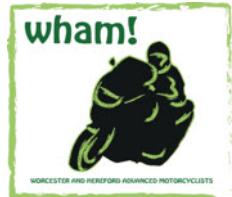




WHAM! NEWS

September 2010



Guess who's got a new bike then?

Rich Smith, one of the “Rukka twins”, goes the whole way and buys the same kind of bike as Ian Barnard. Note the colourful seat!

(How does the other twin react. See page 8.)

Contents

2. Vice-Chairman's Notes *and* Congratulations
3. September Events for All: Slow Riding Day *and* Club Night
4. August Natter Night Report
5. My Garmin! *and* New Members
- 6/7. Four wheels or two! *and* Wham! Regalia
8. Bits and Pieces

www.wham-motorcycling.org

Worcester and Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists.

Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260

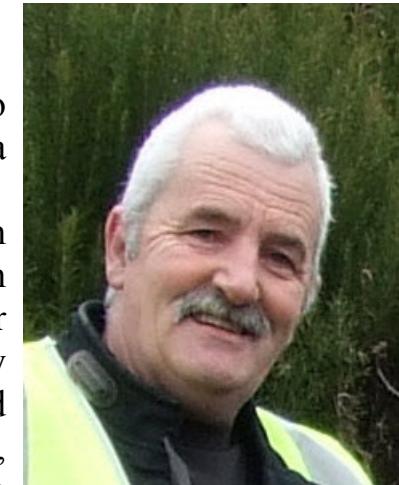
Contact the Editor: Newsletter@wham-motorcycling.org

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THE IAM OR THE WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

Vice - Chairman's Notes

Seeing as Derek is on some remote mountain range and can't get to his pc (I bet he's lost), I thought I'd take this opportunity to post a comment or two for the newsletter.

I don't imagine I'm the only person who has noticed that the sun has starting disappearing a little earlier each day, thus signalling an end to those nice warm evenings that encouraged us to get out for a ride. I know we only had three natter night rides but I thoroughly enjoyed the company and look forward to doing it again; I would even suggest doing more of them next summer – we'll see. Also, it was noticed that the natter night attendance was up for those three nights and I would be interested to know the reason so we can look to repeat the exercise with a view to having more nights with more members. If anyone has any views on this I would very much like to hear from them.



Anyway, I expect that the number of bikes visible on those last Wednesday nights will start to diminish as the seasons roll on (I don't intend getting cold or wet either) but I do intend turning out for the natter nights and I sincerely hope to see as many of you there as possible. You will read elsewhere in the newsletter about this month's speaker so I won't labour it but I would encourage everyone to attend.

There are plans to have some other visitors over the winter months and details will appear in the newsletter and on the website in good time but, for those evenings where no speakers are planned, it would be good to see as many as possible turn up just for the natter and to give everyone the chance to meet. It would also give me the opportunity to talk more members into getting actively involved in some of the future planning and organising for our events and rides.

The committee has work to do over the winter to get us ready for next year's frolics and I sincerely hope that the general membership will have a lot of input so we can all benefit.

In order to try and reduce some of the workload on the committee and, just as importantly, to try and involve the general membership more closely with our activities, it would help if everyone who doesn't currently have a WHAM job could give some thought about which area of planning or organising they would like to get involved. No, this does not mean you'll get dumped on as there are plenty of people available to offer help and guidance. What we need is some small groups working together to help sort out things like routes, skills days, rides to specific events or anything else you can think of so that we can offer everyone more choices. It's your chance to get involved so please give it some thought and - speak to me.

Cheers and take care.

Brian

CONGRATULATIONS

Many congratulations to the following member who has successfully passed his IAM Advanced Motorcycling Test .

