

RIDERS

... magazine of the KAMG



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Front cover: Full story on page 8.

THIS EDITION INCLUDES ...

NEW FEATURES:

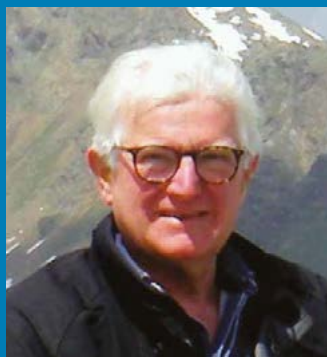
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Above & Left: 'The London Motorcycle Show is on Feb 16th 17th and 18th, 2018'



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.

Magazine design and layout by John Gardiner.

EDITORIAL

New Blood?

It's sad to have to report that in the last couple of months KAMG has lost the help of two of its important and long-serving workers: Tim Johansen has resigned his roles as the organiser of the Introductory Day Course in Advanced Motorcycling (IDCAM) and as Associate Co-ordinator, while Mick West has decided that eight years of running the Machine Control Days is quite enough. "So what?" you may ask. Well, apart from having lost two very good and experienced people, we have to find two new good and inexperienced people to volunteer to take on these important jobs, that's what.

Tim, who is an IAM Masters with Distinction, a National IMI observer and a Masters Mentor, was involved with the IDCAMs for six years and took over the running of them last year. During the time when he was in charge he saw some 70 Associates go through 16 IDCAMs and dealt with hundreds of enquiries; he also carried out an audit of associates which resulted in many who had lapsed being drawn back into the active fold. Mick West went out on a high note when the last Machine Control Day which he organised attracted a record entry with a total of 42 bikes being present in the Ebbsfleet car park on September 30th. Huge thanks are due to Tim and Mick. The club will miss both of them.

These events – IDCAMs and MCDs – don't just happen, somebody has to organise them and make them happen and be present to make sure that they work properly when they do happen. They are hands-on jobs and they are the bedrock of the club's training activity. Next year there are 10 IDCAMs and four Machine Control Days scheduled. Anyone interested?

The KAMG Survey

The recent KAMG survey was very successful with just about 50% of the membership responding. It was hoped that a full analysis of the results would have been completed in time for publication in this edition of the magazine, but that hasn't been possible and will have to wait until the next issue in February. The survey did show that there were one or two people who think that not all of the club's events are advertised and that certain events are taking place without all members being told about them. Well, one place where I guarantee that you can certainly check on every coming event is on page five of the magazine: the 'Calendar of Events' lists all the activities which are scheduled to happen in the next few months, and in the centre of this issue there is a complete calendar for 2018, listing all events as far as they are known at the moment. That's not to say that there won't be impromptu, last minute additions and cancellations to the programme, that's unavoidable, which is why it's always a good idea to check on Tracker about the up to the minute position. For example, the annual Christmas ride to Parkwood school will be on Sunday Dec 17th, but at the time of going to press we don't know at what time it will start nor where it will start.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

Sun 3rd Training/Social ride to Hythe. Oakdene layby 10am*
Mon 7th Committee meeting
Sun 17th Christmas Present run to Parkwood School
Wed 27th Round trip via Rolvenden. Oakdene layby 10am*

January

Wed 8th Committee meeting
Wed 18th TSC meeting
Thurs 25th Club night
Sun 28th Training/Social ride. Oakdene layby 10am*

February

Mon 12th Committee meeting
Sat 17th IDCAM (see page 29 for details)
Thurs 22nd Club night/magazine
Sat 24th Observer conference
Sun 25th Training/Social ride. Oakdene layby 10am*

March

Sat 10th IDCAM (See page 29 for details)
Mon 12th Committee meeting
Mon 19th Area Team meeting week
Thurs 29th Club night. AGM

April

Sun 1st Training/Social ride. Oakdene layby 9am*
Sat 7th Machine Control Day (see page 29 for details)
Mon 9th Committee meeting
Thurs 12th The Fourth Pork Pie Run
(Details on Tracker or contact Steveriches12@gmail.com)
Sat 21st IDCAM (see page 29 for details)
Sun 29th Training/Social ride. Oakdene layby 9am*

*Note that if the temperature is below 3°C the ride will be cancelled.
All dates and times are subject to change but are correct at time of going to press.
Please check on Tracker before attending any activity 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.



DON'T FORGET YOUR CAMERA



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



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

This year the IAM repeated its offer of free taster assessment rides to non-club members. KAMG again took part in the scheme and we had requests from riders from as far away as Brighton and Eastbourne! We then continued to offer these rides after the IAM scheme ended and to date our observers have carried out over 40 rides resulting in a number of new members to KAMG. Thanks to the support of the observers

we are going to continue to offer these rides for the foreseeable future and, I hope, we shall attract even more new members. If you know of anybody who would like to take advantage of this opportunity to "try before they buy", so to speak, please ask them to contact me direct and I will arrange a date for another meeting, or an individual ride, depending on numbers.

KAMG SURVEY

A large number of the KAMG membership recently completed a survey that was sent to them by the committee. Thank you for all the responses. We are currently sorting out the results and will publish them in the near future, unless we have already done so by the time you are reading this – which, I realise, sounds a bit like the TV channel DAVE. However, a couple of things have immediately become apparent.

The first being the use of Brands Hatch Kentagon for our club nights: a number of comments have been made about the acoustics and the bar being in the room. I do agree with some of the comments, but Brands is an iconic venue and it is free to use, however if you have any better suggestions for a club night venue please let me know.

The second comment, which has been aired previously, is that of the club nights being less than welcoming and a bit cliquy. Unfortunately, this can happen. It is no excuse,

but I and some of the other club's officers often have people queueing up to speak to us and we cannot mingle as much as we would like. There is also a team of meeters and greeters but they cannot always be at club night. We all have some responsibility to welcome new members to the club so I would ask that if you see anyone looking a bit lost please have a chat, make them feel at home and if they want any information point them in the right direction. If you have recently joined KAMG and are coming along to your first club night why not go up to one of the staffed tables, Regalia, Raffle or Membership and say "Hello"..... or join the queue to speak to me.

Finally as you will be reading this at the end of November or the beginning of December, I would like to take this opportunity to be one of the first to wish you and your family a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ian Burchell

Alternative views from the Chair . . .



TEST PASSES

Since the last edition

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



David Willson receiving Local Observer qualification from Steve Richies



Tina Underwood receiving National Observer qualification and Colin Underwood with his National requalification



David Lewis receiving Advanced Rider Qualification 1st from James Turton



Ian Sewell receiving Advanced Rider qualification from John Gardiner



Kate Shearer receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Colin Underwood



David Howard receiving Advanced Rider qualification from Graham Hills

LONGWAY NORTH

A DREAM COME TRUE

Andy Stagg

"I HAVE A DREAM"

...so said Steve Riches, cheekily pinching Martin Luther King's powerful words from fifty years ago.

All that Steve was dreaming about was riding a motorbike to the top of Europe and inside the Arctic Circle, but somehow he managed to drag me and four fellow KAMG dreamers into his private hell and took us on a three week, 6000 mile journey this summer. However, we all returned from this dream world unharmed by mishap, untroubled by breakdown and un-bandy-legged, although we did have piles...piles of memories and enough tales to last a lifetime.

This ride of a lifetime – which was debatably claimed in an IAM newsletter to be the longest IAM and KAMG ride to date – was so meticulously planned by our dreamer that we seamlessly rode for day after day to a plan and to satnav routes that were, virtually without exception, kilometre perfect. First we went from home via the Eurotunnel to Calais, then an overnight stop in Hamburg and finally by ferry from Denmark to Kristiansand in Norway where the real adventure actually began.

Norway 'delivered' immediately: our first day was spectacular beyond belief. In fact, day one, for me, is as

memorable as our ultimate goal in Nordkapp. Southern Norway is somewhere quite different with its beautiful red-painted, wood-boarded houses, its fiords and stunning views. And I completely understand why the Trolls of Norse mythology are said to exist in Norway because the huge, house-sized lumps of rock strewn about the valleys and fiords were breathtaking and looked exactly as if some giants had been playing marbles by rolling these enormous rocks around. Later we would encounter many smaller boulders that we had to ride on for mile after mile. These smaller boulders were called roadworks! More of them later.

We intended to cross the Lysefjorden by ferry, but unfortunately after dropping down through hairpins galore to the dock we missed the boat, which meant that we had to retrace our route back up the 27 hairpins only then to discover that at least two roads which we planned to ride were closed due to subsidence or rock falls. After a long detour we eventually arrived at our first campsite at Preikestolen which was 1800 feet above the Lysefjorden and was where yours truly, continuing the theme firmly established on the Scottish trip last year, dropped the loaded bike in a muddy peaty puddle where we decided *not* to pitch the tents! No harm done other than dented pride...again. Next time I shall keep my feet out and definitely not on the pegs in the approved KAMG slow rider style. But rock falls, missed ferries and dented pride aside this southern area of Norway really is worth a trip on its own, so don't discount it: the sights, sounds and the riding are not like anything you'll find anywhere in the UK, believe me.

A couple of days later with many fantastic bridges and tunnels behind us we were in the Trollstigen area with

hairpins beyond belief again. The Trollstigen Pass is so spectacular I just couldn't look. If I had done I would have gone exactly where I looked and that would not have been nice. There were waterfalls tumbling right beside us as we rode but thankfully there was little traffic to worry about as we approached those fall-away bends. We camped at the base of the pass and looked back up as we ate supper and quaffed a rewarding drink that night. It was an evening to remember for all of us.

