

# WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



JUNE 2021



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest Newsletter. It's June already and in a day or two the nights will be drawing in as we head into another winter! But let's look on the bright side, there won't be so many complete idiots on the road hell bent on demonstrating how amazing it is that they haven't yet been signed up for a top factory place in Moto GP..

This month we have our regulars, the Chairman's piece and of course wisdom from the Chief Observer. Each of them addresses slightly different aspects of Roadcraft, but they both agree: the secret of safe riding is to think about what we are doing, - the system is not about mindlessly following a formula!

If you've ever wondered what the skills days at race tracks are all about, Del B has contributed a great article detailing what's involved and what to expect on the day.



And to top off this issue, the popular 'Meet the Committee' series focusses this month on Duane Sanger, who tells us how WHAM has helped him slowly morph from the radical to the sensible.. going from a ZX10R to a BMW GS1250 with a stop over on a Z1000SX on the way. Is it inevitable that all WHAM members eventually end up on BMW adventure models? It looks that way, how long before I too am infected?

Tucked away somewhere too you'll find a quick update on my own restoration project of an historical (hysterical?) old bike.. one day it will come on a Sunday ride.. this year? I hope so!



Not Bike related, but plucky Wham member Ian Rivers is rowing the Atlantic, West to East just now, you might like see the short video at <https://marsandminerva.co.uk/rowsentinel/>



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## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am writing this eagerly awaiting news of the lifting of the remaining C-19 UK lockdown restrictions. Whilst my June Portugal biking break was necessarily re-scheduled to October; hopefully, by the time you read this we will have been able to have booked the odd day ride (or two – Tony D – Please!) and may even have a natter night planned at the Falcon to look forward to. Who knows...?



What I do know is that we have now a date and venue for the WHAM Christmas party for 2021. No, it is not April 1<sup>st</sup>, you read that right. On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December we will be at the Falcon in Bromyard doing our usual thing. It is not yet up on the website, yet the date and booking are firm and so make a date in your diary. Alex will be on-hand to finish any 'seconds', Eric, after a bevy or two, will politely be reminding you to pay your subs in January, and I'll be trying to figure out how late into the evening I have to leave it before getting sloshed is appropriate. And just for Stuart Poole's benefit, going forward, I can confirm nude midnight walks have been banned.

Ok, that is the admin done, quite what pearls of wisdom am I going to offer this month? (queue groans from my fellow committee members)

### DWL – Double White Lines:

An interesting video and subsequent small debate popped up on the Clubs Facebook page last week. The video remains there and so there is no need for me to explain it to you here, but suffice to say it is interesting, thought provoking, and garnered some opposing views...

The debate centred on the safety/legality of crossing DWL's whilst riding a motorcycle. So, is it ok to cross DWL's? In the inimitable words of Mr Martyn Hillier (all-round good bloke, ex-Traffic cop, and recently retired IAMRS examiner), "it depends" ...

I wrote this and ran it past Martyn and so I am confident what I am about to write is Kosher.

The highway code lays down three reasons why a motorist might cross DWL's:

1. to enter a side road or property
2. to manoeuvre round a stationary vehicle blocking your side of the road
3. to overtake a cyclist, horse or a road works vehicle moving at 10 mph (16 km/h) or less

If your examiner is Marcus McCormick up in West Mids., he may well bowl you a teaser and ask what the fourth reason is? Well, it is not written down in the highway code, yet it does exist:

"For the purposes of complying with any direction of a constable in uniform or a traffic warden."

Now, the first three are all straight forward, but the last (fourth) one? It is straight forward to read yet I guarantee if it ever happens to you, you will feel uncomfortable for several reasons. Let us put to one side the fact a figure of authority is instructing you to do something unusual. That is their job, and you will just have to put your modern "no one tells me what to do" attitude to one



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side for a moment. You will feel uncomfortable because crossing DWL's will, or should, feel instinctively unsafe. As an Advanced rider we know these DWL's exist to keep all road users safe. They are to our benefit, they keep us out of ditches and truck radiators, and they stop Mrs Miggins in her 1983 Austin Maestro from having to swerve into said ditch by ensuring Johnny Rocket on his Fireblade remains on his side of the road.

So, as a thinking rider remember, on the rare occasions when "a constable in uniform or a traffic warden" instructs you to cross DWL's, most probably to avoid the debris from an incident they are attending, you should retain responsibility, observations, as to how best to safely execute their instructions. You should retain personal responsibility for going past safely at an appropriate speed and with the ability to cross back to your side of the road/or stop safely if something unexpectedly appears coming towards you.

