

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



April 2023



EDITORIAL

Hello fellow WHAMmers!

Why the happy grin to the right of the page you may wonder.. well, look closely and you may see the editor's Masters journey has now reached a happy conclusion! Plenty more about all that [further on in the newsletter](#) for those interested..

We have an interesting but not too long offering for you this month. First we kick off with a most excellent take on the craft of [Making Progress](#), by our Chairman Richard Hewitt.

Next, Chief Observer Alex Hoyle delves into the [complexities and mysteries of indicators](#).

As you know, we have new committee members. Last month fresh Secretary Andy Chambers introduced himself, and this time it's the turn of the club's new Treasurer, Andy Peckston, to give us [his bio](#).

I had a quick look at the latest gadget, ChatGPT and asked it about advanced motorcycling, see what it said [here](#)!

Now listen you lot, I don't believe that nobody at all has a single thing to say about their life and experiences of motorcycling.

Help me out here, this newsletter is for us all and should be by us all. Sit down for ten minutes this weekend and waffle on.. send it to me with a photo or several and you will make this newsletter into the diverse thing it would love to be!

Get in touch with me any time at whamnewsletter@gmail.com, I'd really appreciate hearing from you.



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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Warning – There will be no mention nor reminder within this piece about the Group riding policy with specific regard to what to do when you either want to pass, or are being passed, on a Group ride (insert smiley face). If anyone needs a 'refresher' on that please download it [here](#). You can draw the conclusion I grow weary of the topic.

In the context of what I am going to write about this month the above is pertinent; however, as I said, we should all have assimilated that aspect of group riding by now....

Ok, now that's said, a recent conversation with a long standing member, Masters holder no less, surrounded the common confusion, or lack of understanding, that many riders have around what constitutes "Progress". This is my topic for this month.

Much has been said on some of the Facebook pages some of us follow; indeed, much verbiage from one chap who I have had the pleasure of unsubscribing and blocking wrote nearly a thousand words on the topic of "Progress". Now, I don't know about you, but I've always thought that if I takes a thousand words to explain something, the person doing the explaining is either a poor communicator, pretending to be a big swinging 'dick', or should most probably break the topic down into bite-sized chunks.

So, here goes, not every associated element will be covered in this article, and so, please discuss amongst yourselves, with your Observer, with Alex as CO (he'll no doubt thank me for that), or indeed with me [via email](#) if you like.

Firstly, let's dispel some urban myths.

"Making Progress"; is it:

- Going as fast as possible, all the time?
- Overtaking everything you come across?
- Filtering to the front of every queue?
- Harshly braking and block changing at every junction?
- Riding with all your spotlights on to harass other motorists into moving out of the way?
- Approaching other motorists quickly and braking well into the two second rule in an attempt to force passage?

Hopefully, given how silly the above list gets the further down the bullets you read, you should conclude that making Progress is none of these things.

In a nutshell, what you could or might do, rarely translates into what you should do in order to make efficient, safe, "Progress"

Remember SLAP? Again, [look it up](#) if you need a refresher. SLAP should permeate the I of IPSGA



and allow you to make efficient Progress.

Let me explain. If you are looking far enough ahead, uphill and down dale, at features of the expected terrain ahead you can start to make efficient Progress. On the flipside if you've piled up behind a large vehicle, and now all you can see is the sign that says, "if you can't see my mirrors I can't see you", you are going to miss each and every opportunity that might fleetingly present itself to get past and, guess what, Make Progress. The slower rider that has caught you up will either see and take the overtake or become frustrated behind you wondering what on earth you are doing!

Progress is also nothing to do with speed limits. That's not to say we condone speeding; what it does mean is that the speed limit is your absolute maximum legally. Sometimes 20 in a 30 is all you need to sail through every traffic light scheme, or be able to get onto a roundabout when the guy that's rocked up and had to put his feet down hasn't got the momentum you've got and can't restart their ride in the same way that you can safely enter the roundabout joining the flow of traffic seamlessly without anyone needing to brake; indeed, this to me shows real planning and execution, and well, just makes you look like the consummate rider that you want to be.

Let's get back to speed at the other end of the spectrum. In a national none mutli-lane scenario what are we saying about speed and Progress? Is it ok to go faster than 60? I bet I've got your attention now? The answer is, it's unlawful to go faster than 60, period. However, do we always, all of us, stick to 60?

