

WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



SEPTEMBER 2017



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Welcome to the September edition of the WHAM magazine.

Well it is clear that we are now well and truly moving from summer into autumn with the night's drawing in and the temperature dropping. I even had the ice warning flash up on my KTM dash on Sunday morning (well it is a KTM so I took it with a pinch of salt!). As the seasons change we also move into the winter programme for the natter nights, with the first being held on Wednesday 27th at The Falcon. For this event the Committee thought it would be a good idea to kick start the new season with a Q&A session hosted by the Training Team.



Therefore, if you have any burning questions, would like to clarify an issue or would simply like to broaden your knowledge about advanced riding then please let us know (by email if possible to whamnewsletter@gmail.com) and/or come along and pose your questions to the team.

Question topics may include:

Group Riding
IPSGA
Bike set up etc.

Changing the subject, I routinely receive a Group Scorecard from the IAM which details WHAMs performance, over the last 12 months, with regards to test passes, number of Observers etc. and was delighted to see that we have assisted 17 riders to pass their advanced test – 6 of them with a F1RST. This is higher than the national average and demonstrates what a fantastic job we are doing to improve rider safety within Hereford & Worcester.

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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD CONT'D

However, passing the test isn't the end of the story. As with any skill, practice is required to retain knowledge and prevent standards slipping. This is demonstrated, unfortunately, via the accident statistics with the highest accident rate, of advanced riders, being with those that took their test more than 5 years previously. In response to this IAM RoadSmart is introducing the Fellowship Membership:



"A new level of IAM RoadSmart membership for those members keen to keep their advanced skills up to date.

Enhanced benefits are offered in return for a commitment to retest every three years.

Joining or switching is easy.

Become a Fellow by committing to a 3 yearly retest

If you passed our advanced test less than three years ago then you can switch instantly by calling **0300 303 1134** during office hours. You'll receive a new Fellow certificate and membership card and your membership fee will change to £49 per year (which includes the retest). On your three year anniversary you'll be invited to take the Fellow requalification test to remain a Fellow for a further three years.

For members who passed more than three years ago you can become a Fellow by taking the entry test which costs £39. Upon passing you'll receive Fellow membership for three years with a membership fee of £49 per year which includes the retest.

Find out more by calling **0300 303 1134** or visiting www.iamroadsmart.com/fellow there is also a detailed feature in the next issue of RoadSmart magazine due out at the end of September."

In addition to this approach also remember that we have a wealth of knowledge and experience within the club and if you feel as if there is an area of your riding you would like to improve, or practice, have a word with one of the Observers on a Sunday run. We can all improve and as the saying goes: *'Every day is a school day'*

All the best & be safe

Stuart

TOURING ADVICE—NEW REQUIREMENTS EN FRANCAIS

MOTORCYCLES MUST DISPLAY CRIT'AIR STICKERS TO RIDE IN FRANCE

Motorists planning to visit Paris, Grenoble or Lyon must now display a Crit'Air anti-pollution sticker on their vehicle.

The new Crit'Air anti-pollution sticker system comes into force in March 2017, and applies to both French and foreign vehicles, including cars, bikes and trucks entering the controlled zones. There are six different levels of certification (with different colour stickers for each) based on the vehicle age and engine type, which allows the local councils to ban some or all categories of vehicles at times when air pollution levels are high.

For older vehicles the system is even more strict, with cars registered before 1996, and motorcycles registered before June 2000, banned from the French capital altogether between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday.

Regardless of the age and type of vehicle, the stickers cost €3.70 plus postage, which for the UK means a total of €4.80. Riding in the controlled zone with a missing or incorrect sticker could cost you €70 in fines.

The restrictions are a response to high air pollution levels in the French capital. According to the Mayor's office, road traffic causes two thirds of the nitrogen dioxide emissions and 55% of particulate emissions in Paris.

At the moment you only need the Crit'Air sticker for riding in Paris, Grenoble or Lyon, not elsewhere in France, but other cities are expected to join the scheme.

