



Thanks to the training team for last months natter night presentation, which was well received with some good debate, one idea that will be pinched and added to this newsletter from time to time is the 'useful biking ideas' thanks to who ever thought that one up!

This past weekend I had a wonderful Sunday rideout to Rhayadar with some great WHAM friends. The sun was shining brightly as Ali Lewis, Lynne Sherwood, Ann Evans & myself, joined by new member Chris Brown set off from Belmont McDonalds, but as the sun was out so where a lot of other bikers that had most likely not ridden since last summer. So keep this in mind when you see an unknown bike approaching, give them plenty of space and let them get out of your life just as fast as they entered it!



The committee is deep in the planning of this years Rider Skills Day, last year we hosted two of these days, one in Worcester and the other in Hereford. This year WHAM decided to put on one day, this will be held in Bromyard at the Queen Elizabeth Humanities College, this location was chosen because it is easily accessible to riders from both counties. If you could help on the day even if its just for a few hours, please contact one of the committee members or email wham.skillsday@gmail.com

Over the past few weekends our Chief Observer Del Britton has put together some observer training ride outs, these were hugely successful and were great fun to boot! So a big thank you to Del and the training team for all the effort involved in setting up these days.

Happy riding

Rog Brooks

The Chairman's Notes by Paul

It's March - the sun is out and roads are dry. I put my bike away without having to wash the salt off. What a fantastic novelty! So it's time to remove the battery charger, check the leathers still fit and get motorcycling.

It was great to see the Training Team Q&A natter night so well attended. Thank you for contributing questions and being involved in discussions on the night. March natter night is the WHAM Quiz hosted by our very own Brucey – Tony Davies. It should be a good laugh so come along and join a team.



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The Chairman's Notes continued

If you have been hibernating (and trying to stay dry), as we enter the new motorcycling season, take time to familiarise yourself with your bike. Give yourself time to become bike-fit and zone in to the dynamics of riding a motorcycle compared to driving a car. We briefly talked about group riding at the Feb meeting and this will be the theme of our natter night in April. If you would like a refresher ride please contact Chief Observer Del Britton or talk to one of the committee and we'll pass on the message.

The great strength of WHAM is you – the members. If you have any ideas or want to get more involved this year please come and have a chat. Keep an eye out in the newsletter for forthcoming events. This year our Rider Skills Day will take place at Queen Elizabeth School in Bromyard on Sunday 27th April. Please let Roger or I know if you are able to help out on the day. We are on the hunt for volunteers and tasty cakes! I look forward to seeing you at the quiz and on a Sunday ride in the sunshine.

Our thoughts are with Ian Barnard who has been layed up in hospital having suffered an aneurysm. I am sure all the members wish Ian a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him out on his bike on a Sunday.

Paul



Thanks to Sharon Palmer for these lovely summer photo's just right to get us in the mood for sunny rides



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WHAM! Regalia

Have you bought your WHAM! clothing yet? We've got polo shirts and T-shirts in stock - for £12 and £10 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: Alex Hoyle.
whamsecretary@trackdown.co.uk



Members articles

WHAMS chief gadget tester, Will Hopkins looks into chain lubrication. Anyone who has seen Will's GS will understand why he gets the above title. I intend to ask Will in future issues to write about what accessories he finds useful and worth adding to your bike.

Chains

By Will Hopkins

Chains are a bit of a love/hate thing for me. They convey the real, raw sense of machine - there's a reason that Steampunk aficionados feature cogs on their haute cogtore - that industrial torque against slack, the childish masochistic fascination with not sticking your fingers near the conjugation of tooth and link. They look good, they work good - and here's the rub, quite literally, as long as they're clean and lubricated - a well lubricated chain is said to be up to 98% efficient in transforming power from the front to the rear sprocket.



Most times I'm racking up about 600 miles a week. I'm leaving first thing in the morning and back home late in the evening and I do things at the weekend and so consequently

motorcycle hygiene suffers, particularly the chain! shaft drive was one of my priorities at the time I bought my GSA. I've tried Scottolers, three of them on three different bikes but they never worked properly - usually I kept losing the bendy metal bit, though I did melt the "behind the number plate" reservoir on my Transalp when I put a new exhaust on it!



