

# WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



JULY 2017



## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Welcome to the July edition of the WHAM magazine.

As we now enter July may I remind you of the upcoming Slow Riding Skills day (July 30<sup>th</sup>). This is our most popular training day of the year – held once again at Throckmorton Airfield near Pershore and organised by Dennis Osborne. A must for Associates and recommended for full members, especially those who have recently passed their test. Slow riding is an important skill and our Slow Riding day gives Members a chance to practice in a safe environment and have fun at the same time.



There will be a slalom course, figure-of-eights and Den's famous obstacle course. The afternoon session will up the pace with a chance to practice emergency braking on the runway.

This is an all-day event, please arrive at 9am prompt for the safety briefing. Coffee, tea, cold drinks, sandwiches and cakes will be provided for a small contribution.

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## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD CONT'D

I am also aware that many of you may be planning trips away on your bikes over the summer, either in the UK or abroad. Whilst reading the recent IAM RoadSmart Weekly News I spotted the following [tips](#) from Richard Gladman (IAM RoadSmart's Head of Driving & Riding Standards) which I thought may be of interest:



- Carry an emergency kit. This can consist of spare light bulbs, a continental adapter to help charge your mobile or other electrical items you may carry during your journey and tie downs which are useful on ferry journeys to ensure your bike is secure and isn't going to move. Make sure you are there when it is strapped to avoid accidental damage
- Make sure you have the right insurance; policies normally have a European extension but you need to check. In the event of a breakdown you want to make sure you have international coverage and also know what numbers and companies to get in touch with. Make sure you check the finer details of what the policy actually covers
- Plan your journey. Some satnavs do not function internationally and unless you have a lot of data it can be costly using your phone as a navigation system. It is better to go old school, use a map and know where you are going prior to setting off
- Make sure you have the right documentation. We recommend taking your full driving license, your insurance documents, both bike and travel documents, your vehicle registration certificate and lastly European Health Insurance cards and passports, dependent on your destination
- Check your machine before you leave. If you are not up-to-date with your bike servicing we recommend going in for a service to avoid any problems whilst on your trip. Remember the tyres; they need to be legal at the end of the trip not just the start



Finally if you are away please make sure that you take plenty of photographs and keep a diary of your trip – that way you can provide an article for the magazine and let us know all of the best European bike destinations!

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD CONT'D

Finally..... Due to commitments, outside of WHAM, Paul Whitcomb has decided that he is unable to provide the time required to complete the Chief Observer duties fully. As such I am pleased to announce the Committee decision to appoint Gary Barnes as the Chief Observer for the Worcester region with immediate effect. Gary has supported WHAM for a number of years, has an exemplary set of riding skills, and will be an excellent addition to the Training Team. Please join me in congratulating Gary in his new role and support his transition into this key position.

All the best & be safe

Stuart



## Patagonia—a trip to the end of the World - Part 3

To remind you... We had been through the Argentine Lake District, seen Gauchos and encountered more than we'd bargained for in the steak and chocolate departments.

Now we were to leave the Lakes to go back across the Andes into Chile again. More loose stuff through the scenic lakes to the crossing of the river Futaleufu and the border post.



In what became a catch-phrase of the trip our tour leader advised that “it’ll be an easy border crossing: really small border post, really informal”.

This day wasn't easy. Of course it was a long transfer ride for us and so we didn't need a hold-up. It turned out it was an Argentine Public Holiday and all the border staff would rather have been at home with their families.



Things looked ominous from the moment an official objected to the rather random parking of our clutch of motorbikes and made us “shape up”. It went from bad to worse when that same official took my passport, refused to process it, return it, or to explain why. We overheard some mutterings about a “red-flag” in their system but that was probably nothing more than the excuse to keep us. After some three hours of wheedling in broken Spanish “my friend” insisted we would all present ourselves one-by-one to him for “interview” – this too was protracted and laborious. Anyone of the right age profile received a sharp salute at the end of the interview; so now all was clear: they're Argentine; we're mostly English and the Falklands is still not forgotten!

## Patagonia—a trip to the end of the World - Part 3

After a racing lunch on the Chilean side we set off for Puyuhuapi, the biggest inland fjord in Chile. We were now under some time pressure so the pace was business-like. We ran down the side of Lago Yelcho with forests slowly petrifying in the mineral waters.