A word on tunnels and bridges, and in Norway there are a lot of both. Norway for centuries was a land of isolated fishing villages with no roads linking them because, as they were all on the water's edge, a boat was all the transport that anyone needed. In a motorised world this eventually had to change and many roads were built before and during The Second World War. More recently tunnels and bridges have become an export industry as the Norwegians have sold their tunnelling and bridge building expertise to the world. As a biker, you need to be aware that entering a tunnel in Norway can mean a very long ride underground; often they are steeply inclined as they run down under and back up from a fjord. Some tunnels are poorly lit with varying surface conditions; they can be ridged and rutted and frequently have water running across them; there are roundabouts mid-way and the satnav doesn't work underground to tell you which exit to take; there is two-way traffic and trucks causing headwinds as they pass, and this combined with poorly marked pavement edges can catch the unwary. All of which is 'good fun' and memorable when loaded to the gunwales on a motorbike. Bridges are also steeply inclined and often twisty too and are again an experience not to be missed.



Nordkapp



Matt Barnes in two places at once - Lofoten



After the Trollstigen Pass our next highlight was to travel the Arctic Highway and cross the Arctic Circle. The weather became less kind; it was cooler, wetter and the much acclaimed Arctic Highway was not so exciting, bridges and tunnels aside. We crossed the 'line' to ride inside the Arctic Circle, and we gave up the tents and requested cabins at each stop mainly due to the time saved in getting going in the morning and the wet clothing issues that would arise under canvas. The cost of a basic shared cabin (Stuga) was little different from a single tent pitch so it was not a difficult decision to make and had we perhaps known this at the outset we could have saved carrying the tents and camping paraphernalia in the first place.

The day we rode to Mo I Rana was memorable for many things, not the least being that it was so wet that by the time we reached our stop we actually opted for a large apartment that took all six of us, and which had washing and drying facilities, and a luxury bathroom in which we ran a hot air blower to dry out all of our soaked gear. This accommodation was a great relief, and we all agreed that it saved the trip as we were by now all feeling the strain of riding 300 miles a day, or more, and often in rain like we had never seen before. The electric bill may still come back to haunt us!

By our eighth day in Norway we were looking forward to reaching Gullsfjord, our booked cabin base for two whole nights. It was to be our first rest day and we planned to spend a day on the Lofoten Islands. And what a day! We

decided to do Lofoten on the first day and keep day two for rest simply because the weather forecast looked best that way, and boy we were right to do that. Riding down and back up the length of Lofoten was just perfect, with blue sky, a fantastic fresh fish restaurant and still weather. It was an experience that will stay with me for my entire life. Lofoten was stunning and we all agreed that if we achieved nothing more on the trip this was the true highlight. Our subsequent rest day saw the return of grey clouds as we washed our clothes and dried them, and how smug we felt as we lazed around that day enjoying some chill-out time rounded off with a beautiful home-cooked Paella à la Steve followed by roasted nectarines, before heading north next day to Alta, our base camp for Nordkapp.

I said I would mention roadworks again and Norway I think must have a month when it simply shuts down completely to allow for the summer holidays of the road-workers. This summer break means that any ongoing roadworks are frequently abandoned, with all the workings left in whatever condition they happened to be in on the day the workers down-tooled, which means that you might be riding for three or four kilometres on a road surface that could be made up of 40-60mm rocks or larger. This is OK for the 4x4s which all the locals use but is not so much fun on a two-wheeler with a pyramid of gear piled on top of it. However, we all "enjoyed" our off-roading and had no mishaps, but you really do have to watch the temporary speed restriction for road works here – they really mean it!

Alta was a sizeable town and the riverside cabins we occupied were a great place for a good night's rest, although technically there was no 'night' since there was 24 hours of daylight. From Alta we headed for the climax of the trip, the Nordkapp or North Cape. At the start the going was good but as we neared our destination the weather worsened and we had to break out the waterproof 'onesies' and the BMW banana suits. The cloud and rain closed in and enveloped us and although we were at Nordkapp we couldn't see over the cliff edge behind us let alone enjoy what should have been an endless vista across the ocean towards Iceland and the Arctic. Sad but happy at having achieved our goal we rode back to Alta where we would share a good meal together before setting off the next day for Gällivare in Sweden via a brief bit of Finland. The return leg of the journey had begun.

From here on there were no fjords, the roads were straighter and there were beautiful pine forests, lakes and rivers. Our second planned rest day was at Ljusdals in Sweden. Ljusdals is an historic and memorable town where, apart from visiting the local Harley dealership, we again ate out – less expensively than in Norway – but where we were also treated to some more great home cooking in the form of Cottage Pie à la Matt which was followed by a stroll along the lakeside beach and a round of crazy golf. But by this time we were beginning to get into 'going home' mode and although we had two more memorable days in Sweden we

were pleased to reach and ride the amazing Øresund Bridge and tunnel (16km) which took us across the Øresund Strait from Sweden to Denmark. Then, after nights in Flensburg and Essen, it was a case of counting down the miles and looking forward to getting back home to our loved ones.

Great dream Steve.

Some stats:

Runners and Riders: Steve Riches, Jim Pullum, Matthew Barnes, Dermot Horan, Tim Johansen, Andy Stagg.

Travel dates: 23 July 2017 to 12 August 2017. 21 days.

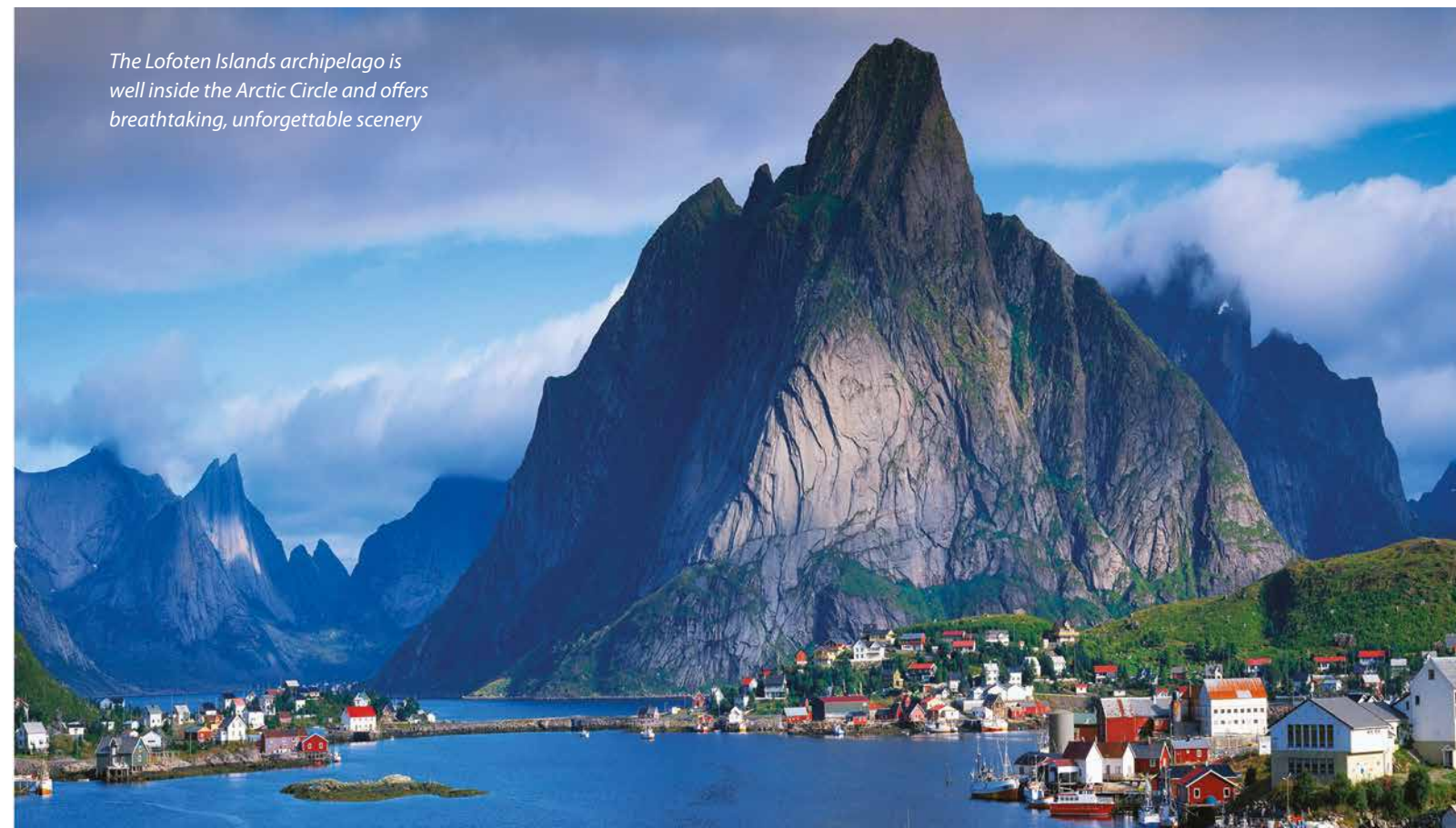
Total Mileage: 5645 or more...

Daily mileage: 518 from start to Hamburg, 390 from Hamburg to Kristiansand, and 370 from Lofoten to Alta, otherwise generally around 300 miles a day.

Two rest days.

Satnav and route planning by Steve Riches and available on request.

