

# Worcester & Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists



May  
2016



## The Chairman's Notes



Welcome to the Newsletter. There has been a lot happening for WHAM and IAM. Exciting times!

Have you seen the front page of our website recently or noticed the new IAM RoadSmart logo and current training initiatives?

IAM are promoting 'free' taster sessions for those wanting to see if advanced riding is for them. Working closely with the Safer Roads Partnership, we are able to offer a £99 Skills for Life Promotion, for a limited number of Associates.

Do you know anyone who is interested in training – please direct them to the website or get in touch with Roger Brooks or Eric Reynolds. We have a large number of active Associates to date and a significant number of taster rides. As a consequence there has been no Rider Skills Day.

However, there will be a Slow Riding Day, at Throckmorton, scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> July. This has been very well attended in the past and I look forward to seeing you there to practice your skills in a safe environment. There will be zones set up for slow riding, hazard avoidance, positive steering and braking

I am excited about the changes taking place in the IAM and proud to have Derek McMullan as part of our club and Vice-Chairman of the IAM. But it is not just the branding which has changed. I am confident the Committee and Training Team will ensure WHAM is one of the forward thinking groups with a commitment to high standards

Through extensive research, IAM have identified that some people want to become advanced riders but do not want to take a test. As an Alternative IAM are introducing an option for customers to choose when buying an advanced riding or driving course to have their membership approved by the group without a test.

There is a caveat to this. Only groups which consistently demonstrate IAM standards will have the opportunity to deliver this. WHAM will be striving to be one of those groups. To be successful we will need to demonstrate high standards, including:

- Adherence to all IAM RoadSmart standards and policies
- All observers with IMI local or national observer qualification
- Time to pass test of less than 170 days (current scorecard)
- Customer satisfaction of 80% (when survey introduced)



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

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- No upheld complaints about the group
- Annual audit of processes

The word is also getting around regarding the roll out of new standards for training Associates. More information will be provided by Del Britton and me when the standards are finalised and distributed in the next few months. Having seen the draft it is a very user friendly package for both Observer and Associate. Del, our Chief Observer, has completed 3 days of excellent training with Observers so they will now be re-joining you on Sunday rides, having been introduced to the new standards.

Biker Down courses are being prepared for 2016; the intention is to put on one per county in West Mercia. Dates will be fixed when gaps are found in busy Air Ambulance staff diaries.

I am keen to see as many of you as possible to join in the group rides. They are a great way to meet other members and enable you to develop your skills. Associate members are welcome to turn up at either the Worcester or Hereford start points on the first Sunday of the month. On a Sunday ride we will make every effort to make you welcome and ensure you are with a group that travels at a suitable pace. Please don't be afraid to tell us what you need - all our members know what it's like to start riding with the group and will be more than happy to help you. Longer day rides have been planned. These are intended mainly as 'free ride' days for full members only. Check the website for dates and details. My thanks go to Tony Davis for managing the website and route information.

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. Thank you to Richard Hewitt for planning the go-karting. Congratulations to Paul Gill and Duane Sanger in winning the gold medal, following some very close and determined racing. They were closely followed by silver medallists Richard Hewitt and Ian Craggs. Well done also to Ali Davis who completed all the races, increasing in speed and skill.

Right, I'm off to dust down my leathers and hoping for the opportunity to wear them in place of Gore-Tex – hope they still fit.... I look forward to seeing you at the natter nights and on a Sunday ride in the sunshine.

Paul

**Do you know anyone that would benefit from advanced training. If so ...here's a chance to try it out for Free.**

**Please use this [form](#) to register your interest in a no obligation free taster session and one of our Observers will contact you to arrange your free ride out.**





William Ricks - F1RST Pass



Adrian Wheeler- F1RST Pass



Matt Gorle - IAM Pass

Observer - Matt Dent



Adrian Nash- IAM Pass

Observer - Ant Clerici



## From One Triumph To Another

By Ali Lewis

After five years on sports bikes I decided, or maybe I was encouraged to ride a bike which gave me more of a sit up position to help with visibility and help me relax more into the corners. I

listened, and searched for the right bike. I found it .... The Street Triple, wow!



What a difference it made to my riding. I had my first Street Triple for three years but it was now time to change. I looked at the Speed Triple but it was too heavy and high for me so I decided to stick with what I know. However I also wanted something different so I this time added an R...

Compared to the previous incarnation, the 2013 Triumph Street Triple R is lighter, smoother, more refined and has the handling and brakes a superbike would be proud of.



I'm not sure why but I was a little nervous to begin with but three rides in I now feel the bike is part of me. I had the suspension softened and a few adjustments made to the clutch levers it now fits like a glove.



