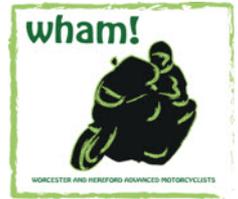




# WHAM! NEWS

June 2010



**Vice Chairman Brian Morgan on a IAM Mallory Park Track Day  
“I’m sure I was over much further than that!”**

## **Contents**

2. Chairman’s Notes & Editor’s Bits and Pieces
- 3/4 Worcester Biker Skills Day
5. “Roof of Wales” Ride.
6. IAM Observer Weekend
7. Have potholes made us better riders?
7. Presentation of GQO Certificates.
8. Prescott Hill Climb; WHAM! Summer Natter Night Rides.

[www.wham-motorcycling.org](http://www.wham-motorcycling.org)

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## Chairman's Notes

As you read this I'll be either on my way to, or in, the Ardennes for the WHAM Summer Tour. As I write this I'm winding up nicely on the pre-trip anxieties of checking over the bike to ensure a trouble-free tour. Is it just me or does everyone become completely paranoid about their normally reliable bike just before going on a long trip?

Several years ago on one of our tours we met George, an ancient German biker with a wonderful sense of humour which seriously challenged the German stereotype. George was riding a similarly ancient Pan European on which he had completed more than 200,000km, mostly touring around Europe. With stereotypical Germanic efficiency George had everything which there was the remotest chance of him, or some other hapless biker, needing in order to complete his trip.



Last year I made a bad decision of not changing the tyres before our trip to the Pyrenees – "I'll change them after the trip". The aggressive Spanish road surface finished the tyres off so quickly I had to buy a set out in Spain – an expensive mistake! Incredible how a different road surface can chew up tyres so much more quickly; it had to be that, there could have been no other reason, could there? We have also had bikes running low on oil and using fuel more thirstily after sustained high-speed cruising on our transfer journeys; these last two accompanied by comments like "it never uses oil!" and "I always get at least 160 miles out of a tank-full". So I guess the lesson for us has been that the bikes respond differently to new usage patterns.

Certainly I'm older, and I'm finding there are more and more things to take "just in case". Hopefully I'm a little more like George now – but I'll never manage the one-liners in quite the same hilarious style.

Safe riding,  
Derek

PS: How good is your Helmet? Here's the link to a very useful (Government!) site on helmet crash performance: <http://sharp.direct.gov.uk/home> It is very easy to use and compare helmets by make, price, type, performance. There is a brief spec-sheet for every helmet and links to the manufacturer's sites. Interesting that Schuberth's new C3 is inferior to the C2!

## Editor's Bits and Pieces

### A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

**Nick Smale, David Denning, Craig Endicott, John Williams and Andrew Hickman**

### ATTENTION - NOTICE FOR NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

The "Win a Yamaha" competition is open to all associates who have joined the IAM after 29th November 2009 and take their IAM test before 31st August 2010. The winner will be the "Best New Advanced Biker 2010" - the IAM will be looking for the rider who demonstrates the most skill and control on two wheels. For more details visit the [IAM Website](#).

### RIDE TO THE NATTER NIGHT- WEDNESDAY 30th JUNE

For the summer months we meet at McDonalds Worcester or McDonalds Hereford between 6.30 and 7 p.m. for an evening ride before gathering together at the Falcon Hotel Bromyard between 8.30 and 9.00 p.m. for a WHAM bike meet.  
Details - page 8.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Many congratulations to **Colin Telford** on passing the IAM Advanced Motorcycle test. His observer was Steve Edwards. Also, well done to our Chief Observer, **Tim Hutt**, for passing his re-test - with flying colours - as a RoSPA Advanced Tutor.



## WORCESTER RIDER SKILLS DAY - SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY

We had a great day at Hindlip Hall for the Rider Skills Day. The event was organised by the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and the West Mercia Safer Roads Partnership with WHAM! being responsible for running the observed rides. Of the 24 booked riders, seven didn't turn up but luckily there were 14 "turn-ups" on the day so we had a full programme anyway. Lots of riders showed great interest and five signed up on the day to do the IAM Skill for Life course.



