



**DEVON
ADVANCED
MOTORCYCLISTS**

NEWSLETTER 75

Oct - Dec 2023



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Chairman's Chatter

Hi Everyone,

Well, as summer is drawing to a close, hopefully everyone has got some amazing riding adventures in. I was lucky enough to accompany some of our members up to the ABR festival in June. For me it was the first time I have been, in fact the first time I had been to any motorcycle festival; I would thoroughly recommend giving it a try. Don't be put off by the title "Adventure Bike Rider" it wasn't just about big adventure bikes, this is a celebration of all motorbike with all types of bikes to play with, from sports to electric and all types of riders. The festival itself is held over 3 days in the stunning grounds of Ragley Hall, Warwickshire and is said to be the largest motorcycle festival in Europe.



It's a fantastic opportunity to try out some of the latest bikes and technology available, but if you are into off road riding a great chance to enhance your skills with 40km of trails and some great opportunities to get a taster of what off roading is like and some of the training available.

Having never really done any offroad riding myself it certainly was an experience I will look forward to repeating. Taking an almost new BMW 1250GSA through a river has to go down as one of my highlights of the weekend together with riding the African Twin on the grass trails (might not repeat that one, but that's another story) to spending time in great company, with great music. Everyone had a fantastic time and you never know maybe next year I hope will see you there as some members I know have already booked to go again.

As we head into the time of year of darker nights and extra layers when we are out riding, your team here is already getting busy planning next year's events and shows, and after this year's successful events, we have many new members to welcome into our group.

A special mention also goes out to the whole team that organized the highly successful Skills Day at WestPoint in the summer, this is DAM at its finest, well done! We are always looking for more volunteers to help so if you can spare a few hours to assist at one of our shows or have some skills that you feel can help, then please get in touch with one of the committee or have a look at the ads from Tim later in the magazine.

Until next time, ride safe,
Richard

EDITORIAL

Diana Percy

In aiming for some coherence I try to give the magazine a rough theme: this quarter it is 'Training'. Our cover photo of a Rookie Ride, taken by Helen Beer, clearly demonstrates DAM's commitment to training. The Michael Whitfield skills day really was terrific, I wish I could fit more of the pics into the mag..



The other day, our Chief Observer asked me to pilot part of a group ride so I thought I should check the route first. I planned it all on MyRouteApp (highly recommended) and off I went. There was one section that went from Crediton to Cheriton Bishop. OMG I do apologise to the CO (he wasn't with me at the time) for the cursing in my helmet as I stopped and yelled into the void 'I don't want to be here' and other significantly less polite turns of phrase. It was a tiny road, grass in the middle, potholes, gravel, a 70 degree turn uphill on gravel with potholes and included a ford.... When I finally emerged into civilization, I messaged our leader. I think he realised my state of mind and asked where I had been. Ooops... that wasn't the route! The real route was much easier. When I got home I removed a stick from my helmet! I know lots of you ride off-road but I am a bit feeble in that department. I have to say it was a great learning experience as I whizzed and swooped on the smooth roads on the way home! I might try it again if I am feeling brave...



Soon we will be dusting off those electric jackets and squeezing into tighter leathers with all the layers, fingers crossed for a mild winter ahead. Watch out for those wet leaves... **Diana x**

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



Search for Devon Advanced Motorcyclists and at 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

Date	What	Where
October		
Sat 7	Rookie Ride	See website for details. Start Woodleigh Coach House, Cheriton Bishop. 9.30 am for 10.00am start.
Sun 8	Breakfast ride	Moretonhampstead, Court St. Car Park. 8.00am for 8.30am start. See website.
Sun 15	Group Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk 9:00 am for 9.30 am start.
Thurs 19	Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See website or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sat 21	Full Members Training Ride	Full Members Training Ride
Sun 29	Group Ride	9.30 am for 10.00 am start.
November		
Sat 4	Rookie Ride	9:30am for 10.00 am start.
Sat 11	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 12	REMEMBRANCE Group Ride	Moto Services M5 leaving 9.15 prompt. Winyard's Gap and then West Bay for lunch.
Thurs 16	Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See website or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sat 18	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk
Sun 26	Group Ride	9:30am for 10.00am start.
December		
Sat 2	Rookie Ride	See website for details.
Sun 9	Full Members Training Ride	Contact John Millgate trainingrides@advancedmotorcyclists.org.uk

Date	What	Where
December		
Sun 10	Group Ride	9:30am for 10.00am start.
Thurs 21	Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)	See website or contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Sun 31	Group Ride	9:30am for 10.00am start.

From DAM Trip to Cornish War Museum 10th September



The Michael Whitfield Skills Day

Michael Whitfield Enhanced Skills Day
Christina Leanne Wilkinson

This was my first real training day since passing my IAM test in 2018. Having booked a place on this training day, I was up nice and early to get to Westpoint on time. Looking out the window, it was a grey day with threatening rain but I wasn't going to let a bit of rain put me off, it makes it more challenging.

Rodney's great organisation meant the location of the event using What3words got us all there. All of the victims' bikes were lined up and I joined the row. The day started with the signing in, and I was duly handed a 'sign your soul away form' from Rodney.

Having lots of catch ups with people I had not seen in a while and trading hugs and handshakes, was a nice start. Apart from admiring some nice bikes in the process of meeting fellow participants, I started chatting about the course. There were a few that disliked one or another of the course manoeuvres on offer, especially the Snowman.