The Lofoten Islands archipelago is well inside the Arctic Circle and offers breathtaking, unforgettable scenery



STEVE RICHES, THE ARCH DREAMER HIMSELF, GIVES HIS VIEW ON THE NORDKAPP TRIP

To ride to Nordkapp, the North Cape in Norway, was top of my bucket list, but turning that dream into reality was not as easy as you might imagine.

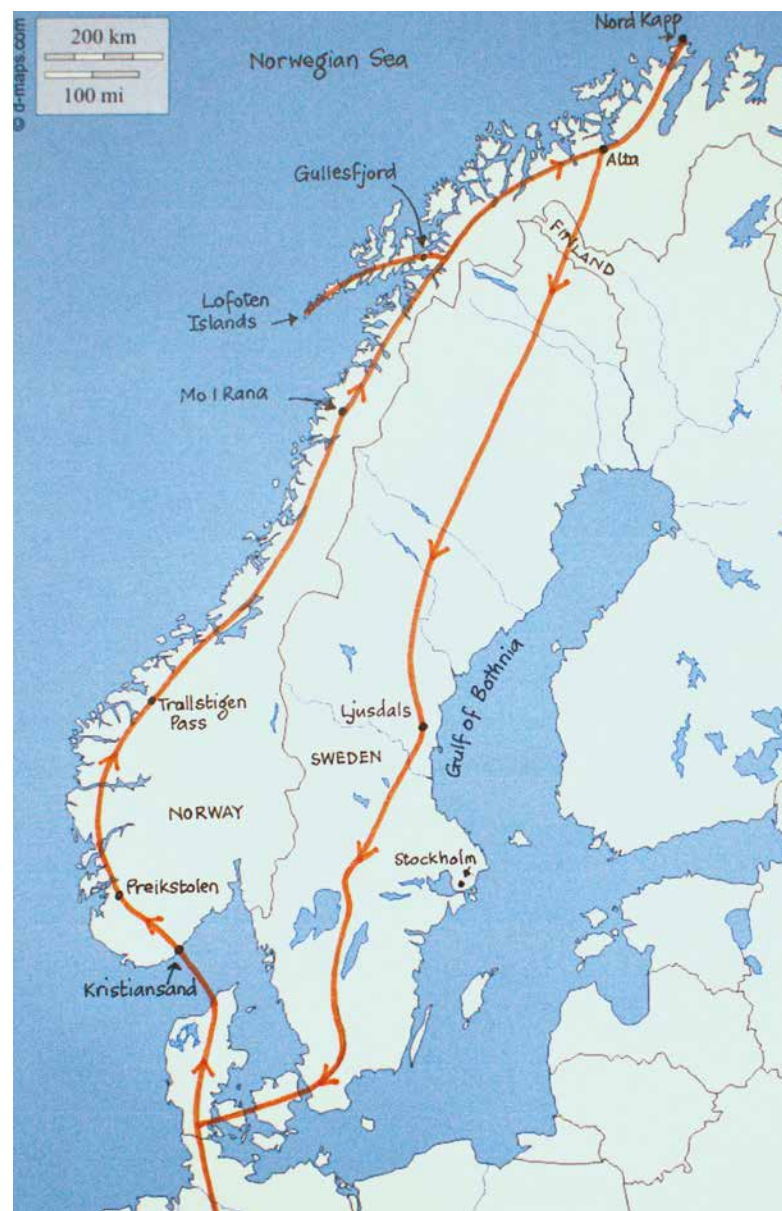
The sales pitch by the Norwegian Tourist Board was akin to the USA's pitch for riding Route 66 – The Atlantic Highway in Norway is one of the must-see roads of the world; discover the wild beauty and endless daylight of the Arctic Circle, and so on. It's all part of the sales chat and if you talk to anyone, and I'm good at that, you can tell who has been there. Just hearing the name Nordkapp is enough for some riders. You can spot the adventurous ones that have actually made the journey. As soon as you mention it they're immediately back there, reliving it, discussing the scenery, the roads, the fun and the adventure as well as remembering some of the trials and tribulations of the long ride north and back. Ask Jim Pullum, Tim Johansen, Matt Barnes, Dermot Horan or Andy Stagg, who all came with me. Ask them and you will see what I mean. They're straight back there reliving the highs and lows of this epic ride.

Nordkapp is the most northerly point on mainland Europe that's accessible by road. It's a 1000 foot cliff rising from the icy cold waters where the Barents Sea meets the Norwegian Sea or, in other words, where the Arctic Ocean meets the Atlantic, and it is becoming a bucket list destination for many riders, drivers, cyclists and people in cruise liners. But don't let that put you off – it is something quite special. It's not easy to get there from Britain on a motorcycle. It's only 1300 miles from the North Pole, and it is a 5700 mile round trip from our corner of the UK. It's not even on the mainland, it's actually on an island which you reach by going through the North Cape Tunnel. But don't let that small fact put you off either, or the fact that more than half the time you will not be able to see the 1000 foot drop into the sea as you will be in cloud. Is it worth it? Oh God yes.

I said that Nordkapp is not an easy place to visit and the first hurdle is simply getting to Scandinavia. The ferry companies conspired to make it even harder by withdrawing the last direct ferry from Newcastle to Bergen (Norway) back in 2008.



Had it still been running it would have saved us 2000 miles of hard mile-munching through northern Europe and a week in time. In 2016 the Harwich to Esbjerg (Denmark) service, which I had planned to use for this trip, was also stopped. There is now no direct sea link from Britain to Scandinavia. We had no choice, therefore, other than to ride through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany on day one and then on through Germany to catch the ferry to Kristiansand in Denmark on day two – that's nearly 900 miles in two days.



Left to right: Andy Stagg, Tim Johansen, Steve Riches, Jim Pullum, Matt Barnes and Dermot Horan.

There are only a few months in which you can make the trip to Nordkapp by car – May to September – and by bike there are even fewer. Winters are long. Going north, remember that Norway only starts just as Scotland finishes, and Nordkapp is above the Arctic circle by a very long way. In fact, it is way, way further North than the northernmost point of Iceland. If you want decent weather go to Spain – sorry, I got distracted for a moment – I meant to say that if you want a chance of reasonable Nordkapp weather you'll have to go in July or August. Even so it's a tough journey and as you'll be hugging the west coast of Norway you only have to look at a map to see that this will mean taking frequent ferries, riding through many tunnels and crossing lots of bridges. We were worried about petrol too, and two of us carried spare fuel, but it was no problem and even Andy made it with only a meagre 150 mile range. It's also worth noting that the Norwegians do like a speed limit, as do the Swedes, and their limits are fiercely enforced. As I was leading this was no problem, we stuck to them all. On one occasion a helpful lady, just outside a beautiful café, told us, after finding out where we came from, that there was a policeman with a speed camera about 300 metres up the road, and she said that if we were German she wouldn't have told us, but that was the only radar trap we



The spectacular Øresund Bridge disappears into its tunnel mid-straits.



Steep and twisty bridges

saw, although we are still waiting for brown letters in the post. Around the cities there were fixed cameras on the main roads, but far less than you see here at home, and we probably saw only about five police cars in 4000 miles.

Travelling up the west coast of Norway is spectacular; traveling through the western fjords, you're looking at a 2000 mile ride. It can be a tough ride too. Hugging the coast requires taking some ferries which sometimes run infrequently and you have to see the advantages in the

inevitable delays and waits – see them as welcome rests and time off the bike, and usually there is a place to get a coffee. But none of this matters; the whole experience is life affirming and brilliant. The scenery, the freedom, the isolation and all of this with five friends. As far as I am concerned it was the ultimate trip.

When we did eventually reach the goal of Nordkapp there was a giant iron globe sculpture at the top of the cliff to mark the spot. Well, so they tell me, we could only see five

metres in the cloud. But remember that this globe isn't the end of the trip, it's only the half way point. We had the ride home through the mountains and the forests of Finland and Lapland, the trees, rivers and lakes of Sweden, all still in 24 hour daylight. It was the genuine ride of a lifetime, and it's no wonder that whenever someone mentions Nordkapp, you're transported back there straight away.

Although Nordkapp was the geographic climax of the trip, in the end the real highlight turned out to be the Lofoten Islands. What a place! The Lofoten Islands archipelago is well inside the Arctic Circle and offers breathtaking, unforgettable scenery, impressive mountain peaks, Arctic fjords and picturesque little fishing settlements. Would I go back? Yes. Tomorrow, given a chance. It is the most beautiful place I have ever been, Scotland on steroids.



A roundabout in a tunnel!



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NOT JUST ANOTHER TT

Geoff Curtis sees a famous rear cleavage and a five litre bike, and then parks in the hotel Reception

Following my first bike trip to the Isle of Man for the TT races in 2006, I promised myself I would return to the island. August this year was when that pledge was honoured and I went to the TT Classic and Manx GP week. Although a smaller event, it is still well attended and if you are not waiting at your keyboard at midnight for the sailings to become available for booking, then you will have to settle, as did my party, for a night crossing of the Irish Sea. To ensure that we had rested before the first day's races, we allowed ourselves a lazy day recovering, and to get a feel of the place we bimbled round the course, although there was still the urge to make good progress over the mountain section.



The Flying Millyard

These meetings are not as grand as the more famous TT races earlier in the year and walking around the pits there is a noticeable absence of big budget teams, of articulated lorries in team colours and of all the PR people and hangers-on who normally attend the big events. Indeed, I spotted the great man himself, Michael Dunlop, in an ordinary white van unloading some bike stuff at his marquee, complete with baggy cut-downs and rear cleavage for all to see as he bent over. It was not a shot for my camera, but I did ask his permission and got some better pictures of him at work, but having been asked by the father of a young girl if he would pose for a picture with her, his expression made it obvious he is not happy posing and doing all the other things to please fans.

