

This Month:

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Published appx 28th of each month. Wheel to Wheel and full details of SAM are available via www.sheffielddiambike.com.

The content of this newsletter may be questionable and thus not conform with the views of the IAM, SAM, or anyone of a sound mind.

A sad start: As you will have seen on the SAM site; on the third of January, Paul Balmforth lost his battle to stay with us. The Chairman spoke for us all and his words are repeated on the last page.

Objects in the mirror...

Gone off white? Did it come on subliminally? Previously considered as the colour of the next machine; an aid to conspicuity? But if we were daft enough to ride in snow, who would see the bike?

For those who believe in the law of averages; with a Winter like this we are due for a scorching Summer? Remember those? Eee, when we were lads and lasses, all't Summers were warm and sunny, wi' just t'odd shower ter keep yon grass green. Aye. According to the Mother in law, RIP, it all stated to go wrong just after the Russkies sent the Sputnik up. Best not argue.

Objects in the foreground...

Have you resolved? Somewhere amongst the New Years resolutions, did there lurk a desire to make 2010 the best motorcycling year possible? For many in 2009, the treat of taking the machine over the water did not come to pass and the chore of monitoring the forecasts, in search of a settled spell long enough to inspire an extended UK trip brought nought but disappointment. This year why not think about a more decisive approach? Why not resolve therefore to worry less over the weather and maybe take Mark's Hexham and Mick's Eiffel trips?

The deadline for booking yourselves on the April Eiffel trip, is looming and June is filling up so... Go see the 'forthcoming' pages on the SAM site!

Also, if deep in the sump the desire to further up-skill incubates, you will be looking forward to the **i2i motorcycle training** presentation at **Treeton on the first of Feb** and might have the diary ready. **Don't miss it!**

As for 2009? Were too many outings merely the means to get out there and pursue an accomplished ride? Not a bad thing by any means but, along with the roads, the lunches, and the social banter, did an insufficiency of novelty or an over sufficiency of familiarity arise?. Déjà vu eventually generates a yearning for Vujà dé.. A feeling that you'll come here again. But if you do? The cycle re-boots. Hmm, Have we covered this before? Within a feasible radius of camp SAM there must be some hitherto unexplored places for a stop off, be them historical, cultural, or picturesque, providing an hour or two of different but complementary satisfaction? If you are so minded and have suitable places in mind, drop in a note please. A places to visit page on the site might eventually result.

An admission of ignorance; It's Global Warming. I know insufficient of the causes and, even less about the integrity of the proffered remedies. There's much focus on Co2. What puzzles, is that if the combined activities of the entire human race generate only 5% of the Earth's annual Co2 output and... the total output from all sources makes up for only 0.038% of the atmosphere... then 'our' contribution must be 5% of this 0.038% i.e. 0.0019%. That's 'nineteen parts' in ten thousand! (Source MCN...Cripes!) Can it be true that if we reduce this over twenty years to say ten parts in ten thousand or, more correctly 'one part' in a thousand that it will make sufficient difference? I so want to be on side peeps but refuse to be a mindless sheep. Ignorance and scepticism remain, co-existing with a loss of confidence in much of the media output. **What we do know**, thanks to the excellence of 'QI' is that if certain digestion related bacteria can be successfully transferred from Kangaroos to Cows, they will similarly become **devoid of the ability to produce and expel digestive (Methane) gas!** It could save us all!

Live long... Don't ride behind a SAGA after lunch... Ron.



Polo Shirt	£17.50
Polo Shirt Ladies fit	£17.50
T-Shirt	£14.00
Sweat Shirt	£19.60
Rugby Shirt	£23.60
Woolly Hats IAM/SAM	£8.00

Tel. Steve Dyson 0777 929 4149

Dates for 2010

Month	Club night	Committee
Jan	none	27th
Feb	1st	24th
Mar	1st	31st
Apr	12th	28th
May	10th	26th
Jun	7th	30th
Jul	5th	28th
Aug	2nd	25th
Sept	6th	29th
Oct	4th	27th
Nov	1st	24th
Dec	6th	none

SAM Social events for 2010

Candy Town – Meal -

Ride, Picnic and games (Venue tbd)
Autumn Boogie £7-50 per head

Sat	Feb.	27
Sun	July.	18
Sat	Nov.	??