The first gear being longer makes a huge difference. The brakes are meant to be better, ABS, although I haven't really tested those yet. The real test will be the SLD, maybe! And I'll hopefully get to really know how to handle the bike when I do the IAM track based skills day....happy days

	Natter Night	Day Rides	Trips	Training	Other
<b>May</b>	25 - Evening Ride	15th - Roof Of Wales			
<b>June</b>	29 - Evening Ride	5th - Welsh Railways	12-19 - Luxembourg		
<b>July</b>	27 - Evening Ride	10th - Welsh Valleys		3rd - Slow Riding Day	30-31 - Aberdare Road Races
<b>August</b>	31 - Evening Ride	14th - North Wales			
<b>September</b>	28 - Bike Dynamics		29/9 - 3/10 - Normandy 9-10 - Peak District		
<b>October</b>	26 - TBC				
<b>November</b>	30 - TBC				8th - Remembrance Day
<b>December</b>	Xmas Dinner				



## Getting Back On Your Bike - A Spring Checklist



By Derek McMullen

So the bad old days of winter are waning and we can think again of getting the bike out for those wonderful bright Spring runs and all the promise of Summer – well let's hope we do have a Summer this year!

For some of us the bike may only have been off the road for the worst of winter but for others it can be close to 6 months – so what's been happening to your pride and joy whilst it has been tucked up in the garage? Just as the period off road is variable so too is the rider's approach to maintenance, some of us spend the winter in the garage cleaning and fettling and some shut the garage door. This article hopes to cover the essentials for you all – if it seems to be a statement of the “bleedin obvious” then good, you have it under control! If one or two items make you think to check that out, then also good, you'll enjoy your first ride rather than reacquainting yourself with your recovery service, or worse!

### **Battery/Electrics**

- Hopefully you've had the bike on periodic charge so the battery will be tip-top. If not it's worth checking the condition now: For lead-acid batteries check for frost damage and electrolyte levels. Check all batteries for adequate charge.
- If you removed the battery for charging make sure all connections are tight and corrosion-free.
- Check that all lights are functioning, especially indicator and stop lights. Don't forget your horn.

### **Tyres**

- Check the cases for any cuts or damage – being off the road over the winter you've missed the delights of pot-holes – just remember they're not all repaired yet! Check the tread depth (minimum 1 mm for bikes but more tread = more grip, especially in those Spring rain showers).
- Tyre pressures will be down! Check your chain or final drive cover, most manufacturers put the pressures there (if not dig out your Owner's manual) and inflate to the recommended pressures.

### **Chain**

- Check for evident corrosion and any stiff link sections. Clean the chain, in paraffin, or with proprietary cleaners and lubricate with your chosen product. All the chain links should be freely moving now, if not why not?
- Check the general wear and condition of the chain and sprockets. They should fit together well, any looseness of the chain on the rear sprocket is indicative of wear.
- Make sure the chain tension is right for your bike.

## Fluids

- In the checks that follow if you find a low fluid level check for leaks – it has to go somewhere!
- Check brake reservoirs for level. Consider too when your fluid was last changed, 2 years is a recommended maximum as brake fluid picks up water. Same for an hydraulic clutch too.
- Engine coolant level and condition. Is there enough anti-freeze and/or anti-corrosion additives?
- Engine oil level and condition; when was your oil last changed?

## Controls

- If you've had the bike apart over the winter make sure you still have full-and-free steering and that all controls operate as expected. Consider lubrication of cable controls.
- Check the controls operation and full steering movement with the engine running at idle to ensure there is no throttle cable or other snag. Don't forget the side-stand/ gear interlock safety.

## Brakes

- Take a good look at your discs and calipers especially if you did a little riding in the dreaded salt. Some bikes will collect salt around the caliper and the corrosion it causes could seriously affect your brakes. Make sure the pads are freely moving and that you can "feel" the pad gripping the disc.
- Before you need your brakes in earnest check they're functioning by performing a "moving brake check" – at say 10-15 mph independently try your front and back brakes for full function. If it's not good go back to your workshop now and strip the caliper down – you'll find the salt!

## Chassis

- Check front suspension movement and damping by rocking the bike back and forth with the brake firmly on. Throwing your weight on the seat (especially if, like me, your still carrying the Xmas pud!) will check the rear shock. We can't do a full technical check here, just that there is travel and damping.

So that's a quick review for the bike, but what about you? We all lose the bike control skills if we're not riding regularly. Take it easy, feel your way back in, or even think about some refresher training to get yourself back up where you belong.





Tony & Paul - They shouldn't be let out



Chasing down the lead



The victors!



