what's on offer; and we are forever buying jeans from other retailers to see what they're like.

It might sound immodest to make such a claim, but there isn't a motorbike jeans brand anywhere that wouldn't want to work with us. We are kind of the jeans experts in the motorcycle world; and it is undoubtedly the case that we sell more premium riding jeans than anybody in the world.

But let me be clear. In our universe, that means 'single layer' jeans. We are not going to beat about the bush. We do not consider Kevlar, or lined, motorcycle jeans a premium offering. We just think they're out of date. When the internal combustion engine first found its way into cars, there were still people who felt that they would never match the horse. We feel the same about those people who still advocate the benefits of Kevlar lined riding jeans.

Kevlar jeans did, it has to be acknowledged, play a part in pioneering a more casual form of riding trouser. Until they came onto the scene, most bikers relied upon leather to protect their rear ends. Kevlar lined jeans looked less aggressive. They were more comfortable; and they harked back to an era when bikers were happy to do all their riding in a pair of Levi's.

But Kevlar and other lined biking jeans have now been overtaken by single-layer riding jeans. There are lots of different types of single-layer jeans out there, just as there are lots of different types of Kevlar jeans. They come in different designs, different washes, different fits, and different levels of protection. Yet the underlying truth is that single-layer motorcycle jeans are lighter, more breathable, more comfortable, and easier to wear both on and off the bike.

And that, of course, is why we like them. Nobody who rides a motorcycle in a pair of jeans is immune to considerations of style. But, for us, comfort is the big thing. It's a major consideration with all motorcycle clothing, but particularly so with a jean. Why, after all, wear a jean if it's not comfortable? In daily life,

nobody would dream of wearing an uncomfortable jean, so why would one wear an uncomfortable jean just because one is riding a motorcycle?

And the good news is that, with modern technology, one really can have the best of both worlds. You can enjoy jeans with levels of abrasion resistance that are way beyond leather, but that still wear like those you would buy in a fashion store.

Some people suggest that single-layer jeans are not as protective as lined ones. But that is nonsense. A nonsense put about those who only sell Kevlar lined jeans. And by those who see motorcyclists as click bait to sell insurance.

The truth is that there are very strong Kevlar riding jeans, and not very strong Kevlar jeans. The same goes for single-layer bike jeans. Quite simply, you pay your money; you chooses the level of protection you want.



**Some Kevlar jeans are very protective;  
but some are barely protective at all.**

But there is a factor that needs to be taken into consideration. Some Kevlar jeans are 100% lined, but some are less than 20% lined. Those that are 100% lined are more protective, but heavier, hotter and sweatier. Those that are only partially lined will be more comfortable but offer protection only where there's Kevlar; and sometimes that's just the knees and a bit in the bum. By contrast, whatever the level of protection you get with a single-layer jean, you get that same level of abrasion resistance everywhere.

'Everyone' knows this formula!

$$v^2 = u^2 + 2aS$$

Where  $v$  = final speed,  $u$  = initial speed,  $a$  = acceleration (or deceleration),  $S$  = distance.

We don't know what  $a$  is, or  $S$  is, but we do know they are the same in both situations.

In the first scenario (starting from 20, ~~reducing down~~ to zero):  $0^2 = 20^2 + 2aS$

In the second scenario (starting from 20 down to  $v$ ):  $v^2$  (unknown) =  $22^2 + 2aS$

Combining gives:  $v^2 = 22^2 - 20^2$

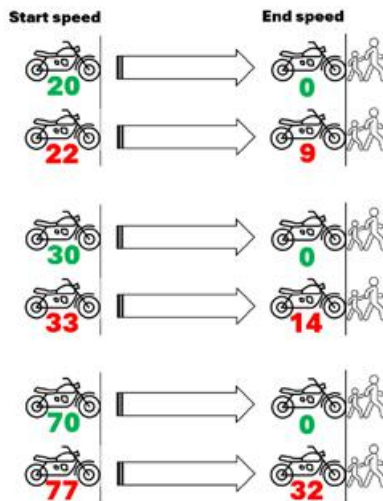
Rearranging and solving  $v = \sqrt{22^2 - 20^2} = \sqrt{484 - 400} = \sqrt{84} \approx 9$

