



## CHAIRS FOREWORD CONT'D

Have you any thoughts on where we could usefully spend some of our funds?

We have several suggestions and it would be good to hear your thoughts....email me [ant@clericidesign.com](mailto:ant@clericidesign.com)

- \* Spend more on Natter Night speakers – get a celeb in! If so who?
- \* A celebration social event when the restrictions are lifted
- \* Slow riding day: buy in some expertise on bike handling
- \* Donation to the Air Ambulance
- \* All of the above or something else?

Remember we are a charitable group that shouldn't spend money on beer for everyone or a weekend in Venice for the chair!

Looking ahead we all need to be careful once we are allowed back on the bikes.

Some of you know I used to work on Guernsey; a lovely island where the speed limits are 25mph in town and 35mph everywhere else. Every Sunday the highlight for bikers is to ride their Blades and GS's the 25 mile coast road of the 7 mile x 3 mile island, so no Welsh mountain roads for them, no 60mph B roads. Cars too are ridiculous with Ferraris and big Mercs common place; pottering around the granite walled, narrow lanes, mounting pavements to pass other vehicles and never getting out of 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. When I asked they said "we need serious motors for when we go to France". I guess those in the financial services industry aren't short of a Guernsey Pound or two. But what happens when they drive off the ferry at St Ma-lo?

TOO MANY CRASH ON THE FIRST FAST BEND (especially the bikers).....sacre bleu!

So when you get back on your bike, take it easy for the first few miles. The roads will be full of equally rusty riders and drivers who will be out for the first time with unpractised skills so it'll be like the worst Bank Holiday ever!

However I'm looking forward to a massive turn out for our first Sunday ride. Tony is hatching a great route, we are thinking Lake Vyrnwy. If you can, we recommend you have a practice ride before turning up for your first WHAM group ride after lockdown.

Finally, I'd like to say more than "stay safe!"

In Japan they use the word **genki**. It means healthy, energetic, optimistic, high-spirited, filled with life. When Japanese greet each other, it is not "How are you?" met with a hedged "Not bad" or non-committal "Fine thank you". They ask "Are you genki?" and the answer is "Genki yo!" And when you part, "Stay genki!"

Stay genki

Ant  
WHAM Chair



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THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



## RESTRAINT... - RICHARD HEWITT

Whilst Ant and I were brainstorming topics I could write about (or drone on about..., dependant on your POV) I floated the idea for a “ready reckoner for the inexperienced continental traveller to at least get on and off the ferry without issue”. This, in hindsight, is a poor idea, as, dear reader, to compound whatever unknown ‘opinions’ Brexit might instil in our French cousins minds (cue Eric to smile and say “I told you so”), we are, as Gary “Chugger” Barnes would say to Adrian “Slippy” Wheeler (our resident globe-trotter), “Yo ‘ent goo’ in no where Adrian” due to this perishing C-19.

So, what to do?, an item on fly fishing? I think not.

Ants been trying to tempt me into writing about the IAM ‘Masters’ programme for some time. Specifically, my role as a Masters Mentor. I’ve a foot firmly in two camps on this subject. And no Tony (Davis—the quasi Lairy one) not that kind of ‘camp’. Specifically:

- I don’t want to write about something that either doesn't get read or bores the pants off all who submit to reading it

Alternatively:

- There might actually be interest in me lifting the lid on a topic that for some is seen as a bit of a ‘black art’ and therefore, interesting

I decided I’d have a crack at one aspect of the Masters and so to start with:

*Restraint.*

Something I guess no one would have expected an article on IAM Master to commence with? Anyway, let’s start there and if anyone is remotely interested in me writing more they’ll contact me, shower me in praise for this eloquently penned article and I’ll write another. *Note to self—DO NOT expect this outcome.*

I failed my first attempt at Masters roughly a month before subjecting myself to it again and coming out with 100% and a distinction. I was also asked to join the ranks of the national mentors programme. What about that for a series of events?

I’ve often asked myself “how does one go from failure to success in a short period of time?”. Yes the examiners were completely different people, one remote in nature and one an excellent communicator, and yes the IAM were going through a period where they were standardising the Masters programme; but still what was it about what I did that made a difference?

