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MOTORCYCLISTS**

NEWSLETTER 64

Jan - Mar 2021



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Chairman's Chatter



The nights have well and truly drawn in, there is now a drop in morning temperatures to single figures and Christmas will likely be done and dusted before you have chance to read these words. January can be a bit of a dreary month, so with Devon's tier 2 status allowing Observed rides to restart in December I have a positive view that they will continue into the New Year as well.

During the lockdown you may have had a limited opportunity of getting onto the bike, so why not make a resolution and check that your skills are still up to advanced standards. You can arrange an improver session by contacting the Chief Observer avdamcso@gmail.com (£10 donation to cover Observer fuel). Or commit to the IAM Fellow membership (current full IAM members); it will offer you enhanced recognition and insurance benefits in return for your commitment to keep your advanced skills up to date by retesting every three years. Details at the IAM website www.iamroadsmart.com/fellow.

You can also take your skills to higher levels through the Masters IMI qualified Observer courses as well, just one of the benefits of being a member of both DAM and the IAM (not forgetting the circuit based skills days, accessory deals from Bike Stop and IAM magazine). Though without a current IAM membership regrettably you would not be able to take part on DAM group rides, so do not forget to renew your IAM membership at www.iamroadsmart.com/renewals

Also, in January there will be the Chairman's Mince Pie run, somewhat delayed (there may be some mince pies left in January) and will no doubt be re-named more appropriately closer to the time. Not forgetting the social evening will be the Chairman's Quiz Night – held on Zoom. I can't promise the production values of "The Chase" or "Taskmaster", but there will be prizes. Details of both events will be emailed out over the festive season, check your inbox!

As Chairman I would like to thank all those who volunteer their time as Observers, pilot group and rookie rides, help with training events and committee officers who beaver away behind the scenes. Your steadfast commitment, wisdom, enthusiasm, and good humour has ensured that DAM has been able during a particularly strange year to continue delivering road safety training in Devon. Once again, thank you and Merry Christmas and an adventurous 2021!

Nathaniel



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My thanks to all who have set some time aside and contributed to this edition of the magazine. I couldn't get it together without you. The lack of ride outs and longer trips had caused me a slight panic as to the content but I think there are some interesting articles to read.

Motorway riding always gives me the collywobbles and I will avoid them whenever possible on the bike. A friend's daughter just managed to scramble out of her broken down car on the hard shoulder, then a lorry ploughed into it. She was lucky. I do shudder at the thought of "smart motorways". Read Ian's article. It has some pertinent information for us all.

This time of year, like a lot of you, I am usually planning next year's trips. Ferries, hotels, places to visit and most importantly the wiggly routes to get to those places. Travel programmes on TV, magazines and YouTube put ideas in my head for all sorts of trips, most of which are just pie in the sky. We love to watch the Tour de France, Giro d'Italia and the Vuelta de Espana, all the roads and scenery, great for motorcycling. Nearer to home Scotland, Wales and Yorkshire are also favoured places to go. I'm still dreaming but even next year is looking dodgy to travel at the moment. Whatever we do, even if it is somewhere local, we are hopeful to get away somewhere.

On this subject I was reading that we will need international driving licences again when travelling in the EU. Not a simple one licence covers all but two licences, one covering the EU, Switzerland and Norway and another one covering Ireland, Spain, Malta, Cyprus and Iceland. Be warned if like us you have a trip in the pipeline to the Pyrenees, jumping borders from France to Spain, theoretically two licences will be needed. When taking out holiday insurance make sure health is well covered as our EHIC cards will no longer be valid. I am sure the insurance companies are well organised and way ahead of us, but ask questions as it is better to be over insured than under insured. My accident in France nearly four years ago, would have cost many thousands of pounds if I hadn't been well insured.

Lets look forward to spring and summer next year and hope it brings many happy miles on two wheels. Wherever we go.

Jill

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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Gerard O'Hanlon, Charlie Wilkes, Mark Robinson, Nigel Belcher,
Mark Evans, Brian Fyfe and Mano Cheema.

