

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



June 2025

EDITORIAL – JIM ROLT

Another late newsletter, sorry! The good weather necessitates that we get out riding rather than sitting down writing..

However, here's a smashing collection of stuff to browse:

The [Chairman's Chat](#), below here

Chief Observer Richard demystifies [the Masters course](#)

Martyn Hillier's short series of articles about life as a copper continues with a [Christmas Eve tale](#),

Will Morgan shares his thoughts on the new [BMW RT 1300](#), no punches pulled!

Steve Edwards responded to the brain teaser last month with:

“NAH! Perfect for undertaking!!! Drop it down a couple of gears, get it up on the back wheel, and get past!!!?”

(But don't expect me to demo it)

HAHAHA”

The official answer, however, is:

Carriageway Edge:

The primary purpose of a solid white line at the side of the road is to clearly define the edge of the road, helping drivers stay within the intended lane of travel, especially in conditions of poor visibility.

Don't miss out on events and the Sunday rides, bookmark the events page at <https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/events/>

Do send any thoughts, ideas, articles or questions to whamnewsletter@gmail.com

See you next month!

Jim Rolt, Editor



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CHAIR'S NOTES – TONY DAVIS

Hi all.

I've just had one of the best months you can imagine. 2 weeks riding around the best roads that Northern Spain and Portugal have to offer followed by a WHAM long weekend in Exmoor on the bike. All in excellent company with competent, skilful riders. I really cant think of a better way to take advantage of the great weather we are currently enjoying.

If you are contemplating a bit of motorcycle touring then stop thinking about it and just get on and do it. Although some (a lot) of the roads in foreign climes are superb, there are plenty of roads here in the UK that give as much pleasure, as our members who attend our long day rides and weekends away will testify. Last weekend was WHAM's fourth visit to Exmoor and it went off as well as our previous trips, lots of great riding and then excellent company with a bunch of like minded people in the evenings. I did notice that we were all in bed a little earlier than normal which I am sure is a reflection of the general age of our community, however Andy Chambers kept the bar staff busy and WHAM members amused on both evenings.

Exmoor is little known by most but has some of the best motorcycling roads in the country, most of which are fairly quiet. One thing that we will change for sure next time is the first day's route. We met at Tewkesbury and then wound our way through the Cotswolds, skirting Bristol, through Bath and on to Cheddar Gorge. It sounds great and some of it was, however the obsession this country seems to have with endless 30mph speed limits and the volume of traffic meant that it just becomes slow and frustrating. Next time I think we'll revert to covering the busy and boring bits on the M5 and get to the good stuff a little earlier. The above is worth bearing in mind if you plan to head for UK motorcycling Mecca (e.g the Lakes, Scotland etc), our Government is sanitising the urban sprawl to such an extent these days that it is no fun at all until you get to the good stuff.

Date for your diary - Saturday 13th September will be our Slow Riding Day, please see the website for details <https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/event/wham-2025-slow-riding-day/>

See you on the road.

Tony.



Masters

I've started picking topics for these monthly columns based on the number of questions, musings, of members that make contact in some way. Call them 'crowd pleasers', but, what's wrong with giving the members what they want!?

The topic of IAM Masters comes up again and again, and so this month I decided to pen something to demystify what seems to be the least understood of IAMRoadSmart offerings.

Succinctly, my description of the programme is:

"The output of the course is to equip the rider with the ability to make the most amount of safe/legal progress consistently for one and half hour's duration"

And that is it!

Some of the words are clear and unambiguous, and it all seems to hang on "the most amount... progress".

This is where explanation is required.

Progress, as I have said time and again, should not be conflated purely with speed. Rather, by using the IPSGA system the rider will complete a journey with a specified physical start and end point in the shortest time possible, always demonstrating 100% safety and legality.

But this still isn't 100% clear, is it?

How do you complete the journey in the shortest time possible by not riding at the speed limit all the time?

There are several scenarios to explain this:

1. Is the quickest way to get past the slower moving traffic ahead by getting bang up behind it and darting in and out to get a view on a overtake as a matter of course?