To apply for the sticker, you need to visit the Air Quality Certificate Service website (www.certificat-air.gouv.fr/en/). The certificate/sticker will be delivered within 30 days.

Steve Kenward, CEO of the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA), commented on the possibility of a similar scheme being introduced in the UK: "Motorcycles aren't a significant contributor to the problem of air quality in the UK, so any adoption of a Paris-type scheme would be using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Bikes built to Euro 3, Euro 4 and the forthcoming Euro 5 specification will constitute the majority of motorcycles and are not targets for emission charges. Additionally, motorcycles and scooters will help reduce congestion and so help improve air quality, which is why the recently launched Motorcycle Safety and Transport Policy Framework has been so warmly received. We understand air quality needs to improve and an inclusion of motorcycles and scooters in local transport plans will help achieve this."



PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

Now we were about half-way through our trip and our next two days would be mile-munching over the Argentine steppes to the East of the Icefields. We were heading for Calafate, very much the regional centre for the Glacier tourist industry – Yes! There most definitely is an industry built around the ice.

Before we arrived in Calafate we had to negotiate some 350 miles of tarmac, gravel and worse on Ruta 40. On a good day the landscape is rugged, in the winter it would be bleak.



The steppes are known for high winds and we were duly warned that riding would be difficult. We refuelled before leaving what passed for civilisation and then headed South again. To start with the wind was not severe - it was there but it was consistent. As the sun climbed so too did the wind and soon we were riding with extreme winds. Sometimes it was on the nose and 60 seemed like 120 or more! Worse though were the cross-winds: trying to keep the bike straight involved a crazy lean angle. Just when we thought we had that taped the gusts started for added interest. Any small roadside knoll would deflect the wind enough to require crazy-lean became bolt-upright in an instant. The anticipation of the wind's imminent re-emergence had us all quite literally on the edge of our seats. We were riding in these conditions virtually all day and it took its toll. The effort and concentration of keeping the bike on the road



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PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

was intense, when we stopped to regroup and leave the main road for our overnight stop one of the riders literally collapsed with exhaustion – fortunately nothing that a glucose tablet and a litre of water couldn't cure.

Our overnight stop was an “Estancia” - a sheep farm quite literally miles from anywhere but set up to deal with the tourist trade. That night a few hapless sheep made the ultimate sacrifice on the BBQ - and very nice they were too! In the morning the fuel bowser was deployed to top up tanks – they had seen it all before.

Yesterday's ride having taken its toll 2 riders decided they could not face another day and so their bikes were loaded onto Geoff's Amarok.



...and the rest of us set off for yet more gravel – lucky us!



The landscapes had always seemed large but now, so far from anywhere we were acutely aware of the huge scale of the continent.

Despite the relative flatness of this area the gravel roads are highly variable. The stone has not been graded or prepared so it is whatever they find locally. Sometimes it is a thin loose surface on a hard substrate – quite good fun that! Then there are the deep gravel sections where the tyres slide and squirm as gravity appears to take on random directions – no high-jinks, just keep it straight. Worst