And all sorts of PASSES, congratulations to



Associate

Richard Agnew

Lin Wilby

Anne Sheridan

Diana Percy

Alan Ebbage

David Greensmith

Jeremy Knight

Stephanie Ebbans

Hiu Lam

Paul Foster

Steve Brookes

Russell George

Nick Whittaker

- Observer

Mark Fouache

Gary Crook & Dave Cooper

Martin Rushworth

Dave Cooper

Robin Watts

Brian Strong

Philip Pike

Martin Rushworth

David Page

Adam Gaisford

Martin Rushworth

John Millgate

Ian Pruce

Rookie rides; See the new Web Site as extra rides are being organised, open to Associates only as we are still running with reduced numbers.

Skills Days; Will be resumed from next spring. Always popular, for the new members these days consist of some theory, POWDERS and *I'm Safe check*, slow riding and on road ride.

Group Ride Pilots are always needed, contact Rodney Rayner.

groupridescoordinator@outlook.com

Front cover picture, was taken in Helmsley, Yorkshire whilst on us 'olidays a few years ago. Seems like the owner of this Harley didn't care, where he parked!

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

ALWAYS check the *website* www.devonadvanced.com or event co-ordinators for up-to-date information, especially with the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

Date	What	Where
December		
Sat 19	Saturday Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sun 27	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
January		
Sat 2	Rookie Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sun 10	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sat 16	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Weds 20	Rider Development Evening	7:00pm Swan's Nest Inn, Exminster or Zoom.
Sun 24	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
February		
Sat 6	Rookie Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sun 14	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sat 20	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Weds 24	Rider Development Evening	7:00pm Swan's Nest Inn, Exminster or Zoom.
Sun 28	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
March		
Sat 6	Rookie Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sun 14	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.
Sat 20	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Wed 17	Rider Development Evening	7:00pm Swan's Nest Inn, Exminster or Zoom.
Sun 28	Group Ride	9:30am for 10:00am start.

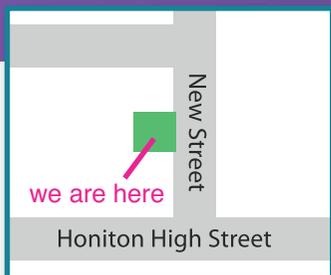
Due to the effects of COVID-19, the Calendar of Events is still disrupted at time of print.

Please see the Website for up to date information.

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GOALS FOR DRIVER EDUCATION

Terry Dormer

Yuletide beckons!

That time when everyone is conditioned by commercial pressures to 'Enjoy Themselves'. We all have various experiences of the social expectations of the period causing a build up of many unspoken pressures.

Got to go to the 'Xmas do' and have that extra drink! - Inebriation.

Got to work extra time in order to be able to afford Xmas - Tiredness.

This year, there are a huge number of extra considerations for a great many of us. The effects of Covid and the myriad of attempts to 'contain' it have led to a host of redundancies, furloughing and for really quite a lot of people, great distress and even personal loss. The very real and human possibility of a sudden release from 'Lockdown' or 'Self Isolation', or even the information that a loved one has proved clear of infection may well be enough to let the hair down a bit!

As we prepare for our festivities and cope with everyone else trying to do just the same, I would urge folk to consider the impact of these unseen pressures on human decisions. Those same decisions we each make every time we take to the roads on our two wheels. Yes, we have IAMSAFE for ourselves, but how many times do we consider the impact of pressures and constraints on other road users, who may well make rash decisions and put us in danger. Remember that we are in the "Vulnerable Road User" category, so we would do very well indeed to take extra care and to look at things in a slightly different way.

"The driver of THAT car is a right pillock!"

Ask yourself why they may have felt the need to consider the action?

What aspect/s of their lives are creating a 'need' to potentially add to the hazards already existent on our roads. If we have already primed ourselves with the consideration of 'possibilities', we may well have forearmed ourselves and forearmed is forewarned. Consider IPSGA, our system of motorcycle control and in particular the Information component. We gather and sift information constantly to permit us to develop and adapt a plan. Isn't a little deeper thought, prior to us even getting on the bike of huge value? Refer to "The Goals For Driver Education" which appears twice in 'Roadcraft' and note the 'Influencing Factors' that can impact on our safety and that of others if we allow it.

INCIDENT PIT

We are all now finding that we are significantly colder and have to dress more appropriately to that wonderful aspect of British motoring called Rain.

Avoiding mention of the 'textile to leather' debate, or 'removable membranes as opposed to laminated', what I would like to share with you are parallels to a very old teaching in Scuba Diving.

