WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS





JULY 2018



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

The Mediterranean weather has been a joy...until my bike's dash shows 30C+ and I can see and feel the softening Tarmac on sun drenched corners.

WHAM has had a hectic spring and the pace quickens! We have had over 70 interested 'free tasters' generating an influx of associates so we now have a very busy set of National Observers.

There's also our excellent radio training for observers which is ongoing via Derek.



August sees the IAMRoadsmart 'thumbs up' campaign.

The 'Thumbs Up For Great Driving And Riding!' campaign is a month of fundraising activities, designed to help IAM RoadSmart members and the wider driving and motorcycling community



acknowledge, celebrate and increase courtesy between drivers and riders on UK roads. Check the IAM-Roadsmart website for more info.

In the meantime the Masters programme continues to thrive with assessments being booked for the end of the year.

If anyone is thinking about the 'Masters' have a chat with our chief observers or one of our Masters Mentors (Derek/Richard H/Del). It's an enjoyable process that raises your skills level.

(Ed - Ant passed his Masters re-assessment with a distinction recently!!)

Enjoy the summer!
Ant Clerici





MONGOLIA BLOG-BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 5 - FINALE



In the night a dog came to investigate and barked incessantly right outside the tent until Jem bravely went out and threw stones at it. Next morning it was back with a friend but this time we tried the stale doughnut technique and they went off well pleased.

Our ride that day took us back to where we had camped near the sand dunes on our first evening. As usual it was very scenic, though being the slowest moving vehicles on the now fairly busy tarmac road wasn't great. Reaching the sandy trail we had followed previously, we rode a further 15km till we found the Khustain Park Nature Reserve. It was looking stormy and we hoped to find a ger to camp in. Their camp was full of pre-booked tours; however, we were offered one of the staff gers at a reduced rate. This suited us even better and it was nice to camp among the friendly Mongolian families.



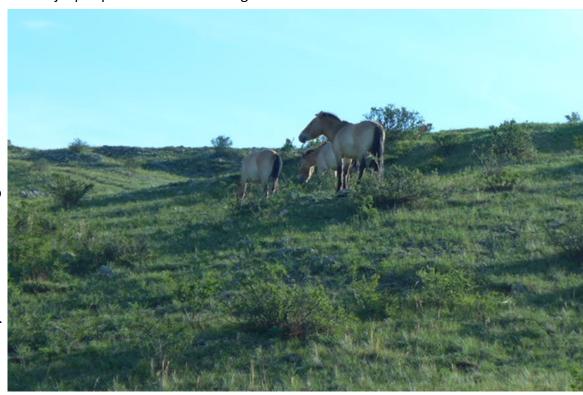


MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 5 - FINALE

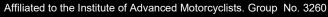


The Khustain Park is one of the few places where Preswalsky's Horse exist in the wild, after conservation and breeding programs saved the species from extinction. In order to be sure to see this elusive creature we booked ourselves a jeep trip for the next morning and were

taken on an amazing drive through the huge park to the remote haunts of the wild horse, or Takhi in Mongolian. We also saw lots of very plump marmots basking in the sun, they didn't seem at all shy.









MONGOLIA BLOG-BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 5 - FINALE

From the park it was only half a day's ride back to Ulaanbaatar and on to Cheke's ger to return the bikes, feeling sad to part company with our fairly trusty steeds.



A few thoughts...

Because of the terrain and the lack of infrastructure Mongolia can seem daunting, but for those wanting a little bit of adventure in a non-westernised country, it is amazing, and if you are sensible and practical, safe. The population of Mongolia is very small and the country very big, so everything is far apart, you might travel 70 to 100km between shops and fuel stops, so forward planning and a few supplies are essential. Due to the high altitude, the weather can be extreme; you can be baking hot, cold, wet and hot again, all in the same day.

