

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



October 2021



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October newsletter. It is, it seems, still holiday season, so this issue won't take you too long to get through... the Chairman has valiantly sent his piece from the far flung reaches of Europe and you'll [see it below](#). Continuing the holiday and travel theme we have a fine account of [a trip to the good 'ole U S of A](#) with a new writer to the newsletter, Sorin Chesa.

The group had its [first natter night](#) for some years at the Falcon Hotel Bromyard on the 29th of September, many certificates were given out to newly qualified members and an interesting and thought provoking talk was given by Ant Clerici about group riding. These evenings are scheduled for once a month, do come along!

This month also saw a members jolly weekend to Wales, so if you went on that, those of us who didn't would love to read about it, so do feel free to send me your stories and pix to whamnewsletter@gmail.com!

Last Sunday there was an [observer training day held near Chepstow](#). Ant and I went, among many others, and theres a quick report from each of us..

It doesn't matter how experienced or qualified any of us become.. our survival still depends to some extent on good luck. What do you do if a driver pulls straight out of a side road and drives directly at you on your side of the road? Click the image to see a 5 second video from N.O John Cross who I met on Sunday at Devauden. His bike was written off and he received a broken wrist. Discussion of this with him revealed that many of us (myself included) have experienced very similar incidents to this. Mine put me off work for 9 months and a lifetime of leg problems..



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What do you think of the events the club holds? Your committee is always on the look out for new ideas, so if you've done something, or have any ideas that you think might fit into the widest interpretation of bike (or wheeled) sport, why not let the chairman know? [Send me your thoughts](#) if you don't have his contact details and I will make sure they get passed along..

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I type this from a hotel in a one-horse town on the border between Spain and Portugal. One of the ramifications of Covid was having to re-schedule a bike trip from June to October. But on the upside, it is 24C rather than 45C, and the roads are near empty. And that made me think, why do we try and cram everything into a biking season that starts in May and ends in September?

Two of our members, who have asked to remain anonymous to protect their modesty, have also just got back from a month riding entirely off-road from Calais to Santander. I doubt that would have been quite so much fun in the heat of the summer. The two pictures here show one this morning of me setting off to carve some canyon roads followed by a ridiculous attempt on the crossdresser to ride an unpaved road. I had to go down what you can see to turn around and come back before it got even worse.



Off-road however comes into its own fun-wise in the UK at this time of the year due to two factors:

- 1) It is not so hot and so you do not perspire as much
- 2) It rains. And rain equals mud which equals top fun and a soft landing for when the inevitable happens



There are off-road centres and experiences all over the UK; some that provide bikes and kit for a very reasonable cost. The skills you will develop off-road, in a safe tutored environment, will pay dividends next year when back on the road. Your slow handling technique will be elevated to a new level and that off-camber U-turn you once shied away from will not phase you at all. So, why not get googling, and find something local to have some fun at. There's experiences available from a couple of hours to a couple of days. If you do find something, why not pop an invite out to your fellow Whammers?

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Christmas is not around the corner; but planning for our Christmas Bromyard Falcon bash IS very much happening. Friday 17th December is the date, there are still rooms available at the Falcon (other overnight stays are available) and there will soon be an ability on the club's website to book your seat(s)/table. It'll be lovely to see as many faces as possible both old and new on the night.

The WHAM Snowdonia weekend was a huge success recently with about thirty of us turning up and enjoying riding and evening banter in equal measure. There will be another next year and I've a club Normandy trip in my mind too.

Lastly, the NEC bike show is back on this year from 4th to the 12th of December and yours truly will be there both weekends and Monday and Friday on the IAM stand and so why not consider, if needs be, a route back into normal life after the two covid years we have had by committing to going yourself and buy some advance tickets now at a discount?

Yours in Sport

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chair

Harley-Davidson Pan America road and off-road experience Sorin Chesa

First of all, we are bike lovers and seekers of adventure from the sunrise to the sunset. But I will dare to say we are also dreamers, chasing our dream journeys to stunning places to experience the wonders of the world.

Like you, I chase my dream and was lucky enough to win a one-day off-road experience with the new Harley-Davidson Pan America at the Adventure Bike Rider Festival 2021. I was very surprised to find out that I was the lucky winner of this incredible experience, so excited, I said "yes" without hesitation even though I had no previous experience of off-road riding.



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My day took place in the heart of the Berwyn Mountains near Llangynog. (Ed: Many of us have been there on Mick's excellent off-road courses) I was welcomed at the Mick Extance Experience Center by Mick and his business partner Richard.

In the front of the building were two new Harley-Davidson Pan America waiting for a ride out through 1500 acres of private forest which has some fantastic trails and spectacular views.



After a short brief and a quick coffee, Mick and I headed to the off-road trails. I remember being quite daunted by the dimensions and power of the Harley but by the end I had figured out that what really matters is how quickly you can acquire the skills to manage the machine.

Assisted by Mick on every "difficult" section of the trail I managed my ride successfully without incident.

After three and a half hours of off-road riding in an incredible place of stunning landscapes, we headed to Lake Vyrnwy riding on the beautiful roads of Powys. The riding was smooth and relaxing and thanks to my training provided by Ant, my IAM Roadsmart observer,

I applied all the advanced riding techniques to enjoy this ride on a new and imposing bike.



