

RIDERS

... magazine of the KAMG



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Bikers are welcome everywhere in France - see page 8.

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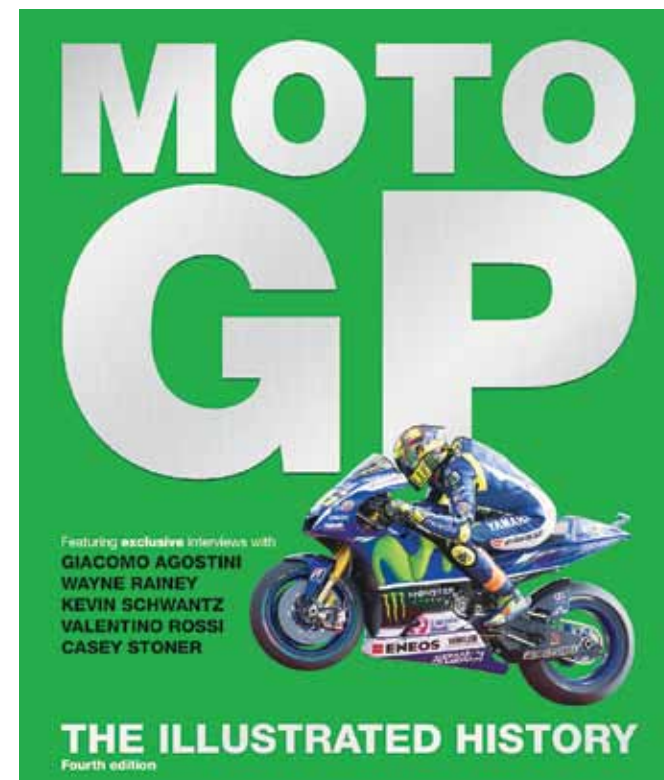
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Two mo-peds and a scooter in this issue!!

Front cover: – On top of the world – the Col de la Bonette, the highest pass in The Alps at over 9000ft.

Magazine design and layout by John Gardiner.



Winner of The MotoGP book offered in the last issue's competition was Ian Parris



Nick Farley, Editor

When sending articles for publishing in this magazine, please send images (with captions) as separate JPEG files.

Images should be in colour in as high a resolution as possible, preferably the original size in which they were captured. Please do not place images inside Word documents as this will significantly reduce the quality of the images.

Views contained within this publication are not necessarily views of the Editor, the KAMG or the IAM.

The Editor claims no liability for correctness of information, printing or typesetting errors.

The Editor cannot guarantee sunshine on club runs.

PS. Don't forget to drop me a line about your adventures. You just might inspire others to follow in your tyre tracks.

EDITORIAL

HOLES IN THE ROAD

What a fantastic autumn it's been for riding. We had weeks of dry, sunny and warm weather all the way through September and October, and as I write this on November 1st it is another perfect morning – no wind and pale autumn sunshine which will soon see me going in search of a bacon baguette and slaloming round the ever-deepening canyons and potholes which pass for roads in Kent and Sussex. After the Road Rage piece in the last issue I thought it was only fair to get the KCC's view of the roads and the problems they face in trying to maintain them. Unfortunately my interview with the Senior Highway Manager was cancelled at the last minute and so that will have to be reported in the next issue of Riders, but I am dying to find out how they decide which holes to repair and which to leave when often the repaired holes are right beside equally large pits which are left open. The rest of Europe doesn't have this problem. Why is that?

GREENERY

The world, as I'm sure you have noticed, has gone 'green' crazy: everything has to be 'green' and it's considered a crime to burn any fuel unless you happen to be some slippery politician flying on a thirsty private jet to yet another 'climate change' conference where you will decide how the rest of us should save fuel. However, we of the KAMG are as 'green' as anyone: the famously green-leather-clad Terry Friday has had his incredible achievements on behalf of the KAMG and the IAM, at last, officially recognised and celebrated (see page 17), while Andy Stagg, that long-standing and stalwart Associate has won through to be a Green Badger. His tale on page 11 makes interesting reading and he makes some very potent points.

ARE WE GETTING IT RIGHT?

One thing that I have noticed in my relatively few years as a member of KAMG is that it is the same people who turn up for the ride-outs and to the club nights and I wonder why this is. I know that every club in every sphere of activity has an active core of bods and there's nothing wrong with that. I also know that people join clubs for a range of different reasons and that for many there is simply no need actually to take part in anything; it's one of the reasons why a magazine is important because it does form a link to all members wherever they are and whether they are active or not. If you are a passive member because that's what suits you that's fine, but if the club is not doing what you want or if you feel that it needs to offer more, I would be very interested to hear what you think needs to change – anonymously if you like.

Now, as I finish this, the sky has become grey, the wind has got up and the search for some pig in bread seems less attractive. Has winter just started in the last hour? Probably, and by the time you are reading this we will be up to our ears in snow or floods. Either way I hope you have a great Christmas and New Year.

Nick Farley

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

Sat 26th Winter Wind Down Party
Sun 27th Social/Training Run to Bexhill - 9.30am Start

DECEMBER

Sun 4th Christmas Toy Run (see Tracker for details)
Mon 12th Committee Meeting
Tues 27th Round Trip to Rolvenden - 10am Start

JANUARY 2017

Wed 4th TSC Meeting
Mon 9th Committee Meeting
Thu 26th Group Night
Sun 29th Social/Training Run - 10am Start

FEBRUARY

Mon 13th Committee Meeting
Sat 18th IDCAM
Thu 23rd Group Night - Magazine
Sat 25th Observer Conference
Sun 26th Social/Training Run - 10am Start

MARCH

Sun 12th IDCAM
Mon 13th Committee Meeting
Mon 20th Area Team Meetings Week
Thu 30th Group Night - AGM

All dates are subject to change at short notice so before attending any activity please check dates, times and location on Tracker for up to date information.

When going on a Club Run, Fish and Chip run or any club jaunt come to that, please take a camera with you and share some of your pictures with us. You can easily email them to editor@kamg.org.uk including some captions

or perhaps a few words to share your experiences with other members of the club. Supporting the magazine is always greatly appreciated.



WE MEET AT 8PM ON THE LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE KENTAGON, BRANDS HATCH, DA3 8NG



WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

I have just finished watching a TV programme on Sky entitled Harley and the Davidsons. It is still available "on demand" and is well worth a viewing even if you are not a fan of the Harley Davidson brand. It tells the story of the founders of the iconic US motorcycle and the challenges they faced. It's a story well told and well filmed, with some terrific riding sequences and it really highlights the huge advances that bikes have made over the years as well as reminding us of how little has actually changed.

Even back at the start of the 20th century, motorcyclists were viewed as a bit rebellious and anti-social and this view of us can still persist today. I remember when I was riding a Taxybike for Addison Lee I had to go to Warner Records in Kensington to collect a passenger for a journey across town. I parked up outside the building, entered the reception area and approached the security desk. Without a word from me the receptionist said:

"Round the back mate."

"Why?"

"Deliveries round the back."

"I'm not delivering anything."

"It's still round the back, mate."

"Why?"

"Collections are round the back as well."

"I am not collecting anything either."

I then explained that I was neither delivering nor collecting, which did confuse him somewhat! When asked what I was doing in his building I explained that I was collecting a passenger as a Taxybike service. This confused him still further so after a few minutes of explaining the service he relented and asked me who I was collecting. I gave him the passenger's name, who happened to be the No2 of Warner Records Europe and within a couple of minutes I was seated on a comfy chair with a cup of tea and a couple of custard cream biscuits to dunk! I can only presume that one minute I was a lowly courier biker (or a biker in general), the next I was worthy of looking after one of the big bosses of the company and was treated as such. I still get this a bit today as I usually ride to meetings, as opposed to taking the car, something folk often comment upon.

I suppose my point is that it's every motorcyclist's job to portray a good image of bike riding. Something I hope that KAMG contributes to. The Easter Egg run and Christmas Toy run; our riding on the roads on club runs; attending shows and engaging with the public, and offering assessment rides to non-members, are all part of this process, as is your personal riding every time you are out on your bike. It's just a shame that the media only ever seem to publicise the bad side of motorcycling.