For those left in any doubt the following do not make good excuses to cross DWL's:

- To make progress
- To 'clip' a DWL on entry or exit from an overtake in order to "get one in"
- To filter to get to the front of a queue of vehicles being held at lights/roundabouts etc.

It is ok to filter in traffic with DWL's to your right so long as you do not cross the DWL. Back to the thinking rider, I have known members fail Masters tests because they have crossed DWL's. I have also known members pass Masters tests after 'clipping' DWL's whilst accelerating beyond the speed limit. How can this be I hear you cry? and doesn't this rubbish all that has been written previously?

Well, no, it does not. In the case were the member passed after transgression of two highway code guidelines the member was able to explain to their examiner that what they did was the safest thing to do. It was what the motorist they were overtaking expected them to do. There were no other hazards present or expected and as it turns out the test route was designed to throw up this very scenario. Success in this instance was due to good observations of unexpected changing circumstances, combined with the quick amendment to the riding plan. The rider was thinking about overall safety and was able to describe after the event why they had done what they had done.

The highway code, taken verbatim, would see a traffic offence being committed. Thankfully, most of our Police traffic Officers, are also able to think and offer leeway and guidance to those that interact with them properly and can explain to the Officer why they have done what they have done.

As an Advanced rider I would suggest, plan to do things by the book, yet be prepared to do something else if you truly assess that is the safest action for you and your fellow road users, including Horses and Pedestrians.

Yours in sport.

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chairman

### My Take on Advanced Riding.

My own personal take on advanced riding and observing, having done it for quite a few years now with a pretty good level of success.

For me advanced riding is about everything being done in plenty of time. Get your road position sorted, along with any braking and gear changing done well before the corner or junction. Remember gears are for going, brakes are for slowing, so if you need to, use your brakes to slow the bike up first before changing gear. However, you can achieve a lot with good acceleration sense.

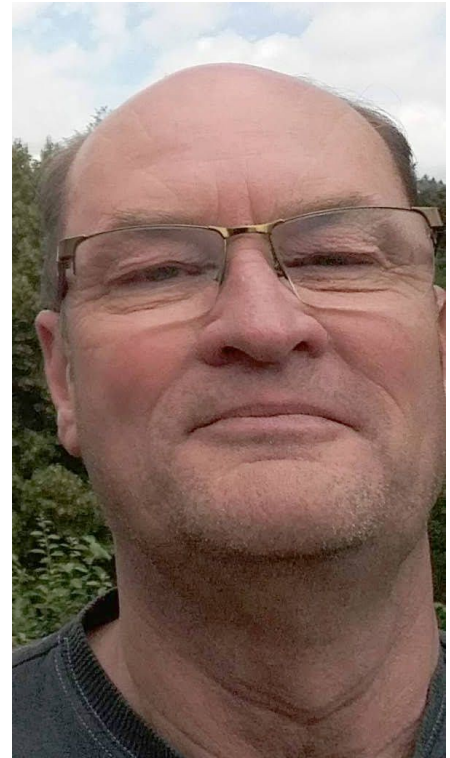
If you see danger or perceive danger, then simply move away from it. Danger from the left move to the right, danger from the right move to the left, danger from both sides, say at a cross roads then stay in the middle of the road.

I am always riding to get the best view, that said never ever sacrifice your safety for the view.

So, on a right-hand bend I'm as far over to the left-hand side of the road as is safe, to give me the best view around the right-hand corner, I go in deep and turn the bike at the last minute. I steer by my nose, I point my nose where I want the bike to go, and it does. Remember that we are taking the complete opposite of the racing line. For left hand bends I am out on, or near to the white line, again as long as it's safe to be there. If you can't see around the corner, then don't go there. If a large vehicle comes towards you, then moderate and come in a few feet to give yourself some room.

If you lose your view, then lose your speed. If you see something happening in front of you, then slow up and give yourself time to sort out what's going on, don't simply ride straight up to the front of the problem.

The advanced rider is a thinking rider. So, the examiners want to see you thinking about how you ride. They want to see you thinking about any possible overtakes. If you are following a vehicle and you think an overtake may be on, then close up to the overtaking position. This is much closer than the following position which is around two seconds back. Close up and come out to have a look, if it's clear, then indicate and go for the overtake. I always say lock, load, and fire. Get the overtake done and come back in. No need to indicate to come in, the police would say that is where you should be. However, if you do get caught out, personally I would indicate to come back in, and then thank



the vehicle that you've just chopped up, it's simple courtesy. A nod of the head or putting up your hand to say thank you goes a long way.