We had lunch on the top of a mountain enjoying the stunning scenery of the lake. After this short break, we returned to off-roading - discovering more challenging trails and beautiful views.

For my first HD Pan America ride both on-road and off-road I was fascinated by what this motorcycle is capable of. Agile and comfortable on-road, the HD Pan America encourages you to ride for miles and miles: an unforgettable riding experience. As a first-timer off-road riding, I trusted the bike which offered me a good feedback and smooth control in a totally new environment. Yes, some people consider this bike ugly, massive and non-adventurous bike but in my humble opinion this bike is a very good all-rounder and very capable on off-road adventures.

You don't need to buy this bike but I strongly suggest having at least one riding experience with this Harley-Davidson Pan America.



Thanks and Ride Safe!
Sorin

Natter Night at the Falcon – Jim Rolt

There was a very good turn out for this much anticipated evening. Of course the first item on the agenda was to congratulate those present who had achieved the AIM standard by successfully facing our local team of examiners. Here they are:



Ant Clerici with John Powell

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Andy Chambers with Keith Clarke



Phil George with William Downing



Richard Hewitt with Pete James



Richard with Mario Carvalho

Once the formalities were dealt with we were treated to a very interesting and well prepared illustrated talk by Ant Clerici, ex chairman, on group riding.



It was partly an introduction to those who might feel nervous about joining us on the Sunday rides, and partly a description of the way we conduct these rides, which is not the same as the IAM approved method. Most of us were pleased about that, our system seems much more flexible and allows for all sorts of riding styles..



The discussion was animated..

After the talk there was much animated discussion before the meeting finally broke up into various factions at the bar!

Devauden Training Day – Ant and Jim

From Ant:

Devauden (where's that?)

If you turned up to WHAM's Sunday ride on 18th October you may have noticed a distinct lack of regulars. Some we know are in Portugal; others of us joined a Joint Observer Training Day in the Forest of Dean. There were 40-ish riders from Devon to BAM including our gang from WHAM.

This event repeated the pre-Covid day at Devauden in 2019 (or was it 2018?) When sleet and near sub-zero temperatures didn't help!

So what happens? It followed the conventional programme for these events – and I've been on a few – but nevertheless still has value.

We get to meet other groups and practice our observation skills.

After coffee and biscuits we were given our riding groups; each a team of 3 with 1 or 2 National Observers and always mixing groups. There were a few prospective LO's present. [eg me! Ed]



The role play involved us correcting Eddie's tongue in cheek sexist (we are going to have fun and can you reach the ground on that bike?) and egotistical (I've been an observer for years and know everything there is to know) first ride briefing. But the more interesting aspect of this session was the Q & A which saw some describe how they managed things...so examples of "best practice".

Then it was time to ride...but actually it wasn't. My group which was helping an LO fine tune his observing for an

imminent NO test decided talking was better than riding. So more coffee and more biscuits whilst



we went thought the NO test and other observing stuff. Eventually hunger took over and we rode to Monmouth along the challenging B4293 where a dry line was beginning to emerge between farmer's attempts at eliminating any friction the road had to offer. I played stooge with poor cornering, comfort braking and a lack of rear observation. All of which was correctly highlighted at the debrief. Then to Abergavenny Morrison's where, to our horror, there were no chips and no pies. Thankfully Alex wasn't in the country at the time.

The last run back to Devauden via Usk was OK but the last few miles were beautifully 'Garmined' via narrow lanes with grass up the centre and severely overgrown hedges....joy!

Finally, a quick debrief then home.....

Since the system of LO/NO and Masters has become established it appears that our riding skills are more consistent across IAMR world. So next time it would be good to arrange a better exchange of best practice in running groups perhaps? But that's for 2022.....

Ant Clerici

And Jim:

The ride there was pretty miserable. Dark, and raining steadily with the added excitement of Herefordshire's farmers all out with their tractor/trailer outfits getting in the potato harvest, - which resulted in me arriving at Devauden looking like I'd just finished a winter Enduro or Motocross event!

We were put into groups, I was flanked on each side by a national observer. Eeek! However, it all turned out OK as John and Bernie were in fact excellent company and my new best mates. As the non observer I was clearly the target of the day but I did succeed in identifying and dealing with their deliberate mistakes (and one or 2 others). We rode down to Monmouth and then on to Abergavenny. John Cross was the man with the local knowledge and guided us to the bus station cafe where there were many other bikers and absolutely epic bacon sarnies. And a recharging station for hydrogen driven vehicles. Never seen one of those before..



Bernie explains how not to make an idiot of oneself..



Plenty more riding after that, a bit with me in front getting lost as I gave a demo to my stooge behind. Once again, John's local knowledge produced some wonderful mountain roads, now dry, and some amazing vistas. None of us had a satnav, so we used an actual paper map with plenty of stops poring over it. How retro, I felt quite at home! We managed to arrive back at Devauden in time for the debrief.. for the last section I was on the spot again to produce a ride suitable to qualify for N.O. status... I'm pleased to report I made it! (Not an NO, just as satisfactory ride)

It was a very useful day with plenty of new ideas to think about. I recommend it to any member..

Wrap Up

That's it for this time, I hope you enjoyed it.

Remember: December 17th is a date for your diaries – The Christmas dinner, not to be missed!

And.. Ideas please to [me](#) or the [Chair](#) for event ideas in the future.. thanks all and have a great month

Jim Rolt

Newsletter editor



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