Enjoy your riding over the colder months and just remember that wherever you are riding someone will be watching you.

Ian Burchell



TEST PASSES

Since the last edition

A warm welcome to the Group's new members and existing ones



Howard Williams
National Observer Qualification



Associate: Andrew Stagg
Observer: Roger Lancaster



Associate: Stephen Wright
Observer: Paul Jessop



Caroline Bowness
Local Observer Qualification



Jim Pullum
Local Observer Qualification

THE QUEST FOR THE

FRENCH POTHOLE

IS THERE A POTHOLE IN FRANCE? WE AIMED TO FIND OUT

Dateline: August 26th 2016.

Cheese and wine, that's what the French do best. Everyone knows that. But wait, there is something else they do which is much more exciting: they do roads. They do *fantastic* roads. The French build roads that hang off precipitous mountainsides and corkscrew up to heights of over 9000 feet; roads that bore through tunnels and blast under great rock overhangs; roads that cut through spectacular gorges and soar over deep ravines; roads that are as straight as arrows for mile after mile, and sinuous roads that curve elegantly through forests and fields or lazily follow the gentle meanderings of river valleys. France is motorcycle heaven. We have nothing like it here. The French have two and a half times as many miles of road as we have in the UK but only 20% more vehicles to use them and that means that their roads are traffic-free and are often literally deserted – outside of the towns you can ride for mile after

mile and hardly see another car, truck or bike. But the clincher is this: the French, unlike us, having built a decent road or two, maintain them in nearly perfect condition. Their mountain roads spend months in the winter under snow and ice and then in the summer they endure temperatures which can reach 35°C or more, yet there's not a crack or pothole to be seen. Like I said, it's motorcycle heaven and it all starts only twenty odd miles away, in Calais.

Which is why we, The Lady Pillion and I, find ourselves staying in Guillestre, a small French town surrounded by some of the highest passes in The Alps, where we have an almost endless choice of spectacular and exciting rides on beautiful mountain roads. Five of the six highest passes in the Alps are within easy reach of this town, three of them are over 9000 feet and all are roughly twice as high as Ben Nevis. Even in this very hot sunny August there is snow on the peaks and everywhere we look the scenery is stunning.

In the summer months it appears that the Alpine tourist economy is now heavily dependent on motorcyclists and on cyclists. Wherever you go there are motorbikes and bicycles. In the mountains there seem to be far more motorbikes than cars, while cyclists are much more prominent than they used to be and are to be found pedalling up the very highest and steepest roads. France has more motorcycles per head of population than any other European country and perhaps that's why it's always been biker-friendly. We bikers, or "motards", are welcome wherever we go, and although French drivers are usually very aware of us and make room for us, we still have to be ready for the French way of doing things: today we were following a lady in a small car through a very narrow street in a small village in the mountains and coming in the opposite direction was the postman with two or three cars following him. The postman stopped and jumped out to make a couple of deliveries and Mrs France stopped in front of us exactly opposite the post van thus blocking the street completely. You couldn't even get a bicycle between the two vehicles. She hopped out and dived into the adjacent boulangerie and we all waited while she bought her bread, then she came out, got in her car and drove off. We all moved on. No one turned a hair.



Why use the Autoroutes?

The thrill of touring in this part of France lies of course in swooping up, down and round the high mountains. Hairpin after hairpin on superb roads. Not two-lane roads either; very often the roads are narrow, single-track jobs barely wider than one car, and without armco, walls, or anything to stop you plunging to your doom if you cock it up. It gives a whole new meaning to the 'limit point' or 'vanishing point' – misjudge a corner here and it becomes the point at which you do actually *vanish* over the edge and reach your *limit* several hundred feet below. Timing the approach to narrow hairpins if there is other traffic about is the secret of success. I try not to reach a steeply climbing hairpin at the same moment as a long, Dutch camper-van is coming down. (They're always Dutch.) On some corners there simply won't be enough room for both of us. These zig-zag mountain roads also deceive the senses because they seem, as you ride them, to be much less steep than they actually are. In fact the bits of road linking the hairpins are often very steep indeed, perhaps with gradients of 20% to 25%, and sometimes more.

I know that the Stelvio is supposed to be THE pass to 'bag', but we have always avoided it simply because of its reputation for being so crowded. This week, however, we have 'bagged' the Col de la Bonette (the highest pass in the Alps), the Col d'Iseran, the Col Agnel, the Izoard and

the Galibier, all of which will be well known to anyone who follows the Tour de France, and each one of which is very different from each of the others. You might think that once you have climbed one of these passes they'd all be very much the same, but no, the landscape each time is different. And while I'm not suggesting that these famous mountain roads were empty, they were certainly not crowded either, and for long periods we were completely on our own, climbing or descending at our own speed. This is quite important, I think. What's not wanted, as the BMW, The Lady Pillion and I round the 101st hairpin of the day, is young Valentino Italy on his Ducati giving us a hard time from behind, and equally neither do I in turn want to be held up by someone else. However, Valentino may not necessarily be on a Ducati, as we discovered: on the ascent of the Galibier the other day we were near the top and cutting quite a speedy dash, I thought; we were gaining on a car some distance ahead and I was looking up to make sure that nothing was descending that would meet me at the next hairpin apex. My mirrors were clear. All was well. Then, like a bat out of hell, and from absolutely nowhere, a bloke shot past us on a Vespa. Yes, that's right, a Vespa. A red Vespa. A bloody scooter! He zoomed past everyone else as if we were all going backwards and hurtled skywards. I swear at scooters in London but at 8000 feet I thought I'd be spared this indignity.



The Lady Pillion and me near the top of the Galibier and about to be mugged.....by 'Valentino the B-----d'!





Narrow, but a good surface and much steeper than it looks here – this is the Col de Perty.

But you don't have to chuck yourself at these famous, giant Alpine passes to find great riding in France; this beautiful country is full of less well-known passes on minor roads which really will be deserted (and scooter-free?) and will be just as much fun. One of the very best mountain rides we have ever had anywhere happened on our way here last week. We were staying in a town near to Mont Ventoux – another great mountain ride, by the way – and the route I had planned from there took us over the Col de Perty on a very minor road, the D65, which runs from St Auban to Laborel. The Col de Perty is, by French standards, pretty weedy and at 4000 feet it is roughly the same height as Ben Nevis, however it turned out to be the most spectacular ride. We didn't see another vehicle until we got to the summit where there was a Laverda Jota and rider. The road was narrow, very narrow in places, the edges were ill-defined and of course there were no barriers, but the

surface was good and the ride and the views were mind-blowing. This was totally unexpected and it is a ride that I shall never forget.

However, riding in France isn't just about the Alps, any ride across France is jam-packed with good roads. We almost never use the Autoroutes, which are expensive, boring and uncomfortable on a bike; instead we use the N and D roads which are the opposite – they are free and traffic-free, interesting and perfectly surfaced, and they are 'involved' with the towns, villages and countryside through which they pass. This last quality is really important because it means that you are, so to speak, riding *in* France whereas on an Autoroute you have that sense of travelling *over* the country without having any actual connection with it. It is these ordinary 'N' and 'D' roads that make the best rides: for example, our route South towards Ventoux took us, last Sunday morning, from Troyes to Macon, and for the first couple of hours we were riding in and out of forests. The sun shone, there was hardly anything else about, the scenery was magnificent and The Lady Pillion even saw a huge wild boar lazily eating by the roadside. It was an incredible morning rounded off with a proper French Sunday Lunch taken outside at a rural restaurant by a canal which was obviously the meeting point for all the locals. It was a ride that captured the very essence of touring in France and if you haven't tried it yet I urge you to go. It's all on our doorstep.

Post Script:

Did we find the French pothole? Well, yes we did. It's in Reims if you are interested and by British standards it's a bit feeble. It certainly wouldn't warrant the attention of that little council bloke who sprays white paint round our spectacular Brit potholes, but the French are very proud of it and we heard a rumour that they are putting a preservation order on it.
NF



AN ASSOCIATE'S TALE

You followed him to Melton Mowbray, and then to Scotland, and now Andy Staggers on to Green Peace. Or does he?