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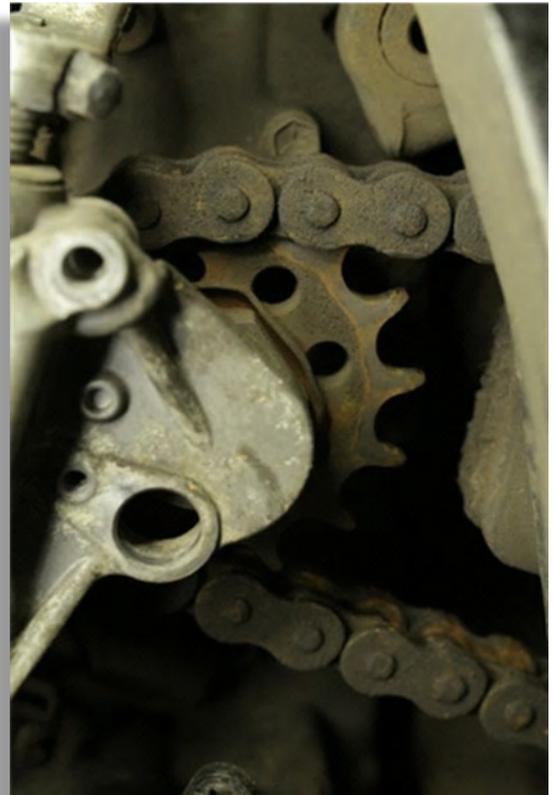
Members articles



So when I came across the concept of a solid block of graphite lubrication at www.CarbonForBikes.com I was very interested and since the 650 VStrom was one of the limited number of bikes they supported I bought into it. The concept is that a solid block of a graphite-based lubricant is positioned on the swingarm under the top part of the chain and the chain "runs along" the block picking up graphite "dust" which creeps its way across the chain and into the rollers. The mounting mechanism to hold the block differs from bike to bike though and this is why there is a limited range of bikes supported;

- BMW - F650GS, F800GS, F800R, S1000RR, HP4
- Honda - Varadero 1000, CBF1000, Fireblade, CB1300
- Kawasaki - Versys, Z750, KLV1000, Z1000/SX
- Suzuki - 650 VStrom, older 1000 VStrom, Bandit 1250, GSX1250
- Triumph - Daytona 675/R, Tiger 1050, Street Triple

Does it work? Yeah, it does - but (I'll get to the but later). The unit cost me £226 (it's flogged in EUR) which was the holder with mounting for the VStrom (€150) and three additional carbon inserts (€35 each) and I fitted it in November last year along with a new chain. Just after fitting the bike sat around for a few weeks due to heavy rain, leaves and cold and without any oiling did get rusty looking. However this was just surface and cleaned off easily enough. When I started using the bike again more through the spring I found the chain remaining flexible, without any tight spots and I wasn't doing anything except hosing it down! Great! There is a good film of carbon which will come off on your fingers looking like brake dust. Best of all though, no fling and no gunk build up around the front sprocket. I do give the chain a good clean every 3 months or so and after that I'll apply a good amount of liquid lube but after that I let the carbon block do its work. The bike as a whole stays a lot cleaner - as does the number plate. These pictures are from a strip down – there is NO GUNK! Dust & dirt yes but no treacle.



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Members articles

As the chain rubs over the block it starts to wear it down, creating a channel which eventually meant it wasn't picking up so much carbon and so I engineered a way to lift up the block so that more of the fairly large amount of remaining block could be used up. A year and about 12000 miles later I have just replaced the first carbon block. So if we depreciate the unit over five years, that's about £55 for 12000 miles about eight cans of chain lube, 1500 miles per can. Hmm, this is the first time I've costed it out and while it's certainly not a money saver it is a time and dirt saver



Would I fit it to another bike? Well the

VStrom (which is one of my 2 bikes) will be going in the Spring (as by then it will be just over 2 years old and have 30,000+ on the clock) and we'll be getting another bike for Angel - "no, you're not having my GSA!" - and if it's one of the above (only candidate will be the BMW F800GS, probably Adventure version) then it depends how much maintenance SHE's prepared to do on HER bike. I'd probably suggest it, yes, BUT (ok, end of the article, here's the but) whilst the product works, there is zero support response from the company behind it.