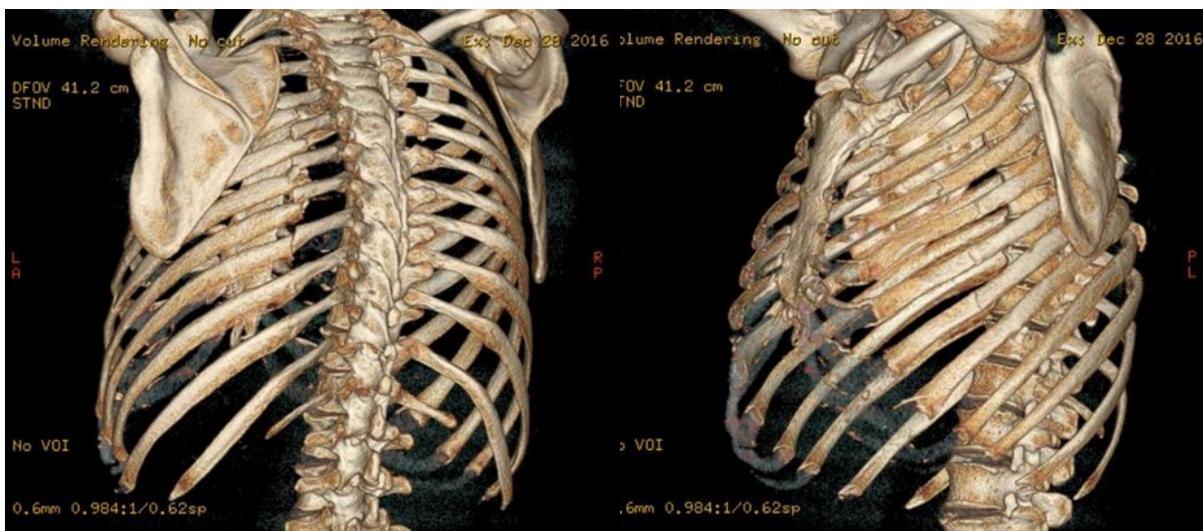
PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

of all are the boulder sections. Each stone approximates to a tennis ball size, and has the ability to really upset the machine's balance. Where this surface is deep the heavy trucks cause ruts and ridges just to add to the spice!

This was where it happened! About 2 hours from Calafate on a flat section the surface changed from fine-deep to coarse-deeper and unfortunately one of our riders took a tumble. Rather stoically he said "I think I've winded myself". His bike was not rideable post-accident so we had a roadside switch of cargo for Geoff.



The rider completed the day in the 4x4 en-route to the hospital in Calafate. I know South-Africans are tough but these are the shots of a "winded rider":



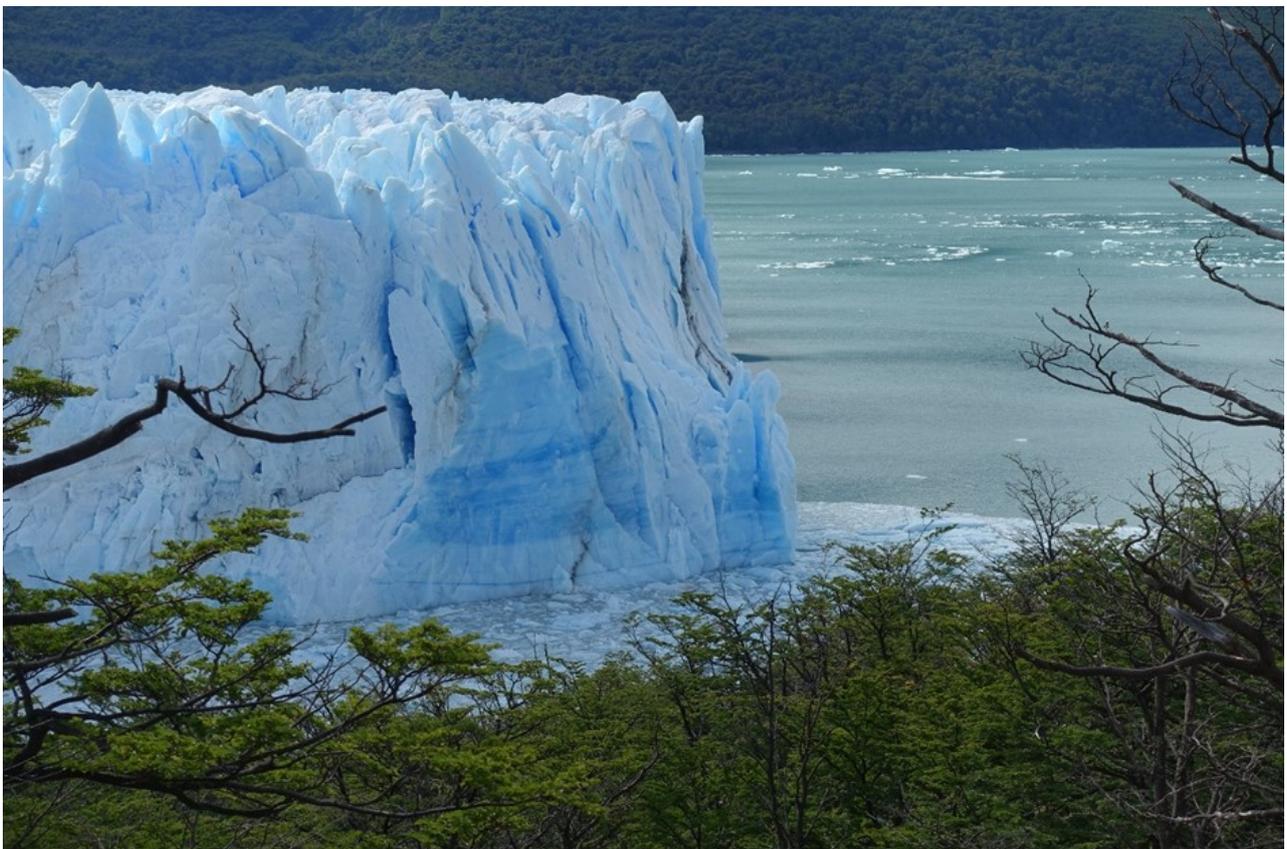
PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