Let me start with some quotes from the IAM website on the aims of the Roadsmart Riders Course – "Gain confidence and skills" it says, obtain "Possible cheaper insurance" and "Use your own bike" as you "Meet like-minded people". Those don't really seem like the aims that made me first sign up, other than perhaps the first one. Actually they don't sound that inviting or sexy, in modern parlance, to any biker-in-the-street either, Mr IAM.

I may not be a typical signed up associate; I am not a born-again biker, having only taken up motorcycling on a provisional licence with a Yamaha SR 125 in 2005. And I graduated to that mighty machine only after having jumped back on a moped bought on a whim when over-enthusiastic clicking on ebay meant that I acquired a 49cc Velosolex moped (the French onion-seller's special) like the one that I rode back in the 1970s as a hippy student in Hampstead. Way back then, and even before that student Velosolex, I had ridden a Lambretta 150, bored out to 175cc, on a provisional licence at the tender age of 16 (it was all that my mum, and older Mod brothers, would allow). There was also the occasional gravel pit trashing of old BSAs and Francis Barnetts picked up from a breaker's yard in Sixth Cross Road, Twickenham. These were rebuilt and retrashed with a good mate whose name was on the folded, cardboard, green ownership document (maybe)...most of you won't remember them. Anyway, the French Solex moped (now made in Hungary, by the way) on modern roads is a disaster. It is less than 49cc and achieves traction by dropping its engine on to the front wheel so that a spinning, gritty, carborundum drum drives that wheel round. This vehicle is definitely not suited to 'A' roads in the UK in 2016, hence the upsizing to the 125 Yamaha and a CB test, and there the story begins.

Unlike in the 1970s the provisional licence is no longer something you can hang on to as long as you like; you have to take a test, and so a full test happened, care of Faversham Motorcycle Training, with the incentive being that when I passed I could then get a better (read 'bigger') bike. A restricted test attained in 2005 became a full licence in 2007 shortly before I fell foul of an unmarked

police rider who did me for filtering on my fifth bike, a Yamaha XJ6N. I was overshooting the line at the red light – actually to let him in to a safe zone – and speed creep in a 30 limit thereafter. No points and no fine, just an ASBO. The Anti-Social Behaviour Order, for those that don't know of section 59, was designed by Home Secretary, David Blunkett, to catch joy-riders on local authority estates. It gave the 'authorities' the power to snatch any vehicle at the second offence. Here was I, at 50 plus, being dealt with like a little, ragbag hoodlum, and that's when a mate (thanks Ged) asked why I didn't come and learn how to do it safely and properly, this motorcycling thing, at the KAMG. So those aims above started to make some sense. Possibly I did need skills and to be with like-minded people with an irrational desire to be on two wheels. There started the escapade in June 2012.

Having now owned up to my lack of pedigree and my limited experience of real biking, do I think the IAM was the right step for me? Advanced? Maybe in age but little else? Let's look at that website again:

"IAM RoadSmart developed Advanced Rider, is an on-road course delivered by trained volunteers that gives you greater confidence and a feeling of safety when you ride on Britain's roads."



It was a mighty Solex that started all this ...



The Green Badger

OK all that sounds very useful. Safety is a priority. What does this course entail?

“It will take between three and six months to complete our Advanced Rider course, which is taken on your own bike with a local group close to you. Courses differ slightly in the way they’re delivered so check your local group to find out exactly how they do it. But all our groups include trained volunteers who’ll take you on a number of observed rides before you take the test.”

Again, all quite plausible, but this is “Asbo Andy” we are talking about here so nothing is simple. Now, four years later, with two failed tests and loads of observed and group rides behind me, I have been asked to apply for my test for the third time. Was I ‘advanced’ on the first two? Obviously not, or at least not on the day. Am I better now? Yes, but by how much, and will I actually get that green badge I crave? Shall we see?

“What was the problem?” you ask, “on the first two tests.” Well, let’s start at the beginning: after joining KAMG it took an age before I even knew who my observer was to be and then he turned out to be from EKAM (the East Kent Group) not KAMG. However, we eventually got going and probably by the time I was due to try for the badge I had done three or four rides with my first KAMG observer (only one written up on tracker none on any cards) and then after a run of four more rides with various other observers, including Tony Young, my new mentor, I achieved a high of 85 and the test was sprung on me with little warning – having applied just before Christmas on the 16th December, I wasn’t anticipating a test date of December 30th.

As it turned out there was an absolute gale gusting 70mph on December 30th, 2013. There was no frost or ice, just

solid wall to wall, heaving, stormy rain. This followed a very cold day the day before that had seen me the second rider to leave the Oakdene layby at 9 am on a frosty club run during which my group’s leading Green Badge rider slid off somewhere near Crowborough, hurting his right arm and his gold Yamaha. This was something I had no intention of repeating the next day when my very own green badge test was to take place. Outcome?

“Mr STAGG produced a safe ride but appeared to lack confidence in the poor conditions. Application of the brakes in inappropriate places was a continual feature of the ride. He had been out on a group training ride the previous day where one rider had fallen off due to ice. This appeared to have affected his confidence which led to a lacklustre ride not of an advanced standard.”

Actually I only had three scores of 4 (i.e. fails) and they were all related – system, braking and progress. Oh well another day another dollar. Was I that bad or was it fate? Looking back, I wasn’t that good, it was a new bike at the end of October 2013 and I was still getting used to it, and hadn’t ridden it since the day I applied for the test on December 16th until the ill-fated group run the day before the test. Coming down Blue Bell hill with the examiner up my pipe a gust blew me from lane one to the centre island, which was a bit less than encouraging, and there was standing water in just about every corner we took throughout the hour and a half test around Lenham. Let’s just see this as a learning process and not rush in but get really prepared next time. It hadn’t been as plain sailing as the IAM website implied nor had it taken only six months, but then I was a pretty un-advanced rider to start with, so no complaints from me.



My next observed ride was with dear old Phil Rush in March 2014 and my tracker score took a real nose-dive to my lowest ever score of 68: tough taskmaster, Mr Rush, God bless him, but what he saw was what he scored and I was slow and cautious, unsystematic and in too high a gear. All things to work on. Yes, I had gone backwards after my disappointment. More observed rides needed, and between Tony, Julian Quinton, John Lemon and Colin Underwood I saw my scores creep up to a high pre-second test of 93. It must be OK to try again. The application was made in August 2014 and out popped the same examiner on 28th August. This time there were no pre-test dramas but the result was the SAME.

“Mr Stagg produced a safe, mostly systemised ride but was let down by the use of lower gear on the ‘B’ roads. This in turn meant he was often out of system. Has the potential to pass but these areas need to be worked on.”

On questioning this written appraisal it transpired that I was in too high a gear (remember Mr. Rush) on ‘B’ roads where I was trying too hard to use speed to show progress. It’s not what I did when observed, but I must have felt “I’ll show this guy the I-can-make-progress-red-mist” or something. At least there were only two fail scores of 4 this time – use of gearbox and that one called ‘progress’, but I got a few ‘1’s for slow riding (MCD Days do work) legality and courtesy, and many more ‘2’s, but the stupidity of what I had done in thinking that progress equals speed, defies even my own, now rescinded, ‘asbo’ logic.

Clearly, a couple of ‘Martinis’ were called for (the any time, any place, anywhere rides) where Dermot and Colin pulled me apart and restructured my psyche until I could face a second (or is that a third? Mmm, yes I think it is.) re-assignment of observer to the illustrious Roger Lancaster who was now to be my guide and mentor. Roger approached his task by starting right at the beginning again as if I hadn’t had a single observed ride before. He began by stating the obvious, saying that I would ride fine and then have a mind fart where I suddenly wanted to show an overtake at any cost, so let’s develop the system – IPSGA, and eventually this started taking its place in my rather staid mind and replacing the all over the place nature of my riding. This all went well until poor old Roger broke his leg and without his tutoring I took up the kind offer of Steve Riches who was someone I had first met on his (as an associate) and my first MCD day; he had been a contemporary Associate of mine but now he was a Green Badger and elevated to National Observer status, Master and RoSPA Gold to boot. I well remember seeing his figures-of-eight on that MCD day, way back, and thinking how does he do that? Years of experience and hours in the saddle, added to confidence and a knowledge that he can, is the answer.