The bikes cost 13euros a day and were fun and adequate. Yes, of course, we would have loved more powerful bikes on the tarmac, but on the unmade tracks we travelled on for over 700km, the Shinerays were competent, comfortable and very easy to fix, even for Jem who is no mechanic. Also, their parts are dirt cheap and easy to find. We met two westerners dismembering their 650 Husqvarnas, their fuel injection systems had been completely fouled by the dust...in line fuel filters highly recommended!

Mongolians are cheerful, easy-going, helpful, curious, and very friendly. The landscape is huge, undeveloped, beautiful and unlike anything we have in Europe. We would definitely go again.

Compared to most organised motorcycling trips, and in fact to most holidays, our Mongolia trip was incredibly cheap but a lot more than just cheerful, it was brilliant.





CHIEF OBSERVERS COLUMN

Limit Point of View

I've recently taken on a new associate, and whist going over the basics with him I started to talk about corner entry speed and the limit point of view. To my surprise he said he had never heard this expression, so I went into more detail with him, to try and explain that the LPOV is the only real way we have of assessing the road ahead and how fast or slow we should be going.

Have you ever found yourself braking into a bend simply because it was sharper than you originally thought? If you have, then you may want to consider how you can actually go about assessing the severity of bends because if you get it wrong the consequences are potentially serious.

There are several clues we can take from the surroundings to help us. The most obvious are the road signs and markings, but there are other less obvious ones: Did you know that, in the UK, virtually every approach to a bend is accompanied by a change of centre white lines to 'hazard' lines; these are long white lines with short black spaces and in many cases they will have a cat's eye between each line? Hazard lines are also placed where side-roads join larger roads.

Other clues are the line of the trees, hedges, buildings, street lights, chevron boards, telegraph poles and even skid marks on the approach to bends, indicating past mistakes. The position and speed of other traffic can also provide you with valuable information.

As advanced riders we use a technique called 'limit point of view' to assess a bend on the approach. The limit point of view is the farthest point along a road to which you have a clear and uninterrupted view of the road surface ahead, i.e., the point along the road where both sides of the carriageway appear to meet in a point and become one.

To use this technique simply ask yourself as you approach each bend, "is the limit point coming closer?" If it is then you will need to start reducing your speed on the straight until the point where your speed and the speed at which the limit point appears to move are the same. On every bend the final bit of analysis is when the limit point begins to move away from you and your view opens up. This is the point you can begin to accelerate away from the bend. In IPSGA this would be the acceleration phase but remember don't chase the LPOV as this will only make you get faster and faster.

The technique of 'limit point analysis' takes a bit of practice but it will help you to link your speed with your range of vision and allow you to stop in the distance you can see to be clear on your side of the road.

Try to remember the saying: 'Brake on the straights – steer on the bends'





CHIEF OBSERVERS COLUMN





The LPOV on the straight is as far as you can see, way, way in the distance. On the right hand bend on a two-lane main road, it's actually for safety reasons your side of the white line. The actual LPOV is by the right hand hadge, but you can't go there

right hand hedge, but you can't go there.



So, for this image, I would be as far over to the left as is possible and safe to do so. I would go in

deep and then start looking to the right to see the road open up in front of me. Don't turn the bike to soon or you will cut off the corner, and end up crossing the imaginary white line, this would put you in the decapitation zone on a main road, and that's not a good place to be.

My thanks to BAM for providing some of the words.

Alex Hoyle Chief Observer (Hereford)

If you agree or disagree you can contact me at: alexwhoyle@gmail.com





Now that I've been able to research this item properly, full credit for it's original (yes original) production, goes to the veritable John Nixon. To spare his blushes I won't reveal the year, yet John ran a successful marketing business (before selling it all off and retiring to his country-pile) back in the day and one of it's UK clients was no less than Gulf Oil.

The impetus behind getting together this publication to provide some accessible 'advanced' riding tips and commentary was unfortunately, as most things can be, born out of tragedy in that someone close to the commissioning party lost someone in a motorcycle incident.