We used to call it the "Incident Pit", which was a theoretical inverted cone, or trumpet like flute. The philosophy is that as we engage in our activity, we accept a level of hazard to ourselves as a matter of course. In diving it was existing underwater, in a medium that is quite unbreathable - no surprise there!

With motorcycling, we, as has been said, are vulnerable road users and we accept that there is a certain amount of inherent risk, just by placing ourselves on the UK road system. As we engage in our given activity, we try to retain a position of travel which is effectively as close to the outside of the flute rim. This is where it is most flat and less slippery and we try to avoid things that could cause us to venture down the flute side walls where it becomes desperately difficult to climb out. Spare a thought then, that wet hands become cold very quickly and this already puts us onto those slippery flute side walls. The resulting loss of dexterity to fingers and ability to respond in the event of something untoward can mean the difference between avoidance and frustration. The same might be said about cold feet, where the use of those comfortable and easy to slip on summer boots, becomes extremely narrow minded as circulation and response suffers again.

'Nip it in the Bud', 'Capture it Early' - prevent the descent into the Incident Pit.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTION

Pressures of the season are just one example, but are particularly pertinent now and in the lead up to Christmas. We hear every year of the effects of alcohol and slightly less of the misuse of drugs. When we consider IAMSAFE for ourselves and in particular the final "E" we think immediately of:-

Am I angry, depressed or stressed? Could this lead me to take risks?

I would very much like to share an experience of my own with everyone from over 40 years ago! Yes, I really am that old!

Twas a lovely summer evening in the countryside of Essex and I had taken my girlfriend by 750 Yamaha to a delightful country pub.

We ate a meal and we had a real ale. In fact, over the course of the evening I bought two rounds, but having had the best of the taste from that first pint, I passed the two thirds of what was left in my second glass to my girlfriend who actually left a good bit herself. The evening had gone superbly and we were getting along absolutely wonderfully. It was perfect. We left the pub and drove the country lanes back towards her parents' home. At a 'T' junction where I had to come to a stop, she leant forward and told me that she was feeling cold. I replied "Ok, I'll get us home a little quicker"! It was all far too good of course.

On a section of concreted road, with no-one else around, I lost the bike on the crown of the bend. I could tell tales of replaced tyres and road menders ridges etc, etc. The root cause for me was that I had let my guard down and I had allowed myself to be buoyed up by elation, **or at the very least by heightened spirit.**

As I have reflected on this happening over the years, I have always used a simple analogy in my teachings and passing on of information:-

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTION

What does that mean for you?

DOES SIZE MATTER?

John Graham

Small is Beautiful. BUT Motorcyclists are carefully steered by Manufacturers, Dealers, Bike Magazines, and indeed, themselves, towards Bigger, Heavier, Taller and more Powerful machines Why is this? Is it aspirational? Certainly a bigger more powerful bike conveys status :- suggesting a more accomplished, competent and experienced rider perhaps. Even the motorcycle licensing hierarchy leans in that direction – age and experience are required before the move can be made from 125cc machines through sub 47HP, to Bikes with unlimited engine size and power. Not unreasonably.

Instinctively perhaps you may feel, when out on the road, that the rider ahead, on a small machine, is less accomplished as a rider simply because of the size of the machine. Or is it for safety reasons? Safety is often quoted as a factor in favour of powerful bikes – the power to overtake slower traffic in minimal time - thereby reducing the time spent in an exposed position. But, of course, overtaking is for the purpose of 'making progress,' not for safety reasons. Or is it to feed the need for speed, embedded, I suggest, in the breast of all

motorcyclists? 205HP powering a road legal machine weighing 200Kgs and capable of 190mph+ is for what purpose and to meet what requirement on UK roads? OR is it the profit motive cherished by manufacturers of all disciplines? More profit to be made from a bike retailing at £20,000 than £6000, and a bigger margin for the dealers?

OR is it because returning bikers, of a certain age, are seduced by biking memories from their youth, and the pretty pictures in MSL?

Is it not the case that bikes have evolved in much the same way as Computers and Smartphones. The technology motorcycles now embody - many of the features hidden in the dash Menu or multi buttons on the bars, remain largely undiscovered and unloved - has now reached the point where the rider is becoming almost a passenger as ASC, cornering ABS, quick shifters, Honda DCT, Cruise Control, and Power Modes take control and leave the rider wondering what happened.