The answer is, if you personally choose to speed, I would urge you consider the other three letters in SLAP. How many "smidsy" accidents happen at junction where a motorist joins the main carriageway, or turns off it? Many of these accidents are caused by the reduced perception of the approach speed a motorcycle "shows" the motorist by dint of its small frontal profile. So why not back it off a bit until you've seen the whites of the eyes of the driver?

And, I'm sorry to have to say this, I see some riders go around country bends at a speed at which I know they cannot stop safely, on their side of the road..... Etc. they are just asking for trouble. You cannot make progress with your head wedged in the back of whatever it is the might be around the corner. You might not make it to the buttie stop, you might not even make it home at all. Sobering thought.

Whatever Progress you want to make, ensure it's at the rate at which YOU can stop, or avoid something, be courteous to your mates, and other motorists, and arrive relaxed, in one piece, and on time for your belly buster of a breakfast (back to Alex again).

It's all about SLAP, IPSGA, TUG; all that information is there in the literature to make you the best YOU can be.

See you out on the road.

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chair



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Failing to Indicate

DRIVERS may face a hefty £2,500 fine for failing to indicate when turning into a junction due to a little known Highway Code rule.

Most drivers know they must indicate to inform drivers of their intentions and avoid possible accidents. However, motorists must remember they still need to use their indicators even if there are no other cars around them.

Pedestrians must also be considered with indicators playing a vital part in their decision making when crossing the road.

The Highway Code has warned pedestrians do have priority over vehicles when they cross the road.

It warns drivers must “wait for them to cross” the road completely before attempting to continue driving.

The Code states: “Signals warn and inform other road users, including pedestrians, of your intended actions.”

Drivers can be issued heavy £2,500 for driving without care and attention.

“If a pedestrian is already halfway across the road you’re trying to turn in to, they have priority, and you need to wait for them to cross.”

Road users could be charged with “driving without due care and attention” if a pedestrian is injured after failing to indicate.

This would see drivers issued between three and nine points on their driving licence and a fine of up to £2,500.

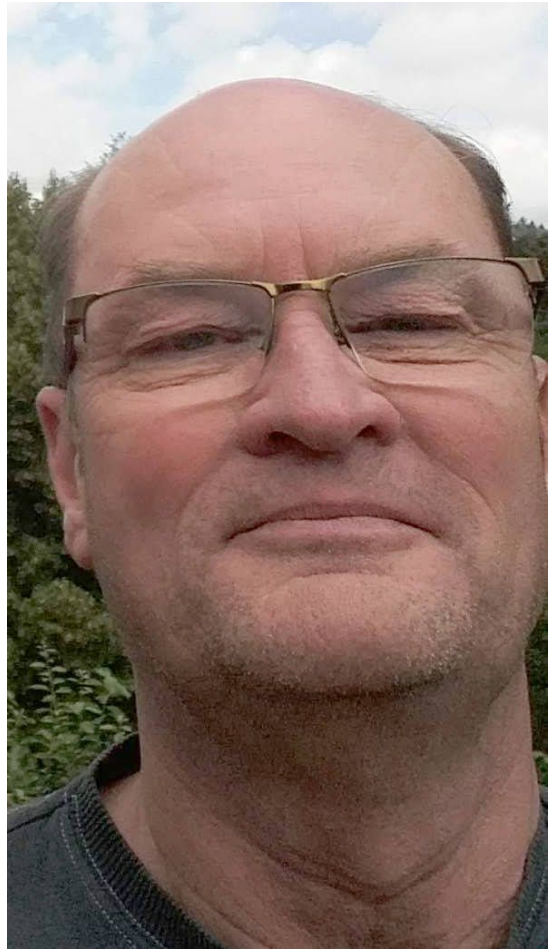
A penalty for dangerous driving can also be issued in circumstances where pedestrians were put in serious risk.

Dangerous driving penalties can range from an unlimited fine, a driving ban and even two years imprisonment in serious consequences.

Ben Smithson, car insurance expert at USwitch has warned drivers could even invalidate their car insurance policy for making the simple mistake.

He said: “Failing to use your indicators to signal is not only confusing for other road users and pedestrians but also dangerous.

“The negligent act would invalidate your car or bike insurance if you were to be involved in an accident and there would likely be harsh consequences as a result.”



The RAC has previously warned inadequate or excessive indicating can land road users in trouble. They warned there were several ways in which indicators could cause confusion among road users and pedestrians.