Looking back at my Tracker reports, and I have 27 in total, though there are doubtless more, some never written up, others only verbally given or carded (the old system), and I am now at the put-in-and-apply-stage for the third time. It’s the end of June 2016. What will happen this time? That’s down to me. Have I learnt anything? Yes, I really think I might have, and ringing in my ears are the words of Colin Underwood after my second test and his Martini ride “Don’t feel pressured in taking your test. The course is called skill for life, not a test.” Wise words and having taken time and tried to enjoy my riding as he further suggested, I hope I am now ready to do it confidently and ride the way I have been trained without a special turn-it-on test day performance. Wish me luck.

Did I pass? YES, but not by riding as I know I can ride. I rode safely (priority number one) but I was, and here comes that phrase again, I was “Lacklustre”. Why? Because in speed limits I was under not at or over the designated limit – remember modern bikes’ speedometers all read high. Having failed two tests I sure as hell wasn’t going to break speed limits by even one MPH, and that didn’t please my man. Nor was my slow take off at traffic lights to his liking either, but again I wasn’t going to go over the line on amber.

Am I pleased to have passed? Of course I am. It’s out of the way now, but what comes after? Well, for me it’s the polish. I can sparkle up without the fear of points lost in appraisal. Who is there to appraise me? ME, of course, now I know how it’s done I feel I can continually appraise myself and build on the simple knowledge learned since starting.

Is the initial aim of IAM achieved? Difficult one that. Have I gained confidence? I would say that all the introspection and constant self-criticism and reports actually knocked a lot of confidence out of me and only getting back to riding for myself will probably help me regain that confidence, but the problem for The IAM is the selling of this whole system: if you look at any risk activity from hang gliding, rock climbing, surfing, scuba diving to speed cycling, what sells it is the image of man against the elements. The risk is the buzz. Do the young want to take an advanced test, or acquire a “skill for life” or, dare I say it, be Road Smart? I doubt that they do, in the same way that they don’t want to wear a yellow vest or look old and uncool in safety gear. A track day? Yes, they are probably game for that, but a safety course? Doubtful. Moreover, are we actually putting off people from taking up bikes in the first place? Definitely, in my view, by making the DVLA test so complicated it becomes more like our own “advanced rider” test and the young say “I’ll just take a car test instead”. That’s probably what our lords and masters actually want – no two wheelers. So maybe all we are doing by shouting about the risks is falling into their trap. Anyway for me it is no more Asbo Andy – it’s hello Bodger the Badger albeit a green IAM one.

THE DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN'S RIDE 2016

Why did Martin Brown and his niece dress in posh clothes and ride round London?

The main aim of The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride is to increase awareness of, and to raise money to help combat, prostate cancer. This is a big killer of men over 40 (which would be most of us in the KAMG, I guess, so when was the last time you got checked?) This year some of the funds were also to go to the Movember Foundation which is promoting awareness of the alarming rise in male suicide levels. (Movember because you grow a sponsored moustache in November.)

The premise of the ride is simple: you ride vintage, custom or vintage "style" modern bikes (think Triumph Thruxton, Moto Guzzi V7), and wear "dapper" dress. That means suits, military uniform, plus-fours, and lots and lots of tweed, plus facial hair both real and false. Another big part of the ethos of the ride is to help alleviate the mostly negative image many people have of motorcycles, and to show motorcyclists in a more positive light. Rules are made clear at the start, no wheelies, tooting or other such loutish behaviour is allowed. The general public then gets to see some magnificent bikes being ridden in a polite and orderly fashion by riders dressed in their Sunday best clothes. As some of you are aware, I did this ride last year and had a jolly good time. So this year I did it again with my niece Natalie as my pillion. As an A&E nurse at Kings she was "volunteered" to be a first-aider which meant she got a very natty DGR arm band which I believe has now been incorporated into a cushion cover along with my marshal's tabard.



This year I decided to volunteer to be a marshal for the ride and so myself and my fellow dapper marshals met up a couple of times the week before in order to ride the route and to ensure that we knew it. We decided to do a variation of the marker system with a "Tail End Charlie" and with individual marshals being allocated a particular corner/junction to mark. On the day we all set off at the front of 1100 bikes and as we reached each point a marshal dropped off to guide the following riders in the right direction. Our station was at Marble Arch and despite the traffic I don't think we lost anyone. DGR does not have any official road closures (too expensive), so we are just riding in normal traffic. We did however have a couple of police outriders this year, but again, not official, and if there was a 'shout' they would be off.

Everyone met at "Here East" which is the new business park by the Olympic Stadium in Stratford. BT Sport operates from there amongst others. From there we proceeded along the A12 and then hung a right to go west past the Tower of London, then along the Embankment to Westminster. After a scoot around Westminster Abbey we went up to Trafalgar Square and then wiggled through the back streets of the West End around Mayfair to finish up at Regents Park. Luckily the weather held, Natalie's first aid skills were not required and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. We had over 1100 bikes, no incidents and raised a huge amount of money. This doesn't just happen in London and the current total worldwide is around \$3.5 million.

At the time of writing I have no idea of the route for next year but I have no doubt that it will be another great day out. If anyone is interested, keep an eye on the DGR official website (www.gentlemansride.com) and dig out your Grandad's tweed jacket. There are lots of pictures and videos on the interweb for anyone who wants to look at lots of tweedy gentlefolk from all over the world riding lots of lovely bikes. There is also a Facebook page so there's plenty of information out there. Don't forget - if in doubt, Ride Dapper.



BIKING BITES

THE ROUTE 1066 CAFÉ NEAR ROBERTSBRIDGE

There was a time in the nineteen twenties and thirties when rather stylish restaurants began to spring up on the country's main roads to serve the new and prosperous motoring classes. The name 'Roadhouse' was coined for these smart new buildings and they were often built in what is now called the art-deco style as a demonstration of their modernity. The reason for my dragging you through this tortuous intro is because I suspect that the subject of this review, *The Route 1066 Café*, is a rare survivor of the type and we KAMG-ers are known for our fondness for an art-deco nosher, visiting, as we do, two other such joints at Shoreham Airport and Lydd Airport on our ride-outs. The 1066 is architecturally more modest than Shoreham but there is nothing modest about its grub which, if Michelin were ever to rate biker caffs, would warrant certainly two and possibly even three stars.

However, biking man does not live by bacon butty alone; we demand proper parking and plenty of it; and generous sitting room where we are surrounded by like-minded individuals. In short, we need to be welcome. We need to feel at home. The 1066 has all this in spades: abundant parking and seats; lots of like-minded people, and a proper welcome which even included, on my last visit, noticing a copy of *Riders* in the magazine rack. Could I have been more at home? I could not. But for me the 1066's ace card

is its location: it's on the A21 right in the middle of nowhere, deep in the East Sussex countryside with not another building in sight, and whichever direction you approach it from there will be some great roads. For my money, if you were coming from the Oakdene-ish sort of area, the best ride would be out through Ightham and Shipbourne, on through Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells and then the A267 to Heathfield where you take B2096 to Battle. The stretch from Heathfield to Battle is particularly good. From the



ancient town of Battle it is three miles to *The 1066*. After you have bacon-buttied and coffee-ed, returning by way of the A21 back to the Oakdene would be a round trip of about 75 miles. Perfect.

This caff has set its stall out for bikers and the custom car crowd and it knows how to treat them. Go to its website and you will get the picture. It's an interesting place to get to. It's interesting when you get there and the food's good. If it was poker that'd be a full house.