The riders, some famous names from today and yesteryear among them, are just as competitive as ever and go as fast as their old and valuable machinery will still allow. In the Classic the bikes range in age from just post-war to only twenty or so years old, and when you see, hear and smell an ex-GP 500cc two stroke having its neck wrung at 180mph less than four feet away while you sup your pint outside the Sulby Glen Hotel on the Sulby straight, it's quite a stirring experience. For the Manx GP more modern machinery is allowed and many amateurs cut their teeth over the mountain course in this race.

The crowds are only about a quarter of those at the TT itself, so finding a good viewing place is relatively easy and you don't need to be on the road at the crack of dawn to bag a good spot. Riding to a different location between races is also feasible as you won't find yourself at the back of a dense throng. There are many good spots for all sorts of reasons and this time mine were as follows:

Race day one

Ballaugh Bridge, for the jumping.
Sulby Straight for the sheer speed (plus a beer or two as above).

Race day two

Grandstand for the start and finish procedures and the pit action.
Ago's Leap for the fast downhill section.
Braddan Bridge for the left right flick.

Race day three

Creg-Ny-Baa for the heavy braking into a right-hander.
Parliament Square for heavy braking into a right-hander then flick left.

Race day four

Ginger Hall for a long sweeping left-hander (and more beer).

Motorsport can be dangerous' is the well-known warning and this was proven true during the second day of The Classic at Braddan Bridge. One rider, taking the first part, a left-hander, much the same as everyone else, failed to make it round and struck the protective cushioning. He was swiftly taken to hospital where it was ascertained he had suffered numerous broken bones but no life threatening injuries, although with its full fuel tank having caught light, nothing much was left of the bike by the time the marshals eventually extinguished it.

2018 CALENDAR



WITH COMPLIMENTS FROM THE KAMG TO ALL ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Calendar 2018

January	February	March	April	May	June
1 Mo <small>New Year's Day</small>	1 Th	1 Th	1 Su	1 Tu	1 Fr
2 Tu	2 Fr	2 Fr	2 Mo <small>Easter Monday</small>	2 We	2 Sa
3 We	3 Sa	3 Sa	3 Tu	3 Th	3 Su
4 Th	4 Su	4 Su	4 We	4 Fr	4 Mo <small>23</small>
5 Fr	5 Mo <small>6</small>	5 Mo <small>10</small>	5 Th	5 Sa	5 Tu
6 Sa	6 Tu	6 Tu	6 Fr	6 Su	6 We
7 Su	7 We	7 We	7 Sa	7 Mo <small>Early May Bank Hol.</small>	7 Th
8 Mo <small>2</small>	8 Th	8 Th	8 Su	8 Tu	8 Fr
9 Tu	9 Fr	9 Fr	9 Mo <small>15</small>	9 We	9 Sa
10 We	10 Sa	10 Sa	10 Tu	10 Th	10 Su
11 Th	11 Su	11 Su	11 We	11 Fr	11 Mo <small>24</small>
12 Fr	12 Mo <small>7</small>	12 Mo <small>11</small>	12 Th	12 Sa	12 Tu
13 Sa	13 Tu	13 Tu	13 Fr	13 Su	13 We
14 Su	14 We	14 We	14 Sa	14 Mo <small>20</small>	14 Th
15 Mo <small>3</small>	15 Th	15 Th	15 Su	15 Tu	15 Fr
16 Tu	16 Fr	16 Fr	16 Mo <small>16</small>	16 We	16 Sa
17 We	17 Sa	17 Sa	17 Tu	17 Th	17 Su
18 Th	18 Su	18 Su	18 We	18 Fr	18 Mo <small>25</small>
19 Fr	19 Mo <small>8</small>	19 Mo <small>12</small>	19 Th	19 Sa	19 Tu
20 Sa	20 Tu	20 Tu	20 Fr	20 Su	20 We
21 Su	21 We	21 We	21 Sa	21 Mo <small>21</small>	21 Th
22 Mo <small>4</small>	22 Th	22 Th	22 Su	22 Tu	22 Fr
23 Tu	23 Fr	23 Fr	23 Mo <small>17</small>	23 We	23 Sa
24 We	24 Sa	24 Sa	24 Tu	24 Th	24 Su
25 Th	25 Su	25 Su	25 We	25 Fr	25 Mo <small>26</small>
26 Fr	26 Mo <small>9</small>	26 Mo <small>13</small>	26 Th	26 Sa	26 Tu
27 Sa	27 Tu	27 Tu	27 Fr	27 Su	27 We
28 Su	28 We	28 We	28 Sa	28 Mo <small>Spring Bank Hol.</small>	28 Th
29 Mo <small>5</small>		29 Th	29 Su	29 Tu	29 Fr
30 Tu		30 Fr <small>Good Friday</small>	30 Mo <small>18</small>	30 We	30 Sa
31 We		31 Sa		31 Th	

JANUARY 2018



MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1 <small>New Year's Day</small>	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 <small>Committee Meeting</small>	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 <small>TCS Meeting</small>	19	20	21
22	23	24 <small>Group Night</small>	25	26	27 <small>Social and Training Run</small>	28
29	30	31				



FEBRUARY 2018

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

DECEMBER 2017

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

[illegible]

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

MARCH



FEBRUARY



2018

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Committee Meeting	13	14	15	16	17 IDCAM	18
19	20	21	22 Group Night + MogaZine	23	24 Observer Conference	25 Social and Training Run
26	27	28				

APRIL	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1						2 Good Friday
	2	3	4	5	6	7 Easter Sunday	8
	9	10	11	12 Good Friday (No, 4:20 PM)	13	14	15 Easter Sunday (No, 4:20 PM)
	16	17	18	19	20	21 Good Friday	22
	23	24	25	26 Good Friday	27	28	29 Good Friday (No, 4:20 PM)

FEBRUARY		MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3	4	
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
				13	14	15	16	17
18	Christmas Monday	19					20	
16	26	25	23	22	21	20	19	18
24	27	28						

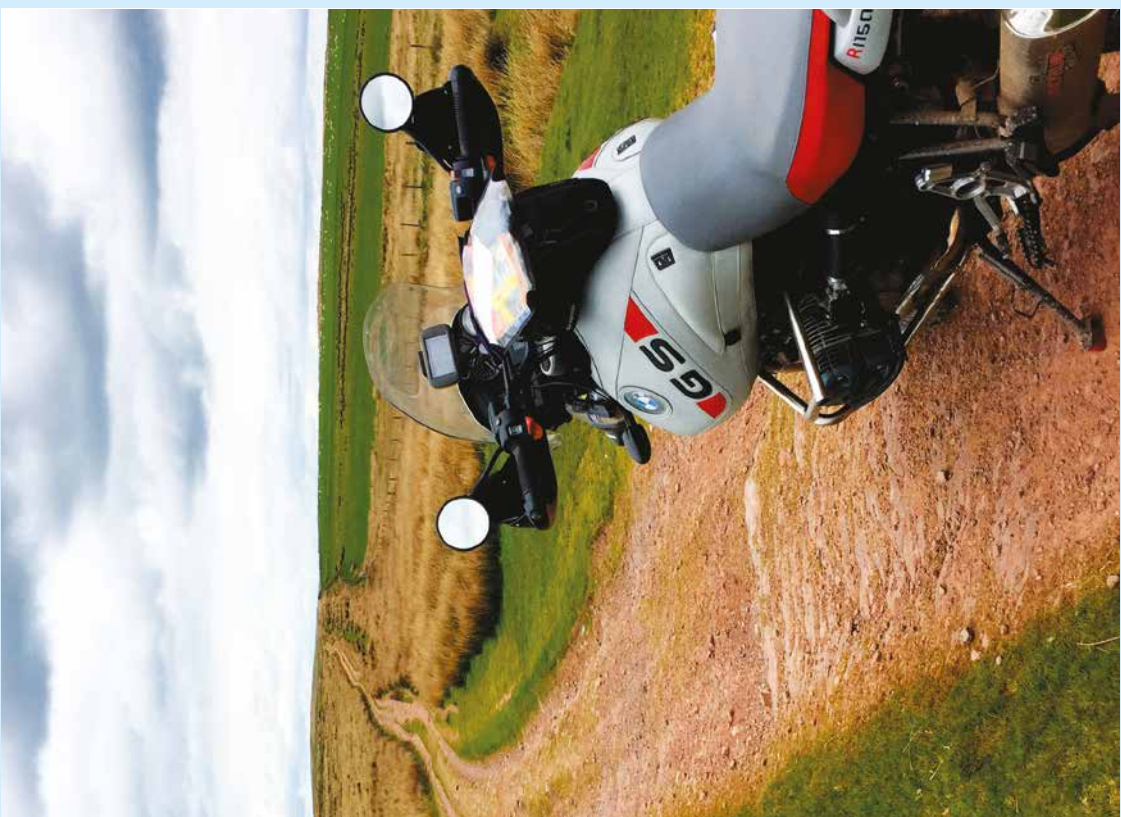


2018

MAY

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5 IDCAM	6
7 May Bank Holiday	8	9	10 Observer Meeting	11	12	13 GBH Rideout
14 Committee Meeting	15	16	17 Fish 'n' Chip Run	18	19 Day Trip to France	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 KAMG Tours to Vianden + Scotland	27
28 Spring Bank Holiday	29	30	31 Group Night + Magazine			

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

[illegible]

