



**DEVON  
ADVANCED  
MOTORCYCLISTS**



NEWSLETTER 85 Apr - Jun 2026





**ROAD  
CLOSED**

**DANGER  
KEEP  
OUT**



## Chairman's Chatter

**Les Mosco**

Spring at last and the riding season is open! I ride throughout Winter so for me that means putting away the Gerbing heated gear and cleaning the bike. Pre-Winter I apply ACF 50 and then occasional cold hose-down but I resist cleaning it all off until Spring, by when the bike looks horrible but is hopefully still protected. (By the way, the Missenden Flyer has a good video showing how to correctly apply ACF 50, worth a look.) My bike is now cleaned ready for a ride in the next few days. Next will be cleaning and re-proofing the winter clothing before swapping it in the wardrobe for my lighter gear. Definitely Spring!

You should have seen the new weekly email which lists the upcoming DAM diary, previews and then full details of our numerous Group events and rides, so please read these, fill your diary and enjoy the DAM community. We try to be a friendly and inclusive Group that welcomes new riders and offers a variety of activities to share our riding fun. Please join in or tell us if you've any different suggestions.

Our AGM on 29th April will vote in new Trustees, Committee Members and Officers. Thanks to those who responded to my earlier calls for volunteers, we now have enough for all the roles except, as I write Secretary. This is an essential role, we cannot operate without a secretary, so please please please contact me if you think you could do it. In addition, as always, we need members to volunteer to help DAM in other ways, for example we'll be at numerous shows throughout the year where DAM Members talk to potential new members. If you can help with that, please contact [marketing@devonadvanced.com](mailto:marketing@devonadvanced.com) or talk to any Committee member anytime if you can help in any other way.

The IAM is 70 this year so is running various PR events, and DAM will be using some of the 70th logos in our material. It reminds me that IAM and DAM are road safety charities with the core purpose to improve road safety. DAM delivers that through our Observers training Associates up to the Advanced standard. Sounds obvious but it is a big leap from a DVLA license to Advanced so if you've any biking friends out there who haven't yet become Advanced, please explain to them the benefits and encourage them to join. Remember if they want to test the waters before committing, we do free Taster rides ([tasterrides@devonadvanced.com](mailto:tasterrides@devonadvanced.com)).

So, I hope to see you out there enjoying the road, on some Group rides and at the AGM. Safe riding!!

Regards, Les Mosco

Chair

# EDITORIAL

Catherine McKinley & Diana Percy



The cover pic is from a few years ago when DAM was producing a calendar. Taken by David Parnell at the Britannia Royal Naval College, with their kind permission to access the site.

Taking on the role of magazine editor (although, I appreciate, still ably supported by Diana) will be a change for me, having had other DAM committee-related roles previously. Why have I agreed to take on yet another one, I hear you say? Or maybe you haven't said anything and it's just a bad episode of tinnitus that I'm suffering from.

My desire to continue to support DAM in this way is because I think it's a great group to support and help in some way, in its contribution to the road safety of motorcyclists across the whole of Devon (which has over 8000 miles of road network, the longest in England, according to the Devon County Council website). Not only that, it also gives me a reason to look up banal/interesting (take your pick) facts such as the one above. Also, it also allows me to hone my grammatical skills as well as enhance my spelling abilities – and I know how important the accuracy of such things is to some of the readers! My initial thoughts are to purposefully insert an error into my ramblings so I can a) gauge how many of you are actually reading this tome b) give you something exciting to test your own skills on, each time you receive the magazine and c) use it as an excuse whenever I unknowingly make a mistake that I intended to do that anyway.

Suffice to say, DAM is always looking for members to join the committee so, as Diana said in the January publication, please contact anyone of us who appear on the Committee and Club Officers page of the magazine and any of us would be glad to hear from you.

To run the group successfully and arrange events/rides/development evenings etc. takes planning and effort from a range of members. So please help out. As Helen Keller said "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much".

And finally, a note to Diana for all her help and support in producing this magazine over the past few years and welcome to her in her new role as Rider Development Evening co-ordinator.

And this publication's planned error was?

**NB: Committee meetings are now monthly apart from July and August. Come and exercise your right to have a say in the club. Due to the impact of extensive flooding earlier this year, we are unable to hold meetings at the Swans Nest for the time being, so be aware of the change of venue. Our thoughts are with the Swans Nest staff at this difficult time.**



DEVON  
ADVANCED  
MOTORCYCLISTS



# DEVON ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Wednesday 29 April 2026 7.00pm.**

**To be held at The Twisted Oak,  
Little John Cross Hill, Exeter, EX2 9RG**

Notice is given of the above meeting to receive accounts and reports, elect trustees, officers and other committee members and to discuss business of an annual nature. The evening will include presentations to those who have achieved IAM certificates through the Michael Whitfield legacy. Trustees, Officers and committee members retiring as per the rules: Les Mosco (chair), Catherine McKinley (secretary), David Stanley (treasurer), Rodney Rayner (group rides co-ordinator), Barrie Dennett (membership secretary) and Brian Churchward (committee member). All the above are prepared to stand again for election to their existing posts except for Catherine McKinley (secretary), David Stanley (Treasurer) and Brian Churchward (committee member).

Nominations are invited for any of the above positions and for committee membership on a form, available from the Secretary ([secretary@devonadvanced.com](mailto:secretary@devonadvanced.com)), to be returned no later than 7 days prior to the meeting. Nominees, proposers and seconders must be full DAM members. Proposals of an annual nature must be received by the Secretary no less than 7 days prior to the meeting, showing the name and contact details of the full members proposing and seconding.