Similarly for the other examples:  $v = \sqrt{33^2 - 30^2} = \sqrt{1089 - 900} = \sqrt{189} \approx 14$

And:  $v = \sqrt{77^2 - 70^2} = \sqrt{5929 - 4900} = \sqrt{1029} \approx 32$

Another interesting example is the difference in end speed when comparing start speed of 30 and 31:

$$v = \sqrt{31^2 - 30^2} = \sqrt{961 - 900} = \sqrt{61} \approx 8$$



## Response to the Round the Bend article

**Hector Vass**

**(Thank you to Jim Smith for submitting the original article in January)**

REFLECTIONS on what went wrong in an associate feeling strongly enough to post an article questioning the system of motorcycle control in the DAM magazine. Jim Smith 'Round the Bend' wrote an article for the last magazine which questioned road positioning as he understood it from his training. If I may quote and precis "in my view, the problems with the IAM guidance occur when related to right hand bends", "on the far left if you want to pass the IAM assessment with flying colours, I call this road position the ditch, and I refer to adhering to the guidance as riding the ditch".

He then gave five reasons to support his arguments. Perhaps something is very wrong with our delivery of ARC (Advanced Rider Course)? Before everyone jumps down my throat to defend the good book (roadcraft) and the ARC handbook, can I point out it does not matter what is written in a book, the takeout by the customer is what matters. Again, before jumping to conclusions about what the observer may have omitted to say and give our own chapter and verse as to what should have been said. Can I again point out it matters not what was said, the takeout by the customer is what matters?

The observer may have said all the right things which demonstrates the point that simply saying something or even demoing it does not make it so. I would argue we are there to take our associates on a journey towards better riding by giving them the space and tools to reason and discover for themselves. Do we not all have ambitions to improve our riding over the rest of our riding careers, not simply while taking the course or when out with an observer? So perhaps Jim's observer did an excellent job and has created a rider who thinks about what he is doing and is equipped to question the good books rather than take things on faith.

I am grateful for Jim's article as it has caused me to reflect, and I do have some cautions for observers. I am an observer myself and retired DVSA instructor (I felt 400 students over the years was my limit) so have to repeatedly give myself a dressing down when I fall for:

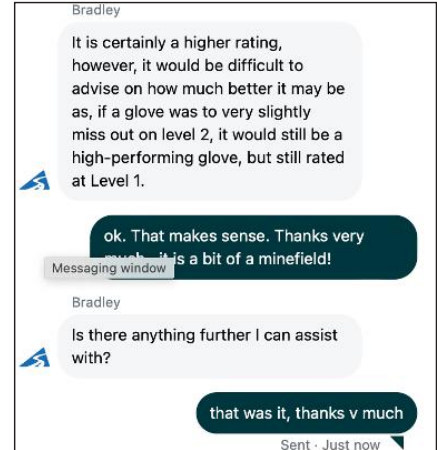
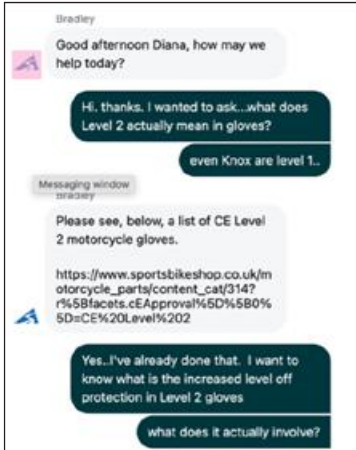
- normalisation of deviance
- god complex
- faith

We get used to demonstrating road position, so we tend to position to make a point -DEVIANCE. We probably ride most days and are constantly honing our ability to position our bikes to within 2-3 inches on the road and are constantly demonstrating road position - NORMALISATION OF DEVIANCE. But if I take a few weeks off the bike, forced by family holidays I am back to 'noobie' status and can position within a foot if I am lucky until I get back into it. Not everyone gets the opportunity to ride as much as a retired old git.