The learning point, in all seriousness, is that adopting ‘Restraint’ in my approach to IPSGA bought fantastic results...



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Let me explain...

If you ever get the chance to sit down with a Police Class 1 motorcyclist and get them to speak about what Class 1 means, what advanced riding means, you'll often hear about advanced riding being about balancing, and possessing, the natural fear of falling off with the potential for red mist to present whilst making progress.

So what does this mean? It means, a certain amount of fear is a good thing. It keeps one out of the bushes; yet you cannot let it control you.

It also means whilst one needs to be confident and ride with presence and purpose, you cannot let the red mist descend or again you will find those bushes. Men and women of WHAM, if I were to describe Masters in a nutshell, there you have it.

Restraint, where does that come in? Well, I did two things during my re-test that delighted my examiner.

1. Travel behind an enormous lorry for circa 1 mile at about 100yards closing distance at about 20mph
2. Crash some double white lines whilst overtaking a single vehicle

On my first test I would, most probably, have been right up the chuff of the enormous lorry swearing and chuntering to myself, not seeing much and with the red mist further clouding my decision making capability. On this second test my calmness, distance, pace (or lack it) allowed me to see a fantastic, albeit brief, overtaking opportunity present itself some half-a-mile up in the distance. If I hadn't seen it from where I saw it, it wouldn't have looked remotely 'on' when I got to it. I sailed past, even getting a wave from the lorry driver; how about that!

Now, crashing white lines you would have thought was an absolute no no in terms of any form of 'legal' bike riding. My personal view is that if this had been my standard bike test, the test would have cut to a halt then. So why did I get commended for taking this action in a Masters test? Well, simply put, "It was the safest thing to do in the circumstances" Think about that for a minute; crashing white lines was safe, safe for me, safe for the occupants of the vehicle I passed, and, made the best progress...

...but, utterly in contravention of the highway code. This is one of the vagaries of the Masters. I will need to explain the circumstances for you. In hopefully as fewer words as possible it looked like this:

- ♦ Long dead straight road with circa mile/mile and a half forward view. No other cars other than the one in front doing about 50ish mph
- ♦ No roadside furniture, no junctions, no people, no pavement, national speed limit with one house set back 75yds from the road with one observable empty car parked right outside the house, so no where near the road



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- ◆ There was ever so slight undulation in the road but not enough to obstruct anything other than a man hole cover.....

Assessing all of this the overtake was considered a breeze and taken in the usual manner.

I get halfway past and the single broken well spaced white lines turn into double white just where there is an undulation and for about 100yds only in front of the house! Oh Sh\*t, what do I do?

Out of all the options available I open the throttle further, sprint past, pull back in, signal to the car driver with a raised hand that I am thankful to them, what for I don't know, but it seemed the right thing to do, slowed down to 60mph and just carried on with a safe ride.

The first thing we talked about at de-brief was this manoeuvre; for quite some minutes I tell you. Until such time as my examiner couldn't help himself anymore, burst into a beaming smile, and said we'd gone down that very road for what had happened, to happen. Gobsmailed...

I'd done, apparently, the safest thing, the thing the motorist would have *expected me to do*, and then shown courtesy and restraint by signalling I knew what I'd done and therefore potentially impressing the motorist with my thoughtfulness. I must admit I did not get into asking quite how a transgression of the highway code could be ignored yet upon reflection, and having got to know my examiner a bit better since the incident, they used their brain and their *discretion*.

There's a funny word - Discretion. The meaning of which is routinely noted as:

"the freedom to decide what should be done in a particular situation"

However, discretion without restraint, as applied to advance riding see's you continually going into the last 10% of either your capabilities or indeed the situations safety margin tolerance. Some guidance I got post Masters test was:

"don't let your obvious capabilities lure you into continually being within the last 10% of what you, the machine, and the surroundings can accommodate"

This sounds like one of the Japanese proverbs Ant has bought back with him from his Japan trip earlier this year. But it's not, it's gold-dust in my mind.

## RESTRAINT... - RICHARD HEWITT

How many of us have been out on a Sunday run and had a 'moment' whilst keeping up? I know I have, plenty of times. That moment is actually you entering the upper limit of the 10% skills and surroundings tolerance, it's waving at you beckoning you into the bushes....