The next thing we were all called to attention. Now the scrum down (Group Meet) to get the details on the courses that had previously been laid out by the observers or helpers earlier.

Each course would be for 25 mins, then change over and swap. The courses consisted of a U Turn, Snowman (3 decreasing rings to go inside of), Decreasing Slalom and Offset Cone Weave. All safety was observed with a certain route on moving to the next course, very sensible. Each course had observers and a mentor, starting each course.

The instruction was to get into 4 groups of 5. Having thought we were in a group of 5 but one had defected to another group, making ours only 4.

Just as our group lined up for the first Course, another joined us; great we are 5.

Decreasing Slalom

What great fun weaving in and out of a row of Frisby shaped cones (hoping they won't fly away). The well-versed Tony gave us the best method of negotiating these discs but you still need a lot of practice before you could

get through without scattering the discs. The backup observers being Mano Cheema and David Cooper. They put the discs back or gave advice too.

The whistle blows... we all move on one.

Next the U-Turn. I think we took turns in going first, I was first on the Slalom but stood back this time. Well, this was a nice one, set out as if you had to make a U Turn in a road but some either knocked cones out or just rode out the side at first. After a bit of practice most achieved it, although there was one on a Sport Tourer that stalled a few times or went too wide; think some bikes are just not that manoeuvrable. It was a matter of the way you approach it and throw your bike around. My way was to under lean and throw the bike over. Andrew Robertson, seeing that I aced it every time, set me a challenge on the last circuit "Now do it tighter" he said..... and yes I did... Ha ha "There done it", I said, felt like a big headed kid again.... Great fun.

The whistle blows... we all move on one.

And here we are....

The Snowman..... Oh dear, squished cones, stalled bikes, refusals and going out the sides. This was the start, hoping that everyone will get the right line, with good advice at the start point. The 3 circles that the Snowman has get smaller on each one. You think 'Ok, I've got this', then the next is smaller, followed by the smallest. The smallest had a large cone in the center, this was a good marker to gauge your turn point.

Having mastered the U-Turn, I used the same technique to go round this course and threw the bike around using the under lean method. This worked well and at the end did two or three circuits on each circles. Sorry I aced it, gaining a thumbs up from Pete Wright. Really, it's all about confidence and technique. This was the best obstacle in my opinion. Think most did it eventually but it was a hard one for some.

The whistle blows... we all move on one.

Offset Cone Weave... It looked easy but you can go too wide and it compounds the next cone and so on. This was harder than we thought.. Focus on the next cone, was the advice... as you round the present one. It turns out if you do this, it was easier but you need full time concentration and pre determine your line, slipping clutch and braking plus throttle in good measure....

The whistle blows..... 12 noon...Lunch

The afternoon Session

We were asked to break into two groups and each course would take 50 minutes each one. This in the end proved too long and Rodney remarked that for next time we do this, he'd make it shorter.

Boot lace Slalom... Before we started, Rodney showed us (not showing off at all) how it was done, at speed. All very well but this was difficult at low speed. Polly from PAM seemed to get this to a tee and wiggled her way through it like a snake through water. I saw the technique she used and tried to emulate it but failed. Quite a few like me knocked the cones (frisbies) all lined up nicely at first, flying or crushing them.

It was an art to wiggle and use a rhythm in the technique, each time Polly was a master at this... think she'd done a lot of disco dancing in the past... Whoops, let the cat out of the bag!

The whistle blows... we all move on one.

Positive Steering Slalom... Seemed easy but the cones (this time proper cones) were laid out wider and offset at distance. The art was to do this, as we were told to ride without braking This was easier said than done and if you got it wrong by not slipping the clutch or slowing at the right time, then you wouldn't get the next one right or miss going round it. Big circles wouldn't work, it had us stumped a bit. I found I couldn't keep my speed at the right pace and braked, which was all wrong.





Very good for getting throttle, steering and clutch just right ...

The whistle blows... Refreshment break...

Hazard Avoidance... This was to simulate a lorry backing out on us when we were travelling at 30mph. First through an entry of four cones, then right (avoiding the lorry), back on line then through four more cones. Aha easy... NO.... Start and get up to speed, through first four cones then counter steer going right, then left and finally counter steer to go right again, through the last 4 cones. Cones fly, missed exit.... What's going on, can't get this! Even the more flexible amongst us clip a cone at the end. At least no one smacked the lorry...!

The whistle blows... we all move on one.

Emergency Braking... You had to get up to 30mph or higher, if once you did Dave Cooper would mentor you on your ability to stop. I'm afraid my ABS doesn't perform like the newer bikes and didn't judder down to a stoplever enough, as the bike isn't diving at the front but spotted my BMW is older with the cantilever front end. Apparently, this stops diving. The newer bikes, especially the adventure, KTM, Sport Tourers or BMW GS's etc are ace at this and show how good they are at stopping on a sixpence.

The whistle blows... We stop for the Slow race.

The Slow race. It's the last over the line wins. This means you must control your machine in a way that keeps you at the back for the longest. The first 3

go onto the next heat, with two groups of 10 and 6 remain to do the final. I was just too tired and tried but failed, so blatted on over the line. Anyway 6 were left to do the final with Dave Cather winning the trophy.

In summary, it was a very well organised and fun training day. No bikes were dropped and everyone had a great time and improved as their confidence grew. Rodney hopes to run more of these Enhanced Skills Days. Look out for announcements on the DAM website and Social Media. Places are limited to 20 so reserve your place early.