Route1066cafe.co.uk

Opening hours :

Mon-Fri 6:30am to 4:30pm / Sat-Sun: 8am to 5:30pm

Open on Boxing Day from 8am to 1pm

A21, Battle Road, Johns Cross, Robertsbridge,

East Sussex TN32 5JH

Tel: 01580 882155



OUR 'MAN FRIDAY'

ROBINSON CRUSOE HAD ONE AND SO DO WE

Andy Stagg's journey to Green Badge-dom (*page 11*) certainly struck a chord with me. Many years ago I was on the wrong end of a sadistic little Hitler who was my RoSPA examiner in Wales and who even before we ventured out into a raging storm and flooded roads had reduced me to a quivering jelly. Not surprisingly I quivered hesitantly to a 'bronze' (later to become a Silver). As a result when I turned up some time later to take my IAM Green Badge test under the beady eye of the legendary Terry Friday I was in a state of near nervous collapse. But I needn't have worried. What a super bloke he turned out to be.

I nervously figure-of-eighted under his eagle eye in a car park somewhere off the M20 before we set off down the motorway with me still obviously in panic mode, but he knew that all was not as relaxed as it should have been and when we stopped at traffic lights in Maidstone he pulled alongside, gave me a big beam and a thumbs up. From that moment all was well. I definitely owe my Green Badge to Terry Friday and, although you may not realise it, so do you, and so does every single member of KAMG, because Terry started the club 36 years ago. In fact, he not only started KAMG, he, with help from a couple of others, was responsible for getting the car-orientated IAM of that time to accept that motorcycles should have their own separate IAM clubs and not be junior sub-sets of the car clubs. He is

therefore a pretty important chap and that is why he is our Club President; that's why he is a lifetime honorary member; and that is why the IAM recognised his contribution at a special presentation at October's club night.

When he started the club he was a police motorcycle instructor at Kent where he was not only training coppers from Kent but from all over the world too. However, let's not get carried away here: he didn't join the police to defend society against the criminal hordes of the county. Oh no, he just joined to play football. Nothing more than that. He was actually a qualified shipwright and had served his apprenticeship in the Naval dockyard at Sheerness. Then, as Bombardier Friday in the Royal Artillery, he did two years national service and "It was the making of me," he says. Much of his time he served driving an armoured scout car in Cyprus. "God, what a super job!" he says, grinning. However, we should remember that Cyprus was a bit different then; it wasn't a holiday resort, it was a war zone, and the Army was there trying to keep the peace between the warring Greek and Turkish factions on the island. However, the nearest that Bombardier Friday came to disaster appears to have been when his CO was shooting a deer for supper from the



turret of Terry's scout car. On hearing the shot, Corporal Friday, down in the bowels of the car, obeyed his training instructions and drove the whole outfit including a slightly miffed CO into a ditch for cover believing that they were being shot at.

On returning home after National Service he found that the dockyard in Sheerness had closed and Chatham Dockyard was about to close. Not a good time to be a shipwright. He heard, however, that the place to be was in the police force. The constabulary apparently welcomed good sportsman in those days and "If you were a good sportsman, you were made," he says, and as he was a pretty good footballer he thought he would go and play football and fight a bit of crime on the side. Footballers in those days, it seems, were always posted to 'B' Division, and so PC Friday finished up at Rochester cop-shop where part of the motorised strength was a Norman Nippy. A Norman Nippy, for those too young to remember this 'classic' beast, was a moped made locally in Ashford; actually, when I say mo-ped, I really mean ped-mo because its main thrust came from the pedals, there was very little *mo* about it as I recall. Anyway, PC Friday was entrusted with this thing one dark winter night and sent to fight a bit of crime that was happening at the top of a hill in Strood. He pedalled with such enthusiasm up the hill that he blew the whole exhaust system off the Nippy and it made a very loud bang. Shortly after this he noticed that the light on the police pill-box was flashing at the top of the hill (remember, no radios or mobile phones in those days) and he ran up the hill to answer it. When he got to the box and called in, his sergeant said that gunshots had been heard in his area and Terry was to lie low until they could send reinforcements. The sergeant was not best pleased to learn that the gunshots were fired by the Norman Nippy's exhaust.

While at Rochester Terry also rode the company Noddy Bike, the 'silent' and pathetically slow LE Velocette, which he dismisses quite simply as "A crap bike." However, at one point he was sent on a police motorcycle course where he found himself riding another LE Velocette this time with 'L' plates. He said nothing about the plates and his instructors seemed very impressed with his riding. He got the top marks and at the end of the first week he was told that he'd passed his motorcycle driving test. But, he said "I've already got a full licence." Admitting there had been a bit of a cock-up they immediately promoted him to a proper Triumph for the next two weeks of training and "I had a ball," he says. After that he went to Traffic Division and 18 months later he got his Class 1 qualification and eventually he was recommended to apply to fill the vacancy to be an instructor at Maidstone HQ.

It was then the late 1970s and as a police instructor he was invited to be the IAM examiner for car drivers in the Maidstone area and he naturally asked if he could cover bikes as well. The IAM motorcycle test had been introduced in 1975 but there were no motorcycle clubs affiliated to the IAM; motorcyclists had to be members of the car clubs. At that time Terry met another key figure in his story and in the KAMG story too – that key figure was Mike Knowles. Mike was Road Safety Officer for The Kent County Council and was responsible for promoting the RAC/ACU training scheme in fifteen centres throughout Kent. (The RAC/ACU was the basic training scheme for motorcyclists in those days.) Mike thought it would be a good idea if all the RAC/ACU trainers at those centres took the IAM test, and so it was arranged one day in 1978 that they would all gather and be tested by Terry and another police instructor, Barry Hill, on one day. It did not go well. The trainers were keen but, sadly, they were not up to Green Badge standard;



KAMG 36 years ago



The two finalists in the World Championships of "Talking the hind leg off a donkey" competition - Terry and John Lemon





Tina presents Terry with an award as recognition of KAMG's debt to him.

in fact two of them actually wanted to take the test on bikes which were damaged and illegal because they had crashed into each other on their way to the test! By the end of the day Terry was close to despair after following these instructors around, and he was not expecting anything better from his last candidate, the still unknown to him, Mike Knowles. But suddenly things looked up; Mike had actually read and absorbed and could put into practice the contents of Motorcycle Roadcraft. Terry was delighted, "In that moment my day changed," he says, "no, *my* life changed." Mike was green-badged, and it was on that evening, I think, that the KAMG was actually conceived, although neither of them realised it at the time, and its birth was a long way off.

The two of them recognised that motorcyclists were keen to improve and needed to progress beyond the basic RAC/ACU scheme. Mike, in his newsletter to the RAC/ACU centres in Kent said that he'd got his IAM Green badge and what a good idea it was, and that there was to be an open meeting at The KCC to discuss the possibility of organising more training for anyone who was interested. Terry and Mike were overwhelmed when over 100 riders turned up to that meeting. Terry stood up and said that they were taken aback by the response and they needed to think about it for a couple of weeks. Two weeks later twice as many people arrived. It was standing room only. So impressed was Terry's Police Driving School boss that he made all the facilities

of the Police Driving School available for the training programme and things began to happen.

There was initially some argey-bargey with the car-orientated IAM whose rules couldn't cope with motorcycle-only clubs being affiliated to it, but Terry's persistence, allied to the not inconsiderable help of a blue-blooded motorcyclist, Lord Strathcarron, finally made it possible for the KAMG to be the first motorcycle club sanctioned by the IAM. It also meant that the club became the blueprint for all subsequent motorcycle clubs that wished to be affiliated to the organisation. Lord Strathcarron, by the way, was not just a noble belted earl who dabbled in a bit of fine weather riding, he was a true 'biker' and a bit of a maverick; Terry's admiration for him is boundless. (See panel.)

It does sound as if the IAM was a bit pompous in those days and certainly the influential Secretary, Bob Peters, was decidedly anti-motorcyclists, and perhaps with good reason because on one occasion, the Annual General Meeting of the IAM was held at the RAC Club in Pall Mall in London. The RAC Club as you will probably know is a bit stuffy; it is rather 'aware' of its Pall Mall position and its doormen don't expect one biker let alone several to turn up in full riding gear seeking admission. On the AGM day in question a large contingent from KAMG, led by Terry, arrived to be met by a "You can't come in 'ere without a tie," jobsworth. But they, having been forewarned by another KAMG founder member, Rod Collins, were all wearing ties under their motorcycle jackets and had to be admitted, much to the annoyance of Jobsworth and to the embarrassment of the IAM meeting which hadn't got a big enough room or enough chairs for them.