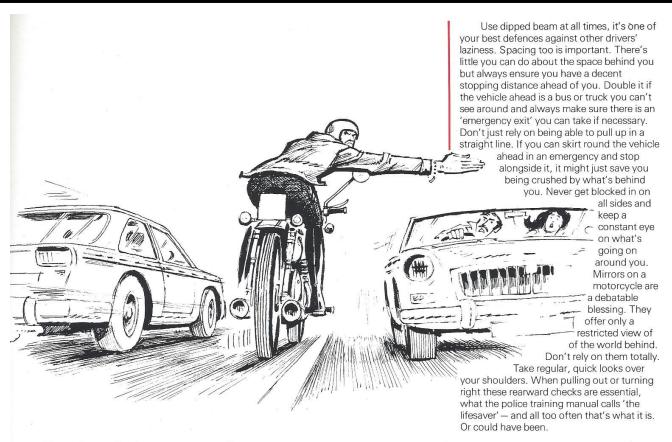
Additional local interest abounds in that Martyn Hillier and colleagues provided input, scenarios and locations to bring the 'story' to life.

In a nutshell that's the history however I'm sure whilst John is a shy retiring type he will be able to speak further on the matter should you ask at a Natter nite near you soon...









Never skip an amber light. Amber gamblers play that game once too often and meet another halfway across the junction. Amber means *stop*.

Defensive riding often requires an offensive technique. Not that one should be aggressive, but one should always be positive. Play ahead, signal clearly, make your move. And when you do, do so absolutely, not weakly or ambiguously in a manner that makes you or others feel unsure of what you're doing. Hand signals, with the advent of indicators, seem to have gone by the board but in many situations they should underline what you say with your winkers. In strong sunlight a winker might be unclear, even unseen. Use an arm. You don't have to be military about it but don't just hang one out limply either. Be positive in everything you do. Make your moves indisputable and informative because other people need to be told what you are doing.

Timing is important too. Signal too late and you can land in trouble - signal too early and the same applies. Many garages are built on corner sites, with roads coming out immediately before and after the forecourt entrances. Signal too early that you are going into the garage and other people could think you're turning into the side road. So use great care, slow down and make your next move known to all. In tricky situations like this, be positive and show exactly what you intend to do - and when the other guy plays the game the right way, acknowledge his patience and skill by a quick nod of the head. He has given thought to what you're doing, so say 'Thanks'. It never goes amiss.

Courtesy on the road is vastly important. Give and take always pays dividends and for the traffic-bound car driver who faces far more frustration per mile than you do, a little give goes a long way.

Show car drivers a courteous motorcyclist and they will remember — for a while anyway — that motorcyclists exist. They will notice them and hopefully be more aware of them. Don't filter through heavy traffic down the inside, or between two lanes of cars. Get out on the crown of the road and overtake there. Your complete freedom and mobility can be a big annoyance to a car driver stuck in dense traffic and no matter if he's totally wrong, that annoyance is still there and can be dangerous. Don't make enemies. Play the game and play it fair. Give and take. Most of all, observe and survive.

Thinking ahead is one of your best defences and once you train yourself in this way it will always stay with you: At in-town speeds, the next fifty or one hundred yards should be no problem. You should be travelling at the right speed to cope with that, so start thinking about the next fifty or hundred. That way you're prepared for whatever comes into view. As it appears, make it into a checklist in your mind: Junction left, pedestrian crossing, school entrance with tuck shop opposite, traffic light. Your brain is the best computer in the world so make it work. It loves work and it loves working out problems - so make it work out answers before the problems

Always stay in an accelerating gear, one that will take a handful of throttle to get you

out of trouble and one that will also give a good amount of engine braking if you roll it off. That will help keep your ride smooth and fluid. And when you brake in town traffic, use the back brake to good effect. Using the front stopper transfers the weight of the machine forward and that gives instability. The rear brake, properly used, slows you firmly yet gently with no weight transfer. You stay smooth and your right hand is kept free to apply a fine degree of control to the throttle. Your front brake can be deployed when needed

Always assume people have *not* seen you. When approaching a hazard assume that you will *have* to stop. Other people might not, so make sure *you can*.

