

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



MARCH 2021



CONTENTS

Here we are with spring banging at the door, and possible opportunities to go riding seem to be just round the next bend.. while we wait, here's this month's edition of the newsletter. As well as the usual features from chairman and chief observer, there's an interesting article about the new edition of Roadcraft, a potted history of Tony Davis, our webmaster/routemaster, and a great piece on diversity from Paul Whitcombe, thanks to whom I shall wear my Harley with pride amongst the GSs and RTs!

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



March is nearly done, and we are still not out on our Sunday runs enjoying ourselves. If you are anything like me your levels of frustration are high, and every day is Groundhog Day. One of the odd consequences of this continued Lockdown is that members both retired and still working have winter projects spilling over into spring. I can only imagine the winter projects are complete and to keep boredom at bay spring has sprung into new secondary projects.

I have spoken to several of you recently that have been:

- Powder coating main stands and servicing suspension parts (Tony D)
- Having their bikes detailed (Lynn & Will H)
- Building a replica 1980's GS's (Gary B) *
- Finding out your CX500 has dumped its coolant into its' engine (me)

It seems the nature of us bikers is that we must have some tweak to make, some new "must have" part to buy and fit, something to clean.... Mark Saxton was even having his 'firmware' upgraded on his new Ducati (Mark assures me this is not some sort of Ducati branded 'Corset' to hold everything in whilst in warp drive).

So, what about some 'Project' work on the software? You know that part that is at least 85%



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water that sits atop the machine, i.e., you!

We spend hours and hours polishing and adjusting the bike and so shouldn't we expect some TLC on our brains, reactions, muscle fitness and stamina before we hurtle off on a Sunday ride?

I went out on the Crossdresser a few Fridays ago to deliver some medical bits and bobs to a relative that was in need and was struck at how quickly the horizon was coming towards me. To start with the sensation was alluring; but this allure quickly changed to concerned thought that I was not fully constructing and implementing a riding plan as my observations were not quite as fulsome as they were pre-lockdown.

Alex will speak further on this in this issue so all I will say is, get back into the groove slowly and methodically.

Paul Whitcombe ably assisted by Del and Tony D have devised a virtual natter nite-esq quiz for your delectation. This will be held via zoom at 730pm on Tuesday 31st March. Full details will be available on the clubs Facebook page soon and to avoid us being inappropriately hijacked attendance will be by invitation only.

Lastly, from a house-keeping point of view, can anyone that has not yet gotten around to paying their subs please do so. Eric puts major effort into making sure we are all up straight and therefore able to attend all club activities and I would like to support him by asking we do our bit and pay up, so he does not need to chase.

Yours in sport.

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chairman

*Gary's GS build was actually a 1/9th scale plastic model kit



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NEW EDITION OF MOTORCYCLE ROADCRAFT – Del Britton

*Published on
8th October 2020*

The Police Foundation and TSO are pleased to announce that Roadcraft and Motorcycle Roadcraft have been updated for 2020 and was published in October.

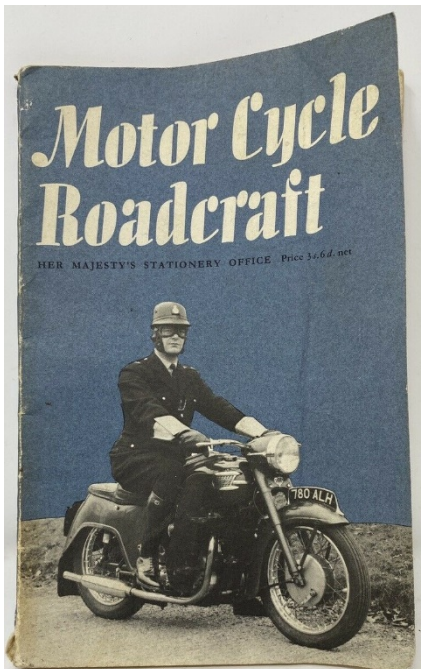
The new editions of these iconic titles have been developed in consultation with expert representatives from the police and other emergency services.