I make that six breaks in the front cage, and, six breaks in the back! To our amazement the Argentine hospital when presented with the travel insurance details said “What’s that for? All healthcare in Argentina is free.” For this rider it was game-over, in fact he was stuck in Calafate until his medi-vac insurer would grant permission for him to fly – that took another 6 weeks.

By far the biggest tourist attraction at Calafate is the Perito Moreno glacier - again the huge scale of South America comes into play – it the biggest in the world, allegedly holding one-third of the world’s fresh water! Unlike most glaciers it is currently growing.



The ice-wall is 70 metres high and about 2 km across as it meets the water – it really is huge! We arrived in the late afternoon of a sunny day and there were growlers going off every couple of minutes. The colour of the ice in the afternoon sun was extraordinary – as usual the photo can’t do it justice.



PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

Our injured rider stayed in Calafate amongst the best of the Argentine icefields whilst we headed South, once more again crossing into Chile, to see the best of the Chilean icefields – Torres del Paine. We stayed at the erstwhile small fishing village of Puerto Natales which has now become the tourist capital of the Torres del Paine National Park, and, in any town of note... sculptures are required.

This “Homage to the Wind” was my favourite.



PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5

We had a two night stop in Natales so that we could take a day-tour around Torres del Paine. The combination of stark mountains and glacial lakes is stunning.



The park is so huge (well it is South America!) that the motorcycles were an excellent way of seeing it in our allotted day.



PATAGAGONIA - A TRIP TO THE END OF THE WORLD—PART 5



Leaving Natales we headed South (no surprise) and then ran alongside the Magellan Strait heading for our ferry crossing into Tierra del Fuego.



KTM 1290R — REVIEW BY ADRIAN 'SLIPPY' WHEELER

I had just finished customising my Yamaha FZ 1; basically shortened it a bit to make it single seater, fitted a power commander and tuned up the suspension. Why? Probably because I was bored over the winter months and had seen one similar and thought it looked cool; and, well, I wanted something different and a bit more fun than the GS....

However, a few months earlier a discussion had taken place regarding the virtues of bhp and torque and how the latter was quite impressive in ultra lite KTM 1290 R form (and you can probably guess who I was speaking with). Well that planted a seed, which grew and grew, you see I'm not an impulse buyer but when I get an idea it kind of lingers.....like an itch so when a nearly new one became available only 10 miles away in Skellerns Worcester I had to see it. Bad move - nice new shiny things become must haves.