This included forgetting to signal at all, forgetting to cancel it after a turn or signalling too late.

A 2017 survey from YourParkingSpace found not indicating before making a manoeuvre was the one thing drivers were most infuriated about.

London is one of the most dangerous cities to drive in

A total of 72 percent of drivers surveyed said this annoyed them, followed by 71 percent who picked mobile phone use when driving.

Mr Smithson warned many drivers were simply "unaware" their bad habits could be illegal and lead to penalties.

He said: "It's not uncommon for drivers to pick up bad habits on the road, even if they have been driving for years, however many are unaware that they could be illegal and dangerous."

Please indicate to me if you agree or not.

Alex W Hoyle

WHAM Chief Observer



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MEET THE COMMITTEE – ANDY PECKSTON

Hi everyone – Like most of us my motorcycling journey started back in the days of 3 TV channels and central heating being the thing the posh kids had. The first time I can recall riding a bike was at a mates farm when I must have been about 13, some kind of step through with no bodywork, and as bikes are most certainly a thing in my family I was hooked !

My Mum was less impressed though. She had spent many years clinging to the back of my Grandad's bike, along with her 3 sisters and my Grandma all somehow travelling on the bike or in the sidecar. Un-surprisingly, Mum saw bikes as horrible cold and dangerous thing to be avoided at all costs.

So, to get my first bike for the road at the age of 16 I had to save up long and hard, or that is what she thought at least. In reality, me and a small number of school fiends stumbled across a secluded spot on the River Ouse at York where the local bike thieves were dumping the their ill-gotten gains on a regular basis. In those days if you found a vehicle and reported it to the police you could keep it if it was not claimed after a certain number of days. So I did. One Puch Maxi and one Yamaha XT500 later I had enough money for shiny nearly new Yamaha RD50MX and the gear to ride it in. I only confessed this to Mum a couple of years ago when I hit 50 - she was not amused !



At the age of 17 the RD got swapped for a downright dangerous Kawasaki KH125 that seized several times a week and had a cable front disk brake that vaguely worked in the dry and didn't work at all in the wet – taught me lots about engine braking and riding in the wet, oh and I still cover the clutch.

After a short gap I bought a Yamaha XJ600S Diversion in 1993, followed by the inevitable CBR600 a few years later, which was in turn followed by the R1 that I had when my journey with the IAM started almost 20 years ago. The R1 was simply stunning, 150 plus BHP, no electronics at all, it could more than double its speed from the national speed limit in the time it took to overtake one car..... crazy, I loved it.

After passing my IAM test I was starting to think I need something more comfortable, so a new BMW K1200S was mine. Great bike, really good to ride, comfortable but proved to be too unreliable for me. After losing confidence in it, I went back to a sports bike with a new GSXR-1000K7 that I put over 25000 miles on in all weathers and a Yamaha Fazer 1000 as a winter bike.

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Next on my biking journey came a seismic shift to something that had been the butt of my jokes for many years – a GS. What happened? I took one of the liquid cooled ones for a test ride in 2015, and ordered a new one the next day. After a brief fling with an S1000R, I came back to my second GS in 2020 just as everyone in the club started to buy those orange things. So to bring some colour to my life I have just bought a bike that I would have loved to have been able to afford in my early 20's – a 1993 Triumph 900 Daytona in bright yellow, affectionately named "The Banana" by a certain Mr. Wheeler.

This is my second stint on the WHAM committee after being the Membership Secretary for about 4 years in the early days of the club, and I am now delighted to be following in Eric's footsteps as the Treasurer. Eric's long service has left the club in a very healthy financial position that I will strive to maintain !

I am very much looking forwards to meeting those of you I don't already know at the many events WHAM has planned for 2023. The program for this year looks great, with events for everyone no matter what you ride, or what you like, so please come along, have fun, and learn something new. I will be doing the slow riding day in August for the first time after spending 15 years avoiding it ! I will be easy to spot, I will be the bloke under the GS!



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MASTERS CONCLUSION – JIM ROLT

So here it is.... was it worth it?

The answer is, of course! Not just because I will now pass among the club members with a supercilious and condescending smile, but naturally that is all part of it! .

No, the real reason is, it's made me a better rider. I've found out stuff about my ride that I just hadn't spotted, mostly gently pointed out by my excellent mentor, Tim Hutt, with some points added by my examiner on the day, the wonderful Robbie Downing, who is our Area Service Delivery Manager and retired Police class 1 instructor on bikes and cars.