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

DAM is a registered charity No. 1080988 affiliated to IAM, group No. 1113

# Scooting the surface in Goa

**Andrew Robertson**

I've been asked to write a few lines on riding in India and the U.K., but as this is for the DAM magazine and not a reference, I thought I would begin where our experiences first started in 1995 in Fetier, Turkey where we caught a water dolmush (shared taxi) across a lake to Chalis beach and our dolmush broke down. It was only a small wooden boat with maybe six passengers plus the driver. The sun was shining and we were stationary on the calm water. We started chatting as the engine had stopped and an older man said to us "If you like beaches, go to Goa, hire a scooter and follow the coast.". Twenty-seven years later we are still visiting Goa.

We used to book our holidays with Bakers Dolphin in Teignmouth so after consulting them our lady said she'd got just the place for us. Anjuna. "You will love it, it's where the Beatles stayed and is very popular with hippies.". So off we went. I'd already visited the Far East so I knew what we were in for but it was Sylvia's first time. We arrived at mid-day. The hotel was pretty grim and smelt colonial and we were given a room on the first floor overlooking the road. The furniture wouldn't have passed inspection in a charity shop. There was a balcony to the front and a rear door at the back that opened out into thin air. There was only one thing to do, put my wife to bed to catch up on some sleep whilst I worked out a plan to get us moved. I did a reccy and discovered uncovered drains, cow pats drying in the sun, huts with coco nut palm for the roof, a restaurant with four poles in the ground, Christmas lights in February suspended and a flimsy roof, plastic garden furniture and earth floor. There was no way we could put up with this hole and the soonest I could do anything to move would be in the morning. Best thing to do was wake Sylvia up when it got dark and take things from there.

She woke up, got ready to go out and off we went. Avoided the open drains and found a well-dressed Indian lady cooking her family's supper on an open fire burnt from the dried cow pats. She smiled and chatted and we left with friendly waves. Things were looking up. The restaurant was lit with the Christmas lights and the owner, dressed in white and greeting us with his nameste sign seated us at his table. He took a smoking coco nut husk and put it in a dust bin lid under the table to keep mosquitoes away. He'd trained as a chef in Mumbai and cooked us a great chicken curry that had flavours we had never



experienced. We were beginning to like Anjuna. We had seen Judith Chalmers on 'Wish You Were Here' ... visiting CoCo beach. We went by taxi and had a great day but there were so many scooters. We had to try one and then do some real exploring.

So, what's the difference between riding in India compared to riding in the U.K.? Quite a lot! In principle it's the same. They drive on the left; the road signs are easily recognisable and although roundabouts are a recent introduction the rules are the same. Bike hire from a legitimate registered company is a must. The bikes nowadays are insured, approved, have yellow plates to indicate they are hired and you need an international driving licence and passport details are recorded by the hire company. Helmets are provided although it is not compulsory for the pillion to wear one. Police stops are regular, usually on narrow stretches approaching or leaving bridges. Failure to have any of the above results in an instant fine and they accept card payment. They also do random breathalyser checks. The machines are different to ours as from a distance you blow into a tube and the machine detects any alcohol.

But in practice it's a whole new experience.

Most of the roads are narrow country roads. The surface varies considerably and on a scooter with a twelve-inch front wheel it makes sense to just slow down. Most of the time we are travelling slower than I would generally ride my mountain push bike. Speed humps and traffic calming lines are used as much as the U.K. and in the larger towns traffic lights are being introduced so really there are no surprises to the first-time biker, so far.

To the Indian though they have a slightly different approach. They expect other road users to know what they are doing and where they are going. There is a lot of eye contact ahead, acknowledgment, and they don't take their hands off the wheel except when using the phone. The horn is used to advise drivers in front that they are behind and are going to overtake. If I get a beep from behind, I may already have clocked the car or bike and will do a return beep, and if there's space move slightly to the right and let him pass.



I'm generally in position 1 to 1 ½. I'm slower than the cars, lorries and motorcycles and want to keep clear of getting rammed, especially with precious cargo, a pillion who acts as another set of eyes. Going slower means a lot of concentration on the rear-view mirrors and shoulder checks on every move, as usual. A hazard far worse in India is that the drivers here pull out onto the road from junctions, driveways or from a parked position, all be it slowly, but without shoulder checks or any observation of traffic coming from the right. Indicators could mean I'm going to stop left but I'm going right. Interestingly when turning right from a junction they do look but start moving slowly and expect the traffic to allow them out. U turns are regular for bikes, especially fast food deliveries which are very popular, but in order to get the turn in it's a quick move on the hoof all the way to the left. He's probably checked his mirror, if he has one, the front wheel quickly turns right whilst he's checking oncoming from his left and he pulls across. The stopping distance appears to be shorter in India. Drivers have less time and are anxious to overtake and will do so in order to smack on their brakes and turn left right in front of you. The extra care is required on cross roads and roundabouts. On cross roads a slow approach is required and a definite horn. Eye contact and slow progression. Roundabouts are the same as the U.K. but if they want to take a third exit, they will take the shortest route and cross against oncoming traffic.

Other more interesting obstacles include cows and buffalo. They have sacred priority and surprisingly are given more consideration for speed and room when overtaking. Monkeys can be a nuisance as like deer and will run across the road just in front of you. In mountainous areas they have been known to jump from overhanging trees onto a rider's helmet, usually on a bend when the bike's going slower.