Unlike computers and smartphones which have got smaller, Bikes have got BIGGER.

So, where is all this going I hear you cry?

Small is Beautiful. My Garage contains some machines as described above, all very competent BUT it also holds a new; Small, 313cc; Less Powerful - 34BHP; Lightweight - 165Kgs; Economical – 80mpg; 200 mile range; Less Complex – ABS only; but is absurd fun to ride and will cruise on the motorway at an illegal 85mph. Beautifully built, compliant, competent and all at a cost of sub £5000.

Consider then that perhaps we are in danger of losing what the nature of motorcycling is all about. Freedom from the interventions of automation, free to experience the elemental joy of having fun on two wheels; just you, the machine and the elements, - whilst remaining in charge of what happens next and all at a cost we can perhaps afford.

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Living in Devon and adjacent counties means there is only one motorway to consider really. The M5. Luckily, for the moment, it is a conventional motorway with a hard shoulder, apart from the occasional absence due to bridges. As a rider I tend to avoid the M5 but there are times when I like to use it as the quicker way home. Most of us in DAM also drive cars and the M5 helps us get to any distant destination quicker. So, maybe it's worth refreshing ourselves on some of the safety aspects to consider in the event of a vehicle failure.

If at all possible, leave the motorway or otherwise move onto the hard shoulder and stop, preferably by an Emergency telephone. Leave the vehicle, preferably via the nearside and get behind the safety barrier before calling for help. The Highway Code covers this with rules 270-278. (I know that you know this, but your passengers may not.) Take particular note of HC rule 276, about re-joining the motorway.

Now, when we reach Bristol, we encounter Controlled Motorway (CM) or All Lane Running (ALR).

1. The Controlled Motorways (CM) *are smart* because they electronically adjust the running speed to the density of traffic. As the density increases the control speed reduces so that there is not that sudden transition from full speed to full stop. This is a huge safety improvement, and the hard shoulder is still there for emergencies
2. All Lane Running (ALR) *can be added to a CM* to increase the capacity by using the hard shoulder as an additional running lane. Combining CMs and ALRs gives us the wrongly (?) named Smart Motorway.

A vehicle breaking down on ALR motorways will stop in lane 1, where other vehicles may travel at 70mph. **Day and night and in all weathers.** As a biker it may be possible to pull up beside a barrier and make a quick exit over the barrier. If in a car, you'll need at least a door width beside the barrier. Leaving your vehicle by the off-side, means exiting into lane 2. Therefore, every effort should be made to reach the next Emergency Refuge Area, which are proposed to be every $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. Currently every 2.5 miles. Concentration and good observation should be employed to note when you pass each one so that you have a plan, should it be needed. If you are not in a Refuge area you will have to wait until they have contacted the control centre to have the lane marked (with a red X. HC rule 269) and Traffic Officers have attended to make the area as safe as possible. If you reach a Refuge area your breakdown service will attend and help you as usual.

HC rule 276 advises building up speed on the hard shoulder and look for a gap when re-joining. The Emergency Refuge Area provides a much shorter opportunity to build up speed, so extra vigilance is needed. The Government has just authorised a further 130 miles of motorway to become Smart Motorway. So, remember that our observations ahead must include looking for stationary vehicles as far ahead as possible. And that goes for rear observations too because we know that very few road users will be looking for you.

WISHING ALL OUR MEMBERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND MUCH MORE RIDING IN THE NEW YEAR!



WORD FIND

O	K	E
T	R	M
O	I	B

Find as many words as you can. All words must contain the central letter in the grid. At least one nine letter word.

25 words – good.

50 words – excellent

60+ words - brilliant

PUZZLE

Whilst out on a ride I came upon an open road. I could not proceed safely because of hazards. After a couple of minutes, a very nice person removed the hazards and closed the road. I was able to proceed safely. Where was I?

Rebecca Ashton from the IAM HQ, kindly hosted a zoom talk for us last month. The main subject was "Are advanced motorcyclists safer than non advanced and if so why?" Rebecca was very engaging and those of us who attended had a good evening. All members can join in. When we have another talk do join us they are most instructive.

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THE MOTORCYCLING HISTORY OF A MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Barrie Dennett

I am one of 42 DAM members who could have passed a motorcycle riding test without a helmet.