Craig Endicott

Observer: David Curzon



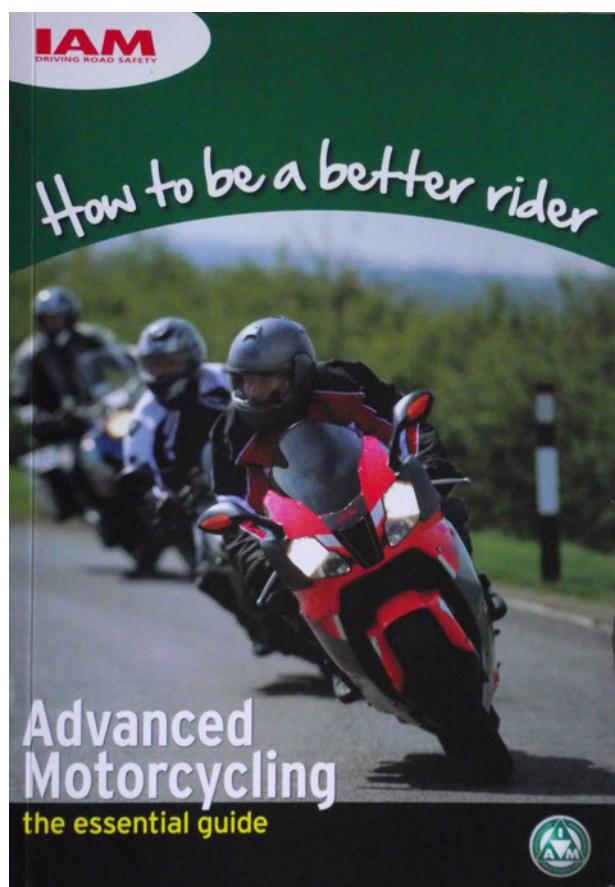
SEPTEMBER EVENTS FOR ALL

SLOW RIDING DAY **SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Den Osborne organises and runs our Slow Riding Days at Throckmorton Airfield - one of the most popular events in our calendar. Great fun and really beneficial at the same time. For all members and associates. Please be there by 0900, ready for the briefing at 0930 and a 1000 start. Also, braking and "positive steering" exercises. Refreshments will be available. The day will finish at about 3.30 pm. Please let [John Hodges](#) know if you are going to attend.



CLUB NIGHT 29 SEPTEMBER 2010 **AN EVENING WITH JON TAYLOR - IAM STAFF EXAMINER AND CO-AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE A BETTER RIDER"**



This is an evening not to be missed. Jon Taylor, an IAM Staff Examiner, is co-author of the excellent new IAM Advanced Motorcycling Manual and is coming to talk to us (and the neighbouring groups we have invited) at our Natter Night on Wednesday 29 September. So, if you have any questions about the manual or, indeed, about any aspect of advanced motorcycling, this is your opportunity to get answers.

The evening is open to all. If you haven't been to a Natter Night before, this would be an excellent time to break your duck. You don't need to come on your bike - and indeed as the days grow shorter, many members revert to four wheels for these evening events. Please make yourself known to a committee member so that you can be introduced to other members.

Jon Taylor is an excellent speaker and will be able to tell us how the manual was designed and created as well as dealing with any problems we may have reference its contents.

Please gather at the Falcon Hotel between 7.00 and 7.30 pm. Look forward to seeing you there.

FOR ALL EVENTS PLEASE CHECK THE [WEBSITE](#) FOR LATEST INFORMATION



August Natter Night

Unfortunately appallingly bad weather meant we had to cancel the last of the “summer evening rides” but a good number still made it to the Falcon Hotel, albeit most travelled on four wheels. The exception was Eric Reynolds, our Treasurer, Senior Observer and Severn FreeWheeler rider and coordinator, who therefore gets a special mention and photo.



Andrew Price receives his IAM Certificate from his observer, Tim Wynn.



Roger Brooks receives his IAM Certificate from his observer, Guy Jenkins (Senior Observer and Red Group Leader)

After the presentations, **Ant Clerici** (Red Group Senior Observer) led a very interesting discussion on group riding. The IAM Group Riding Guide lays down basic and good principles for group riding but then concentrates on the the “second man drop off” system; a system we tend not to use.

Ant has a lot of experience riding in various groups ranging from the WHAM! Vista Summer tours to the Sunday rides. He was not telling us what we should do but pointing out various problems and differences in group riding techniques that he has experienced. What became abundantly clear was that “Group Riding” within WHAM! is an area that we need to discuss more and then agree our procedures. We all go on group rides and this discussion proved the need for the committee to produce some clear and understandable guidelines in addition to the more general ones that are included in the IAM Guide and that we have in our Sunday Ride Policy and Rideout Briefing notes on the website.

The most important point was stressed by all is the need for all riders to always ride within their own skill levels and not to be drawn into riding above their abilities when out with more experienced members. Group riding can encourage competitive behaviour and also the belief that if one rider can do it then so can I. The other factor that sometimes makes riders take unnecessary risks, especially with overtakes, is the fear of being left behind and then not knowing where to go. Both of these behaviours are potentially very dangerous. At the end of a stimulating and informative evening it was agreed that, during the winter, the Committee will review the WHAM! rules and policies for group riding to make sure that we have best possible procedures in place before the next main biking season starts.

Breaking News - Roger Brooks has been selected as one of associates who took the IAM test between November 2009 and 31st August 2010 to go forward, with 50 other riders, to the next stage of the IAM “Best New Rider” competition to win a new Yamaha R1. Well done Roger!



ZUMO™ 500/550



My Garmin and I have not had the best of relationships in the past but now things are looking better.