Having not long got back from an epic trip to Morocco on the trusty GS I was feeling quite sensible and questioning whether I really needed another bike as it wasn't cheap. Being extra sensible I took my wife to see it, as you can imagine she was thrilled at the idea, although I did promise to go shopping with her afterwards. The bike was as new but we weren't quite agreed on price so I decided to think it over and as promised took my wife clothes shopping (again, such a joy!). What had also made me pause was the reason for both of the two previous owners selling it - too much power and lack of self-control? After an hour, I returned to the dealer and explained that I wasn't keen to proceed as it was a little too expensive. He agreed to knock another £500 offdeal done!

When I collected it, my first impression was how light it was compared to the big GS adventure; yet also how comfortable it felt.



KTM 1290R — REVIEW BY ADRIAN 'SLIPPY' WHEELER

First Long Ride

The bike felt great - both smooth and responsive and also very happy to plod along. Not sure what all this "beast" hype was about, although up until this point I was only using approx. 25% throttle.

The road ahead was clear, so as the speed limit changed to 60 a little more throttle was applied. The lunge forward was absolutely tremendous, "OMG" this is amazing and yes big torque is great!

Being a bit of a Treky I now refer to this as "impulse drive" so you can guess what comes next.....When very dry, clear and straight apply full throttle at your peril! This unleashes the full 170+bhp and 144nm of torque..... "Warpdrive"

In "street" mode it will keep the front wheel virtually planted (1" hover max) in race mode it will lift more which I have only ever tried on private land!

You also need to hold on very tight with your legs, lean forward over the tank and make sure you're firmly anchored on the foot rests. Suffice to say you need your wits about you as it will only be a matter of seconds before you hit the speed limit - I can understand why the last owners sold - but I absolutely LOVE it.



KTM 1290R — REVIEW BY ADRIAN 'SLIPPY' WHEELER

After practice, confidence builds making overtakes precise, effortless and quicker. It does, however, have deliberately high gearing and this means the engine feels like its labouring at 70mph in 6th and is much smoother in 5th gear so 6th is redundant. This does keep power delivery under control although I've just ordered a smaller 16 tooth sprocket which should make it even more....interesting.

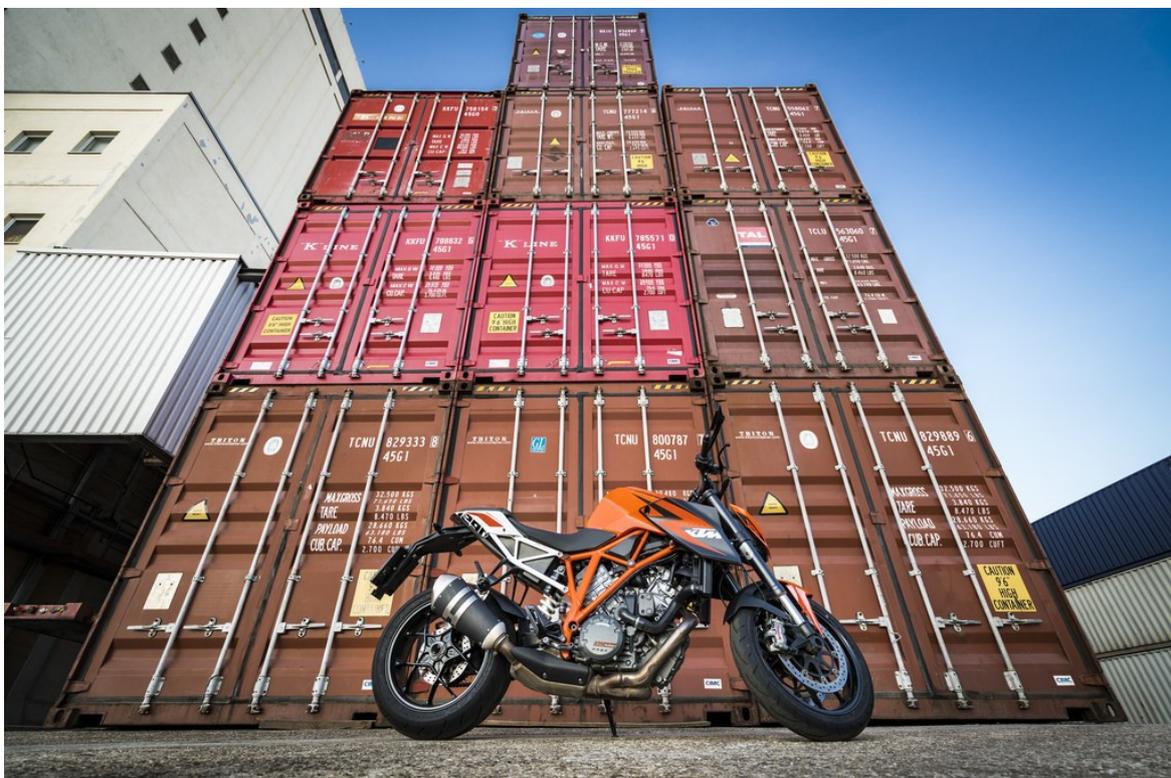
So enough about the power, what's the handling like?

