

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



July 2026



EDITORIAL – JIM ROLT

It's July. Well, you know that. The heat continues and it's all jolly pleasant till one gets off the bike, or is stuck in traffic for more than a second. What to do? I doubt any of us is one of the T shirt and flip flops brigade.. doesn't it make you wince when you see one?

We see plenty of offers of gear to help us keep warm in the winter, but fewer for staying cool when the thermometer is high; - or perhaps you know better, dear WHAM member, how about dropping me an article about summer clothing? Go on, you know you want to!

Short of content this month, I went for a wander through the newsletter archives and came up with some gems, 2 of which are reproduced below

Do you know who this handsome chap on the right is? Well, was, as this is a still prominent member, in 2013. The answer will be found right at the end of this issue..

This month's content:

[Chairman's thoughts](#)

Chief Observer muses on the [risks of riding](#)

[2013 article on left hand bends](#) - is it still relevant?

Stuart Poole from 2013 reports on a [1st Aid course](#)

[July Club events](#), also available on the [club website](#),

All events and rides can be found on <https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/events/>

Banter and more on the [facebook page](#)

Jim Rolt, Editor whamnewsletter@gmail.com



Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260



THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

page 1



CHAIRMAN – TONY DAVIS

Hi all,

We had some great feedback from our day ride to Aberdovey last month. Blessed with dry roads, warm weather, and the usual excellent company, it was a fabulous day out — the scenery over there is so beautiful that we'll probably repeat it before the season ends.

In the meantime, we've got the Roof of Wales ride next weekend, which is another corker.

As most of you will know, the IAM had a presence at the Adventure Bike Festival at Ragley Hall this year. The stand and organisation came together through collaboration with local IAM groups, including Redditch, Kidderminster, Birmingham, Warwick, Lichfield, and us. We had a stand at the festival ground itself, plus taster sessions from the Piston Club and Bridgnorth.

The IAM agreed to support us — funding the stand, providing an ABR discount code, and so on — but set us a break-even target of 14 Skill for Life sign-ups. In the end, we smashed it with 31 sign-ups — a fantastic result and solid proof that having an IAM presence at a big, prestigious event like this is well worth it.

A big shout-out to WHAM members Andy Peckston (stand duty at the ABRF) and Martin Wood (running taster rides from the Piston Club) — you both did a brilliant job and made a real difference.

Regards

Tony



Advanced Riding in an Age of Rising Risk: Why Observers Matter More Than Ever

Happy whatever month you're reading this.

As I sit writing, I find myself reflecting on something that we've probably all noticed over the years. Motorcycles are getting cleverer. Rider aids that would have looked like science fiction a couple of decades ago are now commonplace. ABS, traction control, cornering ABS, radar systems and goodness knows what else are all helping riders stay shiny side up.



And yet, despite all this technology, the news on rider safety remains a little uncomfortable. Recent figures showed that motorcycle fatalities have increased, despite overall road deaths falling.

That got me thinking.

If motorcycles are becoming more capable and safer, why are riders still getting into trouble?

I suspect most readers of this newsletter already know the answer.

The challenge has never really been the motorcycle.

It's the human sat on top of it.

Now before anyone starts muttering that I've become anti-technology overnight, that's not where I'm going with this. I love modern bikes. The engineering is astonishing. However, all the rider aids in the world can't tell you what's about to pull out from a side road, tighten unexpectedly around the next bend or emerge from behind that hedge just as you're congratulating yourself on a particularly tidy overtake (Mr Chair).

Observation, anticipation and planning still matter. In fact, I would argue they matter more than ever.

That brings me neatly to Observers.

As Chief Observer, I often find myself chatting to associates who arrive expecting advanced riding to be something rather mysterious. Some seem to think we're going to spend months teaching them secret techniques known only to a handful of grey-haired motorcycling monks living somewhere in the Malvern Hills.

Instead, what we usually end up discussing is better observation, improved planning and giving themselves more time to deal with what the road throws at them. Not particularly glamorous perhaps, but extraordinarily effective.

Many of us have experienced that lovely moment during an observed ride when something suddenly clicks for an associate. You can almost see the penny dropping inside their helmet.

Perhaps they've started looking further ahead. Maybe they've recognised a developing hazard before it becomes a problem. Or maybe for the first time they're beginning to understand that good positioning isn't about passing a test, it's about creating options.

Those moments are why observing is such a rewarding thing to do.

What's particularly encouraging is that the benefits aren't just anecdotal.

Research commissioned by IAM RoadSmart looked at almost 1,300 riders and found that riders with advanced qualifications were involved in fewer collisions per mile travelled than non-advanced riders. On average, advanced riders covered around 15,000 miles between collisions compared with approximately 9,400 miles for non-advanced riders.