I bought my Garmin Zumo in 2007 because I was getting fed up with having to stop and consult my maps as I tried to discover the decent biking roads in Herefordshire and Wales. I was absolutely delighted with the unit itself; the way it fitted on the bike and the fact that I could operate it quite easily, even when wearing winter gloves. I found the voice prompts really helpful, although sometimes I had to glance at the screen to see exactly where it was guiding me. However, it infuriated me because when planning routes using the unit (or its computer programme known as MapSource), it insisted on taking me off good roads and sending me down ridiculous little country lanes. I checked

with other users and it was the same for them all. The reason for this was that the automatic routeing programme did not differentiate between unclassified roads that were wider than 4m (ie OK) and those that were less (definitely not OK). (The unclassified "wider or less than 4m" roads are clearly shown on most Ordnance Survey maps.) This meant that whenever I planned a route, I had to check it in meticulous detail to ensure it wasn't taking me off good roads and sending me down unsuitable country lanes - but it still caught me out time and time again. I reported all this in detail to Garmin UK but with no joy. Basically I had to learn to live with it - which was pretty frustrating because the TomTom unit I have in the car does really good automatic routeing - avoiding all the "less than 4m roads" except where there is no real alternative.

As it was, my Garmin and I had a major falling out when it decided to totally misbehave and just do its own thing. As I rode along, the map picture would just change to something totally different making it impossible to know where I was. Then, when (stationary obviously) I tried to input information, it just played around - I'd press a "B" and it would highlight the "Z". Having done all the user fault finding that I could ie resets of the unit and re-calibration of the screen, I had to accept that my Garmin was giving up the ghost. So, should I buy a new one, buy a TomTom Rider or get my Garmin repaired? I contacted Garmin UK and they said return the unit for repair and it would cost £108. This was the cheapest option so I decide to go with it.

I sent my Garmin off and in the meantime reverted to trying to lead a group Sunday ride using the excellent route instructions on the website. (Thank you Tony Davis.) Apart from one hiccup when I felt we should have reached the B4560 (I had to check with Eric Reynolds and his Garmin that we were still OK - we were - the road was just another 400m further on) I managed to get my group to the Honey Cafe at Bronllys. However, it convinced me that when riding roads you are not familiar with, a bike sat-nav is a very useful piece of kit.

5 days after sending off my Garmin I received a refurbished (looks like new) one back in the post. Apart from actually working properly again I was delighted that the unit has all the latest maps on it - and the routeing problems have all been solved. I tested all the routes where I know Garmin had got it wrong in the past and it is now spot on. So I can fully recommend the Garmin Zumo to anyone thinking of investing in this piece of technology. It really is a very useful tool - especially when riding in areas you don't know all that well.

John Hodges

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to **JOHN BENNETT**, a full member and observer from Pembridge and to associate members **JUSTIN AXFORD** from Fownhope, **ROBERT HERITAGE** from Malvern and **JEREMY ATTREE** from Hanley Castle.

ARE YOU REALLY RIDING THE ROAD YOU CAN SEE?

At this time of the season, with lots of good miles behind us, confidence is high. Next time you are out, just check that you are still riding the road you can actually see - and not the road you know! Particularly on limited vision left handers - can you stop inside the distance you can see to be clear and on your side of the road? If there is a broken down vehicle or a turning tractor just around the bend, will you be able to stop in time. We all enjoy smooth and progressive riding but please remember that the "SAFE" bit comes first!!



When are 4 wheels better than 2?

(or when to leave the bike at home)

Leave the bike at home? But it's sunny and I have to be there...I must.
I even cleaned it.....

Normally there's no problem: you simply jump on the bike and ride which makes it easy to miss the odd occasion when it is a problem and you shouldn't ride. "How to be a better rider" discusses a number of issues (page 15) where it mentions fatigue, illness, stress, alcohol and medication. A good list because it describes things that may affect your concentration so badly you shouldn't ride – and that's important!

I'm advocating taking a "personal lifesaver" – a 10 second review of how YOU are.

Fatigue.

Too tired to start your journey – a late night, up at 4am because of....? This is relatively easy to accept; more difficult is when you get fatigued en route. The meeting that dragged on and on then that long diversion to find fuel, the weather has turned wet, it's now dark and the extra concentration of peering through a wet visor...you find the last hour has sapped your energy. But there is a drive to keep going that can override the sensible option of taking a break, getting a coffee, phoning home to say you're running late to relieve time pressure.

There can be a self induced psychological pressure to go faster when tired - to get home quick. Petrol stops are mere "pit stops" where your anxiety increases in the queue to pay (why are they doing their weekly shop now?) - you are desperate to get back on the bike. You can become frustrated with traffic and begin to take risks.