Instructing gives you a God Complex especially if you have the word of God aka the good books to hide behind and are free to interpret, "it depends". When I was instructing, I had to laugh: instructors would sometimes claim they were professionals, they had been carded by the DVSA after their 2.5 days residential assessment, they had the badge. But observing or instructing is a craft just like riding; we are all simply works in progress. Lastly, I caution myself for expecting anyone to take anything on faith; a belief or faith-based system has no place in riding. Each time we introduce a concept, positioning, SSL, LPOV, separating speed from gear phase etc. we should not expect anyone to 'have faith' and believe us but help them to discover. In this way our associates help to evolve our interpretation of the principles because we should not have blind faith in the good books either. I cannot remember all my DVSA students but can just about remember all my IAM associates who I would like to take this opportunity to thank for all they have taught me.

## Conversation Between The Editor And A Very Helpful Online Bike Equipment Store, About Gloves.

I was wanting to buy some gloves for a friend who has recently got back into biking, (I am trying to persuade him to do the ARC, of course).



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# Third Thursday Ride Report

## Les Mosco



**Do join if you can- your week will be much improved!**

January's Third Thursday ride was led by Les Mosco with Andrew Robertson sweeping. 16 gathered for the 10:00 start at Hog and Hedge, Whiddon Down. It had been freezing fog earlier, but by 10 was clearing nicely into a sunny day. We rode via Tavistock and Yelverton to battle through the Plymouth outskirts, where the drop off system worked remarkably well. Lunch was at the Venus café at Bigbury on Sea where Les as Pilot managed to be the last to arrive! (Answers on a postcard please...) Excellent views of the massive beach and Burgh Island. After lunch an interesting ride along the River Avon tidal road which floods at high tide (our



timing was good) and then to Totnes where Les made a slight detour through Morrisons car park which split the group for a short while but it was soon back together, to end at Trago 2 wheel centre for free coffee and a chat with the staff there and a look around all their bike goodies. 90 miles, about 3 hours riding, plus stops, no serious incidents and an enjoyable event for all.

### **Only BMWs...?**

Just 5 riders braved the rain for February's Third Thursday ride: Henry Taylor, Mark Robins, Tim Harlow, with Les Mosco piloting and Tony Curley sweeping. But there was a huge variety of bikes, every one different: a BMW 310 GS; a BMW 750 GS; a BMW 1250 GS; a BMW 1300 GS; and a BMW 1250 RT!! Surely, it's not just BMW riders who are brave/stupid enough to ride with a bit of rain?! And we had a great ride, starting at Bridge, out to Bickleigh, the twisties to Crediton, some sweeping roads to Whiddon Down coffee stop and then more twisties to Moretonhampstead and Bovey Tracey finish. The rain was light, mild temperatures and the roads surprisingly clean, so plenty of bends and Advanced overtaking opportunities, some good social crack and chatter, and a good ride for all. We won't be upset if some non-BMW riders join us next time!

For Sale & Wanted Our Facebook page is under-used so please get chatting on it and we might attract some new members. Search for Devon Advanced Motorcyclists and at [www.devonadvanced.com](http://www.devonadvanced.com)



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## 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](http://www.devonadvanced.com)

Date	What	Where
<b>April</b>		
Sat 5	<b>Rookie Ride</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.
Sun 12	<b>Group Ride (full members)</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.
Weds 16	<b>Rider Development Evening</b>	<b>Swan's Nest 7pm</b> NordKapp Norway bike tour. Andrew Carr presents his trip (Come early for supper and chat)
Thurs 17	<b>Group Ride Full Members</b>	See website or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sat 19	<b>Post Test Training Ride</b>	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk.
Sun 27	<b>Group Ride Full Members</b>	9.30 am for 9.30am start. (GMT starts, clocks go back)
<b>May</b>		
Sat 3	<b>Rookie Ride</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.
Sun 11	<b>Group Ride (full members)</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.
Thurs 15	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)</b>	See website or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sat 17	<b>Post Test Training Ride</b>	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@devonadvanced.com
Weds 21	<b>Rider Development Evening</b>	<b>Swan's Nest 7pm</b> Motor bikes, cars, planes, trains and traction engines Clive Yeates (Come early for supper and chat)
Sun 25	<b>Group Ride (full members)</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.