Petrol is cheaper here and garages have dedicated pumps for scooters, usually two for both directions of traffic. They serve you and you need to be sure the reading has been reset to zero before they pump. They accept cards now and delivery is fast as most tanks only take 3 litres of fuel.

Goa is a favourite holiday destination for Indian tourists and the roads are busy in tourist areas for its beaches and low tax on alcohol. As a consequence, the weekend party driving down from Mumbai for a long weekend in a black Mahandra 4-wheel drive with blacked out windows is pretty common and to be kept well clear of. At night there are also heavily cartooned coaches with flashing lights and boom speakers that drive into Goa from around India for short breaks. Part of the attraction is that there is loud music played all day but they do tend to stay in the resorts.

Despite all the above I have seen very few accidents and I have never seen any road rage from an Indian which seems to be more common place in the U.K.

We are normally in Goa at the beginning of March which means Holi Festival. Over a ten-day period, there are road blocks in different villages and the locals ask for a few rupees to party in return for a quick spray of coloured powder paint. Great to start off but we have learnt to say no and they keep a respectful distance. The powder used to stain the clothes and hair which wasn't so good.

Well, we've enjoyed 27 years of travel in Goa mostly in the North and have friends with bikes here and do our Sunday rides out and trips around Goa. Having sat nav has been a major advantage as in previous years we have returned our journeys only after getting help from locals. Once someone showing us a suspended bridge pass over paddy fields that we were surprised could take the weight of a scooter and rider. We've seen funeral pyres, weddings, all kinds of religious festivals and have ridden in the dark dodging fire flies! They are a happy, friendly people.

We just love India!



## 2026 Quiz

Something to keep your brain cells active when the opportunity (for some) to ride is restricted.

### Motorcycle Related Slang

A light-hearted take on lingo often used by those in the motorcycle community. See how many you know (no prizes this time – just the smug self-satisfaction of knowing too much if you manage to get them all correct).

1. Hog
2. Gixxer
3. Busa
4. Bonnie
5. Beezer
6. Royal Oil Field
7. Beemer
8. Steel steed
9. Chicken strips
10. Slip on
11. ATGATT
12. Squid
13. Spill
14. Lowside
15. Highside
16. Dank Wheelie
17. Back warmer
18. Brain bucket
19. Farkles
20. Twisties
21. Rat bike
22. Cager
23. Thumper
24. Tyre Kicker
25. Tank Slapper

Answers further on in magazine.

# A Third Thursday Ride out write up February 2026

The day started with the usual meet up time for winter runs, this time at the motorway services at Sowton, Exeter.

I arrived a bit late, but in time for the scrum down or briefing with the usual disclaimer and humour, this time from Hamish. In the meantime, we had a lovely chat amongst ourselves, with 10 of us arriving for the ride expecting Les Mosco, but poor Les was not well....so Hamish came forward as Pilot.

Hamish, renowned for his dry sense of humour, quick wit and his mickey taking, was on good form as usual.

The day started very well, initially thought it was going to rain as skies were cloudy and dull.

The Pilot's instructions were - we're going onto the motorway after the Services, coming off the first junction for Honiton, onto the A30, and he wasn't marking until we were at Cranbrook.



The roads were wet and slimy in places, especially in the countryside. Our first turn off was past Cranbrook, on the old A30.

Then into the country heading towards Fenny Bridges, lovely place with the Greyhound Inn passing on the left, then back onto the A30 dual carriageway on past Honiton, coming off for Dunkeswell. Passing Smeatharpe Airfield, the roads were still quite wet and slippery, but this made no difference as some nice overtakes were made.

The wind was icy cold at times as we passed the airfield and I'd wished I had plugged in my heated jacket, but I thought better of it from the start because it was warm, or intended to be warm from the weather reports.

Encountered some lovely stretches of road, nice bends plus lengthy straights, this meant good practice of doing some nice overtaking.

Overall ... good marking as well before we came to our first tea stop near Ilminster, a cafe at Monks Yard; although one rider thought better and followed his Satnav. He left us all at the cafe wondering what he'd done!

Great service and a nice atmosphere with decent food at the cafe. Of course, a couple of us forgot that this was just a tea stop and pee stop, a few of us that had burgers or baps, to be reminded by a pilot that this was just a tea stop, whoops.

From there we went through Ilminster Village, you could see there was still signs of flooding throughout the flat areas that we went through coming into Curry Rival and going to Langport. Langport was a bottle neck because of two removal trucks parked or unloading, what chaos. Well, we filtered and got through that, now onto Somerton then Ilchester, lots of standing water in certain places.... Next part, on past Yeovilton Air Base; you could see the high security on the base by the razor wire on the fences as we rode past and the guards standing outside the guard posts with their guns in hand .... No messing with them.....eyes front...ride on

Didn't like the thought of going through Yeovilton but the route ended well.... Pretty unscathed by this we carried to the lunch time cafe/diner..... would you believe it's Hamish's Farm shop cafe... (thought he was really a rich boy)....

They serve up some lovely food. Tim Charlton was well impressed, not small portions either....good value.

The rest of the ride from our lunch stop (some dropped out from there), through East Cocker, Crewkerne and Chard, which was familiar ground to some of us.

A bit of a funny occurred after the cafe stop, on the way to Crewkerne. Following Hamish, there in front of him was an animal that kept running in front; I thought it was a small dog but turned out Hamish was doing a bit of Hare coursing. It finally darted of into a garden, they do a fair speed!