Absolutely planted and balanced and certainly soaks up the typical roads we ride on Sundays. It's also very comfortable and was a joy to ride on the Exmoor club weekend although I did fit an aftermarket ergo seat. I was even contemplating taking it on a European tour next year, the only things that held me back were the 200 mile range on a full tank (the gs is 380!) and the lack of storage space and wind deflection (too many squashed flies on visor).

As the bike is so light, cornering is easy and it goes exactly where you want it to and on the odd occasion when the bends tighten up it's easy to apply more anchored counter steering, aided by the wide handle bars. Grip in the dry is also superb thanks to semi slick dual compound tyres, but the same can't be said in the wet - very slippery but I've never been a great fan of wet riding following last year's Luxemburg "monsoon" experience. *(Hence the nickname – Ed)*

The only minor criticism I have is the indicator warning light is positioned quite low and sits out of my peripheral vision but that has been easily fixed with an extended led light and time delay buzzer.

Suffice to say I love it and as long as you apply restraint it'd a very usable all round bike as well as being a track ready beast!



CHARITY SALE—C/O JOHN HODGES

BIKE CLOTHING, GOOD CONDITION AND YOURS FOR NOTHING!

Having decided to hang up my riding boots I found I had a bit of gear with plenty of life still left in it. I'm hoping that somebody might find the bits and pieces below of some value – all in good condition and washed and re-proofed where appropriate so ready to wear.

No money required but donations to Air Ambulance would be gratefully received. Please contact Del Britton if you are interested.

All the best and happy riding.

John Hodges



OXFORD RAIN SUIT

Large. Virtually new. Worn 3 times and does the job.



HELITE AIRBAG VEST

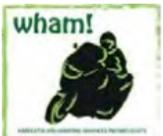
Large. Excellent condition. OK to wear in winter but can be a bit too warm in summer.

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CHARITY SALE—C/O JOHN HODGES



HG Master V All Seasons Suit
Size: jacket 54; trousers 27ie large with 30”
leg. Very good condition. A truly excellent
all weather suit with Goretex and Cordura.



Revit Summer Air Suit
Size: jacket 54 and trousers 27
ie large with 30” leg. Excellent
condition and lovely to wear on
the really hot days.

CHIEF OBSERVERS' MUSINGS—DEL & GARY 'CHUGGER' BARNES

Gears, Brakes – or is it Brakes, Gears? Engine, Slow – or is it Engine, Go?

Why we do not use the gears as brakes

Recent Newsletter articles on this theme have raised a bit of chat on a Sunday morning and it's clear there is still a bit of confusion about what's the "right" way for an Advanced rider. Like a lot of aspects of advanced riding we can quickly quote "it depends" but that's not always very useful so let's take a look at the difference between acceleration sense, braking and our use of gears. Firstly, what is acceleration sense? (Bonus points for those who read it in July's Newsletter.)