Inevitably there were “offs” and missing bikes but the proverbial biscuit was taken by one of our riders who, stopped for a photo, didn’t secure his tank-bag and when regrouping at the end of a 50km section announced that he’d lost all his papers: Passport, bike hire agreement and carnet. Just as we can’t change countries without a passport the bike can’t move without the carnet – he was grounded! Two of us were dispatched to back-track and search for the documents, luckily I’d seen where he stopped for a photo and started there – bingo! Everything within 10 metres but we were lucky as it was a gusty day.



It was a long day but the dirt-roads we used were arterial routes and so well graded with good sight lines so the GS fairly skipped along to catch the Group.

Guess who bought the beer that night?

## Patagonia—a trip to the end of the World - Part 3

Puyuhuapi is a very small town at the head of one of Chile's inland fjords; it has the feel of a frontier town – perhaps we were becoming more remote.



The fjord is very picturesque and has frequent whales. It is more than a little distracting to ride beside.



## Patagonia—a trip to the end of the World - Part 3

We were zig-zagging our way down Carretera Austral, Chile's main road to the South and Patagonia but with a little more anticipation today having reached the frontier town yesterday we're surely now into the wilds of Patagonia?

Our destination this night was Coyhaique – a frontier town making a stand against being a frontier town! It is a big town and I'll admit to being just a little piqued to be staying in a 5\* Casino!



But there were compensations...

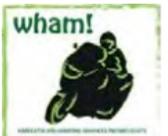


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# Speed....—For the thinking Rider

For the last two newsletters I have written about the first two elements of IPSSGA and the importance of being a thinking rider.

So the thinking rider returns with the next element, SPEED, which arguably plays just as bigger role if not more so than the rest within the system.

The quest for speed is both thrilling and adrenaline filled and is a fantastic feeling on a motorcycle. Trouble is, on today's roads, that is public roads, the dangers of riding fast reduces our safety bubble and reaction time.

There are of course opportunities to push your boundaries in structured environments such as a track day event but for the purpose of this article lets focus on public roads.

The comfort zone is an important part in any riders tool box. Push your limits and we start to get ragged with miscalculated judgments. Any section of road whether it be bends, straights or hairpins become more of a challenge . Too fast and the safety bubble will burst....

So how do we control this quest for speed? A very knowledgeable and experienced IAM Roadsmart Observer coined a phrase to me whilst we were in the Black forest in Germany:

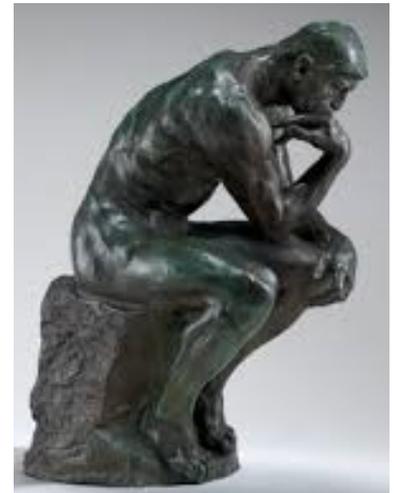
**SLOW IS SMOOTH, SMOOTH IS FAST.**

Using this small and simple analogy to best effect will change your pace, increase your concentration; by allowing you more time to judge correctly, and before you know it your comfort zone, safety bubble and accuracy will all improve contributing to a safer, smoother, sharper ride. This will bring speed without yanking the throttle wide open at every opportunity...

So next time you feel like going quicker just bring those four words to mind.

I Hope this is useful to you all.

Gary "Chugger" Barnes



# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

## Richard Booth writes in introduction:

What can occupational safety professionals learn from best practice in other settings? A substantial amount, as this post explains: management of an accident scene; best contemporary practice in emergency first aid, and the challenges of the perspicuity of PPE.

Dr Mark Cooper is a distinguished member of Hastam's expert witness team, and like me a keen biker [RTB biking blog]. He describes the bike safety training course he recently attended in Worcester.

Here is his rewarding story:

## Background – the Safer Roads Partnership Course

This was a free half-day course run by the Safer Roads Partnership in Warwickshire and West Mercia. There were about 20 attendees. Supporters for the event included: IAM RoadSmart; Warwickshire Police; West Midlands Ambulance Service; Midlands Air Ambulance, and Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service. Biker Down is a national course originating in Kent, and adopted in numerous other areas. An overview of how the course was originally developed by Jim Sanderson from Kent Fire & Rescue can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFcVeghzS4Y>.