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Always wanting to get better at biking, I had googled courses within reach of Devon. I hit on i2i Motorcycle Academy, looked at their website and decided to book Machine Control 1. This was way back last year. On the phone he said, 'Most people wish they had booked MC2 at the same time'. 'Oh', I thought, 'Is that a bit pushy?' It's a lot of money. Anyway, I did. He was dead right. I now wish I'd booked the third.

i2i is delivered by two Irish guys with phenomenal bike skills. I am not going to say exactly what we did here because I am not an Irish guy with phenomenal bike skills and I am not qualified.

The first day grew nearer on the calendar and I was a bit nervous- would I be much less skilled than the others? Would I drop my bike? Hey ho, I am going, whatever. I was pleasantly surprised to see that the group was half women- not the usual 5%- a group of Curvy Riders had made the trip too. Some from Southampton and further afield. People obviously consider these courses to be worth travelling for.

There were all kinds of people – several older women, some younger, racery-looking blokes and nervous blokes, an observer from Plymouth, and all kinds of bikes- T120, a gorgeous grey Ducati (don't know the model), another Tiger, a VFR, a couple of Monsters, a KTM ... i2i are based near York which is a trek from Devon but they come to Westpoint for a week each summer it seems.

The first day I realised that I had never really learned about how a bike works, in terms of straight lines and corners. (This doesn't mean I hadn't been taught..) I'd done some with my observer and on the IAM skills days but some people are slow learners! Maybe some of you know this stuff naturally but I didn't. I knew, or thought I knew, about counter-steering but this was different. It sounds simplistic but once the bikes inherent stability has been demonstrated you get a totally different perspective. The best bit is that it was evidence based: they tell you what you should and shouldn't do and why, and then they go out and demonstrate how not to do it and how to do whatever it is well, so you know why it works.

I was taught to ride a bike by my father putting me on a moped in a steep field and saying 'That's the clutch, that's the throttle and they're the brakes, off you go'. My mother said he had thought I wouldn't like it and that would be that. And that is really, apart from a bit of more recent but partly understood counter-steering knowledge, is what I have based my riding on for decades. These i2i courses are not about Roadcraft; they are about motorcycles.

A weird side-effect on my ride home after the first day was that I thought my observations were better- was that because I was thinking less about the bike or was it because I was not in a track (car park) situation so more aware?



I'd found the first day challenging, although that's part of the fun, so was still nervous about the second day. On Machine Control 2 there were fewer people, maybe around 8 of us, all men apart from me, several of the ladies from MC 1 had said they wished they'd booked the next one. They built on what we had learned

the day before but with even more practice; we were out on the 'track' pretty much all the time split into 2 groups. Whereas day 1 was mainly about the mind and understanding, MC 2 was very much based on the body and how it feels to ride a motorcycle correctly. It is one thing to know how to brake correctly; it is another to train the body to be calm and focussed when doing it. (Not saying I am either of those particularly but it's a goal!) There was a balance between riding and feedback and learning by watching the other group. This time, among other points, we did more about proving to ourselves how steering works- using only your throttle hand to steer a left-handed course with a couple of mini-slaloms was difficult and slightly terrifying but great to understand that pull works as well as push in counter-steering, (obviously, please don't try anything based on what I've said!).

I know I rode home through those great corners on the Whiddon Down to Winkleigh road better and with more confidence. Lastly, it was an excellent day out: the guys, Tom and Colm, are a great double act and very funny, we were all laughing a lot which, with the increased confidence I felt, is a sure sign of good teaching in my book.

JOIN OUR 2024 MISSION

CAN YOU HELP US TAKE DEVON ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS INTO A NEW ERA??

We're looking for two individuals who can help with spreading the word. We have a new established marketing team and we want to expand that to include a new marketing events co-ordinator and social media specialist. Both of these roles will report to the marketing officer but will play a huge part in delivering our ambitious marketing programme for next year, and that needs to start now!!!

The Marketing Events Co-Ordinator will work closely with other departments within DAM but will primarily be responsible for keeping our Mobile Display Unit in A1 condition, along with being well stocked. They will be responsible for maintaining the dynamic roster of volunteers who are able to help at shows and events, along with ensuring the event leads have the required information and support to deliver our message to potential new members.

The Social Media Specialist will be an enthusiastic person with an understanding of how social media works and its importance to not only how we promote through it, but how it reflects on us as a group. This person needs to be willing to keep our social pages fresh with regular content and news of upcoming events, whilst also engaging current members with their stories.

If you are interested in being part of the change, please reach out to our Marketing Officer, Tim on his phone number 07842 023 163 or via email to marketing@devonadvanced.com

AUGUST THIRD THURSDAY RIDE REPORT

Les Mosco



August's Third Thursday ride was different, led by Ian Pruce, and we managed a daytrip to Wales. Meeting up at Cribbs Causeway we had a good ride through Wales on our way to Hay-on-Wye, with stops at Abergavenny and Arthur's Stone. Some great roads, only spoiled by having to follow traffic for quite a distance.

After lunch we headed from Hay-on-Wye up and over Hay Bluff. After about 20 minutes we had to turn back due to a road closure. Not dismayed, we



discovered some other roads which turned out to be great for riding. It was a fast ride back from our second visit to Abergavenny to Gordano Services. Then the ride back to Exeter with 300 miles on the clock and 7.5 hours in the saddle.