An extreme example, but one that I see all too often at the start of the master's course. The quickest way passed the vehicle depends on the presence of actual and expected potential hazards. If there's no hazards, scoot on by, if there's hazards, adopting the position behind the vehicle to be overtaken with the very best view possible of what's up ahead, probably with a following speed way less than the posted limit, is the way to go. You can only take advantage of an overtake safely when you can see it! In this example we are going slower but probably setting ourselves up to get back to the posted limit quicker by availing ourselves of that elusive excellent view.

2. Is the quickest way through the urban sprawl always at the posted limit?

Not such an extreme question, more nuanced, one would have thought right up to the posted limit is the way to go? Not so, again by using IPSGA and taking long observations, adjudging when the traffic lights will change, when a magical gap on an island will appear and you can slot in



without stopping, or inconveniencing other traffic, is delivered by those longer than usual observations in town. Screaming up to the lights/roundabout, most probably delivers a situation where a stop robs you of precious opportunities and seconds to keep 'in the flow'. 20mph is maybe all that's needed to effect this, whilst also enabling you to stop on a pin if a hazard presents.

3. Perfect positioning

If I had that proverbial pound for every time a quicker ride has been delivered purely by focussing on the P in IPSGA, I'd be able to buy more post ride beer (you all know I love beer!). Riders 'coming in' too soon on bends robs them of vital information ahead and makes a ride 'harder' As a mentor I sometimes find myself sitting 'out' longer, but still before the vanishing point extends for me, whilst the rider in front can't accelerate when I can because the 'in' position affords maybe a two to three second lag in them getting the same information I have as I hold a wider line. With high hedgerows etc. this argument holds true indeed. On a track with clear vision, it doesn't.

4. Get on with it!

Be ready before the 'up' in the posted limit to accelerate and accelerate with purpose. Look in your mirrors up to the limit change and when you hit it you can go. If you wait until the posted change for one last check that some buffoon is not going to 'have you' you will then have an overtake to complete. Get the obs out of the way and then get on with it immediately at the change.

5. Filter

There is no absolute requirement to filter. If unsure, don't, and you will most probably still get a pass. If there's stationary traffic on a wide carriageway get on with filtering but remember when you re-join the flow it's got to be planned, not inconvenience anyone, and look polished. Planning is the key; forcing your way back in is not going to see you pass.

6. Know your stuff

You will have to study Roadcraft, the highway code, and know IPSGA, be able to bring the plan on a page (see WHAM library) to life. You will be asked questions, multiple questions, and you need to be able to answer them and so take some time to gem up before you start.

It's my opinion the best way to start the programme knowing that a pass is your 'right', is to get out for a season on the Group rides. Ask for feedback, involve yourself in conversations with multiple members on your and their riding. You'll be amazed on how much you will improve and learn in the space of a summer with WHAM.

Richard Hewitt

WHAM Chief Observer

MARTYN HILLIER - WORKING ON CHRISTMAS EVE



I always liked working a late shift on Christmas Eve, or the last working day before Christmas, which is obviously not always the same day, as with this Christmas.

Anyway, the day I have in mind would have been the very late 1980's, maybe early 1990's.

I was on a 6-2 evening shift, & although it had been fairly hectic earlier, by 0130hrs all now appeared tranquil, so I was looking to finish on time, & I was riding along Christchurch Road to Cheltenham Central police station, on the Lansdown Road.

As I approached the Queens Road traffic lights I could that both they & the Lansdown Road lights were on "red", so I was trickling along at a walking pace, hoping to manage it without having to put a foot down.

("Quiet efficiency is the mark of the expert rider" is the phrase from the Blue Book that springs to mind !)

Anyway, as the lights changed for me, I crossed over Queens Road & trickled towards the A40 Lansdown Road, I heard raucous laughter, as two young men walked across in front of of me, from my left to right, i.e. walking out of town.

They were walking a few feet apart from each other, because they were at each end of a park bench.....

A quick blip of the siren brought them back to reality.....

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Drink had clearly been taken, a lot of it in fact, but they both sobered up very quickly. I explained that we three all had decisions to make.

My decision was whether or not to arrest them, which would mean them spending a number of hours in the cells "over there", pointing at Cheltenham Central police station

OR

They could take the bench back from whence it came. They quickly agreed with me that the latter would indeed be a good idea.

So off they went, back to the Lansdown Crescent play area, although I began to think I had made a rod for my own back.