Readers can look forward to:

- An updated modern design.
- A revised overtaking chapter with separate sections on passing stationary vehicles, single stage overtakes, and multi-stage overtakes.
- New explanations of advanced concepts, such as limit points on left-hand bends.

Rick Muir, Director of the Police Foundation commented

“The Roadcraft handbooks are recognised as providing the very best in driver and rider training for anyone who wants to take their skills to a higher level. Prepared through extensive consultation with experts, they will make a significant contribution to improved road safety and help users become safer and more skillful on the road”



Roadcraft's heritage

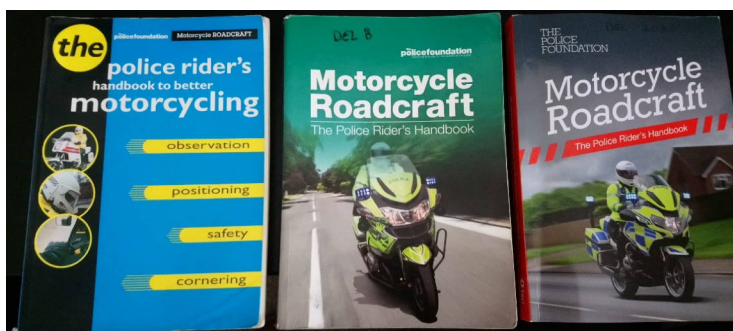
The Roadcraft system of car control has been used for over 75 years by the police. It is an integral part of the Roadcraft driver and rider handbooks and remains unchanged to this day. Based on the system of 'right place, right time, right speed and right gear', the Roadcraft system of control is simple but highly effective. Originally taught at Hendon Driving School in 1937, it subsequently reduced the Metropolitan Police's accident rate by over two thirds.

In 1965 the First edition of Motorcycle Roadcraft was published.

(honestly, I know it looks like our chairman but, it's not!?).

New *impressions* of a book are issued when the current stock has run out – sometimes (but not all the time) minor changes are made between impressions. As the Roadcraft books are a **teaching aid**, changes between impressions are kept to a minimum; the advice given does not change – but sometimes the way it is given might.

Readers wishing to know which version of Roadcraft they own should refer to the bottom of page ii which will show the edition and impression dates - for example 'New Edition 2020'.



I first looked through Roadcraft after passing my advanced test with the IAM some 11 years ago, a year earlier I completed the ROSPA Gold (but that is another story)! The copies of Roadcraft I have read over the years are pictured (version 2020 on the right) here.

Honesty, I am not a 'Geek!' but I must admit to like keeping on top of the 'Principles' of advanced Motorcycling especially observing either as a National Observer or as a Masters mentor; the very same 'Principles' are applied when instructing at the IAM skills days, hence, there really must be something in Roadcraft that applies to all motorcycling.

As an Associate there is no need or requirement to read Roadcraft in fact, I would suggest at associate level the book is too in-depth and could be confusing. Associates really should just concentrate on the IAM Handbook that is issued on signing up for the advanced course. Observers will and should refer to the Handbook during the training for both home study and on the road reference.

Local Observers require to have a knowledge of Roadcraft although not necessarily tested during their local observer assessment, having the principles and knowledge of the book will certainly assist in giving associates the standards of advanced riding required. As Roadcraft is in more detail than the associates Handbook understanding Roadcraft can assist the observer in explaining in more detail some of the principles that are mentioned within associates Handbook.

National Observers require a good knowledge of Roadcraft as during the IAM external assessment process for National Observers the assessor will ask questions during the assessment and will expect to hear references to the principles of advanced riding from Roadcraft. This, and a thorough knowledge of the Highway Code is essential for successfully passing the National Observer assessment.