A large number of accidents are caused by other road users pulling out of side turnings into your path. As you approach make a point of looking for their faces and eyes. If you can see those, they've probably seen you. If you can't, and all you see is their profile or back of head, cover your brakes or use you horn and be prepared to take evasive action.



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Country riding

Out of town the same disciplines apply, only the rules change. Instead of thinking in terms of 30 mph and 200 yards ahead, you reprogramme your brain to think in terms of twice that speed (if not more) and a good quarter to half mile ahead. Jackie Stewart once said that 180mph was so ordinary as to be nothing worth talking about - until something went wrong. Then you realized you were doing nearly two hundred miles an hour! Bear that in mind because it is pure truth. Gear your brain up as you build up speed. Your 'thinking time' doesn't alter, but the ground you cover whilst thinking is often three or four times the distance you'd cover at in-town speeds. At 70mph a fraction of a second can mean life or death. Say that again: Life or death. Now think about what that means.

Highways designated 'A' road status are usually fast but have the blessing of being wide and well surfaced. 'B' roads are altogether different. In your early days of motorcycling you'll find out that 'B' roads are much more fun. Most councils spend the greater part of their road budget on arterial roads, so 'B' roads are often ignored. They are rarely resurfaced, they just get patched up. See one patch of fresh, dark tarmac and there might be a few more ahead — or a steamroller or road gang just around the next bend. Use your eyes and observe all these signs, not just the ones the council

have shoved into the roadside. These are important I admit, but only tell half the story.

Did you know that if there are two roadsigns on the same pole, the one at the top is the hazard you'll come across first? If there is a 'Narrow Bridge' sign above an 'S Bend' sign, you'll cross the bridge before you come to the bend: and the actual 'S' on the sign will also show you if the first part of the bend is a right or left hander. Take a look at these signs and learn all they say. At the sort of speeds you might be travelling at you'll need to know things like that. But nature has her own way of telling things. The 'Cattle Crossing' sign is very familiar, but do you know what sort or time cattle are milked and likely to be crossing the road? Usually seven to nine in the morning and three to five at night, give or take an hour. That alone tells you when they are likely to be on the road and even if they've been and gone, ten to one they've left a souvenir of their visit - and that stuff can have you off your bike in no time flat! Take a look at hedgerows and verges too. If they are freshly clipped you might find a slow moving tractor with a nasty cutter blade on the back of it just around the next bend. Farm machinery takes its toll on the road surface too, so watch those bends. The cambers could be bad, bumpy or even broken up.

Clumps of straw or hops in the road are proof that a loaded tractor and trailer aren't







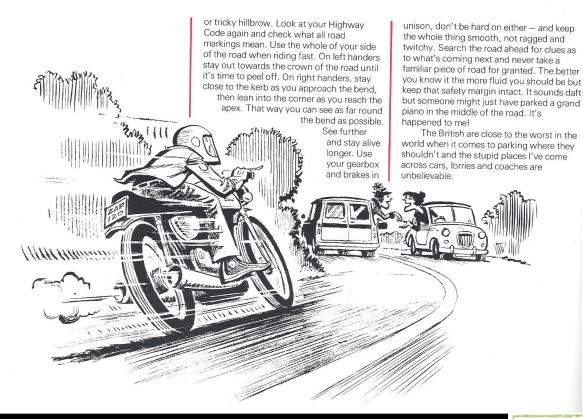


far away. And horse manure isn't just good for roses - it tells you that Dobbin and the rest of the County Cavalry might just be waiting for you a little way ahead. Ease up, cut the noise and ride gently past on the far side of the road.

Look over hedges and learn to read the skyline. Quite often you can see the tops of telegraph poles which will generally tell you the way the road swings round the next bend, left or right, even though you can't actually see it.