The joke was now wearing thin for them, they were now getting rather tired, & they must have been wishing they hadn't started it, & their progress was painfully slow.

Eventually, after what seemed like hours, the bench was reinstated to pride of place in the park, we all shook hands, wished each other "Merry Christmas", & they trudged off back towards the Lansdown Road, even more tired, but hopefully wiser. I finished pretty much on time, & thought no more about it.

Quite a few years later a colleague - no name, no pack-drill - related the above story to me, & asked if I was the officer concerned ?

I immediately remembered the incident, so I entered a Guilty plea.

He was able to explain that the two young men, one of whom was his younger brother, had just completed their first term at university, & being arrested would have greatly complicated, even totally ended, their chosen career paths, & they were grateful that their acceptance of my suggested course of action had resulted in no further action. They had since successfully graduated & were into their chosen careers, as pillars of the community.

I did point out that I too was grateful, as I hadn't had to spend an hour or more on unnecessary paperwork.....!

It just goes to show that even "Black Rats" can be compassionate creatures at times.....c

RT OBSERVATIONS - WILL MORGAN

Observations on the new BMW R1300 RT LE.



There's plenty of reviews on YouTube etc telling us how truly wonderful the new R 1300 RT is, with its increased power, improved handling etc over the old R 1250 RT so I won't repeat all that guff. Instead here are some little truths I noticed during my short test ride that the journalists & online influencers may gloss over.

BMW wanted to make it appear lighter & slimmer, lithe & athletic, but appearances are deceptive. It's actually a few kilos heavier. Push it around in the garage and those "few kilos" make themselves very unwelcome. The side stand is too short, so the bike leans over too far. It takes significantly more effort to lift it upright compared to the old 1250 model. It will keep chiropractors in business.

Getting it on the centre stand is even worse. You must bend down and manually fold out an extension piece to put your foot on. (At least it springs back automatically when the bike is taken off the stand). Then, if you have the ignition switched on, the electronic suspension self-adjusts to make it easier to lift the bike on to the centre stand. Or that's the theory: Sadly this assistance is very marginal, and I dread to think what it's like without it, or the ignition off: Hello hernia perhaps?

The new RT's slim frontal profile has reduced weather protection for the rider's legs & lower body. Fortunately to compensate for this the lower fairing panels can be pulled up to restore the normal RT level of shelter. Unfortunately reaching to do this is a rather awkward stretch, and realistically only practical or safe to do with cruise control set or when stationary. And while in use they

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expose some fugly inner bodywork that looks like an awkward to clean dirt trap.

At the 'LE' level of specification the old RT had both seats heated, the new one it's only the riders. If you buy the new 'Passenger Comfort Pack" you get a heated pillion seat plus heated grab rail & back rest on the top box. Quite how effective a heated back rest will be thru' a jacket with a back protector remains to be seen. And this top box is so vast BMW thoughtfully supply a wall bracket for storing it in your garage, maybe a tacit admission that you can have too much of a good thing?

The new 'Vario' panniers are slimmer. To compensate for lost capacity they expand, but this mechanism compromises useful interior space, and do they really need interior lights? Externally the previous panniers scratchable paintwork has been replaced with more plain matt black moulding. On top of the fuel tank there is a single central phone locker. The old R1250RT had 2 cubby holes, one with wireless phone charging & incorporating a cooling fan. The new phone locker relies on USB charging & a simple vent for air flow.

There are 4 short cut buttons on the side of the tank, principally to access the BMW app for phone & satnav connectivity, or to control the optional audio system. On the old model bike these could be programmed to control more mundane but frequently used features like the heated grips. It is a pity on the new bike you can't do this, instead you must scroll & select with the handlebar switches, then select from menus on the TFT screen. This is unnecessarily longwinded for a bike with such sophisticated electronics. Similarly, the clutch & brake levers are less adjustable, and the heated grip & seats have fewer settings. All regressive steps & signs BMW have been snipping at the specification.

All this may read as a long moaning list of negatives that makes the new RT sound like an undesirable pile of excrement, however none of it detracts from its overall quality. Crucially it's still an exceptional tourer, and now with added bonus of the more (ahem) 'vigorous' performance the new 1300 engine and chassis offer. Anyone want to buy my old R 1250 RT?



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