2018

APRIL

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
30 Easter Bank Holiday	3	4	5	6	7 Machine Control Day	1 Easter Sunday Group Run
9 Committee Meeting	10	11	12 Polk Pie Run No. 4 Starts	13	14	15 Polk Pie Run No. 4 Ends
16	17	18	19	20	21 IDCAM	22
23	24	25	26 Group Night	27	28	29 Social and Training Run

MAY

2018

MOON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Mars	8	9	10 Mercury	11	12	13 Saturn
14 Jupiter	15	16	17 Pluto & Uranus	18	19 Mars	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Saturn	27
28 Mars & Mercury	29	30	31 Mercury			

MARCH 2018									
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN			
			1	2	3	4			
5	6	7	8	9	10	COOL TEMPERATURE			
12 CLOUDY	13	14	15	16	17	18			
19 CLOUDY WINDY	20	21	22	23	24	25			
26	27	28	29 "A" "B" "C" "D"	30 COOL WINDY	31				



2018

SEPTEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2 Social and Training Run
3	4	5	6	7	8 IDCAM	9 Observer Rideout
10 Committee Meeting	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Area Team Meetings Week	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Group Night	28	29 Machine Control Day	30 Social and Training Ride

AUGUST



2018

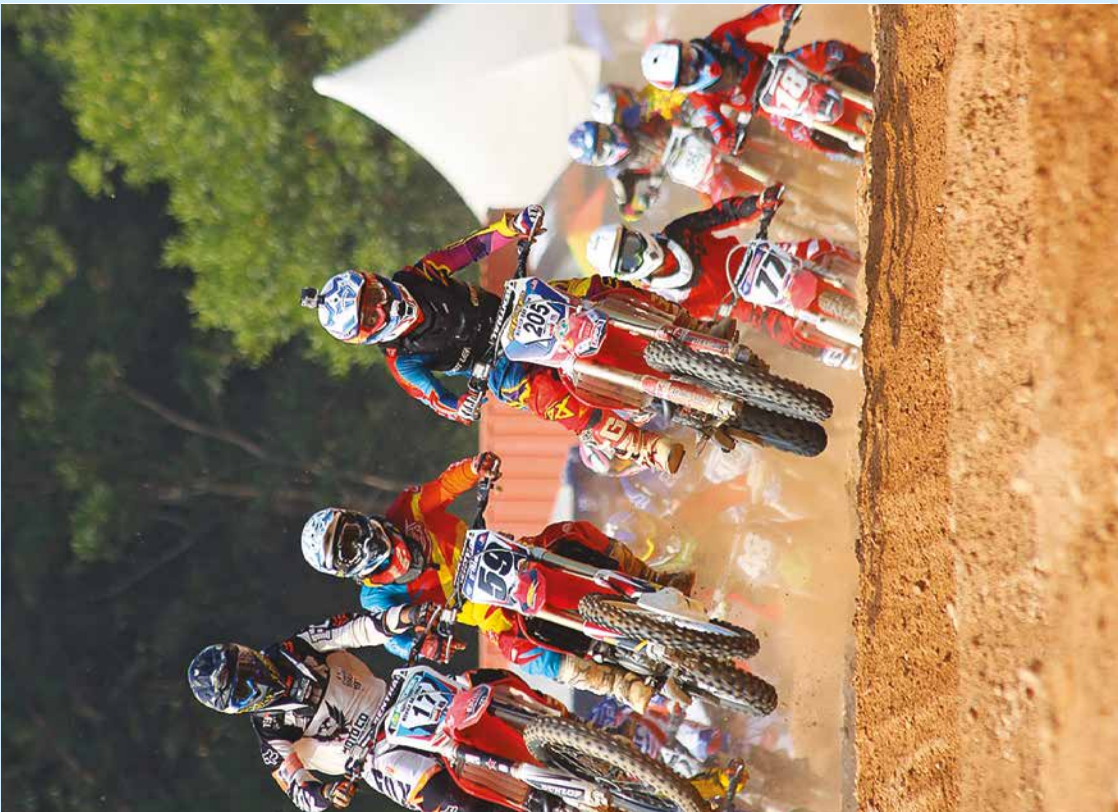
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2 Fish n' Chip Run	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 IDCAM	12
13 Committee Meeting	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Summer Bank Holiday	28	29	30 Group Night + Magazine	31		

JULY 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
31					1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SEPTEMBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AUGUST 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		





8102

NOVEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 IDCAM	11 Ride to Capel Le Fern Bottle of Britain Memorial
12 Committee Meeting	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Group Night + Magazine	30		



OCTOBER



2018

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4 TSC Meeting	5	6 IDCAM	7
8 Committee Meeting	9	10	11 Observer Meeting	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Group Night	26	27	28 Training and Social Ride
29	30	31				

SEPTEMBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

NOVEMBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

OCTOBER 2018						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

JANUARY						
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



July	August	September	October	November	December
1 Su	1 We	1 Sa	1 Mo ⁴⁰	1 Th	1 Sa
2 Mo ²⁷	2 Th	2 Su	2 Tu	2 Fr	2 Su
3 Tu	3 Fr	3 Mo ³⁶	3 We	3 Sa	3 Mo ⁴⁹
4 We	4 Sa	4 Tu	4 Th	4 Su	4 Tu
5 Th	5 Su	5 We	5 Fr	5 Mo ⁴⁵	5 We
6 Fr	6 Mo ³²	6 Th	6 Sa	6 Tu	6 Th
7 Sa	7 Tu	7 Fr	7 Su	7 We	7 Fr
8 Su	8 We	8 Sa	8 Mo ⁴¹	8 Th	8 Sa
9 Mo ²⁸	9 Th	9 Su	9 Tu	9 Fr	9 Su
10 Tu	10 Fr	10 Mo ³⁷	10 We	10 Sa	10 Mo ⁵⁰
11 We	11 Sa	11 Tu	11 Th	11 Su	11 Tu
12 Th	12 Su	12 We	12 Fr	12 Mo ⁴⁶	12 We
13 Fr	13 Mo ³³	13 Th	13 Sa	13 Tu	13 Th
14 Sa	14 Tu	14 Fr	14 Su	14 We	14 Fr
15 Su	15 We	15 Sa	15 Mo ⁴²	15 Th	15 Sa
16 Mo ²⁹	16 Th	16 Su	16 Tu	16 Fr	16 Su
17 Tu	17 Fr	17 Mo ³⁸	17 We	17 Sa	17 Mo ⁵¹
18 We	18 Sa	18 Tu	18 Th	18 Su	18 Tu
19 Th	19 Su	19 We	19 Fr	19 Mo ⁴⁷	19 We
20 Fr	20 Mo ³⁴	20 Th	20 Sa	20 Tu	20 Th
21 Sa	21 Tu	21 Fr	21 Su	21 We	21 Fr
22 Su	22 We	22 Sa	22 Mo ⁴³	22 Th	22 Sa
23 Mo ³⁰	23 Th	23 Su	23 Tu	23 Fr	23 Su
24 Tu	24 Fr	24 Mo ³⁹	24 We	24 Sa	24 Mo ⁵²
25 We	25 Sa	25 Tu	25 Th	25 Su	25 Tu ^{Christmas Day}
26 Th	26 Su	26 We	26 Fr	26 Mo ⁴⁸	26 We ^{Boxing Day}
27 Fr	27 Mo ^{August Bank Hol.}	27 Th	27 Sa	27 Tu	27 Th
28 Sa	28 Tu	28 Fr	28 Su	28 We	28 Fr
29 Su	29 We	29 Sa	29 Mo ⁴⁴	29 Th	29 Sa
30 Mo ³¹	30 Th	30 Su	30 Tu	30 Fr	30 Su
31 Tu	31 Fr		31 We		31 Mo ¹

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
31 New Years Eve					1	2 Social and Training Ride
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Committee Xmas Dinner	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27 Holiday Group Run	28	29	30

DECEMBER

2018





Atlanta Police Harleys

JANUARY



French Alps taken by Nick Farley

FEBRUARY



William Dunlop on the Gilera four at Ballaugh Bridge 2017, taken by Geoff Curtis

MARCH



Spring is upon us

APRIL



Taffy Dakar 2017 taken by Les Smith

MAY



WW II 350cc military Matchless G3L. There were over 80,000 of them

JUNE



Jordi Torres, World Superbike, Losail, Qatar, BMW S1000RR

JULY



Vincent 1000cc V twin engine

AUGUST



Moto cross mayhem

SEPTEMBER



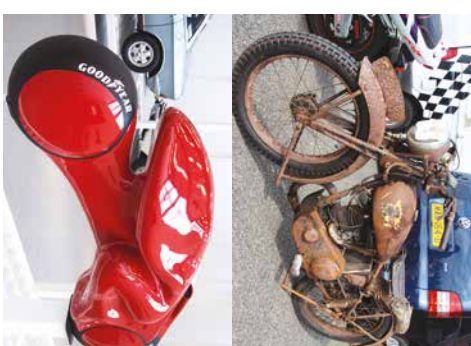
Thruxton Bonneville

OCTOBER



Time for an oil change?

NOVEMBER



Very old Excelsior with brand new tyres (!) seen at Jurby airfield in Classic TT week 2017, taken by Geoff Curtis and the Goodyear 'frog' aerodynamic motorcycle concept

DECEMBER

corners by overtaking most of the other bikes, all bigger and more powerful, which were on track with him.