*Observers' bikes - ready to go!*



*Barb and Steve doing a wonderful job as "Control"*



*Gary Barnes is a bit camera shy - but Rich Smith is always there with a smile on his face! Not sure what Rich's Dad, Robin, is saying! (but he's not smiling!)*



*Lynda and Mark Silvester looked after us brilliantly all day.*



## Worcester Rider Skills Day (continued)



The “Unsung Heroes” of the day (namely Paul Smith and Andrew Price) spent the whole day by themselves directing riders to either the “WHAM Assessed Rides” or the car park for the other events. Steve Edwards visited them regularly to ensure they were OK.

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**Our sincere thanks to all those who helped make the Worcester Day such a good event.**

A special thanks to Paul Kimpton and Clinton King from SAM for helping us out with the observing.

**Observers:** Den Osborne, Eric Reynolds, Ant Clerici, John Nixon, Gary Barnes, Tim Hutt, Phil George, Richard Smith, David Curzon, James Dickson, Derek McMullan, Paul Whitcombe, Tim Wynn, Andrew Wibmer, Brian Morgan, Guy Butcher.

**Control Team:** Barb and Steve Dalloway, Steve Edwards, John Hodges.

**Refreshments:** Lynda and Mark Sylvester.

**Helpers:** Andrew Price, Paul Smith, Andy Peckston, Simon Allen

### **wham! Regalia**

Have you bought your WHAM! clothing yet? We've got polo shirts and T-shirts in stock - for £12 and £9 respectively. You can also buy fleeces and other wham regalia - just let us know what you want. To purchase wham! polo or T-shirts please contact [Eric Reynolds](#).

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**NORTH WALES RIDE - SUNDAY 18 JULY:** The North Wales Ride will be a full day's ride starting at 0930 from the American Diner in Leominster and then following Steve Edward's routes into North Wales. Lunch will be somewhere special and the last tea break will be back at the Little Chef at Woofferton on the A49/A456 junction. Ride distance is about 300 miles over some demanding roads and because of this the ride is restricted to full members or associates recommended and accompanied by their observers. More details in the next Newsletter and on the website.



## **“Roof of Wales” Ride Sunday 23rd May 2010** by *Brian Morgan*

Eleven intrepid bikers, led by Derek, set out from Worcester and ‘collected’ 3 more at Woofferton to make their way onto Den’s ‘Roof of Wales’ ride.



It started gently enough on roads that had white lines in the middle of them, however, Den had all sorts in store for us. During the first section we went over one part of the Eppynt ranges (after I’d got lost)(Photo shows Derek’s KTM ASBO –BIKE set in the stunning scenery of the Wye valley) and we encountered the strange phenomenon of cyclists, about 1000 of them, trying to cycle UP a very steep hill (without engines or anything!). After slowly picking our way through the cyclists and dodging some sheep we had a well deserved breakfast stop at Beulah. From there it was more sheep dodging over Esgairdawe and some very narrow twisties which took us past the Llyn Brianne reservoir to Llandovery (where

we lost Derek). After a spin over the bottom end of the Black Mountains (I got lost again) we went across another part of Eppynt where the military ranges are located. The signs said ‘DO NOT STOP’ so – we didn’t. Part of this road used to form a section of the old ‘Mainland Mountain TT circuit’ where motorcycle racing took place between 1948 and 1953. The old circuit is still there but special permission is required to ride it (maybe next year). More information is available on [www.silverdragons.co.uk](http://www.silverdragons.co.uk).

After a brief period of dodging some sports bikes and an unmarked Police Fireblade we stopped again for some well earned cakes near Rhyader. We went north next and after managing to avoid the attentions of a couple of Police Volvo T5’s we went over St Hermon and down to the main Newtown road and then right, dodging some cattle that had no intention of moooving, towards Knucklas and Knighton and eventually on to our final tea stop at Monkland. I bottled it at this point as I only live 10 minutes from Monkland so I went home.