The observers and examiners can tell within a matter of minutes if you are any good or not. Putting two feet down at junctions or paddling the bike when you pull away is a bit of a giveaway. Try and get your feet up on the pegs as quickly as possible. Riding straight into problems, and situations that are happening in front of you, is another one. Advanced riding is not black and white, it is about how you deal with the everyday situations and scenarios as they happen in front of you, there and then. How you deal with these, marks you out as either a good or bad rider.

You are trying to create an impression in the examiners mind that you are a top flight advanced rider. If you can do this, then things will go much better for you, as the examiner will be on your side. Simply by doing the course and turning up for your test you have already passed, so it's up to you not to screw it up and get a fail. However, mistakes and issues do happen, so you should speak with your observer and take these on board. Sort out any points that the examiner may have mentioned and put back in for your test when you and your observer feel you are ready again.

For me doing the advanced rider course was the best biking thing I ever did. It has given me a set of tools and skills which has allowed me to develop in to a much better and safer rider. I always enjoy my rides, and hope this transmits to all those who I have taught over the years. I know most of these guys personally, and for the most part we are always smiling when we get off the bikes at the café.

Although for me that maybe because I'm just about to sit down to a big greasy breakfast.

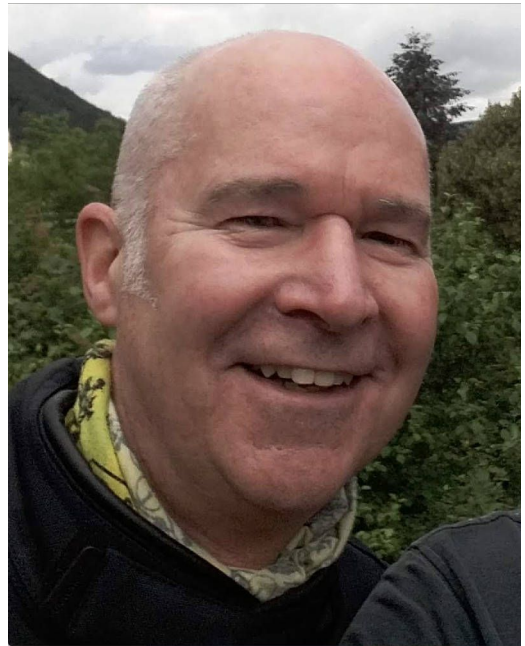
Alex Hoyle, Chief Observer.

## IAM SKILLS DAYS – DEL BRITTON

So, what are 'IAM Skills days'? These days are IAM run training days on well known racetracks such as Thruxton, Mallory Park and Croft circuit, they are definitely not 'Track days' as most riders relate to. If it is race circuits, you are looking for the skills days will be disappointing for you.

The Skills days are exactly that, skills being practiced within the 'system' within a controlled environment on a track, in other words, being in a position to practice all the Roadcraft techniques safely without the concern of such things as traffic, potholes, white van drivers etc, on a race circuit that has no roadside furniture (lamp posts, traffic lights etc) to get in the way.

I experienced my first skills days some eight years ago, the experience gave me confidence in leaning the bike and hard braking something I could not have practiced safely on the open road. I was fortunate to have been chosen as a IAM skills day instructor after completing my Master's assessment and skills day instruction.



You will need to pre-select your A/B/C group choice prior to arrival on the electronic return, the link to this is sent to you with your joining email. As an indication the groups are split as follows:

**A GROUP:** Meant for those who have completed skills days (at this circuit) before and/or have circuit experience and are confident in that environment and/or have undertaken other rider training in a similar environment.

**B GROUP:** Consider themselves to be improvers. Have some circuit experience, have attended a skills day before.

**C GROUP:** First or second time on a skills day, looking to improve. When you grade yourself, please be honest with yourself and remember the day is structured to help you with your own skills development. We may move your selected group to ensure the correct distribution of participants but will not place you in a group that makes you feel uncomfortable.

**The Instructor Team** - Have the following backgrounds:

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- ACU Qualifications
- Examiners - Police Advanced Riders
- IMI National Observers – Masters
- They are handpicked to help you.

#### **They will help you:**

- To learn in a controlled environment
- To really get to know your bike
- To enhance your skills
- Using both theory and practical sessions.

#### **Core Competencies :**

**I** - Information & Observation

**P** – Positioning

**S** - Speed selection including braking

**G** - Gear selection and experimentation

**A** - Acceleration including steering/balance

= **IPSGA**.