There are also displays of old bikes and cars, and trade stands, at Jurby, plus some real peculiarities such as a steam powered (yes, steam, really) drag bike built by a university specifically to break the existing land speed record in this category. Work had reached the early testing stage by the time we saw it. The Flying Millyard was another interesting spectacle: this is a recently hand built retro style bike using



Tyre punishment upon landing

There are events other than races which use the circuit and this year's special parade lap commemorated the 60th anniversary of Bob McIntyre making the first 100mph lap of the TT course. A specially built true replica of the bike which achieved this, a Gilera 500cc four cylinder four stroke, was proudly ridden by Michael Dunlop and from a standing start he achieved a lap speed of around 97mph, on a parade lap! (See MARCH picture in the calendar.)

If the schedule is uninterrupted by weather, then on the days between racing there is the opportunity to tour the natural delights of the island such as the Calf of Man, the small island bird sanctuary off the southern end of the main island. Another scenic delight is the journey by steam train on the narrow gauge railway from Ramsey to Port Erin.

There are also other motorcycling related activities such as the Jurby Festival during which local club racers put whatever machines they own, ancient and modern, through their paces on an ex-airfield circuit. There was a BSA Bantam in the pits which stirred memories for me as it was the first bike I had. This one though was being raced; who'd have thought it? I missed its track appearances myself but while I studied the scuffing on its rear tyre, another admirer described the rider as a venerable gentleman, well used to track riding, who demonstrated how to carry speed through



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My first Bantam didn't look like this



BSA Bantam's rear tyre post race

parts from many others and with a huge five litre V twin engine formed by using two cylinders taken from a nine cylinder Pratt and Whitney Wasp aero engine. Despite its monster five litres this developed only 80bhp but massive torque at 500rpm.

For those who like to make the most of their visit to the Isle of Man, there is just one little disappointment compared to the main TT. There is no Mad Sunday and no one-way working over the mountain section at the end of race days. So no racing lines and despite there being no official speed limit, you have to allow for oncoming traffic and for catching slower vehicles. There are, however, places where sight lines are very good and a certain amount of off-siding is perfectly safe. I can add that in places I was still able to

make better progress on my Blackbird than when on my 600 Bandit the previous visit.

When it was all over we took a night ferry back to the mainland and arrived at the Stonedale Park Travelodge in Liverpool at around 3:15 in the morning, where the receptionist advised us that we needed to be careful to secure our bikes to ensure their presence later in the day. Fortunately they have a special arrangement at this particular hotel and we were invited to ride right inside and park in front of her desk. I couldn't help but think of the old westerns where the cowboy rides his steed all the way into the wild west saloon.

All in all another wonderful biking holiday with good company and a further big tick on my bucket list.

MICHELIN ANEKEE WILD TYRES

Les Smith tells us what tyres to use when we all follow him to the Taffy Dakar next year.

I set off to do the Taffy Dakar in Wales (*See the August issue of Riders. Ed.*) with a brand-new set of Michelin Anekee Wilds fitted to Helga, my BMW R1150 GSA, and she did look smart in her new boots I must say. Having ridden on various off-road biased adventure-bike tyres over the years I sort of know what I'm looking for in terms of traction and handling both on and off-road, but I do appreciate that other riders might have different likes and dislikes. What follows is my view.

Over the last ten years I've fitted off-road tyres to a number of different adventure-bikes; bikes like my old KTM 990 Adventure and my KTM 1199 Adventure R, for example, and more recently a Triumph Tiger XCX, but I've ridden a few other bikes too. I'll steer clear of the techno stuff because I'm just interested in how the tyres ride and work for the rider and how these Michelin Anekees suited my bike. I was really pleased to get hold of them and excited to see how they would fare on a bike of the size and weight of my

R1150 GSA. These particular tyres were kindly organised for me by *Southeast Biker* magazine. They were sent direct from Michelin and delivered by a very nice man who turned up at my place in Kent at 7.30 one morning having run down from Stoke. Thank you, Michelin man. And a quick call to Watling Tyres at Swanley was all it took to get them fitted. When it comes to bikes, they seem know their stuff.



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So, Michelin Anekee Wilds, are they any good? Before I go into how I got on with them let's first look at what I was asking them to do. I wanted these dual sport/adventure tyres to take me all the way to Wales and back – a 600 mile round trip on road and motorway – and to perform well off-road for another 200 miles or so when I was in Wales, on a bike weighing some 270kgs plus. There has to be a bit of give somewhere I thought, but I'll say now at the outset that these tyres are pretty good. They look the "dogs" for a start. They have an aggressive tread pattern with a chunky profile and a lot of off-road promise and feel ... and feel is certainly the right word: as soon as I left the fitters I knew they were off-road tyres, you can tell instantly. There was that familiar squish and roll from the soft block tread pattern as the bike turns and stops. This can be unnerving if you don't ride on off-road tyres a lot, but the Anekees are well made and give a good sense of what's happening under the bike. This kind of slow squirmy feel might not be everyone's cuppa but it's the trade-off between good off-road and good on-road grip, so I was hopeful about the off-road performance right from the start.

The ride to Wales went OK with no dramas and the tyres were fine on the motorways and on the 'A' roads, although I did notice a slight vagueness at high speed when changing lanes on the motorway, but at that stage the tyres were new and just settling in. As off-road tyres go, these Wilds gave a really good first impression. In Wales on the first off-road trails, the feel from the tyres was "tidy", as the locals would say, even on a bike the size and weight of my old 1150 GSA, and I had confidence in them immediately. Predictable slide and good rider feel and feedback allowed for steady progress, the only fault being with the rider on occasions. The day's trails varied from hard-packed dry earth to sloppy mud with everything else in between, so it was a good test. Were there any downsides? Well like I said, some trade-off is inevitable on a bike of this size and the good level of off-road grip provided means there are compromises elsewhere. The Anekee Wilds are good off-road because they are quite soft and have proper off-road block spacing. They clear the mud out well and give decent grip on wet rocky climbs too, but this good off-road grip gives rise to the squish thing on tarmac. This is a phenomenon which can, as stated earlier, feel weird and it takes some time to gain confidence in a dirt tyre before you can push it on the road.

One thing I noticed early on was the wear rate on the rear tyre and I think that this could be a problem for people who cover big mileages and need longevity and an affordable tyre. Modern motorcycle tyres are not cheap so it's a factor to consider. After the trip to Wales and back – 789 miles in total, including about 200 off-road miles – there was noticeable wear on the rear tyre and I began to hear an increase in road noise too. When new, the profile was quite rounded



but after just a thousand miles the rear tyre was showing signs of squaring while the front still looked almost new, but remember it's a heavy bike, and with rider and luggage at motorway speeds the back tyre is going to get knocked out pretty quickly. I'm afraid you can't have everything.

A motorcycle communicates the road surface conditions to the rider through its tyres and it was quite noticeable early on that these tyres do not like certain things: white lines and botched repair banding, for example. White line and repair-band wobble is noticeable at all road speeds and again is probably caused by the soft tyre block just settling down over the contours of the road but it is definitely noticeable. I tried different tyre pressures during the weekend but it made no difference. I lowered the pressures to 30 front and 34 rear for the off-road stuff and put them back to 36/42 for the ride home. Worthy of note, however, is the relatively low speed-rating of 104 mph of these tyres. So something like a high-speed motorway run (that's real-world riding), is going to put pressure on the tyre's blocks. Taking this compromise into account as I used the tyres, I didn't see it as an issue, but if you want a 5000 to 6000 mile rear touring tyre for a long, mainly tarmac trip, perhaps including Autobahns, I would look to other rubber. These Michelin Anekee Wild tyres are designed for a purpose and do the off-road adventure thing very well. I'm planning on doing the Hard Alpe Tour in Italy in September (*The Hard Alpe Tour took place after this piece was written. Ed*) so, riding the 800 miles down to Italy, doing the off-road 500 km gps event there, and then the 800 miles back via the French Alps will, if I use Anekee Wilds, see the rear hoop pretty much finished by the time I get home, I think.

For me, the Michelin Anekee Wilds are proper adventure-bike tyres for big bikes on the dirt, even if they are a little expensive when taking into account how long they last. Just don't expect to tear around on the tarmac and get 5000 miles out of a rear, though. I like the tyres for their good off-road ability and the grip they offered and I don't mind them on the road either, and they certainly look the part. Providing you ride appreciating the flex in the tyre, and ride accordingly, they are a good adventure-bike off-road biased tyre. I just won't be doing a Brands Hatch track day with them. As with many things, you pays ya money and takes ya choice.

CARPE TDM says Dave Willson

(Is this Latin for Seize the Yamaha?)

In August he told you to buy a Bonneville Thruxton but he's changed his mind

Some of you may remember that I waxed lyrical (*Very lyrical as I recall. Ed.*) in the last issue of this rag about my Triumph Thruxton, and I stand by everything I said about it, but three weeks after writing the article I part exchanged it for a Yamaha TDM 900. At this point, younger readers are probably thinking "a Yamaha TD what um?" and those more mature readers are probably thinking "Why?" and "Really?" or something similar, but more of that later. Every day, as they say, is a school day, so here comes the history lesson, and it pains me to do it, but I'm going to have to talk about the bloody BMW GS. Grrrrrrrr. You see, back in 1980 BMW was on its uppers, it was all going a bit pear shaped, a bit tits up, a bit Pete Tong, in fact its bike sales were so poor that it was thinking of giving up making bikes altogether. Hard to believe looking back now, but in a last stand with their wagons circled and the Apache Indians surrounding them, some bright spark came up with the idea of a

"do anything bike", a bike you could commute on, tour on, take luggage and a pillion on, go off-roading on, and do a track day on. I don't think track days had been invented in 1980 but you get the idea, and the BMW R80 GS was born. It was the bike that saved BMW.