June		
Sat 1	<b>Rookie Ride</b>	<b>See website for details</b>
Sun 8	<b>Group Ride</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.
Weds 18	<b>Rider Development Evening</b>	<b>Swan's Nest 7pm</b> Slow riding training event (Come early for supper and chat)
Thurs 19	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start. or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sat 21	<b>Post Test Training Ride</b>	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk.
Sun 29	<b>Group Ride</b>	<b>See website for details</b> 9:00 am for 9.30am start.




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## Communications and Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator Members Needed

Dear Members of Devon Advanced Motorcyclists,

As Chairman of our esteemed group, I am reaching out to you today with great enthusiasm. Our community thrives on the dedication and passion of its members, and it is this same spirit that propels us forward, making Devon Advanced Motorcyclists an outstanding organisation.

We are currently seeking volunteers to join our committee in two pivotal roles: Communications and Rider Development Evening co-ordinator. These positions are integral to the smooth operation and continued success of our group's activities.

### Why Volunteer?

- **Enhance Your Skills:** Take this opportunity to develop or hone your financial management and marketing skills in a supportive environment.
- **Make a Difference:** Contribute to the strategic planning and execution of our numerous events, training sessions, and community outreach programmes.
- **Network and Connect:** Engage with like-minded individuals who share a passion for motorcycling and safety. Build relationships that extend beyond the road.
- **Give Back:** Play a crucial role in shaping the future of Devon Advanced Motorcyclists, ensuring we can continue to provide value to our members and the wider community.

## About the Roles

**Communications Lead:** The Communications Lead will handle all written communications and notifications to our members. This role involves drafting and proofreading new and events notifications, managing email campaigns, and ensuring all members are kept informed about our activities and events.

Your involvement can make a substantial impact on the success and growth of our group.

**Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator:** The Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator is responsible for organising one evening event a month. The event should be of interest to our general membership with a focus around motorcycling. The subjects can be wide and varied and can take many formats. This position has a limited budget which allows for expenses to be paid to guest presenters and speakers. It normally takes a few hours a month to organise and attend each event, so has a limited time commitment

If you are interested in any of these roles or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact our Secretary [secretary@devonadvanced.com](mailto:secretary@devonadvanced.com) or myself [chairman@devonadvanced.com](mailto:chairman@devonadvanced.com).

Together, we can continue to foster a community that is not only passionate about motorcycling but also committed to safety, education, and camaraderie.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication.

Warm regards,

**Richard Whybra**

Chairman, Devon Advanced Motorcyclists

# Mastering 4 wheels

**Nigel Bond**



Die-hard bikers look-away now. This is about cars, but if you're curious then read on. (This is a car..Ed)

Last summer I decided to have a crack at IAM Masters in the car, having made a decent job of it on a bike late in 2023.

A quick exchange of emails with the IAM revealed that the entry requirement was simply "IAM Membership" (i.e. no green badge needed). So I paid-over my money, having had zero car training since passing the Govt test at the 2nd attempt in my Mum's 120Y in 1982. I relished the challenge.

The day of the 1st observed drive quickly dawned; so off to Okehampton to meet my mentor (Den - lovely chap, chief observer with local car group, ex-Met instructor). Usual chit-chat, and then away we went. He said little but scribbled-down a few things. I managed to get an overtake in, which was safe - but not terribly grown-up. We stopped after 40 mins.

I was told that I'd driven as if on a track and getting me anywhere near 'masters' was going to be a massive amount of work. I thought I'd driven like a sedated nun! (Any pics, Nije? Ed.)