(Photo) shows those who made it, celebrating after Derek turned up – (Missing from the picture are Steve and Barb Dalloway and Eric Reynolds who headed for home earlier).

The trip was very well organised by Den Osborne and it was only the fact that there were other things going on that weekend (first aid training / observer training) that prevented more from attending. We encountered some amazing scenery along some of the highest points in Mid Wales



and 6 Counties in all. We travelled on some challenging but not to be missed roads and experienced absolutely stunning weather, lots of sheep, cows, flies, Police activity, cyclists, more flies and lots more sheep. I got lost twice (and I was the only Welshman in the group), Derek got proper lost once and Den cheated by taking a short cut.

It was a fantastic day out made all the more special by the people who were there. Many many thanks to Den.

*Photos: Derek McMullan*



## Biking in the Costa del Powys (IAM Observer Weekend – Llandrindod Wells) by Ant Clerici



### *“Where? And how do you pronounce that?”*

different Groups. There was an introduction by the “bosses” – a bit of role play and discussion and then off out into the hot and sunny Welsh countryside – hey that’s worth repeating – *hot and sunny Welsh countryside*. WHAM is very fortunate to have such good roads on our doorstep – a number of riders from less well endowed parts of the country were completely jealous. It’s a great resource for us.

However, like many such events, it’s not what happened during the IAM bit, it’s the following observations that left me slightly shaky. So here are some highlights – actually “NO” not highlights but “lowlights”. You may recognise where shoulder checks, defensive riding and staying “cool” were relevant to the situation....

- Some people don’t like travelling at 30 in a 30. Me (on my GS) following my “associate” – leaving a 30 into a national speed limit – straight road with good visibility. As we accelerated: we were overtaken by a car at the national speed limit sign who had started to accelerate within the 30 all whilst being overtaken by half a dozen sports bikes.

*What strategies might you employ to be safe in this situation?*

- Whilst de-briefing in a lay-by on a bend – another 6 or 7 bikes came round (their right hander) the first 3 had to back off to get round – their slightly slower mates were smoother because they could cope with the bend at their speed, however all of them were on the wrong line.

*Should the IAM engage with riders like this? Does anyone teach group riding as part of the standard bike test?*

- Another group of bikers – seriously speeding, overtaking us across the hatched area of a crossroads. That was bad enough but there were 2 cars in front – either one might have turned right.

*Presumably, when these riders were ‘learners’, they were trained to avoid this dangerous manoeuvre?*

- A bike following me with hazard lights on – my attempt to communicate this was met with gestures that I took to mean “I know they’re on but I can’t (won’t?) do anything about it”.

*Perhaps he was indicating he had a pillion?*

- A bike overtook me (and the car in front) whilst I was in the “ready to overtake” position; the road hadn’t opened up yet so it was a blind overtake; 1 minute later he crossed the double white lines for the next car – again into a blind bend.

*No point in worrying about this guy – there’s a good chance he’s no longer with us.*

- And I wouldn’t want to be accused of only criticising bikers – 2 cars followed their mate by overtaking into a 40, blind brow with solid white lines.

I guess that you – the readers of WHAM’s mag - are the “converted” but I’m convinced that avoiding hot sunny weekends in Wales might be a good idea. It was clear that every bike in the World was out that day and riding standards would vary – but I was shocked by so much dangerous riding by a significant proportion of the bikes we encountered. The same roads are still there during the rest of the year when those riders with a different agenda have their bikes safely cocooned at home.

I’m now off to clean my bike – the ‘Insects of Wales Collection’ must go!



Photos: Kelvin Ellis



**‘HAVE POT HOLES MADE US BETTER RIDERS?’** by Den Osborne

So how many of us have actually hit a pot hole or bit of winter damaged road since we started knocking up a few extra miles now the better weather is here? I bet all of us.