Yet despite the fact that they sold like hot cakes none of the other bike makers thought that the world was ready for 'adventure-bikes' – a term which in any case wasn't coined until some 30 years later. Then, in 1991, Yamaha thought they'd have a piece of the adventure-bike pie and introduced the TDM 850. Yamaha settled on a parallel twin as they had a good pedigree with this configuration in the past – think RD two strokes and XS four strokes – and to make the engine a bit more interesting they gave it a 270° crank. (Most parallel twins have a 360° crank.) This 270° configuration makes it behave and sound like a 90° V twin. The styling was not dissimilar to a GS, although at the time it was described as space age. It was upright, comfy, with loads of pillion room and luggage. It was light, it had fat





The original adventure-bike:
the 1980 R80GS

tyres, it could do anything, and if GSs were selling like hot cakes TDMs sold like hot cakes in Hotcakesville on national hot cake day. It became the best-selling bike worldwide for several years. It was Australia's and Greece's best-selling bike for about a decade, and in good old Blighty they sold about.....well, er, I think it was three, or maybe four. You see, in sports-bike-obsessed England we just didn't get the concept of a "do anything" bike and it bombed. However, Yamaha weren't bothered about the crazy English with their weather and bowler hats and for a decade they carried on churning out TDMs. Like most bikes when you take the rose tinted specs off, the 850 wasn't perfect: critics said it needed a bit more grunt, so it became a 900 and got fuel injection; they said the steel frame flexed too much, so it got an aluminium frame similar to an R1 which was claimed to be 40% stiffer; it was said that the non-adjustable suspension (only preload on the rear) was too soft and Yamaha gave it fully adjustable suspension with adjustable preload, compression and rebound damping front and rear. And although no one criticised the brakes they uprated them anyway with what we all recognise as the 'blue spot' brakes straight off of an R1. And it carried on selling for another eleven years until 2012 when the last one finally rolled off of the production line.

So, having lived with mine now for a few months let's explore why they didn't sell here, because I can't fathom it. Let's look at its good points. First off, it weighs 190kgs. I'll say that again so it's got time to sink in: it weighs 190kgs. That is the same weight as the latest R6. That's right, it's as light as a top of the range middle-weight sports bike. It's actually five kilos lighter than that fat old lard arse, the Honda Fireblade, and I mean the latest version not the original. That makes it the lightest adventure bike out there, and when you compare it to that leviathan of a GS at 240kgs, well, I'll say no more. Combine that with the fully adjustable suspension, and sensible 18" front wheel and it's got great handling. If you want to go down a fire track or green lane, soften up the long travel suspension and you're laughing.

There's plenty of room for a pillion and if you put your mind to it you can load it up with a large amount of luggage too. It even comes with a small rack and fold-out bungee hooks. It has a nice tall, upright riding position and the very slim front end means you can carve through London traffic like nobody's business. It is tall though; if you're under 5'10" then you're going to be doing your best Margot Fonteyn every time you come to a halt, which you'll do surprisingly well thanks to those R1 stoppers. To be honest I think the brakes are a bit too much for the forks. I'm sure that if you squeeze the brake lever hard enough you could bend the forks, either that or make the Earth rotate faster. It has a reasonable fairing to keep the nasty stuff off, and a fairly modern digital dash, while the 20 litre tank means you can do 200 miles between toilet breaks, a fag, and a fill up. The performance figures for different makes of adventure-bikes are all very similar: they have various numbers of ponies under the bonnet, along with some torques, but when you take into account the weight and aerodynamics of each bike they all perform in a very similar way. Line them up at Santa Pod Raceway and they'll all cross the line more or less together. You see they'll all do a standing quarter of a mile in about 12secs and get a bit wheezy at about 135mph. That Yamaha parallel twin engine, well, it doesn't really excite. The in-line fours are super revving, like an

angry teenager; the singles are big and thumpy like Giant Haystacks; the V twins are super cool, like Steve McQueen, and the triples have a style and character all their own, a bit like a cross between a chainsaw and Joanna Lumley. But the parallel twin, well, like I said, it performs as well as all the others but it's not exciting. It's not boring; it just is. It's a good solid reliable engine. The following is a quote from a Yamaha mechanic: "I've never seen inside one of those engines because they never go wrong. All I ever do is check the valve clearances, and even they rarely need adjusting."

So is there anything I don't like about the TDM? Well yes obviously there is, but they're quite minor. I don't like the chrome handlebars, they look like something from the seventies. I'm sure that when they stopped production of the XS1100 they found a box of leftover bars which they were about to chuck out and someone said "Don't throw those away they may come in handy one day." A matt black pair would look better and would match the frame. Also, the wiring loom, as it threads its way up to the front brake light switch, looks like an afterthought, and I don't like the pimples on the seat cover. I realise that as the song says they're there to stop you from slip sliding away, but they're hard to clean and they look cheap. And first and second gear are a bit snatchy at low revs too. This is caused by a

flap that moves across the air box to restrict the airflow as the revs decrease, and is all done in the name of reducing the induction roar – bloody eurocrats. But these things are an easy fix. Renthal bars would solve the first problem. I can tidy up the loom with a bit of insulation tape, and there are loads of after-market seat covers on eBay. As for the snatchy gears well you just need to disable the flap on the air box. An easy fix which you can do mechanically or electronically through the ECU. Takes about 10 minutes. If you disregard the GS, not an easy thing to do, I admit, then the TDM really was the first, and in my opinion, the best 'do anything' bike. If you fancy an adventure bike but are a bit cash strapped, then take a butchers at the TDM.

The trick is to find a late model, low mileage job, which you can pick up for under £4000. Rather like Marie Antoinette, mine was a Frenchman's plaything and only has 8000kms on the clock (by the way does anyone know how to change the speedo to mph?) I also think I've solved the mystery of why it didn't sell in the UK, and I think it comes down to our language. You see I think people are reading TDM as TeDiuM, which it certainly isn't. If only Yamaha had saved the Thundercat name for it, or maybe called it the Stormtrooper, or The Yamaha Earth Destroyer, then perhaps we would have been talking hot cakes.



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BIKER BEN

Ben lives in one of Optima Care's homes on the Kent Coast. His brother has a bike and Ben has bike models and pictures adorning his room, and he has long harboured a dream to ride on a motorbike himself. One day, during a routine visit which I made to the home as the Operational Director of Optima Care, Ben told me of his great wish to ride a motorbike. So, working with the Home Manager, I decided to try to make this happen.

My first plan was to take Ben as a pillion on my own bike, but this was ruled out once an assessment of his physical health was carried out. However, I started to make enquires about the possibility of his being taken for a ride in a motorcycle sidecar outfit. These enquires, through KAMG, led to a reply from Derek Johnson. Derek is a member of the BMW Airhead Fellowship, a charitable organisation for enthusiasts of air cooled BMWs, and he knew of a retired engineer and fellow Airhead, Ken Beeney, who owned a BMW 60/7 with a beautiful 1960 Steib Sports sidecar attached. Ken, was very happy to help make Ben's dream come true and said that he would ride up from Eastbourne, meeting up with Derek and Maggie Johnson en route, and a date was set for August 22nd.

A comprehensive risk assessment and plan was completed before the day of the ride and this was signed off by Ben, by the Home manager and Ben's care manager, by Ben's family and by the company's senior management. A contingency plan was also completed in case of bad weather, or ill health.



With paperwork completed, the day of the ride finally arrived. Ben had practiced getting into the motorcycle protective clothing and he was ready and waiting with his new crash helmet. Matt met with Ken and Derek, as three bikes – the BMW R60/7 with Steib, a BMW K1200 GTSE and a Triumph Sprint RS – would ride in a group followed by an Optima escort vehicle with a wheelchair. A final dynamic risk assessment was undertaken and then staff supported Ben as he boarded the sidecar using a hoist.

The first half of the ride took the riders in a loop back to the Home. This was to check Ben's stamina for the event. It was a beautiful sunny day and the group rode along attracting much attention from holidaymakers on the seafront – the star attraction being Ben in the sidecar, of course. The ride then

went into the Kent countryside, before heading back to base. After a pit stop, the second leg of the journey ended up at a café near Reculver Castle where we stopped for a drink before once more returning home. It was a great three hours of riding and we all enjoyed ourselves, particularly, and most importantly, Ben. The icing on the cake was a mug and high-viz jacket with the BMW Airheads' emblem given as a memento of the day to a rather tired but elated sidecar passenger.

I want to thank Derek and Ken, for their willingness to help make this dream come true for Ben. Also thanks to the professionals and the family of Ben for being willing to support this ride. It was a day he and we shall all remember for a long time.

Matt Jones



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'RIDERS WRITES'

Dear Riders

KAMG to SERV

SERV (Service by Emergency Response Volunteers) is a vital service which assists the NHS in the transport of blood products, samples, equipment, medicines and all sorts of other essential items to and from the hospitals and hospices of Kent, to patient addresses and, importantly, to the Kent Air Ambulance. SERV operates 365 nights a year and all day at weekends and on bank holidays when the NHS's own vehicles don't operate, and this valuable help is provided entirely by a team of volunteer motorcyclists and car drivers. The unpaid heroes who deliver this service use their own bikes and cars and pay for all their fuel too. SERV is completely self-funding and therefore has to raise all the money to keep this vital service going.