#### **You must:**

- Ride a bike that is fully road legal
- Mirrors & brake lights must be in use
- Take off all removable luggage/tank bags etc.
- always Wear an approved (ECE/UK) helmet when riding – even in the paddock!

#### **You must not:**

- Have a camera fitted to your helmet - fit it to the bike only
- Remove your registration plate.

**Machine** - your motorcycle must be fully road legal. There is further guidance on machine preparation below. Daylight MOTs are not sufficient. Do not attempt to remove or tape up mirrors or remove or conceal your registration plate.

**Insurance** - Most policies specifically do not cover use on a racing circuit. IAM RoadSmart advise you to check with your insurance company regarding the level of cover you have for this event. The letter prepared by IAM RoadSmart can be sent to your insurance company. This contains all the information about the day and can help them decide on extending insurance cover for the event. Whilst Cornmarket Insurance will cover members to take part at IAM RoadSmart approved driver & rider skills days, there is no cover automatically.

You must advise Cornmarket who will arrange cover with their selected insurers for a small fee. Cornmarket will issue a letter on behalf of insurers that says the normal track day exclusion is removed for the purpose of the IAM approved Skills Day event. You cannot purchase Skills Day cover from Cornmarket unless you are an existing policyholder. Please note IAM RoadSmart will always advise you to discuss insurance with your provider not with our Support Team.

**Clothing** - Full and approved motorcycle protective clothing is mandatory. Leathers or textile clothing is permitted. Road legal helmets/visors/goggles must be worn. You do not need a Gold ACU sticker just an approved road legal (UK) helmet. DOT only (USA) approved helmets are not

permitted. NOTE: Helmet Cameras will not be permitted, but machine mounted cameras will be allowed provided they are securely mounted.

**Noise** - is an extremely sensitive local issue. Random static noise testing is in operation throughout the day by both handheld and static monitoring points on the circuit. Overly noisy machines may be prevented from entering the circuit by track officials. Only arrive on a machine with a standard homologated exhaust or an aftermarket exhaust that meets the same noise criteria. No open exhausts are permitted on circuit. Baffles MUST remain fitted.

**Conduct** - The instruction is based around a set of core competences directly related to The System of Motorcycle Control (IPSGA), which will be developed by your instructor. This event is a Skills Day not a Track Day, no timing, pace making, or racing will be allowed. You will be expected to ride within your capability. Due respect must be given to all participants, by all participants. Failure to adhere to these criteria will result in a warning; if there are any further infringements the rider will be removed from the event.

Del Britton.

## THE RESURRECTION PT1 - JIM ROLT

Well, you can't say I didn't warn you that if there wasn't a massive amount of reader content you would have to put up with self indulgent nonsense from the editor.. I am left with no choice!

You may remember that last month I rediscovered an old sidecar outfit that I put together when my son was born. He is now 31, so this old bike, which was about 30 years old then, is now quite venerable. I don't need a sidecar any more so of course the inescapable logic is to whip the sidecar off! That, it turns out, is easier said than done. This bike was ridden in all seasons and I confess, was shown little in the way of mercy; the consequence of this, and many years of sitting motionless, is that anything threaded or close fitting has become effectively welded together. However, one must not be deterred so the first step was to soak all in plenty of penetrating oil. I left that for some days, found suitably close fitting tools (mostly whitworth sizes) and further extensions as necessary, and after a couple of days of struggling and cursing I have managed to divorce the long wedded couple!



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I'm now working on stripping her down for fresh powder coat and a fairly full rebuild. Some of the fastenings are so seized that heat is going to have to be employed! And those leading link forks are going, fortunately I put the original forks aside all those years ago and still have most of the bits to put them back together.. Also on the to-go list are the square section tyres..



Just look at that lovely old non unit Triumph engine! 1956 T110, iron head, with magneto ignition and 6v dynamo! This one will still work after an EMP kills everything electronic..

More, no doubt, next month, if the world gives me time to tinker!

### Transition to an Adventure Bike

There is often a debate/banter/abuse between Wham friends regards the adventure bike vs a sports or sports tourer..

Whilst often being on the receiving end of this, or some might say the instigator of this discussion, I thought I might open it up to set myself up for more abuse.