JULY THURSDAY RIDE REPORT

Les Mosco



July's Third Thursday ride was a 120 mile glorious sunny ride out to Portland Bill. 16 of us gathered initially at Greendale Farm shop for teas and coffees and briefing, Leanne joined us en-route to Lyme Regis for a first leg stretch with the sun sparkling magically off the sea and Portland Bill clearly visible in the distance.

We had an excellent ride along the coast, no incidents, just some traffic and lots of sea views, especially Chesil Beach all the way to Portland Bill. We then ate a relaxing lunch sat out in the sun with the beginnings of the tourist rush. After lunch the return leg was via Dorchester, Winyards Gap and another leg stretch at Crewkerne where the primary school kids and teacher were most interested in our bikes. That's the next generation of bikers committed! Final leg finished at about 3pm at Honiton Starbucks, where rain threatened after being very kind for the ride itself. Thanks to all who joined, and to Derek and Andrew for sweeping.



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TRAINING TOPIC #78 – GETTING ON YOUR BIKE

As chief observer I really don't understand why so many advanced riders find this simple start up routine so hard to get the hang of.

- Ignore the ride pilot when he gives 2-minute warning.
- Chat with your friends.
- Discuss what your first bike was.
- Tell that long anecdote about that time you were in the Alps.
- Pick up your gloves.
- Put your gloves down.
- Finish you mug of coffee.
- Look for a bin.
- Walk to the bin.
- Stroll back to your bike.
- Rub off that little speck of dust from your wind shield.
- Pick up your gloves.
- Put on your gloves.
- Take off your gloves.
- Put on your helmet.
- Secure the chin strap.
- Take off your helmet.
- Look for your keys.
- Get on bike.
- Put keys in ignition.
- Turn ignition key.
- Turn ignition key again.
- Turn ignition key again.
- Announce your bike won't start.
- Disable kill switch.
- Turn ignition key - BIKE STARTS!
- Turn engine off.
- Get off bike.
- Open top box.
- Locate neck warmer.
- Put on neck warmer.
- Close top box.
- Put key in ignition.



- Put on helmet.
- Put on gloves.
- Take off gloves.
- Put on gloves.
- Get on bike.
- Turn ignition key.
- Turn ignition key.
- Turn ignition key.
- Put side stand up.
- Turn ignition key – BIKE STARTS.
- Take gloves off.
- Zip up jacket.
- Put gloves on.
- Turn engine off.
- Get off bike.
- Take gloves off.
- Visit the facilities.
- Put gloves on.
- Get on bike.
- Turn ignition key – BIKE STARTS.
- Turn engine off.
- Take gloves off.
- Check phone for messages.
- Drop phone in puddle.
- Pick up phone.
- Check weather forecast.
- Put phone in pocket.
- Put gloves on.
- Get off bike.
- Get on bike.
- Turn engine on.
- Pull in clutch.
- Select first gear.
- Engine stops.
- Check kill switch.



- Get off bike.
- Look at bike.
- Get on bike.
- Put side stand up.
- Start engine.
- Turn off engine.
- Get off bike.
- Go to hotel reception.
- Collect luggage.
- Open panniers.
- Put luggage in panniers.
- Close panniers.
- Open panniers.
- Close panniers.
- Open top box.
- Take out visor cleaner.
- Take off gloves.
- Take off helmet.
- Clean visor.
- Put visor cleaner in top box.
- Lock top box.
- Put keys in ignition.
- Put on helmet.
- Secure chin strap.
- Turn on helmet intercom.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.
- Wait for intercom to connect to phone.



- Put on gloves.
- Pull visor down.
- Pull in clutch.
- Put side stand up.
- Turn ignition key – BIKE STARTS!
- Select first gear.
- Release clutch.
- Stall.
- Select neutral.
- Start engine.
- Select first.
- Look at sky.
- Select neutral.
- Get off bike.
- Take off gloves.
- Open top box.
- Remove waterproofs.
- Put one foot through waterproof trousers.
- Hobble to nearby bench.
- Fall over.
- Get up.
- Sit down.
- Put second foot through waterproof trousers.
- Pull up waterproof trousers.
- Look at sky.
- Look at waterproof trousers.
- Look at sky.
- Stand up.
- Walk to bike.
- Lock top box.
- Put on gloves.
- Take off gloves.



- Open top box.
- Remove waterproof gloves.
- Put on waterproof gloves.
- Lock top box.
- Open visor.
- Wipe away steam with finger.
- Close visor.
- Get on bike.
- Put keys in ignition.
- Put side stand up.
- Start engine.
- Pull in clutch.
- Select first gear.
- Set off. My

neighbour encouraged me to look at IAM training for motorbikes,
 To make procedure easier for everyone to remember I have developed this
 simple acronym:

ICDTPPFLWSRPPTP
 STLGPTTTADTGOL
 PCPPPTPGTTTTPTTZ
 PTGTVPGTTTCDPC
 PPGGTPSECGLGPS
 TGGCOPCOCOTT
 TCPLPPSTWWWWW
 WWPPPPTSRSSSSL
 SGTORPHFGSPPLLL
 SWLPTORPLOWCG
 PPSFSS.

**You have no
 excuse for
 getting it wrong
 in future.
 Safe riding
 everyone.**



MASTERS

David Strickland

Strange as it may seem, I still enjoy driving! My first experience with I AM was in 1972 when I passed my Advanced Car Test with them. Roll on to 2022 and I've had several motorbikes for nine or 10 years, after a 40 year break from riding.