***The course was primarily aimed at motorcyclists, although it would be of direct value to all road users. There was useful advice to safety practitioners responsible for the management of occupational road risks, and safety people generally.***

The presenters were: PC Robin Dellbridge (Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police); Tom Dudziec (Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service), Dave Shenton (IAM RoadSmart). Although free, course delegates were invited to make a donation to the Midlands Air Ambulance. Further details can be obtained from the organiser: Anna Higgins, Communications Manager, Safer Roads Partnership in Warwickshire and West Mercia, Phone: 01905 331323, Mobile: 07891 096 407.

## Why did I attend?

I was involved in a car accident in remote Shropshire some years ago. I was indebted to the members of the public who were first on the scene and to the emergency services, including the Midlands Air Ambulance who airlifted me to hospital. I would like to be in a position to help in similar circumstances.

I have also been one of the first on the scene of a motorcycle accident on a fast 'A' road in Worcestershire. The motorcyclist suffered minor injuries but the principal danger was that



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the people who came to his aid were at grave risk from fast approaching cars, manoeuvring into the opposite carriageway to be faced with on-coming traffic; there were too many 'helpers' who did not know what to do.

I also have a professional interest. One of the fatal accidents I have investigated concerned an overturned All-Terrain Vehicle. There were delays in getting prompt medical help to the victim due to the remoteness of the site and an inability to phone the emergency services with an accurate location, as there was no mobile signal.

I have also reviewed emergency arrangements at remote quarries in the Lake District and examined the arrangements for summoning assistance in an emergency.

## Course Content

The three topics on the course were:

**Collision Scene Management** – advice from emergency service personnel on how to protect a casualty and other road users who may have stopped to assist.

**Casualty Care** – looking at basic lifesaving skills such as CPR, airway management and helmet removal (when and how).

**The Science of Being Seen** – a session looking at conspicuity issues and the classic SMIDSY (Sorry Mate I Didn't See You) situations. This includes hard-hitting videos from fatal accidents and taken from riders' head-cams, which are now being used in road safety campaigns.

## What did we learn?

***We learnt practical skills to help avoid being involved in a collision. We were also taught emergency first-aid, and advice on what we should do to if first on the scene of an injury accident.***

### ***Specific learning points were:***

Personal safety at the scene of an accident is a priority and strategies such as positioning of your vehicle can be effective.

999 calls made from a phone with a low signal will hunt for any available network in order to make the call.

**Pre-registering for a 999 text service from your mobile phone is possible. This may be useful if you are regularly in areas of low signal strength (text will get through more easily than voice calls).**

# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

**The emergency services cannot (in real time anyway) accurately pinpoint the location of a mobile phone signal** (a common misconception). So mapping apps on phones and Satnavs can be invaluable.

In trauma cases, **stemming of blood loss is now considered to be the number one priority.**

Based on combat experience, **the use of tourniquets is now approved to stem serious blood loss** - once frowned upon.

**Helmet removal (always considered to be dangerous) is helpful in assessing the overall condition of the patient.** Two techniques were demonstrated (single or two-person). The rationale is that being helmet-free aids communication and is less restricting in times of distress.

Pink is the most prominent colour for motorcyclist's clothing.

**Having a variety of colours (clothing/motorcycle materials) may act as camouflage.**

A uniform motorcycle/clothing colour, and coordinated with the motorcycle may be particularly effective.