Coming through Crewkerne I took the wrong turn, as there wasn't a marker....several followed me... (Silly, should know better)...Tony as sweeper putting us right....well left actually.

Finish was onto A303/A30, then Starbucks at Monkton.... Nice ride. Thanks to Hamish and Tony.

A special thanks to one of the group for soaking me on an overtake..... well boys will be boys.

Leanne Wilkinson



## Spring Roads

Spring wakes slowly on the moor  
A pale gold light on granite tors  
And somewhere down a hedged in lane  
A motorcycle breathes again.

The air is sharp with thawing earth  
With wild gorse bursting into birth  
Lambs scatter across the fields  
Where winding Devon tarmacs yield.

Past stone walled farms and moss green gates  
Through valleys where the river waits  
The rider leans with easy grace  
And petals drift across the race.

Bluebells whisper in the shade  
In quiet woods the roads are made  
For engines humming soft and low  
Where ancient Devon pathways go.

Then westward still the road unwinds  
Through salty air and cliff side winds  
Where gulls wheel white above the foam  
And every bend smells faintly of home.

The sea appears in sudden blue  
Beyond the hedges slick with dew  
And down the coast road, riders glide  
With sunlight dancing on the tide.

Across the moor the skylarks climb  
Their songs like bells in open time  
While wind and throttle weave a thread  
Through miles of green and overhead.

And every bend reveals a new  
A patch of sky, a brighter view  
For Spring in Devon seems to say  
Ride slow but never ride away.



Kindly submitted by Simon Jeffery (thanks) but attributed to ChatGPT!

Editor: I know we commented in the last magazine about avoiding this option, but it really makes you think about the impact of AI, eh? Perhaps the role of Editor will be short lived!

# Dear Denzel....

## Advice from our Motorcycling Agony Uncle

### Moving Heads?

Dear Denzil, My observer keeps telling me to move my head when checking my mirrors. "That's what the examiner will expect to see", so I am told. I can see perfectly well behind me without nodding like a Churchill dog. Yours frustratedly.

Dear Rufus (I assume), Oh, yes, I agree with your frustration. Your observer shouldn't be encouraging you to do anything just to make the examiner's life easier. In my experience examiners can do their jobs effectively without being spoon-fed exaggerated head movements. There are a few definite advantages of looking properly in your mirrors though: Firstly, you DO have a blind spot. (If you think you don't ... well, you won't be alive much longer anyway, and the discussion becomes irrelevant). Secondly, not only do you want to see that there is something behind you - you also want to know how far away it is, how fast it is going, and what it is likely to do next. You can't judge these things properly using just a glance. Thirdly, by moving your head you are GIVING the following traffic a strong hint that you may be about to turn. Contrary to popular belief within the motorcycling community, other road users do not want to deliberately kill you. If you can give them advance warning that you are about to manoeuvre, they will react appropriately, and the world will be a much happier place. So YES, make use of head movements ... but NO it's not for the benefit of the examiner. Yours noddingly, Denzil.

### Bus Lanes

Dear Denzil, Some people in my advanced motorcycling club say that it is only appropriate to use bus lanes if I enter at the start and continue to the end. That is, no joining and rejoining halfway along. I can find no rules or regulations about this. What is the situation in Devon?

Yours Anonymously.

Dear Polly, You should understand this is largely a theoretical question in Devon. In most cases motorcycles are not permitted to use bus lanes at all here. The exception is in Plymouth but we generally don't worry about what's going on in that strange corner. Let's assume we are talking about a more enlightened county where motorcycles are permitted to use bus lanes. I fear the people you mention have fallen into the common trap (in the advanced riding world) of making up rules where there are none. If you can safely change from one lane to another without hindering or causing confusion to other traffic, feel free to do so: there are no rules preventing you from swapping lanes. If you find yourself going in and out more frequently than your left leg doing the okey-cokey, I'd certainly challenge your advanced planning skills. But there are no rules about this per se. Yours, Denzil.

## Are you sure?

Dear Denzil, In the previous edition you seemed to have a rather biased (if succinctly stated) preference for Triumphs over BMWs. Surely with their superior off-road capabilities, Bavarian reliability, exquisite electronics, superior comfort, vast versatility, and with a global dealer network providing support wherever you choose to ride, surely, SURELY, BMWs are the way to go? Yours Otto Fritz.

Dear Otto, Triumph. Yours preferably, Denzil.

## 2026 Quiz Answers

- 1. Harley- Davidson (usually linked to a cruiser type motorcycle)**
- 2. Suzuki GSX-R sport bikes**
- 3. Suzuki Hayabusa**
- 4. Triumph Bonneville**
- 5. BSA (which, for those who don't know stands for Birmingham Small Arms Company)**
- 6. Humorous twist on the name of Royal Enfield**
- 7. BMW**
- 8. Old-style term for a motorcycle**
- 9. The unused edges of a motorcycle tyre that haven't touched the road. Often used as a way to measure a rider's (over?) confidence to lean their machine over whilst riding.**
- 10. A motorcycle's muffler**
- 11. All The Gear All The Time**
- 12. A derogatory term for a rider who wears little or no protective gear**
- 13. To have a crash or tumble**
- 14. A crash where the motorcycle slides out from under the rider, on its side**
- 15. A crash where the rear wheel loses then regains traction, flipping the rider and motorcycle over**
- 16. Slang for a high-angled wheelie**
- 17. A pillion rider**
- 18. A motorcycle helmet**
- 19. Any non-essential accessories added to a motorcycle**
- 20. Winding or curvy roads that are particularly fun to ride**
- 21. A motorcycle that is not washed and looks poorly maintained, though its appearance can be deceptive**
- 22. A derogatory term for someone driving a car**
- 23. Nickname for a single-cylinder motorcycle**
- 24. Someone who spends a lot of time examining motorcycles for sale without any serious intention of making a purchase.**
- 25. Used to describe a potentially dangerous and uncontrollable wobble or oscillation of the handlebars and front wheel of a motorcycle.**