Ladies rides (chaps also welcome!)

First evening ride- from McD's Meadow hall
Second evening ride - ditto
Second day ride - ditto

Tbd
Tbd
Tbd

Club night features

Feb 1st 2010

Mar 1st.

Apr 12th.

May 10th.

June 7th.

July. 5th.

Aug. 2nd.

Sept. 6th.

Oct. 4th.

Nov. 1st.

Dec ?

i2i motorcycle training.

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AGM?

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Congratulations



Due to the traditional lack of a January meeting; we congratulate below those who have recently passed their Advanced test but have not yet received their Certificates. We'll get 'em again when the appropriate ceremony and photographs are taken, meanwhile: A thorough well done to all!

12th December 2009	Malcolm Hayes	Observer: David Mawhood
28th November 2009.	Julian Rawthore	Observer - Peter Harley
	Drew Lodge	Observer – various
20th November 2009.	Alison Marsh	Observer -- Alan Yates
7th November 2009.	Sean Whitehouse	Observer -- Paul Boardman

Why not mail in and tell us all about the journey?

Did you miss the reunion?

With no Saturday turn outs for about four weeks in a row, in anticipation of better conditions the GS received a thorough pre-ride inspection and a fastidious clean, almost but not quite to the impossibly spotless standard set by our Treasurer... failing at the final fence due to an insufficiency of Anorak! (apologies Chris... thank goodness you ride as well as you clean) All this was in preparation for the possibility of a turnout today – 23rd Jan, in sympathy of Mark Dunstan's turnout up last week to witness a total no show, having as a result, to settle for a convivial chat with himself whilst yet again admiring his Muffs from close quarters! See page 11 for more about Mark's Muffs.

So... off then this am. for a 9 o'clock arrival and turning into McD's it seemed almost like Piccadilly Circus. Lots of HNY's and 'Haven't we met before?'s and, in the case of a witty greeting to Roy Hobson... Would you care to join the Group sir? Tee Hee. In total a good two dozen were there. It was reinvigorating to see so many, and hear several honest admissions of the need for some re-familiarisation. Can we lose our edge so soon? Yes we can, so Les sez, 'Be extra careful first time out.' All this was avoided by the Chairman though, as a result of disgracefully turning out with far more wheels than a man in his position should. i.e. 4. Shame on you sir!

A score or two miles of Derbyshire's finest tarmac later, despite vestiges of snow on the hills and verges it was agreed over breakfast by Gerry, Michel and Mark that turning out had been a good decision. The roads, variably damp to wet, reminded of the need for a competent technique if this was to be 2010's first venture into spirited effort. Anyway, it was, and the riding was easily able to remind why we do this thing that we do. The minds progressively cleared and the bikes became progressively filthy. A small price to pay for this uplifting if premature salute to the oncoming Spring.

If you weren't out you missed a good day... Come on all you Associates, Observers are waiting!

View From A Quiet Car Park - Where are the wimps? – or was it an Advanced decision?

Saturday December 19. I awoke and looked out of the window. Decisions, decisions. Should I go to Meadowhall Retail Park or not? The previous couple of days had been wet and an overnight frost left a white covering on the ground with possibilities of black ice lurking on exposed surfaces.

I decided to get ready slowly, have my porridge (with salt of course) and then have a good look at the road.

Duly fortified, I ventured out and checked, all seemed reasonable, the frost had all but gone so I decided to wait a further 15 minutes before getting kitted up and setting off to meet the other brave souls willing to put up with the cold in anticipation of a bikers breakfast to fortify them for the rest of the weekend!

Just as I was leaving the phone rang – it was a text message from Les telling me he couldn't get up his road because of the ice. This didn't bode well for the other SAM members who live out in the sticks.

I had made my mind up to go so off I went, carefully, until I reached the bus route (which had been gritted). Still on my road I turned right and had a bit of a back end twitch at the junction which is open and exposed and is always the last bit to clear.

On the bus route I got stuck behind a woman in a blue Micra who refused to go more than 15 mph. No chance of an overtake so I had to suffer for more than a mile until I took an alternative route. The rest of the journey to Meadowhall was uneventful but it was just before 9:30 when I arrived.