(My suspicion is they're a bunch of blokes with a good idea but not really an effective business.) The guys who run the Triumph Offroad School in Malvern expressed an interest in the unit when they saw it on the VStrom - as they do a lot of desert expeditions (ex-army chaps doncha know!) and the carbon lube is particularly well suited as you don't grab any grit into the oil lubricating the chain. However when I had a question about the initial rust I had no response from several emails, even when I dangled a potential of teaming them up with Triumph, so you order at your own risk!



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Club Notice Board

Up coming EVENTS

Natter night 26th. Tony's Quiz Evening

Remember to check the 'Programme' section of the WHAM website for the SUNDAY ride out routes.

This months youtube video

[2014 BMW 1200RT review](#)

[Building a BMW](#)

Members Good Idea's

Draw string bag, folds up tiny for under seat storage. Rog

Visor wipe, works like a car wiper blade. Den

90 deg valve, makes life easier at the garage. Alex



The Chief Observers page

WHAM Newsletter March 2014 from Chief Observer

What are the commonest causes of motorcycle crashes?

In the majority of collisions, inappropriate speed for the conditions is a factor. The most common causes of all motorcycle crashes in the UK are:



Right of way violations – drivers who look but fail to see. The commonest cause of a motorcycle collision is when a driver looks but fails to see a motorcyclist approaching a junction and pulls out across their path, mainly on urban roads at low speeds.

1 in 3 drivers involved in a daylight collision with a motorcyclist failed to look properly and didn't see the rider before the crash

Loss of control on a bend, corner or curve on a rural road. Crashes on bends are often the rider's fault. They are more likely to be fatal because of the speeds involved as even a small mistake can result in loss of control: 7% on left-hand bends and 5% on right hand-hand bends. Most occur on unfamiliar roads and 65% of riders deaths are on rural roads, involving only the motorcyclist and no other traffic



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The Chief Observers page



Even a small mistake at the wrong speed can result in loss of control. An inappropriate speed could be 20 mph in a narrow street crowded with pedestrians moving in and out of the road..... or 60 mph on a straight open road if you are tired and your attention is split between several tasks.

Errors of judgement. In manoeuvring the machine, often at low speed. This type of collision tends to result from poor bike-handling skills or loss of concentration, and often leads to injuries as the rider falls off the bike.

Overtaking. In about 1 in 8 collisions, the rider was making an overtaking manoeuvre just before the collision.

Critical learning from experience.

Most riders involved in a crash do not accept that they contributed to it. If you think that you did not help to cause a collision, you will also think that you have nothing to learn from it. Your riding behaviour won't change.

To become a better rider, the first step is to recognise the resistance in ourselves to accept responsibility. The second step is to accept every near miss and collision as a learning opportunity to decide how you can avoid the same mistake in future.

For example, crash statistics show that all riders are at risk from the actions of other road users who fail to see them. If you have a 'look but failed to see' crash, you can choose how to view it. Is it all the responsibility of the careless driver? Or can you take action to reduce your own vulnerability? You can choose to reduce your chances of 'look but failed to see' collision by anticipating this potential hazard whenever you ride.

Del Britton
CO

Graham Foxall took up Del's offer of a refresher ride-out and here is Graham's experience in his own words

"My assessment day with Del, my feedback and impression"

After passing my advanced test some 12 months ago I still felt that I had an awful lot to learn, observing and watching all the other riders when we go out on Sunday mornings. So therefore with the old adage nothing ventured, nothing gained, I contacted Del via email and he agreed to do an assessment ride which we did last Thursday on 6 March 2014.



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Members' Articles

With the belief that good preparations might make for a smoother ride, my day started very early - bike washed, chain oiled, oil level checked and a quick stop at my local garage to fill up with petrol. I did remember mpowder and thought I may be tested on it. I hoped an early start would afford me the time to relax a little at the falcon hotel.