That's quite a statistic when you stop and think about it.

The same research suggested that advanced riders were more considerate of other road users, more aware of others' limitations and less likely to approach hazards such as bends too quickly.

Now, I can already hear one or two readers saying, "Well, perhaps safer riders are the sort of people who choose to take advanced training in the first place." And that's a fair challenge.

However, whichever way you look at it, spending time thinking more carefully about what you're doing on a motorcycle is unlikely to make you a worse rider. If anything, it reinforces something many of us have believed for years.

Advanced riding works.

Not because it teaches perfection. None of us are perfect riders. Not because it teaches people to ride slowly. And certainly not because it squeezes the fun out of motorcycling.

Rather the opposite....

I often think one of the greatest misunderstandings about advanced riding is that it somehow requires riders to sacrifice enjoyment for safety.

In my experience, the better someone becomes at reading the road, planning ahead and understanding risk, the more enjoyable riding becomes. Things happen more smoothly. There are fewer surprises. The bike seems to flow more naturally.

And perhaps most importantly, confidence becomes based on skill rather than hope.

As a group, we should probably never underestimate the importance of what our Observers do.

A couple of hours given up on any given morning. A debrief over a coffee. A few words of encouragement when an associate is struggling. None of it feels particularly dramatic at the time. Yet collectively it can have a profound impact.

Every rider who develops better observation skills, better machine control and a more systematic approach to riding becomes another rider better equipped to deal with the hazards waiting out there. And goodness knows there are enough of those.

So perhaps the next time you're preparing for an observed ride, or wondering whether your efforts as an Observer are making much difference, remember that statistic.

Advanced riders are travelling significantly further between collisions than those who haven't undertaken advanced training. That's not just a number. That's evidence that what we do matters.

In an age where rider risk remains stubbornly high and roads seem busier and more complicated than ever, the role of the Observer remains one of the most important contributions any of us can make to motorcycling.

Anyway, those are my musings for this month.

If you're an Observer, perhaps ask yourself after your next observed ride: did my associate learn something useful today?

But maybe ask yourself one other question too.

Did they enjoy it?

Because if they're learning, improving and enjoying themselves, there's every chance they'll keep coming back. And that's good for them, good for the group and, ultimately, good for motorcycling.

Yours in Sport,

Richard H

Chief Observer

WHAM

LEFT HAND BENDS - JOHN HODGES

Here are four simple guidelines that advanced riders use when negotiating left hand bends;

1. Plan your ride on what you can see, what you can't see and what you can reasonably expect to happen.
2. Position yourself to maximise view.
3. Always be able to stop safely on your side of the road, in the distance you can see to be clear.
4. Always sacrifice position for safety.

However, is positioning for view now too dominant in our minds. Do we give sufficient emphasis to "anticipating what can reasonably happen" with a resultant "sacrificing of position"? We have to think that "delivery van man" (in a hurry and cutting right handers) will always be around the next bend so we've got to make allowances for him. We don't want to be sitting out near the centre of the road if he suddenly appears so we need to moderate our position and move in a foot or two - and if necessary reduce speed a little.

Here are a couple of scenarios; is it good to be out towards the white lines as we go round this bend? Where would you be?



Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260



THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

page6



Remember, if you ever find yourself having to adjust position abruptly when an oncoming vehicle appears then, you were most probably too near the centre of the road in the first place.

Here is the perfect place to maximise position for view. Being out near the centre line means we see any oncoming vehicle nice and early which allows a smooth change of position to maintain a good safety bubble.



Where is the safest place to be when going round a sharp left hand bend? Over to the left – but travelling slowly?; advanced riders make progress, so we use our position to increase view – which allows increased progress.

Where to be and what speed to be travelling for each left hand bend varies – but provided you never have to alter your position abruptly when an oncoming vehicle appears, then you've got it about right!

Many thanks to John Hodges who put this editorial together.

BIKER DOWN FIRST AID COURSE - STUART POOLE

The day started with a slightly wet, windy and miserable ride from the respective start points to Llandrindod Wells fire station where things immediately started to improve when copious amounts of tea, coffee and biscuits were offered.

The 1/2 day course was billed as a motorcycle specific basic first aid course and was organized by the Powys Safer Roads Partnership in conjunction with the Fire Service. After finishing tea and completing the registration, which involved divulging ages (difficult for some!), everyone settled down for the morning.