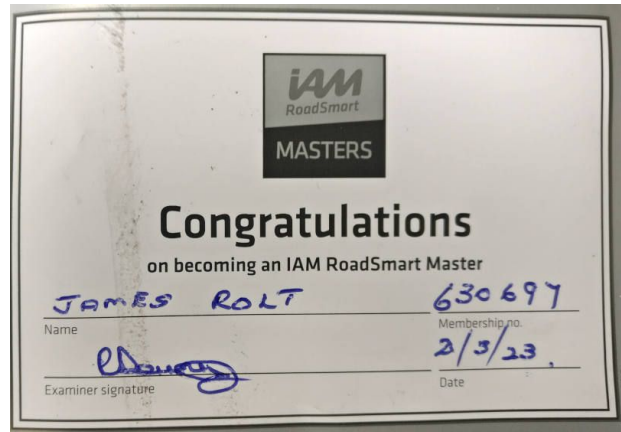
I went out for a final rehearsal with Tim the week before the test and naturally I rode like a complete plonker. Tim was kind enough not to give me an itemised run report - I expect he could see morale was already pretty low! After that I gave myself a good talking to and a good deal more practise.

You won't be surprised to hear I was totally bricking it when I arrived at Weston McDonalds (what is it with the IAM and McDonalds?) to meet Mr Downing and submit to his eagle eye. I'd been told he was the perfect gentleman and a lovely bloke, and this turned out to be the case, with him taking time to put me at ease and talk about my history in bikes, what better way to relax someone that ask them to talk about themselves..?

The ride went OK I thought, Robbie even managed to throw in some wind and rain along with an incredibly varied selection of roads of all types over about an hour and a half. He had spotted several faults as we went along so I tried to hide my disappointment at not achieving a Distinction – (It could've been a lot worse, couldn't it) and actually quite pleased to have not made a complete arse of myself.

The debrief was long and comprehensive and again delivered in a most friendly manner with lots of 2 way conversation about all the detail. I won't go into all that because the ride report below delivers it from the expert directly.

My take on the test: It's hard! The first priority is, at every moment you MUST be 100% safe. But, you must make progress too. You must be legal at all times. Applying this, the natural thing is to err on the side of safety – one broken speed limit or dodgy overtake or white line contact and you're history. So, if you're not as sharp as a razor, you can miss opportunities or fail to make sufficient progress. This won't make you fail, but it does add points to the score and in this game points do NOT equal prizes.



I'm a bit annoyed with myself about the overtaking comments, next time I hope to do better. And, Robbie pointed out some faults that hadn't been mentioned before..

In what ways have I improved? I'm now taking information from the limit point of view more consistently, I'm using the mantra "Can I stop on my side of the road in the space I can see is clear" at all times, this is a big survival technique – see remarks from other contributors within this newsletter! I've picked up lots of tips to tidy up my ride: don't cut corners, do straight line where appropriate, don't put a wheel on a painted mini roundabout, and lots more fine tuning tips.

I am safer. My brake light bulb will last the life of the bike.

Right, I'm off to get rid of those chicken stripes!



Masters Test Report



IAM RoadSmart

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Full Name	Mr James Roit		
Date	21/03/2023	Membership No.	00630697
Classification	Master Rider Mentoring and Test	Vehicle Make	Triumph Thruxton R
Examiner	Mr Robert DOWNING	Total Score	32
Result	Pass	Pass Breakdown	Pass

Vehicle Information					
1 - Masters 2 - Advanced 3 - Requires Development					
Safety	1	Gear Changing	1	Restraint	1
System	2	Use of Gearbox	1	Progress	2
Observation	1	Acceleration Sense	1	Smoothness	1
Anticipation	1	Braking	1	Human Factors/concentration	1
Planning	2	Steering	1	Courtesy	1
Positioning	2	Mirrors/Rear Obs	1	Legality	1
Hazard Management	1	Signals	1	Slow Manoeuvring	1
Eco Driving	1	Cornering	2	Knowledge	1
Vehicle Sympathy	1	Overtaking	2		

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Comments:

James passed his DSA motorcycle test in 1967 and in 1990 he was successful at his first IAM Advanced Rider test when he also became a Group Observer. Following a break James has returned to riding and in August 2020 achieved a First test pass at his IAM RoadSmart Advanced test. Following on from the Masters programme James is looking to return to his observing role.