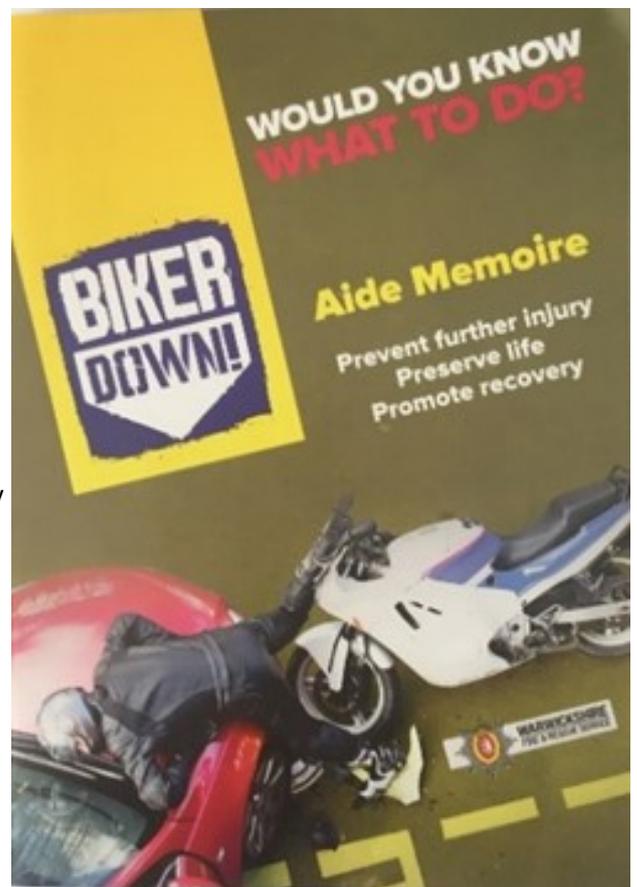
A black bike with black clothing may therefore be effective (but counter-intuitive).

Effectiveness of colours for best visibility may be dependant on the time of day, the ambient lighting, time of year and other factors. One set of clothing may not give the best conspicuity in all riding conditions

## Session 1: Collision Scene Management

Delivered by Robin a motorcyclist from West Mercia Police, this session started by covering the accident statistics and across both forces (West Mercia and Warwickshire). There are about 10 fatal accidents per year involving motorcyclists. Causes, were discussed and these included speed, loss of control and failure by motorists to see motorcyclists. A significant proportion of the accidents were in the urban areas.

A graphic video called *Dave's Story* highlighted the issue of driver inattention at a junction. Amongst the delegates on my table, the fact that the motorcycle was travelling at over 90mph in a de-restricted zone caused some discussion.



# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

Much of the remaining part of the session was about the initial actions to take. The acronym **CRASH** gives a prompt:

- Caution
- Road
- Accident
- Serious
- Help

In summary to have caution for your own safety; to know the road/location the incident has occurred on; to identify the number of vehicles; the seriousness of any injuries; and summoning help. Arguably, obvious but easily overlooked in the heat of the moment.

Unfortunately, one delegate (there's always one) asked more than his fair share of questions and delayed the presentation!



A number of practical measures including the fact that locked mobile phones can still make an emergency call.

Also, having contact details stored in your phone under ICE (In Case of Emergency) so that the emergency services can quickly contact relatives.

I didn't know that the European equivalent of the 999 emergency number is 112 and this works in the UK too.

## Session 2: Casualty Care

I hadn't previously seen the Vinnie Jones video *Staying Alive*. This is compression-only CPR. It delivers a memorable message: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/how-to-save-a-life/hands-only-cpr>. The course also covered the use of AED's (Automatic External Defibrillators) with some guidance on using compression-only CPR with these devices.

# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

## ***Tourniquets***

The importance of stemming serious blood loss was emphasised and the use of combat tourniquets: <http://www.combattourniquet.com>. I had always been under the impression that these were a 'no-no' but apparently British experiences in war zones have shown them to be effective, even over many hours.

## ***Helmet Removal***

The second revelation was that helmet removal (always considered to be dangerous) is helpful in assessing the overall condition of the patient. Two techniques were demonstrated (single or two-person). The rationale is that being helmet-free aids communication and is less restricting in times of distress. Clearly, flip-top helmets can help too.

## ***Biker's First Aid Kit***

All the delegates were given a biker's first aid kit designed to fit under the seat. Very useful.



## **Session 3: The Science of Being Seen**

This session was run by a motorcycle examiner from IAM RoadSmart (formerly the Institute of Advance Motor-ing). Quite a bit of discussion was around the wearing of high visibility clothing.

*My personal and unscientific views are that:*

- Anything that increases visibility must help
- Day running lights are compulsory and are a 'good' thing
- High visibility clothing should be compulsory

# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

Very occasionally, I ride a Blood bike and I have also noticed (from how other road users behave) that what gets you noticed is:

- Having a large physical presence (a wide bike)
- Having a high, upright riding position
- Having conspicuous markings

Interestingly, I think that the effect of wearing high visibility clothing can be negated by having a high screen.