Much has happened since those early buccaneering days and KAMG is flourishing 36 years later, but although there were many people involved none of it would have happened without Terry Friday driving it forward from the very beginning and that is why he is President. He's now 80 and recently had a stroke, but he's still riding and long may that continue. We owe him a lot.

(Thanks to Mike Knowles and Rod Collins for information about Terry and the birth of KAMG, a birth in which they too played a significant part as founder members. NF.)

THE OFFICIAL STORY OF THE GREEN LEATHERS

For some it's green badges but for Terry Friday it's green leathers. If anyone knows just one thing about Terry Friday it is that he wears green leathers, and not just any old green leathers either, his leathers are in the official bilious-green of the German Motorcycle Police. How come?

Like this: one day Terry was blasting down the motorway going about his high speed constabulary duties when

he came upon a crippled Mercedes and caravan with a smashed windscreen on the hard shoulder. He stopped to see if he could help and found that the German driver and his wife were in a bit of a stew and were waiting for the AA to arrive, but they were expected to be two hours! Sergeant Friday thought that was not good enough and said he had a mate nearby who could help. Remember that this is long before mobile phones and there was no way he could call up this mate, he had to go and see him. So off he went. Said

mate was duly found and told of the stricken Mercedes. The mate said that he had the right replacement screen and Terry could leave it to him, he'd have a rescue van sent out immediately. Terry went back to Mr and Mrs Mercedes, told them that the cavalry was on its way, and he then sped off on his official business and thought no more about it.

About a year later Sergeant Friday is summoned to his boss's office. This is never a good thing and he suspects the worst. His boss tells him that a German bloke has called from a motorway service area and asked to speak to Terry. The boss is suspicious but tells Terry he'd better get there to find out what it is all about. Terry goes to

meet the mysterious German and finds Mr Mercedes waiting for him with a big box. Inside the box there is a brand new set of official German Polizei leathers. It turned out that Mr Mercedes was somehow involved in supplying these outfits to the German rozzers and he was giving a set to Terry as a 'thank you' for his 'Good Samaritan' work of a year earlier. "There's nowhere here to try them for size," says Terry. "They will fit," says Mercedes, in that meaningful, don't argue, German, sort of way. And they did, and they still do. Which is why President Friday is the only man with a Green Badge and green leathers.

LORD STRATHCARRON

Lord Strathcarron actually died ten years ago after a motorcycle accident when he was 82. He was the first rider to take the IAM test for motorcyclists, and Terry has huge admiration both for him and for Lady Strathcarron and the part they played in KAMG's birth. They were both true motorcyclists, but my favourite Strathcarron story is of the pair of them touring Europe on holiday on their motorbike followed by their butler in a three-wheeler which also contained their elderly, scrawny parrot in its cage. It's the parrot that's the killer: as if it's not enough that a Lord and Lady in late middle-age are motorbiking around Europe followed by their butler, there's a bloody parrot in the party too. His Lordship went everywhere on his bike and one day turned up to an important meeting at BP House in London in the pouring rain on his bike and announced himself as Lord Strathcarron. To which the car park attendant said "Yeh mate, and I'm the Queen of f----- Sheba." A few days later his Lordship had to return to BP but this time he was properly booted and suited in pinstripes and in a car. Once again he said to the same car park attendant "I'm Lord Strathcarron, and I know you, you're the Queen of f-----g Sheba." Late in life he had to have corrective surgery to his throttle hand so that he could continue to ride a solo motorbike in comparative comfort. However, he said that the operation had made it "a bit of a bugger getting out of the bath".



The Strathcarrons on holiday. Parrot and butler out of shot unfortunately.



Terry with Lord and Lady Strathcarron at an early KAMG meeting – possibly the first meeting

BE A ROAD USER NOT

A CRASH STATISTIC

Bob Gorton finds out how

Bikers make up only 1% of road users but 26% of the crash statistics.

Yes, this is the story we have heard a million times before, but the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, who have to deal with the everyday reality of these statistics, is trying to do something about improving them. Their Advanced Machine Skills courses are part of their Road Traffic Crash Reduction initiative and are based on the premise that all bike crashes have machine control as an element of the cause, especially turning and braking control,

The aim of the courses is to reduce the chances of collision by teaching essential riding skills such as:

- Slow speed handling and full lock turning
- Positive steering techniques
- Swerving skills and emergency avoidance techniques
- Advanced and high speed braking skills

And so it was that a contingent from KAMG led by Chief Observer, Colin Underwood, set off for Essex to take part in one of these courses. As the day dawned...no that's rubbish, it was



Is this the gyroscopic effect in action or has someone lost a lens?

pitch dark when the New Ash Green cohort left to meet the rest of the KAMG party at Thurrock services for a 6:45am departure on an interesting dawn run to Finchingfield in Essex. There we joined the other participants at 8:15 to leave for Wethersfield, an MOD airfield and our playground for the day. This is a huge open space criss-crossed by very large runways – think Top Gear but bigger.

First of all there was a brief introduction to the three instructors from *Hopp Rider Training* who had been assigned to the twelve of us. These guys were obviously very well qualified with a wealth of experience gained from race instruction, trials riding, IAM and RoSPA. To begin with there was some discussion about the gyroscopic effect of spinning wheels*, but the main point of this preamble, was that the morning was going to be all about exploring what the back brake was for. No touching of the front brake lever at all, forbidden on pain of death, broken machinery and probably more pain. Anyway, I got the point.

THE FIRST EXERCISE

Picking Up a Fallen Bike was the first exercise of the day. Now even my limited imagination was holding up banners saying 'This does not bode well...' and 'Abandon hope all ye who begin this course...' Anyway, our Matt was the first volunteer offering to lay his lovely, but lumpy, new BMW down on the grass so that he could be shown how to pick it up again. Picking it up again was accomplished by ensuring the engine was dead, engaging first gear, rotating the steering to point the front wheel skywards, and then lifting using the lower end handlebar – bend knees, straight back and heave. This

technique is fully explained in the IAM Advanced Rider Handbook appendix and is very different from what some of us may have been taught before, namely backing into the side of the bike with a two handed lift, a method which threatens a tip over the other way if there is no stand down on that side. We watched it done correctly with a Honda Pan European as well. All very instructive but I don't think I was the only one hoping I wouldn't have to use the technique that day.

SLOW SPEED HANDLING

This began with some donuts and figure-of-eight practice, which most of we KAMG members are well used to, before progressing to the familiar cones and slalom layout. Key lessons: constant engine speed, introduce power with the clutch, and control speed with the back brake. If you stall you fall, so lift off the brake and ride on if that threatens. Nothing new here, except that I really needed the practice.

I found the first lot of cones were laid out to be difficult (excuses below), but watching others, I could see I was not the only one displacing cones. I think these were deliberately very small so that we could ride over them rather than round them.

My issue was that I was rusty after a prolonged lay off, the new knee was not doing what the old one did and machine adjustments I'd made to compensate (lowered pegs and extended levers) meant that everything felt like my first ever machine control day experience. I hang my head in shame and admit that I really muffed it to start with. But despite my confidence draining away like soup in a string bag, I got there in

the end with the first stage exercises. I think everyone improved but the last lot of cones was later officially declared (with a chuckle) to be almost impossible. (Note to organisers, and I think this also applies to our own club training: early stage exercises need to be easy in order to build confidence, and then to increase in difficulty to an attainable level that results in accomplishment satisfaction.)