Masters assessment a comprehensive knowledge of Roadcraft is required although depending on the assessor and the circumstances they may or may not ask direct questions from Roadcraft (or the highway Code).

During my first Masters assessment in 2013 after having finished the assessment ride and slow manoeuvring exercises, I was asked ten questions from Roadcraft and the Highway Code. In 2018 when I had my re-evaluation there were no direct questions asked but I was expected to refer to the principles of Roadcraft during my debriefing. I was extremely proud of achieving a Distinction and have become a Masters mentor.

In summary, Roadcraft is there to be used as a learning and teaching aid. Having a knowledge of the principles of safe riding is certainly required as an Observer. As an advanced rider who would like to develop ones riding theory it will certainly be of interest. Will it make you a safer rider knowing the five principles of safe cornering (chapter 7 page 141)? only you will know that, but as far as I am concerned it has been and still is an excellent aid in both my riding and Observing.

Conclusion

Four reasons to buy it:

1. Become a better rider - the techniques outlined in Roadcraft will help you become a safer and more skilful rider, able to cope with the most demanding situations
2. Be safer on the road - the Roadcraft system of bike control provides you with a systematic decision-making tool that enables you to deal with hazards safely and efficiently
3. Learn new skills - clear explanations of advanced techniques, such as overtaking, positioning and limit points make you a safer, more competent rider
4. Expert guidance - thanks to input from trainers in the emergency services, Roadcraft is internationally recognised as the 'gold standard' for riding. There is at present no reference to electric or hybrid vehicles.

Del Britton

Editor's Note:

I'm sure you want to get this now; I confess I don't have the latest version but it's on its way! It's available in many different formats direct from the publishers, the Police Foundation. Get it direct from this link: [Motorcycle Roadcraft](#)

Interesting website in general actually, have a look at <https://www.roadcraft.co.uk>

You can even access the Roadcraft content anytime and from anywhere, online. With interactive quizzes and full administration monitoring. Check it out here:

<https://www.roadcraft.co.uk/roadcraft/roadcraft-online/>

“MEET THE COMMITTEE” – Tony Davis, web/route master



My motorcycling career started back in 1977 when I purchased an old Honda C50 off a mate using money I had stolen from my sister. I parked it in my girlfriend's Dad's garden shed and used it to rattle around the fields at the back of her house with a bunch of mates. She wasn't my perfect match to be honest but I was more than happy to keep up the pretence of liking her so that I could hide my illicit moped from my parents (and my sister). On one memorable occasion I was blatting around the field with a friend on the back when we went down a huge hole and fell off. My unfortunate pillion was screaming with laughter, or at least I

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thought it was laughter until I realised that the exhaust pipe was burning a hole in his abdomen.

A year later at 6am on my 16th Birthday I set off down our cul-de-sac on my new to me Suzuki AP-50 in full knowledge of my family and to the extremely gratifying envy of my brother. This was the best day of my life so far. 1 week later I was in the local hospital with a broken wrist having sailed into the side of a truck.



These two episodes resulted in me realising that bikes were great fun but also a little dangerous, however I was set on a path that would lead to a constant obsession with motorbikes that has lasted right up to the present day. I am a slightly risk averse character so I have constantly been looking for ways to make my favourite hobby as safe as possible. To that end I got involved with the ACU Star Rider scheme (older bikers will remember...), passed their training course and became an instructor at what today would be called CBT level (at the time there was no CBT, you just sellotaped some 'L' plates to your 100mph RD250 stink wheel and got on with maiming yourself. Happy days).

I then progressed through a series of Japanese bikes (Superdreams, Kawasaki GTR, FZR1000) until I had kids, the world stopped turning and I had to concentrate on earning a living and being grown up. Fortunately that part of my life was fairly short lived and at the start of the new century a ZZR1100 appeared in my back garden. I've got to be honest, it scared the living daylights out of me. Coupled with the fact that I had collected 11 penalty points on my license over the previous 12 months (all in the car) I decided it was time to either give up petrol based recreation all together or get some training. Luckily I chose the latter.