I could see as I entered the car park that not many bikes and therefore not many bikers were there to greet me. There were only two, Richard Lyons and Brian Wilkinson. We shook hands and after the usual complaints about the weather conditions and what was forecast for the following week began a discussion on "WHERE ARE THE WIMPS?"

After a further 10 minutes with no one else appearing we decide to call it a day. Richard was off for some breakfast and Brian wanted to try out his new heated socks. (Are they any good?). We shook hands again exchanging best wishes for the forthcoming festivities and with hopes for some good riding days early in the new year.

As Richard and Brian were readying themselves I got back in the car and ...Oops, I didn't mention I was in the car did I? Well it was the "advanced decision" under the prevailing weather conditions. So the other bigger wimps also made the advanced decision by not even turning out.

Well done Richard and Brian you managed to uphold SAM's reputation for riding all year round.

I hadn't intended being out on Boxing day but I was disappointed at not being able to get the scooter out on January 2, 9 and 16. Thank goodness for the Optimate keeping the battery in tip-top condition throughout the subzero temperatures. Not much to do for a couple of weeks – hibernation nearly set in. Putting food out for the birds and watching them squabble over the titbits helped break the monotony.

January 23 came at the end of a mild week when most of the snow had gone so it was hopefully back to normal with guidance starting up once more. A reasonable turn out at Meadowhall, well over twenty bikes – more than some weeks last summer - but as may have been predicted, a lack of Associates. Thankfully two brand new Associates turned up. So not everyone went off to enjoy themselves on ride-outs, some of us had to "work". Welcome then to John Dickinson and Chris Aldridge. Chris was down for an assessment but promised to join up next week.

Finally, I must defend the honour of my Readers Digest Pocket Dictionary. I've had it from a pup and it has served me well through school and college; a constant companion for over 44 working years! Latterly, it has been neglected due to e-dicts from spell-check, although it is still useful when there are several spellings of a word and spell-check gets the wrong one. I was therefore somewhat hurt by "The Pain On The Saddle's" rather disparaging remarks. (**What say you Hon Sec? Is this one to run on?**)

Alan Guidance Coordinator (Underworked)

(I lied about the salt in my porridge, I have honey.)

Life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes....

Now please wash your hands Alan.

Chapter and Verse? - Harley's and err... Speeding

E-Mail recently received by the Chairman and irrationally forwarded to the Editor

From: mikeclayton@xxxxxxx

To: rqdickerson@xxxxxxx

Subject: **Fw:** Lead rider speeding issue

Date: Fri, 15 Jan 2010 08:47:18 +0000

Subject: Lead rider speeding issue

Many of you have contacted me and expressed concern regarding an article that was published in MCN back in December in which it was reported that an individual had been prosecuted and fined for speeding whilst leading a group of riders. The report has prompted questions about the implications on Chapter group ride leaders and a fear that the front rider of a group ride may or can be prosecuted for speeding even if he/she isn't. I have had the details of the case – not the MCN report - reviewed by the legal team here at Harley-Davidson. These are the findings they have come back to me with:

“Mr. Clark, the lead rider, was caught doing at least 25mph above the speed limit. This is why he was prosecuted. Whilst his fine reflected that his own speed was an aggravating factor in causing one of the riders following him to break the speed limit, Mr. Clark's own speed was the reason he was in court. The ruling does not mean that a lead rider, inside the speed limit, is liable to be prosecuted if someone following is speeding. The court did not provide any guidance on this, since this wasn't the situation they were addressing, since Mr. Clark himself was at least 25mph over the speed limit. It does suggest, though, that the lead rider should take into account that his or her own speed will influence the speed of those behind him/her, not least because if he/she is prosecuted for speeding, the court may take this into account.”

Based on these findings, I would like to reiterate the guidance I previously communicated:

All Chapters should endeavor to prevent incidents and employ group riding operating policies that include codes of conduct. They should include these imperatives: 1. Never pass the lead Road Captain or Lead rider and 2. Never pass another rider whose motorcycle is in motion participating in the group ride. These should be clearly communicated to anyone that participates in a Chapter's group rides, either in writing or during a pre-ride briefing. As a proactive measure, I would encourage all of you to incorporate these statements on your event release forms which all participants should sign prior to participating in a Chapter group ride.