The chimney stack of a farmhouse or roof of a barn tells you enough: dirty road, cattle, farm machinery or even a pedestrian could just be a few seconds away from you. And do you really know what white line markings tell you? If there are more black spaces than white, the road ahead is OK. When the white marks suddenly tighten up and there's more white than black, there is an unseen hazard ahead, usually a junction







wham! THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

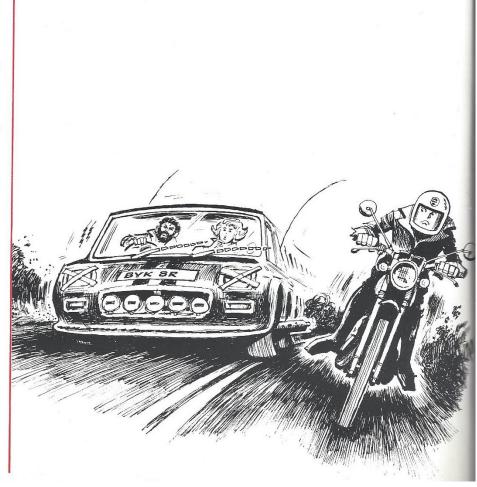


Always ride with your safety margin in reserve because you'll need it someday. To 'expect the unexpected' sounds trite, but always be aware that there are idiots in this world. Some of them travel the same roads as you and I.

Put your powers of observation to good use at all times. There's a car ahead. Probably eight or nine years old. It has chequered tape down the sides, the rear window is plastered with stickers and a pair of miniature football boots are dangling from the interior mirror.

The guy driving it is obviously into selfhypnosis or suffers tunnel vision and with those things dancing around in front of his eyes all the time, you can bet he hasn't seen you coming up behind. The next move he makes could be your last. Never try and put one over on this guy. Don't overtake him coming out of or going into a bend even if it's safe to do so. Dent his pride and he might dent your head. Cruise by quickly and smoothly and put some real distance between the pair of you. If he rises to the occasion, let him have his own way otherwise you'll find out just how badly his chequered wreck has been maintained. And he's the last sort you'd want to share an ambulance ride with.

Take a look through the back window of every car you come across. Two's company but if you see more profile than you do the back of the head, the driver is too busy talking with his passenger to notice inconsequentials like traffic to the rear.





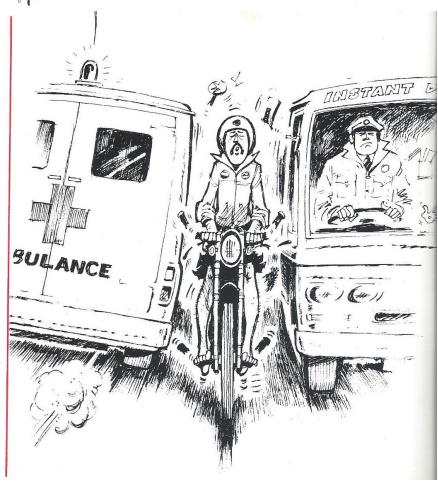
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Choose your moment carefully then zip by and put something else between them and you as soon as you can. Notice things like a blown stoplight, poor lines through corners, no signals, body rust, erratic driving and suchlike. All these things show the quality of vehicle and driver.

When you do overtake, never make yourself the filling in a sandwich. Get past whatever's ahead without squeezing through oncoming traffic at the same time. Take pride in not taking risks. And if in doubt, ease off. There's always time to try again later. Remember, better to be twenty minutes late for your appointment than twenty years early for your funeral. Relax whilst riding but never let your mind wander from the job in hand.









Anchors and twistgrips

When braking, use a formula for each occasion. When it's dry, use your brakes seventyfive-twentyfive in favour of your front brake. When it's wet, ease up on the front brake and use both brakes fifty-fifty to shed speed. Above all, develop a feel for friction (or lack of it) between your tyres and the road. Your front brake is the one that requires more care during application because wrong use of it can land you in trouble very quickly. Learn to use both brakes correctly.