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I turned up at what was then the Worcester IAM Group based in Kidderminster at 09:00 on frosty morning in November 2002. As I was about 10 minutes late everyone had already left the start point except for one stray Observer, He offered to take me out on a check ride and from that point on I was convinced that this was the way forward, I discovered that you could have fun riding within the speed limit and that motorcycling was about a lot more than point and squirt. Amazingly at the time the IAM would not let me take the test and become a member as they had a rule that no one with more than 7 points on their license could join the club. I was test ready after about 6 sessions and the local examiner did a mock test for me which I 'passed'. My Observer was not the type to let the IAM off the hook with this ridiculous rule and soon persuaded them to change their policy. As it happens he went on to form his own breakaway club in Hereford and Worcester called WHAM in 2007 and a few of us from the old Worcester group followed him. Most of you will recognise the name, Derek McMullan, he went on to become Chairman of IAM Roadsmart. A very fortuitous meeting for me on that freezing cold morning as it sort of shaped my motorcycling future.

I soon found out the root cause of my 11 point nightmare. Yes, I was going too fast, yes, the Alpha-Romeo company car I was given begged me to thrash it and yes, I was young and irresponsible. However I was also driving and riding around on auto-pilot. I didn't notice the posted speed limits, I didn't see the speed cameras, I didn't recognise the danger of exceeding 30mph in built up areas. The Advanced course taught me Observation and planning. It made a huge impression on me and improved my enjoyment of riding and driving so much that I was determined to stay involved long after I passed my test. Nineteen years later I am still learning and still getting a lot out of my involvement with WHAM.



As I stand today, I've got a clean license (hope that's not jinxed it), am a National Observer with WHAM and, as you may have noticed I am Webmaster for our Website and try to organise some interesting ride outs for the club. The hardest thing about creating the routes is finding suitable cafe stops. Finding the roads in between the stops is relatively easy, especially given the fact that our region has access to some of the best roads in the UK. I try to introduce some variety where possible but there are only so many stretches of tarmac. If you've found any especially interesting 'B' roads or cafe stops on your travels please let me know, I am always looking for new stuff to incorporate into our ride outs.

If I look at my recent choice of bikes, it forms a very definite bell curve that goes on a scale as follows: exciting (ZZRs) - utterly mad (Hayabusa) - bit less mad (Speed Triple) steady (CB1300) - Almost boring (1200GS) - Old Man (Triumph Scrambler). I think its time to get something like a

Superduke or a Tuono to get some spice back into things. The GS is a keeper though, it is brilliant at everything except individualism.

Lets hope we can exit this horribly restrictive Covid climate very soon and start up our motorcycling activities again. I am looking forward to meeting up with you all in 2021.



DIVERSITY – Paul Whitcombe



I love being in WHAM, with such a diverse group of interesting individuals. This got me to thinking about what diversity means to me in the context of motorcycling and maybe raise a few questions for reflection on the way. Cue bit of theory, bit of personal experience and a few photos.

Why do you ride a bike? Look at the magazine shelf and you have access to a diverse range of motorcycle magazines catering for differing makes, styles, cultures. Are they seen in WHAM?

Diversity means having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience and interests. Diversity is a group of people who are different in the same place. It offers a variety of perspectives aiding improved problem solving, exposure to a larger audience and increased output. It could be split into 4 strands: Internal, external, organisational and world view.

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Internal characteristics relates to situations that a person is born into and are impossible for anyone to change. That can include race, age, culture and gender identity. External identity is used to describe things that are related to a person such as education interests, appearance, familial status, relationship status, life experiences. Biking is often seen as a culture in itself, with varying sub-cultures. Putting on a helmet has such a levelling effect. I enjoy the fact that there is a comradery, regardless of the above, which only become apparent when you stop for a brew and have a chat. Kicking tyres is a great leveller.