And also emphasize these basic safe group riding practices taught by Riders Edge and that I'm confident are already employed in your Chapters: If you are the lead rider of a group, bear in mind that your speed will influence the speed of those following you and **OBAY THE SPEED LIMIT**.

Marjorie Rae

Manager, H.O.G. & Rider Services.

Reply to the Chairman:

Mike,

You have sent this to the wrong person, I am a Motorcyclist not a Harley Davidson rider, nor a member of a 'Chapter'. I once belonged to a paragraph but was soon demoted to the Sentence Team and ultimately the Word Group. I mention this, as being merely a 'Character' yourself, you have probably had an even harder time.

Ron.

Never pass another rider who's motorcycle is in motion participating in the group ride....?????????????
Fer #@<k's sake... Haven't they heard of the 'drop off' marking system?

IAM Rider Skills Day – Mallory Park –15th April and 21st October - 2010

Reminder: If you want to take part please contact:

Lyn Francis (Skills Days) - Institute of Advanced Motorists - 510 Chiswick High Road - London, W4 5RG.

Tel. 02089 669668 for full details or:

You can find more details or you can purchase on line at iam.org.uk

You will need to log on with your membership number and go to the events diary.

Let us know if you book!

Adapted from 'Bike' Magazine:

Counter steering: Removing the confusion.

At it's crudest level, Counter steering means simply pushing the handlebars to make the bike turn. Push the left side of the bars away from you to turn left – or push the right side of the bars away to turn right. Sounds wrong? That's why it's called Counter steering.

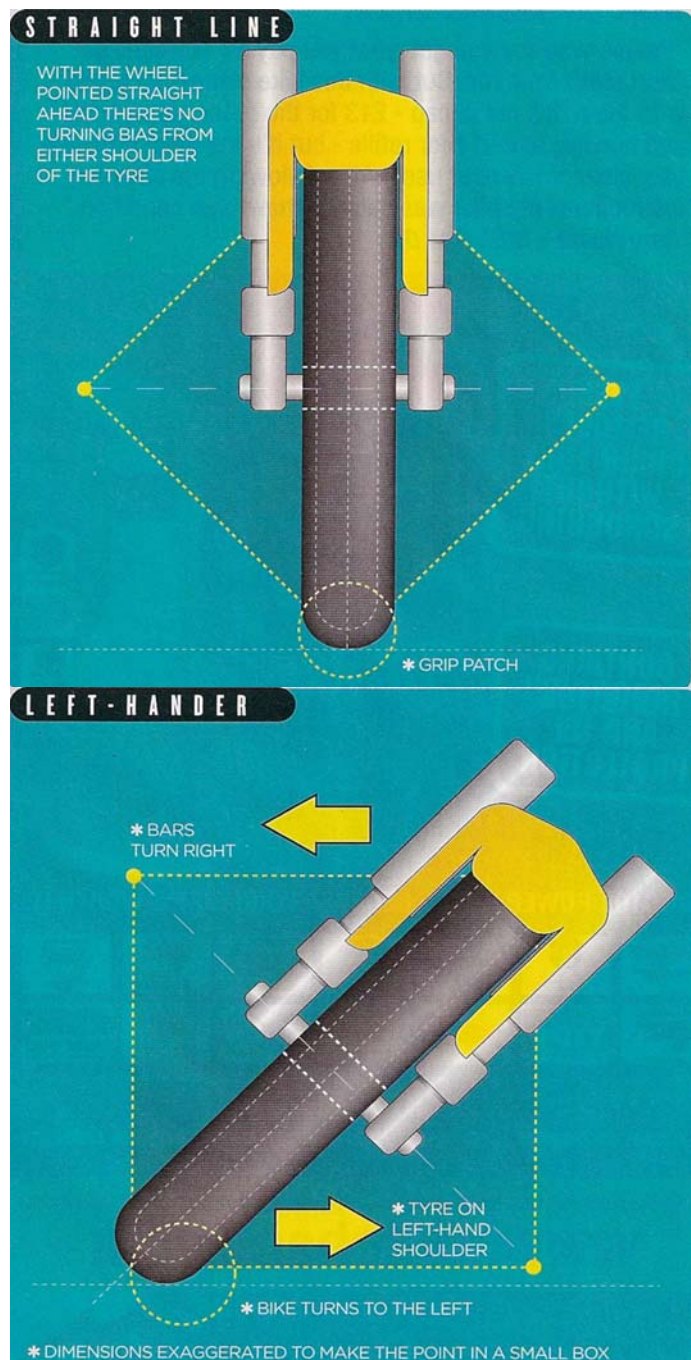
Imagine a pair of ice-cream cones stuck together at their fat ends. As long as the tips remain at an equal distance above a flat surface, the cones will roll along in a straight line. But, if one of the tips (say the left one) is lowered to surface level, then because of the tapering profile of the cone the conjoined pair will roll in a circular fashion to the left. Counter steering works by using the tapered shoulders of the front tyre in the same way.