# The Advanced Rider's Guide to Looking Like You Know What You're Doing

There comes a point in most motorcyclists' lives when people start assuming you actually know what you're doing. It's a slightly worrying moment. Usually, it happens once you stop stalling at every other junction, own more than one set of riding gloves, and someone at the café asks you for tyre recommendations.

The awkward truth is that "advanced riding" isn't really about knowing everything. It's more about looking calm and vaguely competent while travelling at speed on two wheels, surrounded by unpredictable humans in metal boxes.

In other words, it's about learning the art of looking like you meant to do that.

## The Art of Doing Less

One of the first things you notice when watching really good riders is how little they seem to be doing.

Newer riders tend to look busy. They're adjusting their position constantly, gripping the bars for dear life, making lots of little corrections. Experienced riders often look almost suspiciously relaxed.

The bike turns smoothly. The throttle comes on gently. Braking looks calm and controlled rather than dramatic.

It's not laziness. It's efficiency.

After a while you realise motorcycles are actually very good at being motorcycles. If you give them clear, sensible inputs they'll generally behave perfectly well. The trick is not confusing them by trying to do too many things at once.

From the outside it all looks effortless.

From the saddle it still feels like you're quietly negotiating with physics.

## The Legendary "Smooth"

Ask any instructor what separates average riders from really good ones and you'll usually get the same answer: smoothness.

Smooth throttle.

Smooth braking.

Smooth steering.

Simple advice, but not always simple to achieve.

Smooth riding comes from doing everything just a fraction earlier and a fraction more gently than your instincts might suggest. Instead of grabbing the brake you progressively squeeze it. Instead of snapping the throttle open you roll it on as if you're turning a dimmer switch.

None of this makes you slower. In fact, it usually makes you quicker.

And it definitely makes the ride feel a lot more civilised.

## The Motorcycle Is Usually Not the Problem

Modern motorcycles are astonishingly capable machines. The tyres can generate more grip than most of us ever fully use, the brakes are powerful enough to make your eyeballs shift forward, and the suspension is far more sophisticated than it used to be.

Which leads to a slightly humbling realisation.

Most of the time the limiting factor isn't the bike.

It's the rider.

Many of us discover this during training days or group rides when someone disappears around a bend at a pace that seems entirely unreasonable, while riding the exact same road you just tiptoed around.

It's a useful reminder that there's often a lot more performance available than we think.

## The Rider's Sixth Sense

After enough years on the road, you start to develop something that feels suspiciously like a sixth sense.

You begin to notice things earlier.

The car waiting at a junction that might pull out.

The van driver who hasn't spotted you yet.

The corner that looks like it might tighten halfway through.

It's not psychic ability. It's just experience quietly building up in the background.

You start picking up on small clues – a wheel turning slightly, a driver looking the wrong way, a patch of road that might be a bit shiny. Spotting these things early means you can adjust smoothly instead of reacting suddenly.

This is generally a lot less exciting for everyone involved.

## Relaxing When You Don't Feel Like It

Another favourite instruction from trainers is simply: relax.

Relax your shoulders.

Relax your arms.

Relax your grip on the bars.

This is excellent advice, although it's often delivered while you're approaching a corner a little quicker than feels entirely comfortable.

The natural reaction when something feels tense is to stiffen up and hold on tighter. Unfortunately, that's exactly what makes the bike less stable.

The better approach is supporting yourself with your legs and core so your hands can stay light on the controls. The bike then gets on with its job without you accidentally interfering.

It takes practice. And occasionally a conscious reminder to breathe.

# The Advanced Rider Poker Face

Finally, there's one advanced skill that doesn't appear in many riding manuals: the poker face.

Things go slightly wrong from time to time. You might miss a gear, fluff a downshift, or realise halfway through a corner that your entry speed was perhaps a touch optimistic.

The key is not to panic.

A calm correction, a smooth roll-on of throttle, and carry on as if everything went exactly according to plan.

Most of the time nobody notices anyway. And if you can make it look deliberate, people will assume you knew what you were doing all along.

Which, if we're being honest, is sometimes half the battle in advanced riding.