In fact, in 1962 on an icy January day I rode my dad's Raleigh Roma motor scooter 20 miles, without a helmet, to the testing centre in Southport. Wearing thick gloves, two balaclavas, a woolly hat, a scarf, goggles, lots of woollies and a leather jacket, I arrived frozen and late. Distressingly the examiner took me straight out on the road. In those days examiners didn't follow you on a bike, they just gave instructions to follow a figure of 8 around the local streets. "I will be watching you at various points" he said "and sometime during the test, I will step out in front of you with my hand held up, you must stop as quickly and safely as you can". It was all going well until that point; I didn't see him, my goggles were icing up, my fingers were frozen. I slammed the brakes on and did a very gentle back wheel skid with a foot down, swinging the scooter neatly into the examiner's legs. Fortunately, no injuries but also no pass. 6 months later, wearing a helmet, I passed.

A year or so later I managed to pass my car driving test and found that the car was far more successful and useful for attracting the ladies than a scooter.

It was in 1973 that motorcyclists were required, by law, to wear helmets and that was the year I got married. Money was very tight we had overstretched our finances to buy a house in Ham near Richmond. I had a job in the West End of London, and I couldn't afford the train fare or even lunches. The Bank of Mum and Dad lent me money to buy a Yamaha YB100 and for 5 years, rain, hail and snow, I commuted to Marylebone High Street. I became expert at dodging in and out of London traffic and apart from a few spills on ice and warming fingers, often in, rather than around a mug of tea, I learnt how to ride a bike.



A few promotions later and Company car meant it was time to sell the bike. I have to say I missed it, but family responsibilities and a demanding job left little time for fun. I was fifty when bikes came back into my life. On the condition that I did some motorbike re-training, my lovely wife bought me a Suzuki Bandit 600 for my 50 birthday. So I signed up for a 3-day returning riders course. On reflection, compared with ARC training, it was pretty low level, but there were two notable exceptions.

The first, I was miked up to the instructor who

kept reminding me to use my mirrors. At one point, with him riding behind me, the voice in my ear said "where am I?" I looked in both mirrors and couldn't see him. Then he tapped me on the shoulder!! Not something I, or I suspect any of our Observers or the IAM would ever recommend as a training aid for blind spot life savers but it definitely made the point.

My trainer was a 6-foot rugby player, who was probably 3 or 4 stone heavier than me. He apologised for having to subject me to the next part of the training which was to carry him as a pillion. He explained he was going to give me experience of carrying a bad pillion passenger by leaning the wrong way on corners. He reassured me that none of his students had crashed during the exercise and said once the bike became unstable, I was to leave it to him to correct. It was a very scary exercise but taught me a lot about how to coach inexperienced pillion passengers.

For me carrying a pillion is one of the joys of biking, especially when miked on a long ride. I sometimes think it would be of value to pay a little more attention in our advanced training, to bike handling with pillions passenger on board.

The Bandit opened a whole new biking world for me. I became a bike touring addict with one or two major tours a year and thousands of miles. With a group of friends, I toured all over France and into Switzerland, Germany's Black Forest Highway (Route 500), the Pyrenees and many trips around Wales and the Cotswolds.



My touring buddies all had big Beemers and Yamahas and my Bandit, with its comparatively limited range, luggage and "umph" was the baby of the group; it was time to step up a little. I went for a stylish R1200RS.

I loved it, it went like a rocket and even fully loaded with luggage and pillion it was a dream to ride. I took it to the Isle of Man one year and was lucky enough to be there when the roads were empty, and bikers could ride the circuit. The TT course is 37 miles through small towns and villages and over a long mountain road. I raced around and completed a lap in what I thought was an impressive 39 minutes. Average speed just over 56mph. The lap record is 17 minutes with an average speed of 135 mph. For those interested check out this video of a rider on the circuit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4eL2fmE4UI>

Incidentally, Advanced Riders and Observers may be able to pick up a few rider faults in the video.

I guess it was this trip and advancing age which helped me realise I was getting past speed thrills and still, with touring very much in mind, I bought the BMW classic tourer R1200RT. I took it around the spectacular coast of Ireland twice including the Ring of Kerry and the very special Derry to Belfast route along the



beautiful Antrim Coast, it's been to France a couple of times, to Luxembourg and over to Jersey. The RT is a comfortable all mod cons vehicle, suitable for a gentleman of my age and status, but my, it is a problem to pick up if it's dropped.