The journey there was somewhat eventful in itself. On the road between Great Whitley and Bromyard, attempting to keep to the national speed limit (60 mile an hour), a police car, on the wrong side of the road and exceeding the speed limit, came hurtling towards me. He swerved to avoid me and I attempted to carry on with the words of roger brooks in the back of my mind. "they are only in your life for a few seconds". It was then that I noticed the road kill. March is a classic time of the year for badgers to be out and about in daylight hours finding food for their young. Unfortunately, this particular badger didn't run quite fast enough and, in my opinion, the dead badger in the middle of the road was what the officer had, unsuccessfully, tried to avoid.

There is another theory that the police officer was attempting to get a better view of the road ahead, that was Del's theory!

I got to the Falcon Hotel, ordered myself a hot chocolate to chill out, wind down and relax. Del arrived and debriefed me on the task ahead. We donned our helmets and set off on the predetermined route. There were three main sections of the riding assessment and, at the end of each section, Del debriefed me on the strengths and weaknesses of my riding. I found the assessment to be very useful, highlighting the areas that could be improved such as 'remember good and regular use of the mirrors ensures you know who is behind you at all times'. Funnily enough, every time I looked back today I saw another bloke on a motorbike with a camera on his helmet. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't lose him!!! Joking aside though, the feedback was positive and constructive and provided me with clear targets for improvement and advancement.

In addition, the whole experience was captured for posterity on video and posted on YouTube. A great thank you to Del, my assessor, Roger Brooks (my initial observer) and Gary Barnes my observer, for passing on their wealth of knowledge and helping to make my motorcycling experience so much safer and enjoyable.

In my opinion we should all go through such assessment annually.....

These are my main learning points;

keep out of the dirt and mud which deposits in the centre of the road (position 3).

Keep looking up at the horizon and exit (limit point) of the corner.

Conduct a blind spot check only if required, don't do it just as a routine. The priority is the road ahead, only take your eyes off the road if you require to do so, remember; good and regular use of the mirrors ensures you know who is behind you at all times.

Keep your head and thus your view up right try not to lean your head with the bike, this makes you feel like you are leaning the bike more then you are.

Good progress through out in some not so great conditions, well-done.

Good control and hazard management through out, excellent.

You kept on line through the corners (after the briefing) which extended your view and lessened the turning circle, excellent.""

Graham

If you believe an assessment ride is required please go through the WHAM associate coordinates who will try there best to assign an observer when one is available.

Ken Anderson k_anderson@blueyonder.co.uk (Worcestershire)

Stewart Morehead smorehead@me.com (Herefordshire)

Members' Articles

If it's been too long.....?

Sometimes we don't get to ride our motor bikes as frequently as we wish. Things get in the way

Things that are sometimes outside our control

Work, Xmas shopping, holidays, DIY, family reunions, frost, snow, floods, you've mothballed the bike and even though it's a fabulous winters day you can't be bothered to get it out of hibernation, alcohol levels following the New Year celebrations, ice, sorting out the garden, salted roads, it's dark, there are floods at the end of the road, I missed my alarm.....it's too cold

Lately the weather has been wet, very wet; and the floods have made travel difficult let alone on two wheels, and then we've had a succession of frosty mornings, so even the keenest riders have sensibly left their bike in the garage or under the covers.

Although I ride around 12k miles a year I've noticed that even after a short "lay off" my biking is a little rusty. So what's it like if you've not ridden for a couple of months?

And what about the increased risk if you are a little rusty?

FACT

Motorcyclist casualties are highly seasonal - fatalities and overall casualties peak during the Spring and Summer months, reflecting increased riding during this period and riders returning to their bikes after a winter lay-off.

WHAM now offers a "return to riding" scheme.

This is for anyone who hasn't ridden for a while – our guidelines are:

- Not ridden for over 6 weeks?
- Not ridden much lately? Which we mean less than 100 miles a month
- Been off the bike due to illness or an accident
- You simply want a refresher because you feel you want one

We'll pair you with an Observer who will ride with you on your first outing. This can be on a Sunday ride or at another time.

If you are interested in booking a ride call/email Del Britton (ykr1200rt@hotmail.co.uk) or any of WHAM's observers



Ant Clerici



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