Pushing the left side of the bars away makes the front wheel point and turn slightly to the right and so forces the left hand shoulder of the tyre profile into contact with the road surface. (See lower diag.)

The wheel will now prefer to run in a circular direction around a theoretical point to the left of the front axle.

Because we do not wish to turn as tightly as the ice-cream cone example, the movement required to induce Counter steering can be very small. In fact, it can be so small as to be barely noticeable.

To a very small extent Counter steering occurs as a natural result of leaning the bike. But, letting the bike do all the work leads to a slower rate of turn and a feeling that the bike is resisting your wishes. Actively Counter steering lets us turn far more easily or more quickly. QED?



Cafes and Truck Stops Galore

Hello all, I've often thought it would be a good idea to have available a list of cafes and truck stops to "assist" when planning a ride. It also seemed to be sensible to make such a list as generally available as possible so I'm pleased to report that Peter has agreed to place it on the members pages in our SAM site. This is in both in html and pdf. format as a table containing names and grid references and also as a Garmin ".gdb" file to be viewed in Mapsource. It is probably possible to convert this latter file into one that can be used on other SatNavs.

It is an amalgam of lists posted on the UKG's'er site - in particular by "ebbo" who has produced lists of cafes and, separately, of truck stops – and is augmented by suggestions from other individuals. I should say that I take no responsibility for the accuracy of the data – perhaps there's a project for someone: to check all 400 odd references, it might make a grand "Round Britain" ride!?

Good riding and eating.

Pete Harley.

Thanks Peter, a very welcome facility.

Its those 50 limits again. Adapted from 'Bike' Magazine.

Do you remember the blanket 50 debacle? And the subsequent Government climb down?

Here's some news on the current approach.

Every rural A and B road with a National speed limit is now subject to review.

The Government has requested all local authorities to consider reducing each limit to 50 or even 40 on a piece by piece basis where they think it might make a difference. The review must be completed by 2011 - i.e. within the next 11 months! In theory, alternatives must have been considered and rejected before a change can be made.

Notice of any change has to be published at least 21 days before enactment and, if no valid objection arises it will go ahead. 'Publishing' may consist of as little as an A4 page secured to a nearby lamp or sign post and a brief note in a 'local' Newspaper.

The good news is that anyone seeing an 'impending change notice' can object, and, all objections must be given proper consideration. Otherwise 'Automatic approval' takes place.