The debrief boiled down mainly to things about the use of the controls. I was not sufficiently alive to the risks of dark & powerful forces wrenching the gear lever and/or steering wheel from my inadequate grasp. I was neither smooth nor refined with my use of any control. But my positioning was excellent, and no sniff of complaint about all the solids I'd been clipping in order to gain view. Speeds, observation and anticipation were good.

The rest of the observed drives resulted in improvement each time. Den quickly rowed back from how much work I was going to be, and by the 4th I was declared fit for test; my final score indicating a distinction.

Test day came, and off we went after a snack and chat. It was going well until "the overtake". This was well anticipated, planned and beautifully executed - hitting a peak of 62mph. I recovered to the nearside - no other traffic so no indicator - perfect! At this point the examiner is looking in his door mirror, and I take that as a cue to add "no reaction from overtaken vehicle" to my commentary. But - then comes "take the next left - it's on the next brow". Sh\*\*! I can see what I assume to be the gap in the verge, but approaching upslope, I see nothing of the layout; meantime the recently overtaken vehicle is starting to close as I slow.

IPSGA says to finish the speed phase - then gears - both before any steering input. This required (would have if I'd done it!) coming to what feels like almost standstill on a dead straight NSL road (with hidden dips). 40 years of un-'advanced' driving was too powerful to allow me to do this in front of the car I've just overtaken, and the conflict between instinct and IPSGA resulted in a manoeuvre that was neither, and earned me 3 'two's in the blink of an eye. The examiner was perplexed and said so. I shrugged and muttered something about the balance between "the standard" and the real world - I don't think that helped.

The rest of the test went OK, a tad brisk round a LH'er earned me the remark "well - we got round it" - whereas I was thinking (not saying) that we would have "got round it" at twice the speed & without complaint from the tyres. No mention of Rule 126 which surely was my sin - if any.

Fast forward to the end of test de-brief - it's a Pass not a Distinction. Not unexpected. My excuse for the left turn was (and remains) that I simply couldn't overcome my aversion to looking a twit. (I realise - before anyone points it out - that this aversion otherwise serves me poorly).

The score (33) was better than I feared. He said that he could see "bike" in the way I drove, but he didn't elaborate. I learned that I could have justified the overlap at the turn-off if I'd declared that I'd planned it for the reason of extending the show of brake lights. As to looking a twit, I was told that comes with the gig.

I used a moderately powerful car with a manual gearbox. If doing it again I'd look to do it in something underpowered, i.e. where greater use of gears & revs are actually necessary. I imagine that the job is a whole lot simpler in an automatic, and a doddle in an EV with the regen set at max.

The whole experience was a lot of fun, but very different to the bike.

Why submit this to the DAM mag? Because I wondered if others share my curiosity about 'advanced' in a car. I know some of our members are also advanced drivers, but many are not - and I've heard some say that they don't bother with being 'advanced' when in the car.



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# WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Paul Haines, Daniel Snaith, Graham Ranshaw, Shane Quick,  
Claire Quick, Andy Horn, Keith Baldwin, Tom Thorpe, Sam  
Crouch, Samantha Jones.

## Congratulations to the Test Passes

Associate	Observer
John Milsom	Barrie Dennett
Pete Adams (Legacy F1rst)	Les Mosco
Tony Sussex (F1rst)	Nick Marks
Ray Helm (F1rst)	Gareth Taylor
Robert Slaughter	Mark Fouache
Al Sparks	David Strickland
Elaine Adams	Tony Curley
Andrew Coomber (F1rst)	Rodney Rayner



# The Observer Team April 2025

NO = National Observer

LO = Local Observer

TO = Trainee Observer

## **NORTH AREA (8)**

NO: Robin Watts TL  
NO: Nigel Bond  
NO: Simon Kidner  
NO: Martin Rushworth  
NO: Andy Pratt  
NO: Hector Vass  
NO: Stuart Taylor  
NO: David Strickland