POSITIVE STEERING (COUNTER STEERING)*

This was a very useful exercise about what a little bit of handlebar push – positive steering – combined with some rear brake control can do. Alternating staggered cones were placed down the sides of our runway and the game was to 'corner' each one tightly enough to set up for the next, building up speed and rhythm as skill develops. The only way this can be done well, is by using positive steering – a push on the inside handlebar to induce lean – combined with some rear brake control. The rear brake is a very useful tool in a tight bend situation, combining the ability to scrub off a little speed and increasing the lean angle. The trick is discovering that on lifting off the brake, everything comes upright again very quickly. Touching the front brake here would result in a sudden, catastrophic meeting of the machinery and the asphalt, but it was huge fun

**If you want to know more about the fascinating and counter intuitive effect of 'positive' or 'counter steering' there is some really interesting stuff on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbdqpXb> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N92FYHHT1qM->. This second one is a long lecture with quite a few 'hard bits' in it but it is worth a view. There are plenty more; just Google gyroscopic effect or counter steering. Ed.*



Confident positive steering

discovering how much control you can have in a whizzy, twisty situation without it.

SWERVING

Swerving was introduced as a collision avoidance technique. The layout was two narrow tracks laid in and out of a box area. Now imagine you are riding down the track when the box area suddenly becomes a white van that has stopped, blocking the path in front of you. The reasons why our superior forward vision and ride planning had not anticipated this were not explained – maybe it just dropped into the road like a bit of overhead bridge? Anyway, there is no time to brake so the only way to avoid a crash is to swerve hard.

So disengage the clutch, induce positive steering with a handlebar push to get around the obstacle: only to be faced by the (imaginary) oncoming traffic, which requires an opposite swerve to get in the lane the other side of the box. This gets more challenging as the pace is increased and an instructor stands in the box to telling you which way to swerve at the last minute. Exciting stuff, and a very useful technique for dealing with the vehicle that pulls out of a junction in front of you.

BRAKING

The front brake, being fitted with massive discs and multiple callipers, has only two jobs apparently: one is holding you fast in stationary traffic, so that if you are ever rear-ended you are not forced forward into further trouble. The other is stopping you fast and hard. That it will do very well, provided it is applied correctly.

"So the first thing we are going to do is see what happens when you panic and snatch at it, thus inducing a front wheel skid. Here's the demo Okay, got that? Now you go and do it."

"Do what?"

"I want you to come down the runway at a reasonably fast speed please (it won't work if you go too slowly) and



Bob Gorton braking heavily



Snatching at the front brake induces a front wheel skid

snatch the front brake to induce a front wheel skid”.

I looked around and could see by the expressions on the faces of my fellow ‘students’ that I did not imagine this, I had actually heard him say it and it’s why in my head a voice was screaming “This is nuts - run away!” However, provoked by bravado, camaraderie and the wish not to be seen as the only wimp on the airfield, it was done. There were two important lessons here:

- 1) If you snatch at the front brake you are going to skid because the level of tyre friction in play cannot transmit the braking forces to the road until the suspension is loaded up and the front tyre is squashed. ABS might keep you upright but extends braking distance in these circumstances.
- 2) If you let go of the brake lever thingy fast enough it all sorts itself out. This was very neatly demonstrated by a guy on a cruiser who almost had it on its side until he remembered to let go of the lever, then up it sat, as neatly as any heavy thing rolling along on two wheels can.

Now, to do it properly use four fingers please, none of this namby-pamby two finger poser stuff, and apply in three stages: take up slack, load up suspension and squeeEEEEEEEE. Crikey, it’s stopped already. And away we go to practice. Pick a speed and keep doing it. I chose 60mph because I figured that’s the sort of speed when I might need to hit the get-me-out-of-trouble brake in our neck of the woods. After an hour most of us were

capable of stopping from that sort of speed in about four car lengths AND changing down into first at the same time. Why first? Because if you’ve stopped that hard, the very next thing that might happen is getting hit by the guy behind who didn’t stop and you may need to get away very quickly.

Other things to contemplate: two fingers on the front brake lever are a no-no. If you habitually ride with two fingers covering the lever then there is a chance you’ll introduce a front-wheel-s snatch-lockup when you really don’t want it – like in the middle of a cornering manoeuvre. Two fingers can’t apply anything like the force you need for a hard stop because they are inboard at the short end of a long lever and your finger tendons are tied together, both of which limit the braking force you can apply, on top of which your winter-gloved pinkies might stop the lever from fully operating. Forget the back brake altogether, if you are doing it right, there is so little contact pressure on the rear that it will just lock up. And here’s a thought: if the rule is that you should always be able to stop safely on your side of the road in the distance you can see to be clear... then it follows that if you can stop safely quicker, you can ride quicker. Hmm, I think I might need to think about that one a bit more.

KAMG riders: Paul Jessop, Ian Walker, Colin Underwood, Rosie McKay, Rob Lawes, Bob Gorton, Caroline Bowness, Matt Barnes

Course operator: Andy Stroulger, RTC Reduction Manager, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, andy.stroulger@essex-fire.gov.uk www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Trainers: Martin Hopp (Nürburgring instructor, RoSPA National), Mel Hipperson (Trials competitor, IAM Observer, RoSPA Gold), Ben Henderson (Cadwell race instructor).

Trainers provided by: Hopp Rider Training see <http://www.hoppridetraining.co.uk/>

The final message is: practice, practice, practice. You don’t want to be trying to remember this stuff when you really need it.

FANCY A GO?

A jolly good time was had by all and I think everyone learnt a huge amount. They say the course is for absolutely everyone but I think you would get most out of it if you are currently training for, or at the advanced standard. Everything here is covered by IAM advanced rider training and material and I certainly would not recommend attempting anything I have described here without expert guidance. This course was a great opportunity to practice these techniques. If you can’t wait until the next KAMG organised event then you may apply directly by Email to Firebike-essex-fire.gov.uk.



Colin Underwood - the burden of being Chief Observer is sometimes too much and he just has to sit down

KAMG REGALIA

For reflective bibs both Observer and Green Badge holders, please see Regalia Manager at one of our club nights

BRANDED CLOTHING

Large range of KAMG branded clothing to order only, any colour and size.

Crew Neck T-shirts **£17**

Polo shirt **£17**

Sweatshirt **£20**

Ladies Polo Shirt **£17**

Fleeces half zip **£26**



MAINTENANCE AND ACCESSORIES

Muc-Off spray cleaner **£5.50**

WURTH Chain lube **£8**

Seal Awheel **£10**

Grip Lock **£44.95**

Approved Breathalyzer kits. **£5.50**



BOOKS

How to be a better rider **£10**

Highway Code **£2.50**

Know Your Traffic Signs **£4.99**

Road craft **£12**

IAM Sticker **£1**



MACHINE CONTROL DAY

Our machine control days are organised by Mick West. If you have not yet signed up then do it now. A MCD is the best value for money you can buy at **£10.00** (paid on the day).

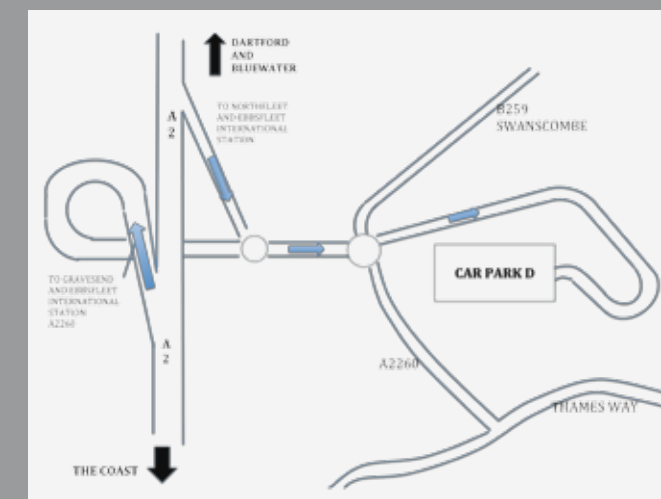
0844 585 7783

mcd@kamg.org.uk

Held at: Car Park D
Ebbsfleet Station
International Way
Gravesend, Kent DA10 1EB

Arrival time: 08:45 for 09:00 start
Finish Time: approx 13:00 Hrs

Saturday, 8th April 2017
Saturday, 24th June 2017
Saturday, 29th July 2017
Saturday, 30th September 2017