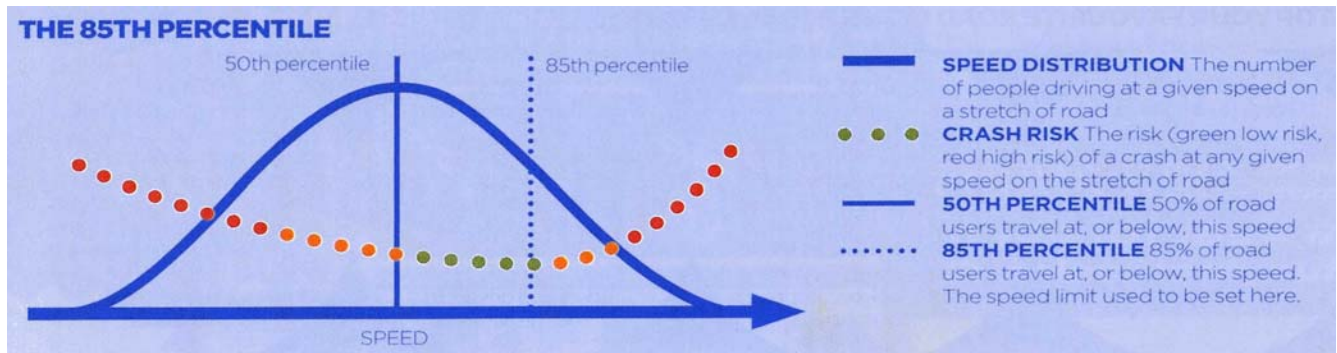
The Road Safety Foundation (www.roadsafetyfoundation.com) ranks every classified road in Europe according to a scale of 1 to 5 on its accident risk. On the UK map, those roads at highest theoretical risk are drawn in **black** or **red** and are easy to spot. These should receive attention first.

There are approximately 20 of these in SAM's Bailiwick! We are all up for safety but judging by the quality of some of the recent 50 decisions? We shouldn't be afraid to question!

According to 'Bike' magazine; Here's what you can do...



Why slower isn't always safer



The DfT's own research shows that crash risk alters with speed – and to a point the risk decreases the faster we travel. That holds true until the speed at which 85% of road users naturally travel on any given road. Once over this and into the speeds travelled by the remaining 15%, the risk increases again.

This used to be the key when deciding on a speed limit and was called the 85th percentile and limits had to be set within 7 mph or 20% of it. Since 2006 however the DfT additionally recommends that the 60 mph maximum National limit which was introduced should only be allowed on high-quality strategic A and B roads with few bends and junctions. Lower quality A and B roads with a relatively higher number of bends and junctions should be set at 50 mph whilst those with an even higher occurrence are now a prime target for a 40 mph limit.

A stark contrast with the departments research teams findings which suggests that the 85th percentile is provably the safest speed for reducing accidents.

Just a wee precautionary 'Plug' for Bike magazine:

I've said this before but I do honestly recommend Bike Magazine to all SAM members. Excepts from two of their recent articles have featured within our magazine this month. I find it covers a broad range of our interests in an excellent manner and the riding tips, safety matters and recommended roads make it the best magazine of its type I have found so far.

Vehicle Excise Duty for Motorcycles.

I read somewhere recently that we may soon to be faced with the Europe wide equalisation of Vehicle Excise duty which will simultaneously migrate towards declared Co2 output. Whether the opportunity to swallow motorcycles into the same stomach takes place it's too early to say, but the case for not doing so may be hard to make as the tree huggers gradually take over the planet.

So... lets say for starters that a simple rule turns up... and 2 Euros per gram of Co2 per kilometre output is imputed as the rule?

This means that a motorcycle of the type we tend to favour which typically emits around 110 g/km would pay appx £187 each year. Ok, so it won't break the bank but its not a welcome thought.

Tours 4 Us ? - A note from Andy Clarke

Hi Everyone,

Well the Winter is well and truly here and sadly for many of us, (except of course the hardened all weather riders!) our bikes are not seeing as much road as we would like. Plus, after a long break I feel I need something more than just a Sunday ride-out!

I don't know about you guys, but it's times like these that make me think of riding in sunnier climes. Over the past months I have met some guys who were offering something different in the way of motorbike tours. It caught my eye enough for me to apply for a position as a freelance tour leader.

A diverse team but mainly from military backgrounds, they all have a passion for bikes and for travel. Professional CBT & DAS motorbike trainers, survival instructors, first aid instructors, bike fanatics and businessmen make up an energetic, organised team with the key ingredient that brings it all together.....a sense of humour.

During 2010 they are running tours throughout Wales, the Lake District & Scotland, and throughout Europe to destinations such as France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and are also planning trips to Morocco and to the Balkans.

Usually they do not offer discounts but after successfully getting a place on their tour leader team, and after a little bit of persuasion I have managed to secure "mates rates" for all IAM Group members.

Extra Mile Bike Tours are offering us a 15% discount on their published prices for any individual booking.