On a quiet road use the front brake only before a bend or two, then the rear. Use them in unison, putting more emphasis on one than the other. That will teach you how to mix them properly and just how each differs in the way they do their jobs. Like a lot of things, there are no firm rules, just general guidelines.

Fine control of your machine is what you should be striving for. Line up for bends properly, cog down a gear or two without straining the engine, dab gently on the brakes if need be and accelerate gently out of the bend. Don't just slop through. Take care to feel the road and tyres beneath you as you apply power.

Apply positive thought before you apply brakes or power. Be aware that acceleration

or deceleration can lead you into or out of trouble with the same ease. This is where smoothness pays dividends. Make an effort to master both braking and acceleration by exploring what both can give. Find a quiet piece of road and travel as far as you can without using your brakes.

Just use the throttle and gearbox. When you've mastered that, try it in traffic, using the brakes only when you need to (or at least be happy that you're using them as little as needed). Exercises like this will bring complete mastery of your machine a lot closer. When you reach this stage you'll find out that smooth does not mean slow. You can be Smooth Quick or Rough Quick — and smooth is safe.

The boring black strip

Motorways are not the favourite haunt of motorcyclists simply because they are boring beyond description. There's really only one thing to be said about motorways — avoid them unless you really do need to cruise at high speed to get where you're going. If you do use them learn the language of motorway signs, especially the 'lighted dot' boards down the central reservation. Be wary of cross winds and the tricky bow-waves created by big trucks, they tend to push you about or suck you in as you overtake. Apply the same 'two-thirds the way out' rule no matter which lane you occupy and when you

come across a lane closure, move out or in as the case may be at the 400 yard marker.

At the legal limit you'll cover that 400 yards in about ten seconds and that doesn't leave you any time to waste. Signal clearly when you overtake and keep your winker on until you are positioned correctly in your new lane. Don't just give four or five winks, keep it going all the time you are moving out. Traffic approaching you with headlamps on during daylight is often a warning that a rainstorm or patchy fog lies ahead. Again, that's a question of observing what you see and using the information. Motorways are a risk area because many people use them at high speed with their brains atuned to low speed. That's why I say don't use them if they can be avoided. And avoid them at all cost in bad weather.

Two's company

Carrying a pillion passenger presents no real problem as long as your partner does as you say. Someone who's never done it before sits tightly and leans the wrong way on corners — so fill them in on the drill first. They should sit directly in line with you and lean neither left nor right on bends, just stay right behind you. And when they want to look ahead they should do so over your *left* shoulder, leaving your rear view clear for when you check behind. If they can't get it right after a few miles, leave them at home next time. Adjust your suspension and

check your owner's manual for recommended 'two-up' tyre pressures. It makes a lot of difference. Most of all, be aware of the extra responsibility you are taking on. No girl wants a scarred leg or a limp for the rest of her life — and no feller I know would be too thrilled with that either. Hurt yourself and you've nobody else to blame, hurt someone else and it's with you and them for the rest of your lives.

Never let a passenger give a hand signal for you unless you first authorize it. It's quite simple to do, you make a left or right hand signal then your passenger taps your elbow and continues the signal. That allows you to get both hands back on the handlebar whilst a much-needed third hand does the signalling. But always signal first yourself, then there can be no mistake.





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NIGHT RIDING - ERIC REYNOLDS

In the last few years I have done circa 5000 miles riding in the dark. I have done this as a volunteer for Severn Freewheelers on a BWW R1200 RT, a large proportion of this riding was done with deliveries classed as Urgent – get there as soon as you safely and legally can.