My neighbour encouraged me to look at IAM training for motorbikes, which is what I did with NDAM. So, after a taster ride with Martin Rushworth, followed by six observed rides, I shot off down to Cornwall to take and pass the Advanced Motorbike test. The whole process was very engaging and enjoyable, but I was miffed that my neighbour and biking bud had beaten me by passing his test with a First Pass!

In spring this year, Martin made me aware of an opportunity to go a stage further and think about progressing to the Masters Qualification. After some investigation, I was a little reluctant to enrol for the course as it's one of the highest civilian driving qualifications to be had. More discussions followed and I went for it! Five observed rides this time, plus a check ride with Trevor Olding, plus nearly 4000 miles of practice and here I am at Compton Abbas Airfield to take my Masters test with Shaun Cronin.

A couple of hours later and nearly 50 miles away and the Test ride is done. You've passed the Masters with a Distinction!', Shaun tells me. I'm ecstatic, both for myself and for Martin, all the guidance, encouragement and polishing" that Martin has imparted during the preparation for the test. The main message that I got from Martin to help me get this pass was to be consistent in using the system of bike control". This means every aspect of the ride had to be polished mirror checks, speed, position and application of the correct gear for the situation. The all important SSV Stability and View is key to maintaining that safety bubble when riding.

The Masters also helped me to identify and prioritise potential hazards far earlier than before. Dealing with hazards is then far easier. This has transferred over to when I'm driving my car, which has got to be an added bonus.

I've yet to come back from a ride on the bike or drive in the car, which is perfect. I blame this on the Masters course as it's now very difficult not to think 'Could I have handled that situation or hazard differently?' So, time, money and effort well spent? Too right! I'll continue to ride as long as I'm able. I thoroughly

recommend taking part in the IAM Roadsmart group rides as they are piloted expertly to take in roads less travelled. Always good company and great to chat with fellow riders with a similar passion for safe riding. For next year my plans are to become qualified as Observer in the hope that I can pass on some of the skill set learnt during the Advanced and Masters Courses.



Michael Whitfield Skills Day at Westpoint



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Roger Bridgeman, Michael Lowrie, John Halling, Chris Wood, Dave Hayes, Ash Kite, Neil Ballam, Sandie Puttick, Rebecca Bright, Yvette Casey, Felix Gregory, Steven Bell, Lewis Turner, Jerry Anderson, Sharon Waterton, Nick Sims, Giles Plaatsman, John Paradise, Hazel North, Leo Turner, Mike Bilham, Gareth Hart, Phil Gray, Peter Morris, Bronwyn Nash, Trevor Goodman, Dave Britton, Gemma Palmer, Darren Way, Kris Greaves, Jerry Lowe, Nathaniel Lonsdale, Anthony Wallis, Stephen Harcus, Jamie Goodreid, Libby Collier, Stuart Thomas, Oliver Davey and Jason Cardwell Brewin.

Congratulations to the Test Passes

Associate	Observer
Adrian Page	Robin Watts
Brian Pilarz	Martin Rushworth & John Millgate
Stefan Miller (Legacy)	Derek Facey
Geoffrey Hearn (F1rst)	Catherine McKinley
George Andrews (F1rst)	Rodney Rayner
Steven Dunn-Sims	Dave Grant
Brian Ingleby (F1rst)	Tim Carter
Les Mosco (Legacy, F1rst)	Ian Pruce
Alastair Green (F1rst)	Derek Facey
Ross McCormick (F1rst)	Nigel Bond
Hamish Renton	Barrie Dennett
Milly Gibbs	Martin Rushworth
Pete Cort	Andy Pratt
Anthony Gray (F1rst)	Dave Cooper
Marc Winstanley (F1rst)	Simon Jeffery
Marian Bennett (F1rst)	David Page
Freddie Hepburn	Richard Blyth
Tim Redman (Legacy, F1rst)	Simon Jeffery
Simon Russell	David Page
Andrew Robertson (Legacy,F1rst)	Simon Jeffery



WALES – BY DIFFERENT ROADS

Tim Redman



After the varied success of previous navigation roadbooks, I entered into a two-day event in Wales. The brief was that we would be riding hundreds of kilometres of mostly off-road trails through the centre of Wales. For this reason, the event was called The AS 500 Rally. The AS part being an abbreviation for the title sponsor Adventure Spec.

I travelled up to Wales on Friday, regretting my decision to trailer the bike up. There were queues of red taillights as far as one could see, until I eventually made the exit off the M5 towards Wales.

Crossing the Severn, I realised I was going to be getting into camp in the dark. Oh yeah, I forgot to mention the camping bit. So 500km of mostly offroad riding split up by a night in a tent on a damp Welsh rugby field. What more could one want!!

I rolled into camp at about 8pm after five hours on the road, quickly popped my tent and shuffled off for a beer and some warm food served up by the kitchen staff in the rugby grounds clubhouse. Heading to bed early in anticipation of the next day's events, it rained like it hadn't rained before as I wandered back across the camp field. Thank God I had borrowed the marketing teams new event shelter!!

The next day I woke bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. Quick shower and the usual morning chores, followed by wheeling the mighty Tenere out of the trailer and a bit of pre rally prep. All around me riders were doing the same. Bikes being tinkered with and engines being warmed up, air pressures adjusted and rolling tests. I realised quickly this was going to be a big event with some seemingly professional looking chaps and chappesses in the camp. Our pre-event briefing was set for 0930 with bikes due to leave at 10am, with two-minute intervals between every two bikes that left. So, at around 0900 I wheeled my steed towards the back of the clubhouse and the start line. Many had already gathered and I took my place near the end of the 180 riders on the starting

sheet. Cups of teas and biscuits were passed around whilst the sun shone on our backs. Inside for a briefing and an intro to what we would expect and a few safety boxes ticked – keep your arms and hands inside, along with where the safety exits from your vehicle were – the atmosphere was beginning to build!!