Alternatively for any group bookings of 6 paying riders then number 7 goes free PLUS an additional discount of between £50 to £100 off the total group price depending on the tour. They can also tailor tours and courses specifically for our Group if required.

This is compared to their other group offers of 8 paying riders then number 9 goes free.

For more information you can visit their website at www.extramilebiketours.com

Alternatively if you have any questions or queries drop me a line at andrewclarke51@tiscali.co.uk or give me a call on 07930 323300

Ride Safe

Andy Clarke

Thanks very much Andy - lots to look at here.



A Taste of the track : Its Pete and Avril Again with **i2i** track day tales.

We awoke to the delightful sound of torrential rain hammering on the roof of the bed and breakfast. Oh goody...a soaking wet track day to come at Cadwell. We had both ridden there before but each time any rain had held off until after the track sessions had been completed. This time we were booked onto an **i2i** training day for those that had already completed the Machine Control 1 and 3 courses. So the select 42 (hmmm ... life, the universe and everything) who had signed up had already committed to advancing their riding skills and were aware of the **i2i** coaching ethos.

After the obligatory noise check on the bikes we had time for introductions before a thorough safety briefing. This was not to be your “usual” track day – the emphasis was very much to be on taking certain of the skills learned in MC1 and 3, practising them again and then applying them whilst circulating Cadwell Park at (hopefully) increasing speed. Another significant difference from normal track days was the amount of time we would be spending on the track; most of the track days we had attended had the pattern: 20 minutes riding, 10 minute debrief followed by 30 minute break before the next ride. The **i2i** sessions were more intense: 20 minutes riding, 10 minutes debrief followed by 10 minutes to get yourself organised and back to the assembly area for the next ride.

The first few sessions were pretty conventional, being spent making sure that everyone was familiar with the layout at Cadwell and the “correct” lines for each corner; the turn-in point and apex of each bend had been marked with cones to make this easier. The conditions made this a useful start to the day even for those familiar with Cadwell because the track was indeed wet but, in addition, the rain had brought down some of the pine-needle-like leaves from the trees at the Hairpin. Thus the track was very slippery if the line cleared by everyone wasn't followed closely – this did catch out a couple of the riders though, happily, no-one was hurt and damage to bikes was limited.

After a couple of sessions circulating the track came the main practice session which took place in the pit area next to the main straight. Everyone was together for this as Tom first recalled the skill we were to practise – in this case braking without applying weight to the bars. The group was split into two, one half to practise the technique while the others watched and commented on what they saw; then the two groups swapped so that everyone had the chance to recall earlier work and apply it. Then the scene moved to the uphill corner just before the Mountain. Here the task was to apply the technique of braking while tightening the turn. Everyone had several attempts at both tasks with feedback given by Tom and his helpers.

Then back to circulating but now using the techniques just practised to go faster, confident that speed would be able to be scrubbed off where necessary. Then we had a break for lunch followed by a briefing on the afternoon sessions. The role of Tom and his helpers changed; now, rather than leading groups round the track, they were available for individuals or groups. All that was necessary was to ask

and some extra tuition varying from being followed and having your technique assessed to following them to improve your timing and rhythm. Essentially, the ride was tailored to your need.

The new “topic” for the afternoon sessions was the use of movement on the bike to change the way the bike behaved while cornering. Being able to try this out at Cadwell was a major improvement over working on it in the rather artificial circumstances of the airfield near York that I2I use for their road-riding courses. Here it became clear the movements on the bike made a significant difference to the speed at which it turned in to bends and to the confidence with which you approached those bends. Personally, I (Pete) made a complete pig’s ear of my first attempts to do this; my timing was completely off and the bike became less rather than more stable. However, one session following one of the helpers sorted all that out and the remaining sessions became more relaxed and faster; beforehand I had been being overtaken with monotonous regularity but now I seemed to be circulating in a little quiet cocoon of my own – bliss indeed!

Eventually it was the end of the day and the final debriefing session where everyone gave their feedback to i2i. The general view was that it had been a superb day, very professionally handled and with lots more track time than usual. Given that this had been i2i’s very first track day it had run extremely smoothly and we’d recommend it without reservation to anyone who’s already covered their MC1 and MC3 courses.