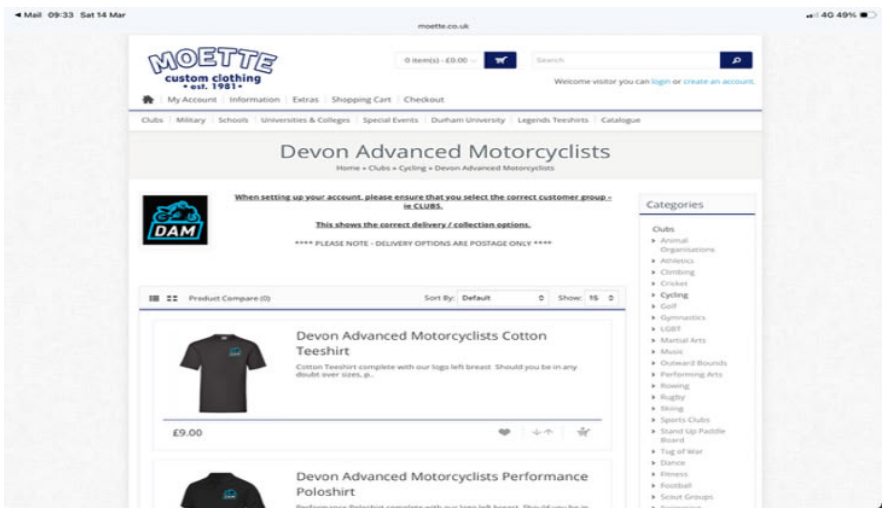
## Carefully researched and submitted by S Jeffery

### DAM Merchandise

The DAM Marketing have been working hard to set up a simple way you can order DAM kit. Please follow the link below to see the DAM merchandise you can purchase.

<https://www.moette.co.uk/Clubs/Cycling/Devon-Advanced-Motorcyclists>

Please be aware you have to pay for P&P. You may want to combine your orders with a few friends to reduce the overall cost of postage.



**Moto Gear, No Idea? Learn Here!**

## **Secondhand Savings**

**By Daniel Knight, a new DAM Magazine series**

Not everyone is able to afford the newest, latest, "greatest" (in the largest quotation marks size 11 Arial afford me) motorcycle kit. I completely get it - costs are going up and up for everyone, but available funds aren't. And with moto PPE regulations getting pushed further and further, manufacturers are needing to pay more and more to get their stuff onto the market. ECE22.06 and EN 17092 coming in (new helmet and clothing regs and tests respectively) and the much higher testing costs mean these companies have to make their money back somehow. And unfortunately, us consumers are always the ones to feel those costs the most. So, why not check Marketplace or eBay for a bargain? Or maybe even DAM's upcoming buy-sell RDE?

### **Cheese and Wine**

Many things get better with age, cheese and wine being good examples. You cannot beat a good bit of cheddar that's been in a cave for years, and I will die on that hill. But motorcycle gear is not the same, age and how it has been used can make a huge impact on their ability to keep you safe.

Starting from the top, helmets do have a shelf life and you NEED to pay attention to it. Contrary to a belief that I think started when plastic shells on helmets started to become a thing, the defining factor in helmet age is not the shell, but the EPS inside. Oh, dammit, I haven't gone into helmet anatomy before. Alright, get ready to get immediately bored.

### **The Immediately Boring Bit**

EPS (Expanded Poly-Styrene) is the most common means by which impact is absorbed in a helmet, and also the cheapest and most researched. Just like everything else on the market, it absorbs impact by compacting down, preventing that energy from an impact being transferred to your skull. That would hurt. However, not all EPS will be the same. Most helmet companies will opt for "multi-density EPS, which is where the polystyrene is cured/heat-treated to create different densities; this comes about



with soft EPS being better at absorbing impacts at low speeds, and hard EPS better at high-speed impacts. Most manufacturers will do 2 or 3 densities, but premium manufacturers (excluding Shoei) will do more than that. You can end up with EPS layers and zones having up to 9 densities (which is the highest I have seen). Arai, always the outlier, is the only helmet company to have multi-density, single piece EPS in their helmets, which is INSANELY expensive to do.

Why does this matter? Because polystyrene ages and will harden, crack and flake away after enough time. It CANNOT absorb impact anywhere near as well. During a visit to Arai Europe, my manager at my previous job witnessed the testing of 2 Arai helmets of the same model - one being brand new, the other being around 6 years old. After doing the exact same tests as would have been done on ECE 22.05, the new one passed with flying colours; but the old one BARELY passed. Not only a testament to how solid Arai is, but also shows how much age can stop an old helmet being safe.

Jackets, trousers, gloves, boots and armour will also all age. It's not quite as obvious, though, as waterproof membranes can get worn through and not cleaned; leather dries and cracks, especially through use in rain and when not being cared for; Kevlar/aramid fibres will gradually weaken with age and washing (specifically Kevlar and aramids); solid armour will crack and flake just like helmets; and viscoelastic armour (working on a principle of being a non-Newtonian fluid armour like D3O will become solid on impact) will gradually lose its ability to create those bonds and therefore loses protection.

### **So, can I buy secondhand?**

Absolutely! But here is my advice for each bit of kit. These aren't hard and fast rules, but keep all of this in mind when looking to buy used kit.

#### **Helmets**

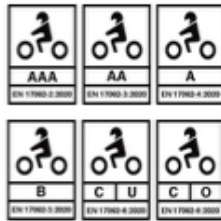
Don't.

Seriously, don't risk it. People don't clean their helmets and helmet liners properly, they store them in garages (please don't store your helmet in your garage, the petrochemicals in the area will react with your helmet's EPS and accelerate the aging process), they drop them (damage can be invisible but fatal), and they won't have the same head-shape as you. This one is key, because it's the same reason I never recommend sharing helmets: because each person's head will be a different shape, it will bed into their shape. You need a good fit all round for a helmet to be effective, but if someone else is regularly wearing your helmet, it means it's ALSO bedding into their shape. That compromised fit could mean the liner could be loose or uncomfortable, but more importantly, the micro-bedding in the EPS will be wrong and could mean it cannot absorb an impact how it's supposed to. Just wait for a sale in a shop, buy local and make sure you wear the helmet in-shop for at least half an hour.