The colour of the helmet (white or yellow) when riding in an upright position is noticeable above the screen and above other traffic. It gives advance warning of your presence.



Some of my home-spun views were challenged by Dave Shenton!

***A term referred-to was 'Conspicuity Blindness'. This is the idea that amongst many conspicuous objects, observers can become blind to them and they are not seen.***

# Biker Down—An Appraisal by Dr Mark Cooper of WHAM

A few 'snippets' from the talk, some repeated from above) were:

- Pink is the most prominent colour for motorcyclist's clothing
- There are black reflective tapes and strips commercially available
- Having a variety of colours (clothing/motorcycle materials) may act as camouflage. There are many military and natural world examples of this
- A uniform motorcycle/clothing colour, and coordinated with the motorcycle may be particularly effective
- A black bike with black clothing may therefore be effective (but counter-intuitive)
- Effectiveness of clothing may be dependant on the time of day, the ambient lighting, time of year and other factors
- One set of clothing may not give the best conspicuity in all riding conditions

## **Presenters**

PC Robin Dellbridge (Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police)

Tom Dudzic (Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service)

Dave Shenton (IAM RoadSmart)

## **Additional Reading**

Dave Shenton's session, in particular, directed delegates to other sources of information. Subsequently, I have found the following:-

'*Sorry, Mate, I Didn't See You: A Plausible Scientific Explanation*' Michael White and downloadable at: <http://acrs.org.au/files/arsrpe/RS060062.pdf>

And an interesting piece on advanced riding from a solicitor and biker, Andrew Dalton, who is actively involved in motorcycle-related cases:

<http://www.whitedalton.co.uk/motorbike-blog/2014/03/perception-and-reality-of-advanced-riding/>

Both are thought-provoking and potentially contentious!



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# Yamaha MT10 — Mini Review, by Eric Reynolds

The review may be mini but the bike is not 'mini' performance wise. Admittedly, it feels small to sit on but nothing else is in any way lacking. It is not an R1 but its close enough for me.

I had to agree with the staff at Motorcycle Mart who described the performance as "stupidly quick".

I had taken my Tracer in for its service and as usual I had a loan bike to get home. Usually this is an MT07, which is light and fun as long as the roads are smooth so I was surprised when the key fob said MT10.

Delighted I was and a bit nervy, I climbed on and it was low and light and little. The handlebars were lower than I am used to and the footrests were higher and further back but it wasn't uncomfortable. The instruments were well laid out and when I turned on the ignition I noticed the riding mode was on level 2 and I was not tempted to click it up to a more ferocious level. Firing it up the exhaust note was not loud but just throaty.

Into 1<sup>st</sup> and I wobbled off the forecourt finding out where the clutch and the brake pedal bit. A couple of hundred yards later it was ok and soon after that the controls needed no conscious thought.

I was trickling through the town easily at 10 to 15 mph. Then on the road up to Great Witley I was held up by two cars doing 50 on double whites. When the overtake opportunity opened up I moved out and sat waiting to get a view into a big gateway of the right.



I then rolled on the throttle and the world appeared to stop. I took both of the cars in a couple of seconds and as I moved back left there was a really big number on the speedo. I backed off the throttle and steered effortlessly through the double bend at 10mph more than I normally do.

The rest of the ride confirmed the power and ease of this machine with a lovely throaty sound when the throttle is opened; it does enable you to feel perfectly in control rounding open bends 10mph quicker than normal as the suspension, particularly the forks, feel so competent.

I then went onto back lanes and it was clear that this machine is set up for main roads, but it was still better than my Tracer. So 20 miles into a 2 mile journey home I rode into my garage and had a look at the machine. It is stylish but the pillion seat is definitely for tiny people not going very far.

Altogether a brilliant motorcycle that is fast and easy, and also flatters your riding style....



# Chief Observers Musings—Del B (Hereford)

Open the throttle:

- To *increase* road speed
- To *maintain* road speed, for example when cornering or going uphill (referred to as '**positive throttle**').