Pete and Avril



By 2012, Unmanned military-style spy drones which can fly for 15 hours and reach altitudes of 20,000 feet, making them invisible from the ground are to be used to monitor antisocial motorists.

According to a report in The Guardian, a Home Office-backed partnership led by Kent Police aims to use them for ‘monitoring antisocial driving’ as well as fly-tippers and protesters.

Documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act reveal .that a prototype equipped with high-powered cameras will begin test flights later this year, the paper says. The scheme is a pilot for **country-wide use** of the technology for “surveillance, monitoring and evidence gathering,”



An outbreak of Muffery, an interview with Mark Dunstan.

Regular Saturday attendees will have noticed the recent Muff outbreak which started with a single occurrence sometime around the beginning of last year on the machine of Mark Dunstan. He was seen sporting the rare 'Yellow' strain.

During an interview, Mr. Dunstan admitted that he had 'created' the Muffs by adapting the Frankenstein process described within in a novel by Mrs. Mary Shelley.

Due to genetic deficiencies, the resulting Muff was originally assumed to be a reluctant breeder, however, due to recent instances of the strain being spotted aperc at least five other SAM motorcycles, Mark warned of the urgent need to review this belief and has taken the precaution of raising the National Muff infestation 'alarm status' to level two, i.e. infestation Imminent.

The first additional occurrence was spotted just before Christmas, on Mr. Brian Tate's machine and gives rise to allegations that Messrs. Dunstan and Tate now conspire to offer a Muff 'Breeding and Advisory' service. When asked, Mark admitted this and to spending a great deal of time on the internet, searching for further inspiration. He said, 'I have recently come across Muffs bred from Rabbit skins, Deer, Muskrat, Seal and Dog!

Mark is determined to keep his hand in... Experiments continue involving the greater use of Genetic transfer techniques. The introduction of DNA from Mountain Goats, is expected to improve off-road skills, and material from the male gender of the long haired Sheep has already been tried. Mark said, 'They looked rather nice and offered greater warmth, but at higher speeds were inclined to mate vigorously with certain other clothing and glove materials. Steering ability was compromised.'

Work is also progressing on the Bum Muff, in the hope that a 'Shivering' gene can be introduced to the DNA helix thus providing an automatic massage facility for longer journeys on colder days. As a precaution, The Bum Muff, will not contain any long haired Sheep DNA unless by 'special order'.

Mark says, 'The prime justification for harbouring a Muff, or more commonly a brace of same, is their ability to keep riders extremities both warm and dry, enabling the use of thinner protection. The Yellow strain also improve visibility but at the price of being the antithesis of high fashion.'

Further experiments pursue a reduction in drag which might be achieved by careful cross breeding with the 'Trollenburg' strain. As a potential aid to overtaking; this strain, will feature a special aerofoil section which originated in Switzerland and is commonly attached to the calves of downhill ski racers.

Mark does not claim novelty, he says the UK has a long history of Muff breeding. It was introduced to women's fashion as early as the 1500's and later became popular with both sexes.

'Their origin', he continues, 'can be traced back at least to Roman times, when the place of the glove was taken over by a lengthening of the sleeve (*manicae*) so as to cover the hand. In winter, special sleeves of fur were introduced. Also, earlier, in Medieval Latin we find the word *muffulae*, is defined by Du Cange as *chirothecae pellitae et hibernated*, and in a Cartulary of the year 817, is explained the 'issuing to monks of sheepskin coverings to be used during the winter'. Thus the 'muffulae' is clearly distinguished from the glove used in summer'.

'Additionally, **Muff** (Irish: *Mágh*) is a village in County Donegal in the northwest of Ireland. Each summer, usually during the first week in August, the village celebrates a Muff Festival which includes various activities including Muffing competitions and street partying.'

Do you have a secret hobby readers? Write in and tell.

Paul Balmforth



It is with deep regret that we learned of the death of Paul earlier this month. He died just after midnight on 3rd January.

As we all know Paul put up a valiant struggle to recover from his accident, which occurred just about a year ago.

From time to time Maxine reported that her hopes, and therefore ours too, were improving as Paul began to work towards his rehabilitation. It seems that secondary symptoms of pneumonia proved just too much.

I have written to Maxine on behalf of the Group.

Mike C. Chairman.