#### **Jackets and trousers**

These are where you CAN more easily see how a garment has aged, and therefore can get a good deal. When looking at listings, make sure it has a decent bit of detail (and double-check to see if they used ChatGPT or other gen AI in the listing, because it gets all the fine details wrong) and good pictures. If you end up going to look, don't commit right out of the gate. If it's textile, have a look around the garment's surface to see unusually light or dark areas in the major contact points for the road: elbows, shoulders, knees, hips, lower back. Those discoloured areas could offer insight into if it has been "pre-tested". Having a look inside the garment, make sure there are no weird stains, and if it has a waterproof membrane you can see (normally a white or grey plastic-y feeling layer), a visual inspection to see if there are any stress marks, excessive

dirt, flaking or seam tape peeling/missing normally tells you if it will be waterproof in the future. Also do a pocket check, see if the seller has been putting sharp keys in the pocket, that could wear the membrane too.



With leather, it's a bit easier again.

Leather is a natural product and needs nourishment to keep going strong. Ask the owner if it has been taken care of, like with regular leather cleaning and a feeder (normally a liquid product) - consider asking them what they use, and consider skipping if they say saddle soap, that's not gonna help bike leathers in the long term. Again, look

for discolouration, repairs, any cracking or stress marking.

If the garment is new enough to have an EN 17092 rating, look for it on the labels inside, it will HAVE to be permanently attached to the garment to be sold. This will mostly be related to the abrasion level of the garment: C is "impact only, no abrasion resistance"; B is "limited abrasion resistance, no armour" (but more often than not, you can add armour or wear armour underneath, see if it has U for under, O for Over); A is "armoured, limited abrasion resistance"; AA is "armoured, decent abrasion resistance"; and AAA is "armoured, highest tested abrasion resistance".

Look at the armour to see what condition it is in, plus ask the owner if they know how long ago, they bought the garment. If you have any doubts but still want to go ahead with the purchase, replace the armour as soon as possible. Any included armour should have EN1621 on the inside face of it, with a Level 1 or Level 2 rating, with the Level 2 offering more impact protection. You will also see some lettering about the location intended for the armour - E for Elbow, K for Knee, B for Back (with some additional lettering like CB being Central Back, FB being full back, or LB being Lumbar only), H for Hip, KP for Knuckle Protector, and L for Leg (specifically the shin, but this can be combined with K to form a K+L knee and shin protector).

If everything seems good, try it on. Don't leave without trying it on. Jackets and trousers vary on fit depending on intended use, but the general quick tip version is: race fit, tight to slim; sports or casual, slim fit; touring, tapered fit with adjustment. Don't size up "to fit a thick jumper".

## Gloves

Gloves are one of the few secondhand items that can really be hit and miss. Because the palms of the gloves are in constant contact with surfaces like grips and pillion grab handles, it means that the surface of the palm will gradually wear thinner and thinner and thinner. It can be difficult to feel, but it's something to be aware of. Looking at the gloves, again look at the obvious stuff - weird light or dark spots, obviously thin material that's not supposed to be thin, scratches or bumps on the knuckle armour, the waterproof membrane looks fine (don't be afraid to put a bit of newspaper in the glove and pour a bit of water on the outer of the glove to see if it leaks), any thermal

liner isn't fraying or dirty, things like that. If they are heated or have some other cool feature (like some gloves have a dual chamber design with a waterproof side and a vented side), make sure these features work as expected.

Something to remember is that a lot of people seemingly buy fake motorcycle gloves, often from places online for not a lot of moolah (bike kit costs for a reason!). These fake gloves really do not offer much protection, so don't risk it. Make sure the gloves have an EN 13594 rating, as well as a Level 1 or 2 rating, with the Level 2 offering way more abrasion resistance. It will say KP for Knuckle Protector, if it has one. The most important thing, though, is fit - try on the gloves and flex and grip your

hands as much as you can. You don't want skin tight and you don't want over-hangs on the fingers, you want a slim fit for pretty much any glove. Don't size up for a liner, because that just compromises the fit when you don't have the liner in. Gloves want a flat palm layer that a proper fit offers, because if the worst happens, you are offering way more surface area for the friction. If the glove is too large and it bunches on contact with the ground, you are significantly reducing the surface area for the friction, which means way more pressure on that one area - there goes your skin once that palm wears through or bursts open.



## Boots

This, in my opinion, is the bit of kit where you can REALLY get some good deals. Look for scrapes and unusual dark/light patches, scratched metal bits, the usual signs of crash damage. If the boots are leather or some other animal product, make sure it has been taken care of - good boot owners will normally make sure the leather is nourished, clean, and often polished. You also want to have a close squint at the "stress points", especially in the ankle and toe regions, where the flexing happens whilst walking. This will normally be where the leather will first crack. And as with the other bits, don't sacrifice a fit for a good deal (or seemingly good deal), you want enough room for a medium density sock but not enough that a thin liner sock will be way too loose. Only exception to this will be with race style boots, they're really only for liner style socks. On that point of race boots, some use an inner bootie, make sure you are aware of if it's supposed to have one and make sure it's included.