At 0955 bikes were being started up and there was every make of bike represented. Small Honda 250s, through to behemoth GS1250s and anything in between. Most riders were on adventure bikes, but a few were on enduro bikes. Those guys looked set for it!!

As bikes began leaving and we all rolled slowly towards the start line, the excitement was building. In the pre ride briefing the organiser had mentioned today was 385km. 385km!! mostly offroad. Big day!! Dinner served at 6pm...ummm. With my start time looking like 1040ish, I calculated this



would be a mega day averaging 55km/h. Offroad. Rolling up to the start line I pulled my goggles down and took off quick, already planning to use my Advanced Riding Skills to gain as much time as possible on the road sections. The first thirty kilometres was all wide back roads and a few white line sorts. You could spot the small handful of riders who were IAM standard carving through the pack with increased awareness and observation. I caught a couple up and followed suit. The thirty km came and went quick and all of a sudden I was on smooth gravelled Welsh forest tracks. The smaller bikes, much more agile and nimble, particularly in the corners were leaving me behind. Like a small plague of locusts, they were everywhere and then they were gone. I focused on the job and got into a groove. The kilometres started disappearing beneath the 80/20 tyres and dust was billowing in my wake. I started catching and passing not only the bigger bikes who had left earlier in the day than I did, but also some of the smaller pesky enduro bikes who were making navigational errors and misreading the roadbooks. Around 100km in there was a mandatory 20 min stop. This was at a fuel station where you could top up if needed and get a choccie bar or similar. It was great fun sat there waiting

for my time to count down: bikes coming and going, various chats about events so far, some mechanical tinkering going on. With my 20 minutes gone I was back on it. A bit rested and more confident of my ability I ploughed on, smashing the kilometres and forcing some overtakes on loose gravel. All great fun until I came up behind this big KTM 1290 Adventure. 30

He was quick, but also peppering me in gravel at each corner as we slid around them. I picked my opportunity for a pass up the inside on a hard right-hand switchback, shoving the mighty Tenere deep into the corner, coming out the corner we were level pegging, but the torque from the KTM pulled him past me up this steep loose climb. Knowing I was quicker than him in and out the corners I pushed hard into the next bend and cheekily ran him wide on to the real loose gravel and left him for dead. The day went on with much the same adventure. Passing and being passed. Two more rest stops. More gravel. Some adjoining tarmac sections. Eventually with the sun falling low in the sky I got to the end of day 1 at 1830. It is worth mentioning that the primary purpose of navigation rallies is to get the navigation right. In the Adventure class I was entered there were no points for time or speed, but as you may do yourself, when you get on a track, whether its dirt or blacktop, the competitive edge comes out.

The evening dinner brought many laughs and good stories, along with some presentations from the organisers. You quickly forgot the aching bones and sore calves. In a moment of brash decisiveness, I persuaded the organisers to let me change from the easier "just follow the roadbook" class of Adventure, to the harder Rally class, which had more technical offroad sections and some timed stages (these you were awarded points for every minute you were in that particular stage). I will blame the guys I ate dinner with who had rallied in Hellas for giving me too much Dutch courage in a pint glass!!

Sunday a.m. rolled around and with the same morning routine followed by many I made a critical decision and rolled my bike to the start line at 0730. With an earlier start time of 0930 today I expected a short sharp 120km day to equate to 500km. But no. The roadbook was issued and it was another 240-odd km. With heavy rain forecast, some of the regulars were advising this was going to be a slog. I took advantage of my early starting position and being only 12th out the gate quickly got into my rhythm. I settled much earlier, helped by the fact I had no one to force passes on and not many catching me from behind. I rode clean lines in a much calmer state. As I came off the first long offroad section (40km of sweeping gravel corned after corner) the rain started to fall, first as large single drops, but quickly a torrential downpour.

Stopping quickly, I layered up in my waterproofs. Dropping down into a pretty little Welsh village I followed a line of the local IAM group for 10-15km along a twisty road, before blatting down a side track. The route navigation was much harder on the second day and I felt for the guys who were true novices. As I came around one corner I was greeted with the view of Nant-Y-Moch reservoir. A beautiful lowland type reservoir, high in the Welsh mountains. Along its southern edge is a fantastic trail that has whoops, jumps and berms galore. All carved out over years of cart horse and now motor vehicle use. With nobody around I set to working the mighty Tenere through the whoops and setting up the bermed corners. Quite quickly I arrived at the day's biggest challenge – a wide and potentially deep river crossing. We had been warned about it in the briefing. I slowed down, clicked into first gear and stood on my pegs, I slowly rode across the river. Perfect. Nobody around to see it, not even the marshal who was supposed to be there who I guess had been caught out by the speed of the front runners. The trail went on with a few more deep crossings and big puddles caused by the incessant rainfall. Another 100km or so in I merged off a trail into a large group of other riders. I quickly realised this was the slower riders of the same event and we browed a hill and there was Nant-Y-Moch again. I followed the slower less nimble bikes through the whoops and berms heading back towards that river crossing. However, this time on my arrival there were bikes everywhere. The afore mentioned marshal was in his waders in the river helping one rider pick up his bike. There were three other riders looking at a line on the left through a narrower part of the river but the flow was fast there. There was even one chap considering taking his KTM 990 across the narrow footbridge. Two GS1250s were stood talking side by side on the approach to the river and I stupidly, not realising it would draw attention to myself so much, beeped. Not a long one. Just a toot. To say I'm here, I'm just going to pass you don't move. Everyone looked. I rode down to the river and thought "been here, done it, just repeat it". I slowed down, stood on my pegs clicked first gear and made my across. But yes, I hit a rock, couldn't save the bike and dropped it in the middle. I switched her