One of the biggest problems we have as riders and avoiding potential hazards that might hurt us is that of ‘Target Fixation’. I read an interesting article about ‘Target Fixation’ and dive bomber pilots in various wars. The pilots were finding that they were concentrating so hard on their ‘Target’ they were ignoring closing speed, anti-aircraft fire, general surroundings and planned escape route once the bomb was dropped. Inevitably many brave pilots met their maker because of the blinkered concentration/fixation on the ‘Target’ and actually followed the bomb into the ground!! I can only presume the phrase ‘Target Fixation’ that we use in our motorcycle training may have come from the military use. (Perhaps one of you ex army boys will know?)

Some of our newer and less experienced members may wonder what all this ‘Target Fixation’ is about. Briefly one of the basics of riding a motorcycle is that you will go where you look and if you point your nose at the place you want to end up then that’s where you will go. For example, sometimes the corner may unexpectedly tighten up, your ‘bum’ muscles tense up, (we’ve all been there!) and you will look at that hole in the hedge that someone went through a week ago and you will think that you’re going to end up there as well. You will find it extremely hard to pull your eyes away but under these circumstances you must point your nose at where you want to go - the corner exit - and you will get round. The bike will do it no problem and if you keep pointing your nose where you want to go, you will as well. You can easily fixate on the car that pulls out in front of you, patch of gravel or the very attractive horse rider in tight jodhpurs (sorry, that’s fantasizing!)

What is this to do with pot holes you ask? I’m sure we’ve all hit the odd pot hole or bit of rough road we didn’t want to and because it was just an annoying bumpy ride rather than a big off after doing it a few times we started to learn or program our brain to avoid these pot holes by not looking at them too long and fixating on them. In other words looking where we want to go to miss them rather than looking at them to miss them. Hope that makes sense?

A little interesting exercise you could try. Obviously with no traffic about try slaloming the centre ‘cats eyes’ of the road and try not to go over them! By looking at them to miss them you will certainly hit them! The art is to look at the bit in between - where you want to go - not at the cats eyes that you want to miss.

So have pot holes helped our riding by programming our brain to miss them? ----- Answers to your Newsletter Editor for the next issue please!



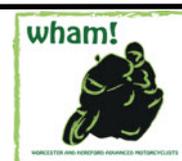
*Gary Barnes with his trainer, James Dickson, receives his certificate from the Chief Observer, Tim Hutt at the May Natter Night.*

**PRESENTATION  
OF NEW  
GROUP  
QUALIFIED  
OBSERVER  
CERTIFICATES**



*Martyn Newman with his trainer, Steve Edwards, receives his certificate from the Chief Observer, Tim Hutt at the May Natter Night.*

*Paul Whitcombe, who qualified last year, at last picks up his certificate from his trainer, Eric Reynolds, at the Worcester Rider Skills Day.*



## Prescott Bike Festival

Prescott Bike Festival - **SUNDAY APRIL 10th 2011**

Prescott Hill, Gotherington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 9RD

First 100  
Run the Hill  
entries get a  
FREE Buff

FREE  
Helmet Park  
& Parking!

SAVE 20%  
With Advance  
Tickets



**If you fancy doing the Prescott Hill Climb in 2011 you'd better get in quick - only 200 riders allowed. The event is in support of Severn Freewheelers.**

For details visit: <http://www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk/>

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## WHAM! SUMMER EVENING NATTER NIGHT RIDES

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For June, July and August we combine the Natter nights with an evening ride which is open to all. We have 2 meeting points - McDonalds in Worcester and McDonalds in Hereford. Please be there between 6.30 and 7.00 pm. Each group will leave promptly and then enjoy circuitous and interesting routes before arriving and meeting at the Falcon Hotel in Bromyard between 8.30 and 9.00 pm. for a drink, a chat and any club business. This is an excellent opportunity for all members, observers and associates to have a really enjoyable evening ride. If you cannot make it to McDonalds in time, then why not join us at the Falcon Hotel. Please make a note in your diary now for:

**Wednesday 30 June - the first of this year's Summer Evening Rides.**

**We hope to see you there!**