## **EAST AREA (8)**

NO: Dave Cooper TL  
NO: Gareth Taylor  
NO: Ian Holten  
NO: Richard Blyth  
NO: Daniel Knight  
LO: Terry Dormer  
TO: Leanne Wilkinson  
TO: Jonathan Doney

## **SOUTH AREA (11)**

NO: Dave Page TL  
NO: Catherine McKinley  
NO: Phil Pike  
NO: Steve Westlake  
NO: Tony Curley  
NO: Graham Hirst  
NO: Barrie Dennett  
NO: Nick Marks  
NO: Andrew Robertson  
TO: Richard Thorns  
LO: Brian Lee (inactive)

## **WEST AREA (9)**

NO: John Millgate TL  
NO: Simon Jeffery  
NO: Mark Fouache  
NO: Pete Wright  
NO: Alex Thomas  
NO: Richard Wiseman  
NO: Tim O'Callaghan  
NO: Darren Evans  
TO: Andy Burden

## **CENTRAL AREA (9)**

NO: Ian Pruce TL  
NO: Dave Mudge  
NO: Rodney Rayner  
NO: Brian Strong  
NO: Dave Grant  
NO: Simon Padley  
NO: Chris Palmer  
NO: Les Mosco  
TO: Chris Kingsley

## **'FUTURE OBSERVERS'**

Sam Iskander - Totnes  
Roger Sell – Ashburton  
Jonathan Mendez - Brixham  
John Paradise – Newton Abbott  
Tim Pattermore – Barnstaple  
Philip Ware – Loc TBC  
Sandie Puttick – Barnstaple  
Andy Yarwood – moving into area 2025/6  
Greg Evans – moving into area 2025/6



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# KEEPING UP WITH YOUR RIDING AMBITIONS

## What can Devon Advanced Motorcyclists do for you?

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Devon Advanced Motorcyclists is THE leading provider of IAM Roadsmart's Advanced Rider Course in the whole of Devon!

We are here to make competent and confident motorcyclists.

We have a team of 35 nationally qualified Observers who can help you become the best motorcycle rider you can be. And help you stay that way.

If you have no ambition for this, stop reading here.

### The Advanced Rider Course

We are affiliated with the national road safety charity IAM Roadsmart. Our role is to provide on-road coaching to enable IAM Roadsmart members achieve a nationally recognised advanced riding standard.

Advanced riding is the ability to maintain focus on the road and traffic environment and to take timely action to deal with it safely, smoothly, and systematically. It's a frame of mind.

Our members come from all walks of life and all ages. Our common goal to be the best riders we can be. The only prerequisite is that you should have a full (A or A2) motorcycle licence.

To apply for the **Advanced Rider Course** visit <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/advanced-rider>.



The course includes the Advanced Rider Course manual, one-one on-road riding sessions with your allocated Observer, the price of the advanced riding test, and one year membership of both IAMRoadsmart and Devon Advanced Motorcyclists.

Not sure? We offer a free, no-obligation, **Taster Ride where** so we can answer all your questions. To apply for one of these free Taster Rides visit [www.advancedmotorcyclists.com](http://www.advancedmotorcyclists.com) or contact Mark Fouache on [tasterrides@devonadvanced.com](mailto:tasterrides@devonadvanced.com)

## Social Rides

At any one time, we have up to a hundred people like you preparing for their advanced riding test.



FREE

We encourage new members to attend our regular social rides aimed at those new to advanced riding. We call these Rookie Rides, and they take place on **the first Saturday of each month**. You can use the opportunity to compare your advanced riding experiences with other new members.

Once you have passed your advanced riding test, you will be eligible to join our other Group Rides. These tend to be longer, all day, rides, and normally on more challenging roads than the Rookie Rides. You'll be riding in the company of experienced advanced riders and come to enjoy the best riding roads and destinations the county has to offer. Put these regular dates for Group Rides in your diary now: **the second Sunday of every month, the fourth Sunday of every month, and the third Thursday of every month**.