You may not be the quickest rider; I know I'm not and I've learnt to recognise when my ability is starting to tail off. We all know we're better than most though. We've had the training, read the books, and get up at OMG it's early on a Sunday to hone our skills.

Don't assume the guy/gal you are following (at a safe distance of course) knows any more than you and can ride as well as you. Sooner or later whilst they are in the last 10% barrelling into a high-hedged bend blissfully unaware of exactly what is around the corner, Murphy's law will present them with a tractor pulling out of a field. And that's just not cool.

So, in closing, showing restraint does not mean you need to ride like a snail. Adapt to the circumstances and make the most progress by being safe. You cannot make progress with your body wedged in the drive shaft of a Massey Ferguson.

And when we eventually get out of this lockdown, ride safe, show restraint, remain healthy and see you at the breakfast stop; whoever gets there first.

Richard

Vice-Chair WHAM



# THE SLIPPER CLUTCH—TONY REUSSER

WHAT? WHY? HOW?

Well I don't know about you but I really enjoyed last month Newsletter. I was especially drawn to the piece on Braking & Gear Changing, by Del Britton. I was keen to tell the linked follow-on story, about Slipper Clutches, manual throttle blipping and automatic throttle blipping. Del gave his blessing, so hear goes.

The opening line in the for-mentioned piece said, "Correct use of gears depends on accurately matching the engine speed through the chosen gear to the road speed and using the clutch and throttle precisely. This gives you smooth gear changes and greater stability".

Absolutely right, but what happens if we don't match the right gear to the road speed, or we accidentally change down one or more gear too many and let the clutch out clumsily. Do this when you are braking and weight is transferred forward, reducing the static load on the rear along with grip, possibly compromising stability. Add wet conditions, poor road surfaces, or adverse camber, (after IPSG just before A) when you are turning into a bend applying a balanced throttle or acceleration and it's highly likely that the rear wheel will, hop or skid, or at worst slide completely away!

Hang on a minute I hear you say, that doesn't happen on my motorcycle even if I've been unusually careless with my down change!

Well that is probably because either you understand how to throttle blip or modern technology has come to your aid.



Let me reminisce for a moment and take you back in time to the mid to late 1970's. I had had a couple of right-foot gear changing BSA's and I'd just traded my right-foot change Norton Commando for a left-foot change CB750 Honda. Although I knew gear and rear brake had been switched to the Japanese convention, did I ever press the left thinking it was the brake! of course I did, and it caused a few worrying slides. This of course can still happen if you are lucky enough to own old and new machinery, and your bike doesn't have a Slipper Clutch.

## SLIPPER CLUTCH—TONY REUSSER

Technology to the rescue: Enter the Slipper Clutch and/or Auto Throttle Blip.

Firstly, it's not essential to manually throttle blip on down changes indeed one would probably only choose to do so when making good progress in a National speed limit setting (especially in the wet) or when developing skills in a track based training environment. In these situations it's important to be precise, smooth, maximise grip and ensure stability.

So what does a Slipper Clutch actually do? As we know a clutch engages and disengages the engine from the rear wheel, or crank from the transmission. One half of the clutch housing connects to the gearbox and the other half connects to the engine with clutch plates in between. These are generally pressed together by springs and disengaged by either cable or hydraulics and your clutch lever.

In a Slipper clutch both halves of the clutch housing (transmission/rear wheel side) and (engine side) have ramps built into their circular housings. When the rear wheel drives the engine under deceleration, due to multiple down changes causing a reverse torque reaction, the ramps are forced together. This causes them to ride up each other, forcing the clutch plates apart, thereby separating engine from transmission, allowing the rear wheel to regain rotational contact

and grip before the correct gear is selected and speed matching between engine and transmission is once again achieved.

In addition to slipper clutches which are now fitted to many motorcycles, Auto Throttle Blippers are becoming common place. These blip the throttle when the rider presses the gear lever on down changes, once again speed matching engine and transmission, without the need for the clutch lever to be operated. Magic!

So with both Slipper Clutches and/or Auto Blippers the holy grail of smooth down changes avoids the loss of rear grip, keeps us stable and safe.

Ride Safe with skill and know how your bike works!

Tony Reusser

Secretary WHAM