My story comes up to date with a move from Surrey last year. There I passed my Advanced Riding Test with Wey Valley Advanced Motorcyclist. I joined DAM

shortly after we moved to Shaldon and it wasn't long before somehow, I got volunteered to be the DAM's Membership Secretary. As a newbie I am really impressed with the club and think the people are great, I love the group rides and going right back to 1973, when I spent my honeymoon in Porlock, I have rediscovered some of the most beautiful riding roads in the UK.

Aren't we lucky?

If you have read this far it will be clear that I am one of the older members of our biking community, but our eldest member has 10 years on me. One of the reasons DAM exists is to bring safer biking to our County and with the average age of DAM members being around 58, we are clearly not making enough noise to attract younger two wheeled riders. At a recent committee meeting we agreed an incentive to attract riders under 30 to the club, a scheme is in place to part finance the ARC course for these younger riders. The first 10 riders under 30 to register with DAM and take the Advanced Riding Certificate test can claim £100 from DAM. I would like to encourage all members to spread this news.

A couple of other membership plugs. All our Members, and Associates in particular, are reminded that it is a condition of membership that we pay the annual subs of both IAM and DAM. The ARC course for Associate training includes one year's membership of DAM, but, for the second year and subsequent years, Associates need to pay subscriptions to both DAM and IAM.

The second point is that we have launched a new web site, which I hope you are enjoying. As part of this initiative we are also changing our back-office membership and administrations systems. To make sure we are current and up to date we need all our Members and Associates to log in on the new system and input their basic details. It's an easy process, go to the new web site www.devonadvanced.com, ask to register and our excellent webmaster will respond and give you access.

In these strange times ride safe and enjoy our beautiful and empty roads when you can.



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DAM TRIP TO THE SPANISH PYRENEES, MAY 2021

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

Out and back via Plymouth/Santander

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

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

All information is on the tour Facebook page:

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

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

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

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

Rodney Rayner

Tour Organiser

Next year we are looking to put on a few more social events, if we can, and would like hear from you with any suggestions for events.

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REFLECTIONS OF AN AGEING MOTORCYCLIST

I have just bought a new motorcycle. Which got me to thinking – whatever happened?

My very first BIG Bike was a Douglas Dragonfly (some people might say that BMW stole their designs from the Douglas Motorcycle Company).

For those who don't remember, which is probably most people, the Dragonfly was a horizontally opposed flat twin of 350cc, 17BHP, fuelled through an Amal single carburettor, coil ignition, distributor with contact breaker points, Earles front forks, swinging arm, twin hydraulic shocks, drum brakes and spoked wheels and with a weight of 166Kg. Kick start of course. It could manage 75mph and 65 mpg. This was state of the art.

It was a wonderful machine to ride but suffered two shortcomings. In very cold weather it struggled, because of a single carburettor feeding two cylinders,



with carburettor icing. After 20 minutes everything stopped until heat from the cylinders melted the ice and then off you would go again. The second challenge was tyres. Not as we know them today – more akin to bakelite – touch a white line in the damp and you were off.

What strikes me though is the changes wrought in 60 years. Then, most people rode, or had ridden, a motorcycle. The machines were relatively simple and the majority of owners were able to rectify faults or to service them. They were light, approachable, friendly, and non-aggressive. They were an essential part of everyday life. They were affordable in a way that the car was not.

So what has changed? Cars have become cheaper whilst motorcycles have not!

And who remembers advance/retard controls, choke control, kick start, tubed tyres, spoked wheels, easy seat height, fuel float tickler, blocked pilot jets? Enter fuel injection, ECUs, tubeless tyres, cast wheels, BIG engine capacity, huge BHP, portly weight and tall seat height.

And the riders? Gone is Everyman. Now it is the turn of men and women of a certain age, with perhaps disposable income, chasing nostalgia, adventure, or the end of the rainbow?

Motorcyclists now represent less than 1% of road users but 19% of RTA fatalities. Why is this, and is it likely to change? Aside from the obvious vulnerability of the motorcyclist, I would contend that a large contributory factor is that the great majority of road users have never ridden a motorcycle, do not have an inbuilt awareness of motorcycles, nor any concept of the dynamics of motorcycle control.