Organisational identity relates to the characteristics within the workplace or organisation. This is regardless of position, its work you do that solidifies your position within an organisation, paid or as a volunteer. We are all volunteers focused on improving motorcycling safety and having fun. WHAM strives to be inclusive and welcomes all through the door to improve their riding.

Worldview identity relates to how we conceptualise the world and this may change over time as we have new or different experiences. Examples may include political beliefs, moral compass or outlook on life. Do we as bikers strive for freedom and travel?

Have you noticed how many adventure bikes, such as GS's, there are in the club? Is it the type of road our routes use, the current trend, peer group pressure, the image of adventure or a need to conform? Or is it just the best bike out there?

As part of my role, I coach leaders in education and other settings. A common metaphor we explore is the mask we all wear. I alter my communication depending on who I am talking to, which is varied in the settings I work in; from upset child to angry young adult in a secure unit, to professional parent, to CEO.

Wearing a mask. Why? Do we see ourselves as Ewan or Charley, James Bond or Steve McQueen or Peter Fonda or Lara Croft? Yep, bikes are used to sell an image of freedom, breaking away and adventure. Yep, I've fallen for it too!



Tony Davis on board

Riding with other IAM clubs I was surprised to see that they were not predominantly adventure bikes, though this has changed over recent years. However, bikes such as KTM super duke GT etc are changing perceptions. One group was all Honda VFR 1200's and Pan Europeans, another naked bikes such as S1000rs. Is that a reflection of the roads they ride or trips they do? Or is there a trend in the club?

I remember buying my first GS in 2005 when the 1200 first came out – Yellow – bear with me, it looked good at the time. A change from several big Triumphs. Friends within the club and beyond questioned why I didn't have a sports bike or sports tourer – more suited to your riding they said. It just wasn't that cool they commented. However, a little bit of Ewan and Charlie changed a lot of perceptions (and the re-sale value....). I've had 5 GS/GS Adventures....

Different bikes bring a diversity of riding styles. I believe if we are imparting knowledge of bike behaviour and control to budding advanced motorcyclists experiencing a wide range of bikes is important to understand the diverse characteristics of engines and handling. I remember a rider of a large adventure bike earnestly explaining how to corner on a Street Triple. Road positioning and roadcraft may be consistent but dynamics such as steering geometry, wheelbase etc offer a different technique and cause/effect.



Do you buy your bike with your head or your heart? I recently purchased a Tiger 1200, fully loaded, trading in a Speed Triple and R1200GS. I had completed significant miles on both. The GS was like the reliable companion where-as the Speed Triple was like a cheeky friend wanting to get you into trouble. I loved riding them both, offering a very different riding experience and conveying a different feeling or emotional response.

I love bikes. I enjoy being part of the culture. However, I don't want mainstream any more. I want to celebrate diversity. For that reason, I am considering a change. A friend likened my Tiger 1200 and Ali's Tiger 800 to German cars – not that exciting but do exactly what you ask of them well. A safe bet. Also, an expensive accessories range!

I celebrate diversity. Two of my brother-in-laws are bikers. Two ends of the spectrum; 1 has a 1260 Multistrada and still enjoys the type of riding he remembers from his dispatch rider days, plus big tours. The other has a BMW which he has rebuilt as a café racer which he loves to cruise on. Both wear different kit, enjoy different biking experiences and over beers we all have a common love of all things 2 wheels. So, why wouldn't they join IAM – sensible old boys on tourers and GS's they say. Stereotypes eh!!



Roger Brooks tries the Indian for size

So, how will we celebrate and embrace change as the club evolves? I think we will – cue even more kicking of tyres, brews and new friends. This opens the window for greater, broader enjoyment whilst not losing the essence of why we love biking and enjoy being part of WHAM.

Gently, Gently.

Deja Vu Perhaps.

Below is an article I wrote for the club Newsletter last May. Like many I thought that the Covid situation would be well and truly over by now, wishful thinking perhaps.