off quickly and critically managed to keep the airbox above water. The chap in the waders helped me retrieve my bike and then with some other rider's assistance we stood the T7 up on its end and poured what seemed like 20 pints of water out of the exhaust. After lowering her back down, I hesitantly pushed the start button and she fired up, coughing and spluttering. A few gentle revs to clear the last of the water and the white smoke gone I took off, pushing hard to make up my lost time.

The last timed section was 10 or so kms up the route. Whereas yesterday I had struggled to get into a groove with so many other bikes around, today I rode these sections smoothly. There was a speed cap of 90km/h which I couldn't get to in the horrendous weather but I was up at a good speed and still nobody was catching me and I could still just make out the bikes in front of me in the distance.

In the last few kms of the final track, I came across a junction that should have been five options for an exit according to the roadbook, but there were only three choices. A small handful of bikers were already here deciphering which way to go and as time went on even more appeared. Eventually four or five of us decided the roadbook was wrong and we used local knowledge to skip ahead a couple of kilometres on the road book and pick up the track again. This decision proved very important and would show later in the results.

With every inch of me now soaked through I was tiring and fed up. It had rained all day and hadn't eased up. Imagine having buckets of water chucked over you all day. That's what I felt like. With 25 km to go the route turned into what would be the last track. I've driven around Wales a lot and know a lot of the rights of way. This one was a favourite. I had never ridden it but I knew it. Throttle open through enclosed forests, this bought about a final moment of joy from the weekend. The weariness of riding sopping wet soon vanished as long straight into tight corner into long straight into tight corner came gain and again. In that tight enclosed forest, it may as well have been a tunnel. The noise from the Akra exhaust echoing around me. Then all of a sudden it finished. The trail dropped out onto a 30mph speed zone and a few kilometres through the town of Llandovery towards the rugby club and the finish line.

I was spent. So tired out. I had ridden hard all weekend. The bike had taken a beating but had performed at every request of power or hard braking. The tyres had complained a lot but had never let go completely. It had been such a balance of sliding the bike through the corners and winding the throttle on but not enough to cause the back to step out more than a controllable

amount. Steering with your feet and butt came in to its own on the long gravel sections. IPSGA played a huge part in all of it. Advanced Riding skills aren't just for on the black top, they are for every time you get on your bike.

And no, I hadn't forgotten. The results. Yes. My first big two-day rally. 180 riders. Awful weather. With a clear navigation score on both days (the missing crossroad was erased for all riders) and minimal points gained in the speed zones, I finished <drum roll> thirteenth!! Not quite podium but very much encouraging me to do more.

There will be a Roadbook Rally over the Xmas period that I will organise for DAM members and other IAM groups. This roadbook will be all tarmac and take you on an explore of East Devon. It would be amazing if you would take part in it and learn to roadbook. It's great fun and a very good way to explore parts of the county you may not know.

NDAM UPDATE

On 9th September it was Ilfracombe Bike show run by MAG. NDAM had a stall and 2 new members are now waiting for Observers and a third was very keen. On Saturday 16th September NDAM ran a Skills Day for prospective joiners. The weather was varied but this just added to the range of conditions to be considered. The day generated some very positive interest.





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MICHAEL WHITFIELD LEGACY UPDATE

DAM Members will know that the late Michael Whitfield donated over £30,000 to DAM to benefit Members and their training, and that Brian Churchward, Les Mosco, Phil Pike and Rodney Rayner are the Committee deciding on its beneficial use over the next few years. Progress and training are now in full flow:

- 14 applied for F1rst (Legacy paying for 3 Observer Rides and IAM Member's Riding Assessment fee), most have started training, to date 4 have taken their Assessment with 3 F1rst passes and 1 Pass (i.e. Advanced standard but not F1rst).
- 3 have applied for Masters Taster (Legacy paying the IAM fees in full), 1 complete to date.
- 15 eligible applied for Masters (Legacy paying £200 of the £299 IAM fee), most are well into their training, to date 1 Masters with Distinction pass.
- 22 Members attended the Michael Whitfield Skills Day at Westpoint on 12th August (all costs paid by Legacy) with a combination of slow and obstacle riding, turning and braking skills. It was judged by all a resounding success and a repeat is being organised.

So the Legacy funds have already delivered enhanced skills with many Members benefiting from cheaper/free access to the training. The next few months should see many more taking their IAM tests. Michael has enabled greater skills and safety within DAM. Thanks



to him and the IAM mentors and examiners, and all in the DAM Observers group who have helped deliver the additional training and to the Westpoint organisers and marshalls for their time and guidance.

The Committee are meeting shortly to plan 24/25 activities. Any Members with fresh ideas can drop a line to lesmosco@hotmail.com or any other Legacy Committee member.