Devon Advanced Motorcyclists also organise a number weekend or longer trips throughout the year to UK and European destinations.

Detailed arrangements about forthcoming Rookie Rides and Group Rides are emailed to members on a regular basis. Contact our Rookie Rides co-ordinator [dnmudge@blueyonder.com](mailto:dnmudge@blueyonder.com) or our Group Rides co-ordinator [groupridescoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:groupridescoordinator@gmail.com) for more information.



FREE  
FOR  
MEMBERS

## The End of the Beginning

For some new members of, passing their advanced riding test and joining in with the regular social rides is sufficient for them to keep their advanced riding skills honed.

For many more that is just the beginning.

We continually encourage all our members to take opportunities to keep their advanced riding skills up to scratch. Newly acquired skills can (and do) fade remarkably quickly.

IAM Roadsmart offer a **Fellowship** membership status: in return for an additional annual subscription, Fellow members are automatically offered a re-test of their advanced riding skills every three years. What better way to keep you on your toes?

Information about **Fellowship** membership can be found at [www.iamroadsmart.com/membership](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/membership).

£18  
PER  
YEAR

Alternatively, to take your riding skills up another level, you might consider the **Masters** programme. This provides mentoring support and guidance that will help you attain the highest standard of civilian riding in the country. The coaching encourages the use of professional riding techniques used by police and other emergency services riders.

£299

Information about the **Masters** qualification can be found at [www.iamroadsmart.com/masters](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/masters).

If something less formal is your thing, we run a variety of events offering ongoing encouragement of advanced riding.

On the third Saturday of each month, we run **Post-Test Training Rides**. These offer you the opportunity to ride with experienced observers who will offer suggestions for improving and refining your ride. No fee. No obligation. No reason not to!

FREE  
FOR  
MEMBERS

Contact [posttesttrainingrides@devonadvanced.com](mailto:posttesttrainingrides@devonadvanced.com) to book your place on a Post-Test Training Ride.

**Personal Training Ride:** Your DAM membership means you are eligible for bespoke one-one coaching from one of our Observers. Just fill up your Observer's tank and away you go. Any time, any place, anywhere.

To arrange your **Personal Training Ride**, contact [chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com](mailto:chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com).

## Be a Giver

The ultimate way you can hone your advanced riding skills is by passing your knowledge along by joining the club's team of Observers. Observers are not only excellent advanced riders, but also possess the personal qualities to coach and encourage others to ride to the best of their ability. You will receive training to a nationally recognised standard overseen by the Institute for the Motor Industry.

If you think you have what it takes to become an Observer, get in touch with Simon Jeffery, your [chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com](mailto:chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com)



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## Committee & Club Officers

<p><b>Chairman: Social Media;</b> Richard Whybra E: chairman@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p><b>Group Secretary:</b> Catherine McKinley E: secretary@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p><b>Chief Observer:</b> Simon Jeffery E: chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p><b>Treasurer:</b> Brian Lee E: treasurer@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p><b>Marketing Officer/Events Coordinator:</b> Nathaniel Goss E: marketing@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p><b>Group Rides Co-ordinator:</b> Rodney Rayner E: grouprides@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p><b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Diana Percy E: magazine@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p><b>Webmaster:</b> Nick Tucker E: webmaster@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p><b>Rookie Rides Co-ordinator:</b> Dave Mudge E: rookierides@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p><b>Membership:</b> Barrie Dennett E: membership@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p><b>Observed Rides Co-ordinator:</b> Ian Pruce E: observedrides@outlook.com</p>		<p><b>Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator:</b> Tony Curly E: riderdevelopment@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>If you are a new associate member please contact Ian as early as possible, preferably by email, even if you don't intend to start your <i>Advanced Rider Course</i> immediately.</p>	<p><b>Other Committee Members:</b> Steve Hyde Brian Churchward Jill Payne Les Mosco</p>	<p><b>Trustees</b> Terry Dormer, Catherine McKinley, Richard Whybra Philip Pike, David Mudge Brian Lee.</p>	

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