The course was split into 3 sections each led by a different trainer

- Accident Management - Craig
- Trauma First Aid - Dai
- Road Presence - Ali



Accident Management

It was explained that if you are first on the scene of an accident, particularly one involving a motorcyclist, there are a number of actions that you can carry out to protect yourself, aid the casualty and help the emergency services. These included ;

On arriving at a scene continue past, if possible and place yourself and your bike 'downstream' therefore preventing you from being hit by oncoming traffic. To improve this situation, it was explained, that you could ask someone, from the inevitable queue of traffic to place their car, or preferably a HGV, as a barrier upstream of the incident. If there were no other road users then use your own bike a safe distance up the road. This then creates a safe zone in which to work. After completing basic assessments it will be necessary to contact the emergency services as soon as possible.

Within the Powys region there is an initiative to the GPS location onto the back of all of the yellow 'Ride Safer' road signs. Therefore if possible locate one of these signs and the exact location can be passed onto



Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260



THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

page8



the emergency services. (Powys SRP are in negotiation to get this excellent idea country wide)

Trauma First Aid

Following the first session we moved onto First Aid skills. This was hosted by Dai, an extremely knowledgeable paramedic who provides the first aid training to the Police & Fire services in Powys. He explained that injuries following a motorcycle accident are likely to be severe and will require different first aid skills than those taught in a basic course. Therefore the instructor concentrated on a few key techniques;

1. **Bleeding** If there is a major bleed deal with this first. It is the blood carrying the oxygen around the body and if you loose this there is no point in carrying out CPR etc. Firstly try to stem the bleed with a pad, this can be from a first aid kit, clothing etc. If the bleed continues place a second pad on top of the first. If the bleed continues remove both and try again. If still unsuccessful it is OK to use a tourniquet to stem a severe bleed! This can be fashioned out a multitude of items, clothing, belt etc. although you can now purchase a Velcro one for your first aid kit. In order to aid later treatment make a note of the time that the tourniquet was applied.
2. **Breathing** Check for breathing. It was explained that this can be carried out initially by checking for fogging on the crash helmet visor then by opening the visor or flip front if possible. If the casualty is breathing it would be best to leave the crash helmet on. Following this Dai explained that if it were necessary to remove the injured persons crash helmet, in able to resuscitate for example, there are specific methods to limit spinal movement and therefore reduce the risk of aggravating any spinal injury. These techniques were expertly demonstrated before we all subsequen practiced – less expertly. It was immediately clear that some of us picked up the techniques quicker than others !
3. **CPR** The last first aid technique was CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Whilst many of those attending the course had had some form of training before it was certainly valuable to practice the techniques on the dummies provided.

Road Presence

Following a very interesting first aid session this was followed by an update from Ali on road statistics and road presence. Did you know..... 19% of all road fatalities involve motorcyclists whilst they make up only 1% of road users. Much can be done to increase your presence on the road and help to prevent the SMIDSY accidents (10 points for all those that know what SMIDSY means!) These include ;

1. Additional daytime driving lights, 3 are better than 1 or 2 as they aid in speed perception.
2. Use of block colour to aid in increasing profile eg. Leather the same colour as your bike.
3. The use of hi-vis does not necessarily improve your road presence shouldn't be considered 'a suit of armour'.

I think that I can speak for everyone involved that the content of the course was excellent and everyone thoroughly enjoyed, and benefited, from the course. Finally after a bit of lunch in a local

café we all got ready to ride home. After feeling slightly smug at getting out of the carpark first, along with Paul, Derek and Roger I was slightly disappointed that 100 yards down the road we were directed into a lay-by by a member of the local constabulary. Whilst it was only a random check on tax, tyres and insurance (which we all passed) it meant that everyone else sailed passed !



Richard, Stuart & PC handcuffing Paul

EVENTS THIS MONTH

[Sunday Ride – McDonalds Malvern to Beechenhurst Lodge, Forest of Dean – Route 35](#)

July 19 @ 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Sunday Ride from McDonalds Malvern to Beechenhurst Lodge in the Forest of Dean then return to British Camp on the Malvern Hills. 08:30 Arrival for a 09:00 start. Download Route 35 Garmin Format GPX Format Google Maps

[Sunday Ride – McDonalds Hereford to Craven Arms – Route 53](#)

July 26 @ 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Sunday Ride starting at McDonalds Hereford to Craven Arms. 08:30 for a 09:00 Start. Download Routes: Garmin Format GPX Format Google Maps

[WHAM Evening Ride 3](#)

July 29 @ 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

Join us for a ride to the Falcon in Bromyard. Leaves the start points (Hereford or Worcester) at 19:00, arrives at the Falcon at around 20:15. Please arrive in time to organise riding groups. All members very welcome. Cant make the ride-out? Then please join us for a chat and drink at the Falcon

Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260



THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

page10



THE MYSTERY MEMBER

Is, of course, our very own Richard Hewitt! No really, you can tell if you look closely.. the eyes and smile..

Have a brilliant month!



Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists. Group No. 3260

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF
THE EDITOR THE IAM OR WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS
page11