When rocking up a few years back on my Kawasaki ZX10R Ninja all in black, with fully bedded in titanium knee sliders at a 'Wham taster day', I quickly noted the lack of other power ranger bikes in the car park and thought I must have fell upon a saga day out. Nonetheless, I ventured in and was taken out on a taster ride by a gentleman whose name shall remain anonymous – all you need to know is he was riding an adventure bike (obv). I smiled to myself thinking this guy has no chance of observing me.. I'll be gone, especially as it was a road I knew very well! My self-assured arrogance was to be proven mis-placed quickly! "These boys know what they are doing" I thought – so I quickly signed up and completed the course.



My 1st Wham trip was to Exmoor which I did on the ZX10R (oh and a big rucksack with my freshly pressed shirts). It is fair to say generally the Wham routes are not designed for a sports bike and this became apparent very quickly this particular weekend. I rode several routes that weekend with some old bald bloke called Matthew D who would be approx. 30 years older than me, yet I was the one when it was beer 'o' clock that was completely shattered from the days riding..? How could this be? Nonetheless I knew when we were all admiring the bikes after a shandy or 2 in the car park that the ZX10R would be drawing the crowds and be envy of all – once again, I was clearly delusional. I think "which cereal packet did you get this out of Duane" was probably the most popular comment... hilarious I know.

After plenty of Sunday and Wednesday rides out I decided (bullied I think actually), into getting something a little more appropriate for our routes, plus I knew I wanted to tour further afield. Being so young and cool I just could not get away from the look of the sports bike – there was no way on earth I would lower myself to an adventure bike, moreover a GS tractor, what an ugly bike! I then came across the Kawasaki Z1000sx; bingo! A sports tourer yet still looked cool, a 4 cylinder high revving & fairly ballistic machine! A more upright bike with heated grips, what more do you need.. I fitted the bike out with Panniers too – perfect! Oh, and I could go more than 100 miles without filling up.



Whilst touring the Z1000sx in the Pyrenees 2 years back with my pals – Adrian Wheeler, Tony Davies & Matthew Dent, they soon realised it was the bike of the tour and all wished they had one (not). I wish I had the voice recording of Matthew Dent when we swapped bikes and he was saying how much he liked the bike and how easy it was to ride compared to his GS – we could still hear him even though he was 5 miles back and couldn't keep up. I think his actual words were "I'm scared" I stepped onto his GS, topped her up with some red diesel and within 5 miles of being on the bike soon realised how flattering the bike is on the rider; I was with the front runners! It also made it clear how crap Matt really is and it was all the bike, he had no chance on the Z1000 as he had to actually ride it.

Despite telling everyone in the club that I would never get an adventure bike, I knew from that trip on that if I wanted to continue enjoying the wham routes & touring further afield I had to! A moment in my life knowing that I was actually picking comfort over coolness – OMG I got old.

Just to really make a few laugh in the group after all the s\*\*t I gave out regards the GS sheep; I purchased a BMW GS1250 late last year. I don't need to talk much about this bike as one or 2 of you have one, however just so I am clear, I HATE the bike. A little bit of sick comes up into my mouth every time I look at it. It sounds crap and it bores the s\*\*t out of me. I really miss the high revving 4 cylinders that make you smile knowing every time you open the throttle its going to try and buck you off and kill you (I still keep hitting the rev limiter on the GS) I miss the conversations at the bike meets or the petrol station of folk admiring the shiny sports bike and I certainly miss an easy bike to clean!

HOWEVER – what an absolutely epic bike! I have recently returned from a fantastic trip around Scotland which some of you may of seen on facebook. The GS was flawless – comfortable, technology to manage all our gizmos, a mode for every road and weather combination. Whether it be a fast open 'A' road, to a windy up and down road in the back and beyond in the wet, the bike did not falter. It flattered my crap riding and saved me on many occasions as can be seen on our BMW connect apps. Tony Davies unfortunately couldn't join in on this fun – he had to use his plumb bob to check his lean angle. All this whilst carrying my wardrobe of freshly pressed shirts once again. A true adventure bike that we really did use to see the best parts of Scotland. The ease of the BMW (other bikes available) is unequivocal.



For those of you that know me well, you will know I still moan like hell about the adventure bikes, I just don't want to like them! It's a love hate relationship with me knowing that I cannot buy anything else that is so versatile, that flatters my riding and given me more progress potential, - safely and comfortably! A transition to an adventure bike for anyone that has ridden a sports bike is a difficult one and having said all the above I am still not convinced it will be my forever bike.

In summary.. buy a KTM 1250 super duke r OR the Aprilia RSV4, they look cool and sound biblical; but don't go to Scotland on them. I

Duane