Acceleration sense definition

Acceleration sense is the ability to vary machine speed in 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.

Practically, what this means for an advanced rider is that with good observation, planning and anticipation they can, in many circumstances, make the required speed adjustments by moderating the engine power demand alone. Unfortunately this definition has been misinterpreted by many old-school riders – the ones who'll tell you they have circumnavigated the globe twice without once showing a brake light! These old-school riders have the idea that advanced riders don't (or is that won't?) use all the controls of their bike.

Using your brakes less does not mean "enhance engine braking so that we avoid using the brakes" i.e. using lower gears as an early action to slow the bike down!

Remember 'Gear to go, brakes to slow'. Most advanced riders know that to accelerate promptly an appropriate gear is required. The old-school, with their brake-light phobia, bang down through the gears to slow the bike. Brakes are much more powerful and far smoother in achieving speed reduction – use them and move your ride up.



CHIEF OBSERVERS' MUSINGS—DEL & GARY 'CHUGGER'

BARNES

Using the gears

The way you use your gears can make or mar your riding. Correct use of gears depends on accurately matching engine speed through the chosen gear to the road speed, and using clutch and throttle precisely. This will give you a responsive bike, smooth gear changes and greater stability.

Braking and changing gear

The sequential gearbox on a bike does not allow intermediate gears to be missed when changing up or down, we must proceed ratio by ratio. When speed is lost through braking, multiple changing down of gears can be required. There are two techniques which can be used to select the correct gear to leave the hazard:

Block changing

Either after the braking phase or **during the later stages of braking**, hold in the clutch lever and change down through the gears to the appropriate lower gear, then release the clutch to engage the drive.

This technique allows rapid movement through the gears, but depends critically on the rider skilfully choosing the gear for the road speed. Selection of the wrong gear will risk “bogging” the bike with poor acceleration, or, if the rider's not matched engine speed, the potential for a rear wheel skid.

Sequential changing

After some speed is lost during braking, work down through each gear, engaging the next lower gear as the engine's optimum speed range is entered.

At each stage, accurately match the engine speed and gear to the road speed. This promotes smoothness and avoids the potential for a rear wheel skid. With this technique, engine braking helps to slow the machine. The appropriate gear for the speed is engaged throughout and, because the drive is engaged except during changes, the bike remains stable. You also have the option of immediate power if needed.

Which one is right? It depends! The advanced rider should be able to use both techniques and will find circumstances where each is most appropriate. Whichever one is used, it must be properly incorporated into the riding plan.

CHIEF OBSERVERS' MUSINGS—DEL & GARY 'CHUGGER' BARNES

Releasing the throttle – engine braking

When you release the throttle, the engine power drops and through engine compression exerts a slowing force on the rear wheel. The engine is acting as a modest brake, reducing road speed smoothly and gradually with little wear to the machine. The loss of road speed is more pronounced when the rider eases off the throttle in a low gear.

Engine braking allows you to lose speed gradually and is particularly useful for small speed adjustments where the rider has time and space to make gradual adjustments. Engine braking is also useful in conditions where normal braking might lock the wheels - a good example is on long descents when the engine can help to control speed so that the rider has less braking to do when coming to a halt.

Engine braking operates only on the rear wheel, but it is an effective way of losing speed gradually. Remember when you use solely engine braking that this gives no brake light signal to any following traffic. Remember: **In normal riding, engine braking can only produce a *gradual* reduction in speed.**

In Conclusion – or what do I do now?

Remember you have brakes fitted for a very good reason – use them when appropriate.

Practice using block- and sequential-changes, decide where each one works well and then adapt your riding to become smoother.

Avoid the classic (or old-school) mistake of enhancing engine braking by grabbing for lower gears.

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

In a new monthly column our one and only “A RIDER” takes a slightly lighter take on interesting topics. This week:

ALCOHOL, SLEEP AND YOU

Do you, like me, have a drink most days? Recently I’ve been really trying to reduce my consumption to the new guideline of 14 units per week – heck! that’s almost teetotal!!