How then can you do this whilst maintaining a reasonable level of safety? The flippant answer to this is **don't do it** but life is more complicated than that. Myself and many other volunteers feel that is worth the risk for the buzz you get from meeting the challenge and the pride you feel for delivering the service. It may not be for you, but walking into a ward in the Children's hospital at 3am and having



a nurse snatch the drugs out of your hand and run down the ward to administer them to a very sick child is a moment of high emotion.

What then are the additional and reduced risks of riding in the dark and how can we apply IPSGA, experience and common sense to good effect to lower the overall risk.

UNLIT ROADS

The overarching effect is reduced visibility. Most motorcycle lights are mediocre compared with cars although more modern adventure style machines with twin headlights are much better. The lights are not able to provide good enough detail of the road surface at a distance that is needed for safe motorcycling.

Colour is drained from your vision so worn surfaces, gravel, mud, debris and repairs blend into a patchwork of greys and blacks. Oncoming vehicles have better lights than you, if they are badly adjusted or the road has crests you can be unsighted to the extent that you are riding into a black space where the road was when you last saw it.

Most motorcycles when banked over for a bend provide a better view of the parts of the road or verges you do not intend to ride on.

All of these effects are much more pronounced if it is raining and standing water is added to the list of road surface hazards creating a real difficulty in estimating its depth and imagining what it may conceal. Rain drops and mist on your visor compound all the difficulties.

On the plus side, the headlights of oncoming vehicles and those vehicles approaching from side roads can be seen much earlier than the vehicle itself. The roads get progressively emptier as the night wears on and you don't get low sun in your eyes.

I would like to offer this advice.

Drive slower, if you travel at the normal daylight speeds by the time you have seen the road problem in your lights and worked out what they are you will not have time to stop. "Being able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear" is still the message but seeing and interpreting what you can see is a much more complex and slower process in the dark.

Abandon using nearside or offside positions for the increased view, it does not enable you to see vehicles any earlier. Keep to a central position as it keeps you away from the potholes and worn surfaces in the wheel tracks, reduces the mental effort and keeps the bike in a straighter line.





NIGHT RIDING - ERIC REYNOLDS

If there is a vehicle in front and it is travelling at a reasonable speed, stay behind it and look round or under the vehicle to use its lights to get early warning of any problems.

Use any and all anti-misting methods you can to keep your visor clear. Make sure that you are clothed well enough to stay warm and dry.

ROADS WITH LIGHTS

These are much easier to deal with and many trunk roads and lit motor way, after the rush hours, seem to be easier than in the day. There is usually much reduced traffic, virtually no pedestrians and cycles and the quality of driving is usually better. This effect gets the more pronounced as it gets later (Broad Street in Birmingham at 11:30 pm not withstanding.)

Urban and suburban areas are often poorly lit and need care, particularly as the youths and drug deliverers are about on their stunt bikes with no lights and black hoodies. For obvious reasons there are additional risks between 11:00 and 12:00 when citizens are making their way home from the pub when their behaviour in and out of vehicles becomes erratic.

The advice I would offer is keep the speed lower, 25mph seems to me a suitable for these areas.

Expect pedestrians to fall off the pavements and drivers to pull out or stop suddenly.

Do not shout or gesticulate in any way at anyone however aggrieved you might feel.

If we were to apply the rule "you must be able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear" our speed would sometimes be no more than 20mph, the fact that few if any riders do this is the real increase in risk







BIKER DOWN 2018



Upcoming Biker Down courses in West Mercia:

- Sunday 20th May 2018 Bromsgrove Fire Station, Worcestershire (10am-1pm)
- Saturday 17th June 2018

 Peterchurch Fire Station, Herefordshire (10am-1pm)
- Friday 7th September 2018 Bromsgrove Fire Station, Worcestershire (10am-1pm)
- Saturday 22nd September 2018 Shrewsbury (10am-1pm)
- Sunday 7th October 2018 Telford (10am-1pm)
- A limited number of places are available on each course. If you would like to attend one of these courses, please email:

Roadsafety1@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Places will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. We will confirm if you have a space on the course and confirm location and details for the day.