BUT, are times about to change though? Are we heading for a new normal where increasing numbers are taking to two wheels for economic, social, health and structural reasons? If it is to be so then it will be a new Millennium in which organisations like ours will be incredibly important to help in educating and protecting a new motoring population because it will not happen on its own.

Oh yes... My NEW motorcycle is a Single cylinder, 313cc, OHV, fuel injected, ECU controlled, 34BHP, 70mpg, 166KG, with a top speed of 105mph. AND a low seat height to fit everyman.

John Graham

PERHAPS SANTA WILL BRING ME A TRICKLE CHARGER

The second lockdown was over, Tier 2 allowed some freedom and a ride to Charmouth was planned... Just a short play in the winter sun. It felt exciting layering up and getting Mitzy out again - packing up some goodies for a picnic lunch and a parcel of homemade yummys to deliver to an elderly cousin. So excited was I that I forgot my specs... But I wasn't alone - Betty did the same and forgot her keys. We had arranged to meet in Newton Poppleford after Betty had had a visit from a very lovely AA man... her battery had decided to misbehave and needed some tlc. Mitzy was a little reluctant to start but did and I was so full of confidence in her that I plugged in my vest and turned the grips on (you can see where this is going can't you). The thought did cross my mind that this was my first ride without CW support - although I have recovery CW have been there for me for many years but last week they announced their closure and were gone the following day - but I told myself to grab my big girl pants and get on with it - we can do challenges.

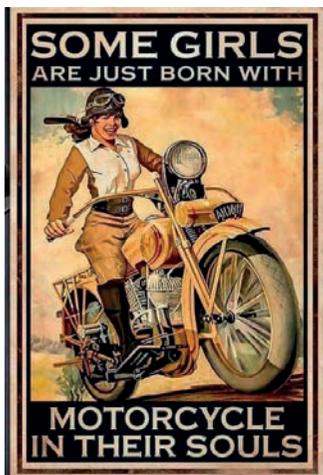


Having greeted Betty we made our plans... and then Mitzy refused to start. After the usual wishing and pleading we decided to give her a shove - now we are girls the wrong side of 60 and trussed up like seasonal turkeys in our many layers of thermals and Gore-Tex which made the Michelin Man look like Twiggy - this must have been a sight to behold as we pushed my bike around and paddled and pushed it down the slope (Betty didn't realise she'd signed up to an exercise class). Even in second with Mitzy back on compression there



was just nothing - oh rude word and whilst I was thinking up a Plan B I pushed the button and away she went - yippee. Next challenge was fuel but Seaton filling station is at the top of a hill and there are also some nice fit young men in there so no worries. I decided not to use my heated grips or my heated jacket to give the battery a better chance of recharging... it was a tropical 3 degrees after all.

Fuel and onwards - the coastal road was lovely and the sun sparkled on the water. The view at Lyme Regis is always spectacular. Arriving in Charmouth to pass the parcel to Pat... except Pat was having her lunch and wasn't answering her door - hey ho! Routine is everything apparently. We left our bikes facing downhill and sat on a picnic table by the sea and dunked our biscotti in



Betty's coffee. On our return a v nice man from Wessex Water was eyeing up the bikes - we warned him we might need a push but instead of running away he sauntered over and chatted - he had a 1250 GS and was shortly taking his IAM test with a local well known examiner - we wished him luck. His muscles weren't needed as both bikes fired up perfectly (they do when help is at hand don't they) and we enjoyed a relaxed ride home

No big adventures allowed at the mo but it's good to get out and enjoy the freedoms and friendships that biking brings.

Helen Beer

ADVANCED RIDER COURSE

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

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

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

How to enrol on the Advanced Rider Course

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

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

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



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

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

Once you pass your test

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

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

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

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

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

coaching and development in a group environment.

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

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

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

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

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

Adrian Veale
Chief Observer, Devon Advanced Motorcycles



Committee and Club Officers 2020

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<p>Observed Rides Co-ordinator: Trevor Olding M: 07738 580 992 E: trevorolding@blueyonder.co.uk</p>		<p>Other Committee Members: Steve Hyde Brian Churchward</p>	
<p>If you are a new associate member please contact Trevor as early as possible, preferably by email, even if you don't intend to start your <i>Advanced Rider Course</i> immediately.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Trustees</u> David Parnell. Martin Rushworth. Ted Gameson. Dave Cooper.</p>		

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