2017 CALENDER OF EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT	DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	04/01/17	TSC Meeting	Sunday	02/07/17	Social and Training Run
Monday	09/01/17	Committee Meeting	Wednesday	05/07/17	Fish 'n' Chip Run
Thursday	26/01/17	Group Night	Thursday	06/07/17	TSC Meeting
Sunday	29/01/17	Social and Training Run	Monday	10/07/17	Committee Meeting
Monday	13/02/17	Committee Meeting	Sunday	16/07/17	IDCAM
Saturday	18/02/17	IDCAM	Thursday	27/07/17	Group Night
Thursday	23/02/17	Group Night - Magazine	Saturday	29/07/17	Machine Control Day
Saturday	25/02/17	Observer Conference	Sunday	30/07/17	Social and Training Run
Sunday	26/02/17	Social and Training Run	Thursday	03/08/17	Fish 'n' Chip Run
Sunday	12/03/17	IDCAM	Saturday	05/08/17	IDCAM
Monday	13/03/17	Committee Meeting	Thursday	10/08/17	Observer Meeting
Monday	20/03/17	Area Team Meetings Week	Monday	14/08/17	Committee Meeting
Thursday	30/03/17	Group Night - AGM	Thursday	24/08/17	Group Night - Magazine
Saturday	01/04/17	IDCAM	Sunday	27/08/17	IDCAM
Sunday	02/04/17	Social and Training Run	Sunday	27/08/17	Social and Training Run
Saturday	08/04/17	Machine Control Day	Monday	28/08/17	Summer Bank Holiday
Monday	10/04/17	Committee Meeting	Sunday	10/09/17	Observer Rideout
Friday	14/04/17	Good Friday	Monday	11/09/17	Committee Meeting
Monday	17/04/17	Easter Monday	Saturday	16/09/17	IDCAM
Sunday	23/04/17	IDCAM	Thursday	28/09/17	Group Night
Thursday	27/04/17	Group Night	Saturday	30/09/17	Machine Control Day
Sunday	30/04/17	Social and Training Run	Sunday	01/10/17	Social and Training Run
Monday	01/05/17	May Bank Hoilday	Thursday	05/10/17	TSC Meeting
Monday	08/05/17	Committee Meeting	Sunday	08/10/17	IDCAM
Thursday	11/05/17	Observer Meeting	Monday	09/10/17	Committee Meeting
Saturday	13/05/17	IDCAM	Thursday	26/10/17	Group Night
Sunday	14/05/17	GBH Rideout	Saturday	28/10/17	IDCAM
Thursday	18/05/17	Fish 'n' Chip Run	Sunday	29/10/17	Social and Training Run
Thursday	25/05/17	Group Night - Magazine	Monday	13/11/17	Committee Meeting
Sunday	28/05/17	Social and Training Run	Thursday	30/11/17	Group Night - Magazine
Sunday	28/05/17	KAMG Tour to Vianden	Sunday	03/12/17	Social and Training Run
Monday	29/05/17	Spring Bank Holiday	Monday	11/12/17	Committee Xmas Dinner
Sunday	04/06/17	IDCAM	Monday	25/12/17	Christmas Day
Sunday	04/06/17	KAMG Tour to Vianden Returns	Tuesday	26/12/17	Boxing Day
Monday	12/06/17	Committee Meeting	Thursday	28/12/17	Holiday Group Run
Thursday	15/06/17	Fish 'n' Chip Run			
Sunday	18/06/17	Observer Rideout			
Monday	19/06/17	Area Team Meetings Week			
Saturday	24/06/17	IDCAM			
Saturday	24/06/17	Machine Control Day			
Thursday	29/06/17	Group Night - Magazine			



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OBSERVER ASSOCIATE CHARTER

What is expected of the Observer / Associate partnership

THE OBSERVERS

➤ Have made the effort to train, not only for the test, but have also taken part in Observer Training courses. They are a valuable asset to the group and give of their time freely, except for a contribution from the Associate towards their expenses, as determined by the Committee and the IAM.

THE ASSOCIATES

➤ Are expected to have equal commitment, with the goal being the Test.

➤ Are to be available for observed runs once every two weeks (ideally), as continuity cannot be maintained with regular gaps of three weeks or more.

➤ Should make their monetary contribution before setting-off.

➤ Must establish the date(s) of the next run(s) at the debriefing, and they must PRACTISE between these dates.

➤ Must make an effort to STUDY the THEORY by reading the relevant literature; for example 'How to be a Better Rider', 'Highway Code', 'Roadcraft' etc.

➤ Cancellation of a run due to the weather will be at the discretion of the Observer. If, after a period of one month, an Observer has not heard from the Associate it will be assumed that interest has been lost and the Associate's name will be placed back at the bottom of the waiting list.

➤ A review of the Associate's progress is mandatory, requiring a Check Run with a Senior Observer after six runs or six months. When the Observer feels that the Associate is riding consistently to the required standard a Pre-Test Assessment will be arranged with a Senior Observer. The Observer will give as much help and encouragement as possible but the onus is on the Associate to endeavour.

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IDCAM

INTRODUCTORY DAY COURSE IN ADVANCED MOTORCYCLING



The revised style IDCAM has been running for some months now. Attendees book in at 8.45am and have their documents and bikes checked over. A short classroom presentation about KAMG and Advanced Motorcycling commences at about 9.00am. An assessed ride follows with a short debrief before a coffee break. A classroom session about the System of Motorcycle Control takes us to lunch time. We also fit in a Highway Code quiz and the POWDDERSS check of a motorcycle, so it's quite a busy morning. After lunch, attendees go out for a second assessed ride with an Observer, finishing at a mutually agreed location.

If you would like to attend as an Associate contact Tim Johansen associates@kamg.org.uk Observers should confirm their willingness to help on Tracker and Tim will keep them informed as to our needs for the session.



CHECK THE KAMG WEBSITE FOR NEXT AVAILABLE DATES
OR CONTACT TIM JOHANSEN ON associates@kamg.org.uk

SOCIAL AND TRAINING RIDES - GUIDELINES

START from the OAKDENE Café layby with a FULL petrol tank and an EMPTY bladder!

There will be a green badge holder at the front and back of each group of 4 riders, who will depart at 2 minute intervals.

It is an opportunity to ride with others who have passed their IAM test and then socialise with club members at the finish point over a cup of tea or coffee and breakfast.

Rides start at 10.00am in December, January and February and at 09.00am for all other months

For the safety of participants, if the temperature at the start point drops below **3°C**, the ride will be cancelled.

PLEASE CHECK THE KAMG WEBSITE OR TRACKER SYSTEM FOR THE ROUTES OF ALL FUTURE RIDES.

The up-to-date routes can be downloaded to your Sat Nav or printed out if you prefer. They will also be advertised in the RIDERS Extra E News published and sent out to all members monthly via Tracker.

ASSOCIATES NON GREEN BADGE HOLDERS

- Maintain highest riding standards at all times
- Read the road ahead, NOT the vehicle in front
- Always keep the rider behind in your mirrors
- Maintain your allocated position unless otherwise directed
- Ride to YOUR capabilities not the rider in front
- **YOU are responsible for your ride at all times**
- **Carry your KAMG membership and ICE cards**

GROUP LEADERS GREEN BADGE HOLDERS

- Make sure all in your group are logged with the run organiser (for insurance purposes)
- Please follow the prescribed route not your own
- Confirm destination and route to group
- Explain run guidelines
- Explain stopping procedures
- Allow a quicker group to pass if necessary
- Select a 'Tail-End Charlie'
- Consider change of associate order at a midway point
- **Adjust speed as appropriate for the group and ride to the SLOWEST rider**



Carry your ICE (In Case of Emergency) card with you, as you may be asked to produce it. When going on a group ride, the ride will terminate at the destination. If this will leave you in unfamiliar territory and you would like an accompanied ride back to the start,

please make this known to the run leader or your group leader before the ride starts. **It is a condition for all club runs that you MUST be a member of the IAM for Insurance purposes. Not a member, then you are not insured.**

CONTACT PAGE

President: **Terry Friday**
Vice President: **Dave Murphy**
Honorary Life Members: **Rod Collins • Kevin Chapman • Terry Friday
John Leigh • John Lemon • Mike Knowles
Brenda Vickery • Ian Burchell • Sue Mills**



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