Recognise any of this?

Illness

Again the obvious situation is easy to deal with – if you're unlucky enough to be confined to bed its unlikely motorbiking will be on your mind. But what about when you're recovering; most people try and get back to "normal" life too quickly. Are you intending to ride a fast bike when you're not 100% fit?

Another aspect of illness is when you ride with others – it might be good to tell them about your condition or at least any relevant implications. Some of us need to eat at particular times (diabetic), take comfort breaks (many senior observers), or have the need to take medication. As a hay fever sufferer non-drowsy antihistamine avoids running eyes and helmet constrained sneezing (not pretty)

If you have to wear glasses then wear them (obvious statement but some don't). Make sure they work with your helmet so you are comfortable and are not distracted by that annoying pressure of the frame pressing on your skull. And what happens if you need sunglasses – are they prescription sunglasses that also work with your helmet?

You may even become ill en route – "oh no that pie was off" – your personal lifesaver will enable you to stop and not get back on the bike until you are fit to do so.

Stress

You need to focus on a bike and stress takes this away.

Personal stress, recent bad news, riding to/from a stressful event can all lead to that lack of concentration. So if you suspect the journey involves a stressful meeting then think about not taking the bike – you don't want to return in an angry frame of mind so plan to either leave the bike at home or to have time to de-stress before you ride. Never go on the bike to get away from a row – go for a walk instead.



But what about stress en route?

Plan to have the enough time to get to your destination. Time pressure leads to stress.

There are so many potential triggers for the “red mist” to descend and we all have experienced the jump in adrenaline which you’ll recall leads to the “flight” or “fight” reaction. Stay cool, remember to take that personal lifesaver. Ride with finesse, avoid whatever has caused that moment of reaction.

Whilst on the subject of “staying cool” - being very uncomfortable is in itself a stress that takes your mind off riding. It can physically restrict movement and your ability to operate controls. So if you get too cold – stop and warm up. If you’re too hot beware of dehydration. If you get soaked it’s usually accompanied by cold (see above). It’s often possible to prepare for weather conditions by simply looking at the forecast and wear appropriate gear, carry a bottle of water etc. The advanced biker will spot rain ahead (clouds, cars with headlights on) and put on their wet weather gear before the rain comes.

Alcohol

There’s been so much publicity about this – don’t forget you can still be “over the limit” the morning after!

Medication

Check the side effects!

Dizziness, drowsiness....reduced vision....can lead to a ‘feeling of immortality’?

And finally.....

Your bike

Do the pre-ride check and solve any issues before you ride.

En route - investigate any odd things – a deterioration in grip (slow puncture?), shiny metal disc on your tyre (screw head?), inconsistent controls (cable about to break?), warning light (what the **** does that mean?) etc

So please carry out a **personal lifesaver before you ride – if the answer is “I’m good” then get on the bike. En route – if the voice inside your head says “I’m good” then continue; but if that voice has a doubt – don’t ignore it....its always right!**

And sometimes you’re better off using four wheels!

Ant Clerici

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](#).



Bits and Pieces



Please find attached a couple of pics of some high class scooters that we discovered on our holiday this year to Mallorca.

On close inspection [but not too close for fear of the bikes complete disintegration] it is obvious that the manufacturers don't need to install indicators or head lights or ignition barrels or electrics; just two wheels, a twist and go throttle and an engine.

Amazingly both bikes were used at the end of the day and returned the next morning.



Makes MPOWDER look a bit sick does it not.

Gary Barnes, Observer Blue Group



Ian Barnard, the other half of the "Rukka Twins" obviously couldn't live without a red seat.

Editor's Note. Please send me your photos, articles, stories, kit recommendations, bike bits for sale, letters and comments etc. I'd particularly like a piece from a member who has recently passed their test or an associate member who is test ready, about their experiences while doing the IAM Skill for Life course.

Also, the wham! Newsletter is the perfect place for getting something (bike related that is) off your chest so please write to:

[Newsletter Editor](#).

SUNDAY RIDES

We had a very successful ride on Sunday 5th September although the weather forecasters got it wrong again and it rained all the time. The RV was the Honey Cafe at Bronllys and riders from Hereford, Worcester and Kington all met there at about 10.45 - as per the website guidance.

Members should be aware that Sunday rides take place every Sunday from Worcester but only on the first and third

Sundays of the month from Hereford. However, routes and the cafe stop, with the approximate time of arrival, will be published on the website for every Sunday. Associate members and non-members are welcome to join the rides on the first Sunday of the month. Please see the [website](#) for further details.