For boot labels, look for an EN13634 label, which will also have a series of 1's or 2's to delineate protection in different regions. In order, these numbers will equate to: first, boot height, with 1 being ankle height, 2 being shin height; second, abrasion resistance throughout the boot, with 1 being the lower resistance, 2 being higher resistance; third, impact cut (so a weighted blade dropped onto the boot material)

with 1 being the lower resistance, 2 being higher resistance; and finally, the transverse rigidity - again, 1 being less resistant, 2 being higher resistance. Generally, short urban/classic style boots will achieve 1's and maybe the occasional 2; and then boots like race, adventure and high touring boots will have 2's with maybe a 1 in there, normally the transverse rigidity one, as some touring boots will have a more flexible sole and shank (normally a plastic insert within the sole to add rigidity, although there are other options and some amount of variation in that, such as TCX's Z-Plate technology).

### General advice and final words

As always, remember the best tool you have as a buyer is the ability to walk away from a sale. Don't commit until you are 100% happy, because it's very easy to regret a purchase, especially one going into 3 figures, and reconsider if you have any doubts at any state of the sale. As a seller, do your best to take care of your stuff, it helps with value and shows you know what you're doing. Most importantly, be honest - lies get found out at some stage.

I hope this is of use for you, any questions, please shoot me an email at "Daniel.knight@devonadvanced.com"!

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Duncan Haddrell, Phil Keeling, Nigel Porter, Dave Sutherland, Ashley Curtis, Tim Capps, Tim Pigott, Steve Cooke, Bob Newey, Juan Garcia, Dave Bright, Simon Prosser, Peter Lane, Stephen Ashton

## Test Passes

Associate	Observer
Alexander Eltringham Steve Ditchburn Matt Cleave John Mather	Leanne Wilkinson David Strickland Graham Hirst Steve Westlake

# The Observer Team March 2026

NO = National Observer - 42

LO = Local Observer - 6

TO = Trainee Observer - 1

## **NORTH AREA (10)**

NO: Robin Watts TL  
NO: Nigel Bond  
NO: Simon Kidner  
NO: Martin Rushworth  
NO: Andy Pratt  
NO: Hector Vass  
NO: Stuart Taylor  
NO: David Strickland  
TO: Sandie Puttick  
TO: Jonathan Evans

## **EAST AREA (9)**

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

## **SOUTH AREA (12)**

NO: Dave Page TL  
NO: Phil Pike  
NO: Steve Westlake  
NO: Tony Curley  
NO: Graham Hirst  
NO: Barrie Dennett  
NO: Nick Marks  
NO: Andrew Robertson  
NO: Richard Thorns  
NO: Brian Lee  
TO: Jonathan Mendez  
TO: Sam Iskander

## **WEST AREA (8)**

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

## **CENTRAL AREA (9)**

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

## **'FUTURE OBSERVERS'**

Roger Sell – Ashburton  
John Paradise – Newton Abbott  
Philip Ware – Loc TBC  
Neil Gibbett - Barnstaple  
Andy Yarwood –  
ex LO moving into area 2025/6  
Greg Evans –  
NO moving into area 2025/6  
Tim Redman  
Marc Youle-Grayling –  
NO moving to area Q4 2025  
Dave Sutherland –  
NO moving into area Q4 2025



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

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

Also please double-check times after clock change. [www.devonadvanced.com](http://www.devonadvanced.com)

Date	What	Where
<b>APRIL</b>		
Sat 4	<b>Rookie Ride (south-ish starts) (open to all members)</b>	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start
Sun 12	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9:30 am for 10.00am start
Weds 15	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details. contact Les Mosco lesmosco@hotmail.com
Thurs 16	<b>Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)</b>	See Website for details. 9.30 am for 10am start. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sat 18	<b>Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)</b>	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Sat 25	<b>N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)</b>	See website for details (A Rookie Ride in the north-ish) 9.30 am for 10am start.
Sun 26	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9:30 am for 10.00am start
<b>MAY</b>		
Sat 2	<b>Rookie Ride (south-ish starts) (open to all members)</b>	See website for details 9:30 am for 10:00 am start
Sun 10	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9:30 am for 10:00 am start
Sat 16	<b>Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)</b>	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Weds 20	<b>Rider Development Evening</b>	Learn how to weld! – presentation and talk from Leanne W. Venue: The Twisted Oak, Exeter, EX2 9RG
Thurs 21	<b>Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)</b>	See Website for details. 9.30 am for 10am start. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sun 24	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Sat 30	<b>N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)</b>	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.

JUNE		
Sat 6	<b>Rookie Ride (south-ish starts)</b>	See website for details
Sun 14	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9:30 am for 10:00 am start
Weds 17	<b>Rider Development Evening</b>	Grand Swap/sell bike gear event Venue: The Twisted Oak, Exeter, EX2 9RG
Thurs 18	<b>Third Thursday Group Ride (full members or associate with observer)</b>	See Website for details. 9.30 am for 10am start. Contact Les Mosco thursdayrides@devonadvanced.com
Sat 20	<b>Post Test Training Ride (open to all members)</b>	Contact John Millgate Triumphjohn955@gmail.com
Sat 27	<b>N'ookie Ride (north-ish starts) (open to all members)</b>	See website for details 9.30am for 10am start.
Sun 28	<b>Group Ride (full members or associate with Observer)</b>	See website for details 9.30 am for 10 am start.

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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.

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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 [rookierides@devonadvanced.com](mailto:rookierides@devonadvanced.com) or our Group Rides co-ordinator [grouprides@devonadvanced.com](mailto:grouprides@devonadvanced.com) for more information.



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## Committee & Club Officers

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

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