What I’ve noticed is I sleep better with less or no alcohol in the evening. Forget daytime drinking! It’s always a non-starter unless it’s a daytime party and then I get a headache which I have to conceal from significant other!

So how much do you actually enjoy on say, Saturday night? Do you count the units?

I’m with the Irish saying: “One whisky is nice, two is plenty, three is not nearly enough!”

Two glasses of 13% red wine is a reliable 4 units (min). Um, I’ve had three quarters of a bottle already....

Come sun up, do you really *really* think about the quality of your ability to ride safely every time before you get on your bike?

I’d wager (not a lot) that as you tog up to ride your machine, you **do** think about the alcohol you had the

night before and you confidently work out that your system will be clear of it. After all, say two pints of 4% abv beer is 4 units and your body has metabolized that in about 4 hours (www.nhs.co.uk).

You went to bed at say 1030 after the (reliably ghastly) News and got up at 7am to be at McDonalds for 9am. You probably didn’t eat much since you’re already salivating at the full English that you know you shouldn’t have. But will! Eight and a half hours sleep (prostate visits aside), no problem then.

Oh yes there is!

Alcohol **will** affect your sleep rhythm (www.sleepfoundation.org).

What you’d rather not know is that alcohol affects:

Your Circadium rhythm - The circadian system keeps us in sync with the 24-hour day. Our body’s internal clock regulates when you feel alert and when you’re ready to sleep. After drinking, production of adenosine (a sleep-inducing chemical in the brain) is increased, allowing for a fast onset of sleep. But it subsides as quickly as it came, making you more likely to wake up before you’re truly rested. Maybe there’s an upside? Trouble is, I find, ‘significant other’ is unlikely to be amused at my mid-night proposition. Anyway, I digress.



THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

Alcohol blocks REM sleep

You get lower-quality sleep following alcohol because it blocks REM sleep, which is often considered the most restorative type of sleep. With less REM sleep, chances are you wake up feeling groggy and unfocused. Er...yes

It can aggravate breathing problems.

Alcohol causes your whole body to relax, including the muscles of your throat. And that makes you more prone to snoring and sleep apnea. Sleep apnea can have serious and life-shortening consequences: high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, automobile (Ed. bike?) accidents caused by falling asleep at the wheel, diabetes, depression, and other ailments. (<https://www.sleepapnea.org/learn/sleep-apnea>)

It leads to extra bathroom trips.

Typically, your body knows that nighttime is time for sleep, not time for trips to the bathroom. That means that your body has learned to put your bladder into hibernation for the night. But alcohol, a diuretic, can make you need to go more, interrupting your normal sleep pattern.

So did you actually get that much proper sleep? Probably not. Add to the above alcohol impact, there are dozens of other reasons too. The aforementioned (so uncomfortable isn't it) throne visits, babies, children, party next door, weather, wildlife, partner snoring, too hot, too cold, work worries (those cold sweats!) - as I say, lots of reasons.

So now we have the scene for Sleep Deprivation. How does *that* affect your ability to ride safely?

Some French (they can put it away!) researchers¹ published an academic paper on the impact of sleep deprivation on motorcycling performance using laboratory and motorcycling tests to seek answers.

In a nutshell, their research shows that sleep deprivation affects the "complex activity of riding a motorcycle" more in the morning than later in the day. ('complex' eh? Stroke my ego!).

Don't want to believe me?

Then I shall quote: *"In a previous study (Bougard et al., 2006), the circadian fluctuations of ... motorcycling performance evaluated using an "off-road" driving test have shown that the number of riding errors is lower at the end of the afternoon than in the early morning. Road accidents can also be induced by the effect of a disruptive factor, such as sleep deprivation, added to the normal circadian rhythmicity of performance capacity. It has been widely noted that sleep deprivation affects performance (for a review, see Himashree et al., 2002) and that sleep deprived subjects make more driving mistakes (Lenne et al., 1998)."*

So there you have it!



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