TRAINING – MY DAM JOURNEY

Graham Hirst, National Observer

It's 5th sept 2021. I am out for a ride and I end up at the Dawlish Bike and Trike show. As I'm bumbling around I come across the Devon Advanced Motorcyclists stand. I am already an IAM member having sat and completed the LGV Advanced Driver course and the IAM LGV Assessors course. As I'm looking at the literature on display I get 'accosted' by a gentleman on the DAM stand who asks if I'm interested and after chatting for a few minutes and confirming I might be, I'm walking away having signed up.

A couple of weeks later, I get an email from a gentleman called Dave who wants to arrange a 'taster ride'. On the day the heavens had opened and it's apocalyptic with rain but as arranged we meet at Trago Mills. After a soggy introduction we head off towards Bovey Tracey and beyond.

I am an all year-round commuter so the rain didn't hinder my performance too much and Dave said I should have very little issues completing the course. Ten days or so later my Observer Barrie contacted me and we arranged a meet. Barrie was professionalism personified and over the next few weeks we met for our training rides. I looked forward to these rides with great enthusiasm. I am normally a solo rider, because historically I don't like riding in groups of people I don't know extremely well and I have always been cautious of others actions whilst riding together. This came as a massive surprise to me.

After every ride I was left with something to work on to improve my own skill set. Having achieved a F1RST in my LGV training and a ROSPA Gold on cars I was adamant I wanted a F1RST on motorbikes as well to complete the set. Barrie arranged a check ride with Tim who impressed immensely with his ex-police rider skill set and encouraged me to work harder to obtain the F1RST I craved.

I actively joined as many Group Rides as I could make watching intently other members' riding habits in awe at some and privately critiquing others but learning and improving all the time.

After another check test with Tim accompanied by Barrie which was a very progressive flowing ride that felt amazing both Tim and Barrie said I was ready to take the test and if I rode to that standard I should receive the F1RST I so coveted.

Test day dawned and as luck would have it, Storm Arwen was raging. My examiner was Dougie and we had arranged to meet just outside of Honiton at the Windmill garage.

Dougie actually rang me and asked due to the conditions did I wish to postpone the test and when I stated I was already at the meeting point he said "Great, let's carry on then."

So, on what was a very wet, wild and windy ride with debris from trees scattering the whole road and gravel and soil running off the surrounding fields due to the downpour, we set off.

In what seemed like 20 to 30 minutes (actually 70 minutes) we were back at our starting point and as we dismounted and removed our helmets my heart was racing. I was happy I had performed well during the ride BUT I wanted that F1RST! I did it. I got my F1RST.

The whole process had taken about 4 months. What next ? Well, I thought about Masters and I also thought about being an Observer. Whilst deciding, I continued to go on as many group rides as possible even enjoying a more social karting event in Plymouth. I even agreed to lead a group ride and after a couple of test runs of the route I had planned I submitted it and it was advertised.



What if nobody turns up?, I thought. What if I get lost? What if the weather is atrocious as I had planned some 'lanes'? What if I make a right pig's ear of it? The day dawned and 22 riders turned up!' Oh God, I thought secretly. The day was a success! Even with a road closed and a serious accident to contend with (not us) we all made it to the finish line unscathed. What a buzz!

A month or two later DAM sent an email for potential new Observers to apply. I did. I am now a qualified National Observer. The training I received was first class. I succeeded on the first attempt. The fact I am a certified LGV/PSV instructor during the day helped me massively, but I believe that even if I wasn't I would have passed due to the standard of training and preparation beforehand. If you are sitting on the sidelines wondering if this DAM and IAM stuff is worth it, rest assured, it absolutely is.

I am a safer, faster more competent rider now than I ever have been. I have made new friends and enjoyed so many new experiences since joining DAM. I have seen roads and viewpoints I would have never found by going on group rides. I am now helping others become better safer riders. I have opportunities to tour either nationally or on the continent with DAMs organised trips. I get reduced insurance premiums because I am an Advanced Rider. I am eligible for a host of discounts because I am an IAM member. And I have discovered I eat a lot more cake now!! Thank you to all the people who have invested their time and expertise to get me this far and I only hope I can do the same going forwards with others.



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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.

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



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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 or contact fouache@btinternet.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 or our Group Rides co-ordinator 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.

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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.

Information about the **Masters** qualification can be found at www.iamroadsmart.com/masters.

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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!

Contact triumphjohn955@gmail.com to book your place on a Post-Test Training Ride.

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Martini Rides: 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 **Martini ride**, contact 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



Committee & Club Officers

<p>Chairman: Social Media; Richard Whybra E: chairman@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p>Group Secretary: Catherine McKinley E: secretary@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>Chief Observer: Simon Jeffery E: chiefobserver@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p>Treasurer: Brian Lee E: treasurer@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>Marketing Officer/Events Coordinator: Tim Redman E: marketing@devonadvanced.com</p>		<p>Group Rides Co-ordinator: Rodney Rayner E: grouprides@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>Newsletter Editor: Diana Percy E: dianapercy9@gmail.com</p>		<p>Webmaster: Nick Tucker E: webmaster@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>Rookie Rides Co-ordinator: Dave Mudge dnmudge@blueyonder.co.uk</p>		<p>Membership: Barrie Dennett E: membership@devonadvanced.com</p>	
<p>Observed Rides Co-ordinator: Ian Pruce E: observedrides@outlook.com</p>		<p>Rider Development Evening Co-ordinator: Tony Curley E: tony.curley@btinternet.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>Other Committee Members: Steve Hyde Brian Churchward Jill Payne Les Mosco</p>	<p>Trustees Terry Dormer Catherine McKinley Richard Whybra Philip Pike. David Mudge</p>

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