Mark & Lynda Silvester are organising a weekend to the Peak District, staying at the Yorkshire Bridge Inn at Bamford

[www.yorkshire-bridge.co.uk](http://www.yorkshire-bridge.co.uk)

Friday 9th and Saturday 10th September 2016.

There are 8 rooms available on a first come first served basis, the prices below are for bed and breakfast per night.

- Doubles at £85
- Twins • • at £85
- Singles • • at £65
- 1 Triple room at £120



A deposit of £25 per person secures the rooms, Phone the Inn to book  
Tel:01433 651361 mention Lynda Silvester and Wham to get the discounted rate.  
Please confirm your booking to Mark either by Tel: 01789 731226 or e mail [avsp78@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:avsp78@dsl.pipex.com) to enable further information, routes etc. which will follow in due course.

Tony Davis has kindly offered to do the routes for the weekend, we look forward to some of you joining us for a great ride out.



Worcester & Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists

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

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with details ASAP.





## Spot the difference

Road surfaces vary hugely, even before they start falling apart. Learning to spot a bad one could save your life.

Your bike is set up beautifully, suspension perfect, tyres good and you've completed the IAM advanced test, you use the bikes power to best advantage, your cornering is confident and balanced. There is only one other variable and that's the grip of the road surface, which seems to be a constant source of surprises.

How are roads made? made?

Roads are constructed from aggregate, held together with bitumen. There are two major factors affecting the skid resistance of roads: macro texture and micro texture. Macro texture is the texture of the road itself, used to shed water and prevent aquaplaning. Micro texture is the texture of the aggregate pieces, which give grip. The binder itself is basically the same stuff as overbanding and has no grip.

The aggregate can have different skid properties and the precise specification of the road surface used in any situation is determined by the skidding risk. The ideal is that the risk of skidding is equalised throughout the road network so that a higher minimum level is set where you need increased skid resistance. In areas where you are likely to brake heavily, such as approaches to traffic lights and on bends, a grippier surface is used to reduce the risk of skidding off the road.

There are actually six levels of recommended skid resistance depending on the nature of the stretch of road. Surprisingly, motorways can have the least resistance surfaces, as the risk of skidding is low.

There are national standards for measuring, investigating and fixing skid-deficient areas. Each council, as well as the Highways Agency, has its own skip policy. As long as it sets out its procedures, and they can be shown to meet the council's legal obligation to maintain a safe road, that's OK.

A and B roads are normally tested annually, C roads are tested every three to four years, but once again this varies, Some councils test all C roads annually, other just do the busy ones.

The test vehicles look a bit like road sweepers but they move at traffic speed. They go along testing the nearside wheel track with a skidding wheel and some water to recreate wet skidding; the vehicles are not looking at the part of the road used by bikes most of the time!

What are the rules about skid resistance?





What happens if a road comes out badly on the test?

There is no requirement to treat areas that test as skid-deficient unless there is an accident history on that stretch of road. The Highways Agency and councils' policy usually states this, and the onus is on them to prove that if they don't follow the national guidelines, their procedures are sufficient to meet their legal obligation to maintain a safe road. They regard the road as remaining safe if there have been no accidents there.

'As motorcyclist we might be the ones to find the skid-prone areas first'.

### Why don't we have 'Shellgrip' everywhere?

**Cost, sustainability and speed control.** It costs five times as much as surface dressing, the high quality aggregate is a scarce resource and not available in the UK, and it has a high carbon cost in processing and transportation. Even if cost were not an issue, studies have shown that where high friction road surfacing is present, speeds tend to go up. Drivers become more confident about the high levels of friction. Increased speeds can sometimes be counterproductive where safety is the prime consideration and cheaper surfaces are good enough to keep accidents down.



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### How do the seasons affect road surfaces?

This is an interesting one, as skid resistance is lowest in the summer and highest on a dry day in winter. In winter, detritus on the road is mainly gritty so it tends to roughen the aggregate, giving better conditions on a dry day. In summer detritus on the surface is dusty, so it polishes the aggregate and makes it more slippery. Surprising, but true.





Sudden rain on a hot dry road in summer is a hazard we're all aware of – it makes those polished roads especially slippery. Dry summer days can be just as hazardous on the hottest summer days the bitumen binder can melt, become fluid and act exactly like water, in that it prevents the tyres from making contact with the aggregate and causes 'bituplaning'. This may also happen if you skid on a new surface where the surplus binder has yet to wear away. The increased temperature created in a skid can sometimes be enough to melt the excess bitumen and cause 'bituplaning'. Clearly the worst situation would be a blistering hot day on a new road surface.

Reassuringly, road testing is done between May and October when the roads are at their worst.

*Notes taken from Ride magazine Sept 2011, Chris Newson editorial*



Slow riding day on a good surface, Ali shows how it's done.

Del