Close the throttle:

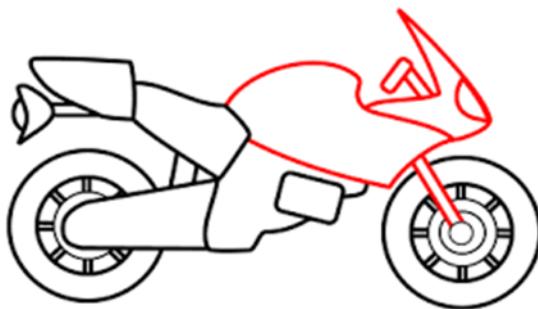
- To reduce engine speed and slow the bike down

*If you are in the correct gear for your road speed, opening the throttle will give you a responsive increase in bike speed. If you are in too high a gear, the engine will respond sluggishly because it is being asked to work outside its power-band. Changing to a lower gear allows the engine to work in its power-band and so makes for a more responsive machine.*

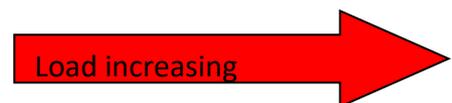
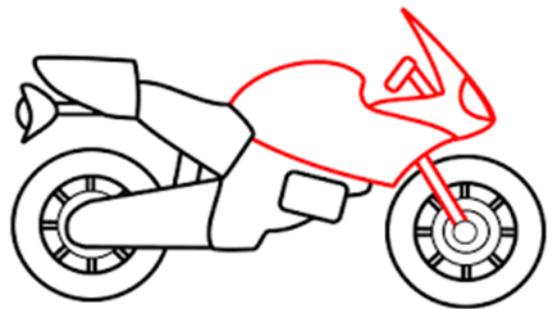
If you close the throttle, you get the opposite effect – deceleration. The engine speed slows down and cylinder compression slows the machine down. The lower the gear, the greater the slowing effect of the engine, or engine braking.

## Acceleration and the machine balance

Acceleration alters the distribution of weight between the wheels of the bike. When a machine accelerates, the weight lifts from the front and pushes down on the back wheel, increasing the load on the rear tyre. During deceleration, the opposite happens, increasing the load on the front tyre.



*During acceleration*  
*load on the rear tyre increases*



*During deceleration*  
*load on the rear tyres reduces*

# Chief Observers Musings—Del B (Hereford)

## Develop your competence at using the throttle

How you use your throttle affects your own and others' safety. Motorcycles are very responsive to use of the throttle during acceleration and deceleration. Sudden sharp use of the throttle reduces tyre grip and jeopardise stability and control, especially when cornering. It could lift the front wheel of the bike or cause the rear wheel to spin.

Jerky use of the throttle is uncomfortable, puts unnecessary strains on the machine, reduces tyre grip and increases fuel consumption. Develop smooth control of the throttle: use gentle, progressive and accurate movements to open or close.

Acceleration capability varies widely between machines and depends on the fuel or power source, the engine output, its efficiency, the power-to-weight ratio and its load. Take time to get to know the acceleration capability of any machine you ride. The safety of many manoeuvres, particularly overtaking, depends on judging it well. Remember the faster you go the further you will travel before you can react to a hazard. It will take you longer to stop and, if you collide, the results of the impact will be worse.

## Acceleration sense

Acceleration sense is the ability to vary machine speed and response to the changing road and traffic conditions by accurate use of the throttle, so that you use the brakes less or not at all.

You need acceleration sense in every riding situation: moving off, overtaking, complying with the speed limits, following other traffic and negotiating hazards. Acceleration sense requires observation, anticipation, judgement of speed and distance, riding experience and knowledge of the machines capabilities.

When you come up behind another vehicle, how often do you need to brake to match the speed of the other driver in front?. If you answer is 'always' or 'nearly always', work at developing your acceleration sense.

Ride along a regular route using acceleration sense rather than braking. Notice how it improves your anticipation and increases the smoothness of the ride.

# Chief Observers Musings—Del B (Hereford)

## Using the throttle on bends

To get the best stability while cornering, you need to keep your speed constant. Do this by gently opening the throttle enough to compensate for the speed lost due to cornering forces. Your aim is to maintain constant speed, not to increase it. Practice will help you judge how much to open the throttle for a steady speed.

Maintain a positive throttle (use the throttle to maintain a constant speed) through a bend. A constant speed keeps your weight evenly distributed front and rear, and ensures maximum tyre grip.

If you accelerate to **increase** road speed and alter direction at the same time, there may not be enough grip available and you may lose steering control. When you need to steer and increase speed together, use the throttle sensitively and smoothly. Take extra care when accelerating in slippery conditions. If you misjudge it, you may experience loss of traction and control.