Anyway, if things go to plan on or around the 28th of March 2021, we may be let out to play again (except that we are still told to 'stay local' - Ed), so just like last May the article below still mostly applies.

On Wednesday, the 13th of May 2020 the government announced it was lifting some of the restrictions with regards to movement. It was good to see motorcycling included in this as well. The advice to start with is that you should go out on your own, or possibly with only one other person. So, on the Friday, Del and I decided to get out on our bikes for the first time in probably six or seven weeks and go for a little whizz around the Cotswolds.

We went off fairly early in the morning and the ride lasted around four to five hours in total, including stops, and we did approx. 170 miles. So, what did we learn? Well, by the time it got to early afternoon, both of us had had enough, and there is certainly no way on earth I could have done the afternoon session.

Please, Please, if you are going to go out on your bike then best to start off steady and build up to it. It was really weird, at times it was like I had forgotten how to ride a bike, but then you soon get back into it, but perhaps this is the danger that you then decide you might want to do a bit more, so just take it steady to start with.

The second thing; there really is not much traffic about, especially out in the country, so you very quickly get into the habit of pulling up to a junction only to see there is nothing there, and then pulling straight out.

This is a very dangerous situation to find yourself in, and as the traffic increases, this is a habit you are going to have to break very quickly. The third thing; there are lots of people out there on push bikes, some of whom are newish to cycling, and who seem to have no real road sense at all.

There also seemed to be far more people out on horseback, and as always with horses, this is a much more dangerous situation to encounter. Horses can be unpredictable beasts at the best of time, and if spooked can cause all sorts of problems. So again, please take care. I think what I am getting at, is you must not assume because there is not much on the roads at the moment, that there is nothing around the corner, there may well be.

Also remember that all those other people who are out there are all thinking like you, that there is not much on the roads, so it will be all right to pull out without looking, and generally dawdle around. Some are also going way too fast for the conditions.



Social distancing should be fairly easy to achieve on a motorbike, and if you are careful about where you pick to stop, and maintain the six-foot rule, then this should not really be a problem. Although we are not involved with the car side of the IAM, I think it's going to be far more difficult for them to maintain social distancing, and that's why I think the bike side will get the go ahead, well before the cars do.

The government says you can go out, and I cannot stop you, but please take care and be sensible about it. Do try and stick to the government guidelines for the moment and be very careful about your social distancing rules.

The last thing we want is large groups of motor bikers going out into the countryside, and charging about like mad things, creating a bad impression with the general public.

For the time being do try and keep it to yourself if possible, or in a very small group. As soon as we have confirmation from the IAM that it is safe for us to start riding, and to start observing again, then rest assured that we will let you know straight away.

Please keep an eye on the WHAM website where all the current available IAM and government information is posted.

Like I said, a little and often, do not do too much in one go, and go steady to start out with for the first few weeks.

I am sure that in no time at all it will feel like you never been off the bike.

Please take care and stay safe.

Alex Hoyle

Chief Observer WHAM 3260



TREASURES FROM THE SHED

I believe in the past there was a reader's ads section; well, it's back!

If you have any bits you don't use any more, drop me a line with details and a photo at whamnewsletter@gmail.com and I'll make sure it's included in the next issue.

For Sale

Wunderlich Low seat for the BMW R1200RT (2015)

This seat is lower than the regular seat sold with the RT therefore making it easier to touch the ground. It is also designed to give a more comfortable ride over longer distances by reducing the pressure on the lower back.



Email Del Britton at ykr1200rt@hotmail.co.uk if interested.

AFTERWORD

That's all for this month, and many thanks to all those who have contributed this time. If you have any stories, ideas, questions, or opinions, please don't hesitate to send them to me: whamnewsletter@gmail.com.

Sadly, biking is still subject to staying local, so it looks like no rides out just yet... however we can tear round our local town or housing estate!