James has ridden a variation of motorcycles both "on road and "off road" building up considerable riding experience. This together with his mechanical and technical practical engineering skills puts him in an ideal position for the Masters programme.

For this Master test James was riding his Triumph Thruxton R 100 bhp motorcycle. Weather conditions were a mix of sunny periods with some strong blustery winds and rain mid ride. Traffic flow was moderate and the route covered A, B and unclassified roads in both rural and urban areas. Total test time was 90 minutes.

I am pleased to say that James demonstrated the skill level of a Masters rider. The ride was safe and legal, generally systematic and had that all important confident riding approach leading to a smooth and courteous ride. Hazard management was excellent, and restraint was shown in busy village areas. Forward and rear observations were good, brake use was balanced and smooth and gear choice was appropriately matched for engine / road speed.

For further fine tuning of the ride James may wish to consider the following areas discussed at the debrief:

Cornering: James's cornering technique and use of the limit point generally is very good and he clearly understands from my knowledge checks how to approach and negotiate bends. We discussed how his speed through bends is different when they are marked with chevrons. James is quite correct in taking the chevrons as a valuable source of information but use this in conjunction with other clues and the limit point to make the speed assessment for the bend. If you enter the bend under deceleration, it not only effects the flow of the ride but also can affect the dynamics of the motorcycle.

There were two occasions when James reduced speed on the approach to a bend, selected a lower gear then repeated the speed phase and another gear. The likelihood then is that you can enter a bend under deceleration as opposed to an open throttle. I would best describe this as a double system application. System application for junction management was accurate.

Overtaking: James executed one very good overtake early in the ride which was planned really well. James has a tendency when he would catch up slower vehicles to allow his following position to be extended beyond the two second rule. In the following position you must match your speed to the speed of the subject vehicle. If not, as it accelerates the distance between you will be extended. This means that if an overtake opportunity did present itself James would have a lot of ground to cover to put himself in a position to commence an overtake. Consider working with the "I see it - I do it" mindset as opposed to "I see it - I think about it - I do it". It's all down to planning. We discussed at length the benefits of your following and overtaking positions being flexible and also the use of view extensions. There are no fixed rules on positioning other than safety - "it all depends".

Positioning: From our discussions James fully understands the principles relating to correct

position and prioritising of hazards. There was the occasional inconsistency in this respect in relation to positioning in a 30 mph limit. Consider safety, stability and view - hazard come in clusters – a single course is better than numerous changes in position.

Progress: Open road progress was very good. The momentum was lost on occasions due to the overtaking issue.

Summary: James has extensive riding experience and a very good knowledge base of Advanced Riding. This was a very good Masters ride so the above points should be taken into context. I feel sure that if James tidied up the points discussed a Masters Distinction is well within his capabilities. His knowledge and practical skills should stand him well for his potential Observer role.

ASK CHATGPT

what are the elements of advanced motorcycling?

Advanced motorcycling is a set of skills and techniques that go beyond the basic requirements for riding a motorcycle safely and proficiently. Here are some of the key elements of advanced motorcycling:

1. **Observation:** Advanced motorcyclists develop a heightened awareness of their surroundings, constantly scanning the road ahead and checking their mirrors to anticipate potential hazards.
2. **Planning:** Advanced riders plan their routes and anticipate potential obstacles or hazards along the way, adjusting their speed and position accordingly.
3. **Positioning:** Advanced riders position themselves on the road to maximize visibility, minimize risk, and maintain a safe distance from other vehicles.
4. **Speed control:** Advanced riders know how to control their speed through the use of engine braking, smooth acceleration, and proper gear selection.
5. **Braking:** Advanced riders have excellent braking skills, including using both brakes effectively and smoothly, and knowing how to brake in a straight line or in a turn.
6. **Cornering:** Advanced riders understand the principles of cornering and use techniques such as counter-steering, body position, and throttle control to maintain control and stability through turns.
7. **Communication:** Advanced riders communicate effectively with other road users, using signals, gestures, and eye contact to indicate their intentions and avoid potential conflicts.
8. **Risk management:** Advanced riders are aware of their own limits and the limits of their motorcycle, and they make informed decisions to manage risk and avoid dangerous situations.

These elements are not exhaustive, but they give an overview of the key skills and techniques that advanced motorcyclists employ to ride safely, efficiently, and confidently.