KAMG were extremely pleased, therefore, to be able to donate a cheque for £206.45 which was raised by the attendees of the KAMG Winter Chiller party last December and we were invited along to SERV's Kent HQ, The Old Police Post, M2 Medway Services Farthing Corner, Rainham ME8 8PG to present the cheque. SERV would like to pass on their extreme thanks to all the KAMG for their support. <https://www.facebook.com/SERVKent/>

Paul Aspinall

Dear Riders

I would like to thank Colin Underwood and Steve Riches for organising the Peterborough Training Run that took place on the 9th and 10th of September this year. It really was an informative and beneficial experience for someone like me who has not had any observed rides for the last 13 years.

The weekend's riding consists of four rides a day, two of which are observed rides, each with different observers, and the other two you ride as third man with the same observers, and where you may be able to relax a little and enjoy the good and diverse roads that have been thoughtfully chosen to expand your riding skills. There are tea and lunch stops to debrief and have a rest between the four rides each day, and when you can also meet and chat with the other participants. An evening meal on Saturday allows everyone to discuss their particular rides and the parenthood of their observer.

I must stress that that you are encouraged to ride to your own capabilities and to enjoy the roads and riding experience, which I certainly did. All the observers give their time and advice freely but I would especially like to thank Dave Murphy as he scored me best.

Stuart Lee

Dear Riders

I thought I'd come out and see what the Firebike Ride Skills Day in August was all about. Although I haven't ridden a bike since 2013 I still have the bike bug.

Initially, I went to the Biker Down first aid course and learned something about helmet removal and CPR although I hope I'm never in a situation to need the skills. At the slow riding skills section it was good to see that most participants can control their bikes at slow speeds, doing the figure of eight and slalom through cones very well, and having ABS on many of today's bikes does make it easier to stop safely and quickly, judging by my own experiences of using ABS on my Honda CBF1000 at times.

The highlight of the day for me was to meet Kevin Williams of Survival Skills again, ten years after doing a two day rider skills training course with him. Back then it didn't

involve a nerve racking test at the end, but there was the odd stop for a discussion and question session and a longer discussion of the day's ride at the end and after the course, I remember. And I got a very comprehensive and detailed breakdown report of my riding over the two days of the course, which I still have.

All credit must go to the Firebike team who organised the day and to Colin and Tina Underwood for their hard work in managing the day, and to the KAMG observers who volunteered to conduct the observed rides. I thoroughly enjoyed myself and wished I could have driven my wife's car round the track! I might do a track day for cars one day unless she hides the car keys?

Robin Hancock

Dear Riders

I wanted to write and express my thanks to Colin Underwood, Steve Riches and all the observers who made the Peterborough training weekend such an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. The detail in the planning was excellent with information packs containing meeting points, contacts and phone numbers, assessment score cards and all the information one required for the journey ahead. The initial explanation pre-ride at Thurrock answered any questions or doubts, and it was made clear that it was intended to be a safe and enjoyable time whilst brushing up our riding skills as we were each being observed by four different observers over the two days.

The routes were challenging, with a variety of roads and scenery, the changeover stops provided a good quality of food and drink and sufficient time was allowed to have a thorough debrief of your ride, and to share the stories that unfolded during the ride, such as satnav malfunctions, missed turnings, road closures, unintentional off-road experiences, torrential rain, and visiting places that were not even on the agenda, to name just a few.

I found that the format of the weekend allowed good interaction and the opportunity to get to know some of the established members of the club and also other club members with mixed ability and age who were enjoying the experience for the first time as I was. As time went by the banter and talking points developed and amusing stories unfolded adding to the enjoyment. I also learned of other trips that are run each year which I hope to join in the future.

We were all glad to see the Premier Inn on Saturday afternoon, having ridden the last session in very wet conditions, and I'm sure we were all looking forward to a hot bath, a drink and good food. As with most trips sometimes little things can go wrong, but Tina and Colin ensured with skilful negotiation (and maybe Colin getting annoyed – probably not a pretty sight) that we were all left satisfied with a full refund and a complimentary breakfast after a mishap with the food and timings at the hotel.

Having feedback from four different observers was beneficial, each with a different style but consistent in observation, encouragement and honesty about what they had seen of the rider being observed. Arriving back at Thurrock for our final observer debrief after another day of good roads and mainly dry weather some of the group were tired, but all were positive about the weekend and what we had experienced and learned.

This weekend also made me further appreciate the time, effort, commitment and enthusiasm from all the volunteers, whatever level within the club, who made this trip possible and I can only say to them all – A BIG THANK YOU- well done!

Sign up now for the next one, I am going to - if they will have me again.

David Howard

www.bikenormandy.com

Photo from Italian Lakes & Swiss Alps Tour

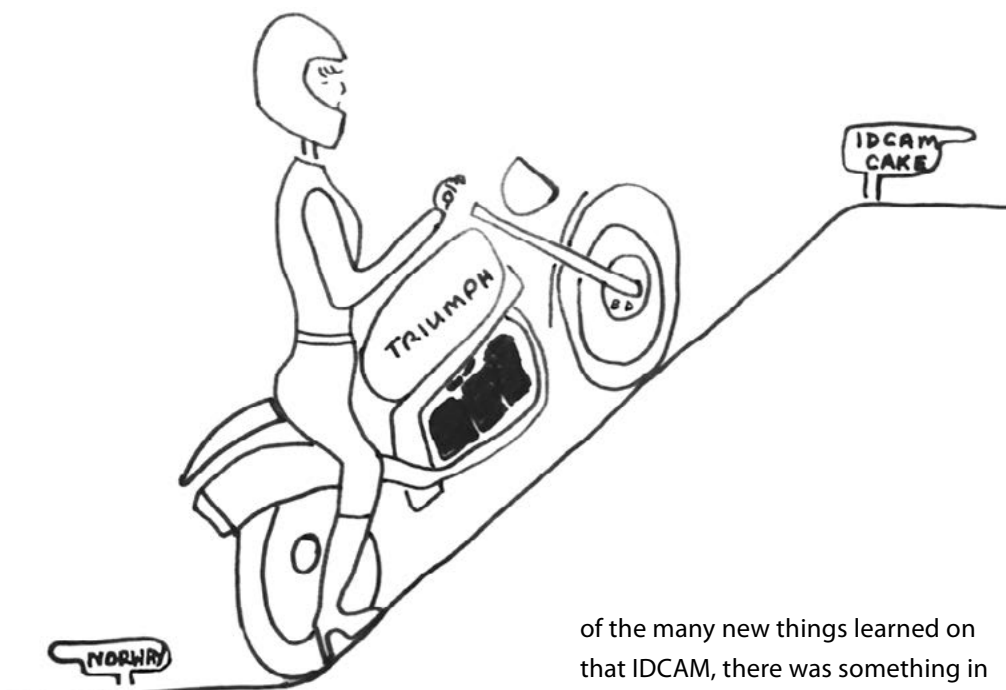


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JOINING THE KAMG

Nicola Thorpe learns to park uphill and blag cake



My journey with the club started a few months ago in August when I joined IAM RoadSmart and signed up for the Advanced Rider Course. When I got my group allocation from the IAM, it was to the Kent Advanced Motorcyclist Group. I wasn't sure exactly what to expect, but it didn't take too long to find out. My first experience of the club came via the IDCAM at the end of August. I arrived at the Inn on the Lake to be greeted by a biker dressed predominantly in orange with some handy parking advice: "Point it uphill," he said. And it didn't take long to hear that he had recently been on a holiday. (*To Norway possibly? Ed.*)

Once I had been introduced to the rest of the group, Ian Burchell took charge of hosting the session and

of the many new things learned on that IDCAM, there was something in particular that Ian said that resonated with me: he said that the club is what you make of it, you can get involved in as few or as many of the club events as you like, but you'd be welcomed at each of them. And from what I can tell, that is perfectly true. Having participated in a Machine Control Day, club nights, a group run, and of course several observed rides, I've met a number of the club's members and been made to feel immediately welcome and a part of the group (although, admittedly, in one instance a case of mistaken identity could have played a part!). I've also been treated to a tale of the club's history, heard first hand from our founder and president himself, Mr Terry Friday, and so it followed that at some point in September, after being reassured that the invitation extended to one and all, I decided to take part in Pork Pie Three.

Suffice to say that it was with some trepidation that I set out for Dartford on a blustery, rainy Saturday for my first ever 'tour'. Following an eye-opening morning of what advanced riding was really about, the sun shone, roads cleared and an outstanding weekend ensued. At no point did I feel like an outsider despite being the newbie in the group, but instead I was made a part of the team and everyone was always ready to offer a kind word or some form of advice or, failing that, cake. I took a huge amount away from the three days, learning from the experience of those around me, and coupled with it I had a great time too. Thanks to Steve, to Colin and all of the pork-pie-ers for making my first run out a memorable one! It should come as no surprise that I've already booked in for Pork Pie Four.

I have owned my Street Triple for just over a year. When I joined the club my odometer read just shy of 2,500 miles – and this represented the total sum of my motorcycling experience. Three months after joining, I'm coming up to 4,500 miles. The club has had a profound impact on my riding (credit where it's due, Ian Walker) and consequently on the enjoyment I get from it, and with such friendly people to share it with there has been little keeping me off the bike. Making the decision to join the club has, so far, proved to be up there as one of my better ones and I look forward to future adventures with the KAMG.

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 associates@kamg.org.uk. Observers should confirm their willingness to help by registering on Tracker and they will be kept informed about the needs for any particular session.

MACHINE CONTROL DAY

Our machine control days are organised by Jim Pullum. If you have not yet signed up then do it now – simply log on to Tracker and register your participation.

mcd@kamg.org.uk

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

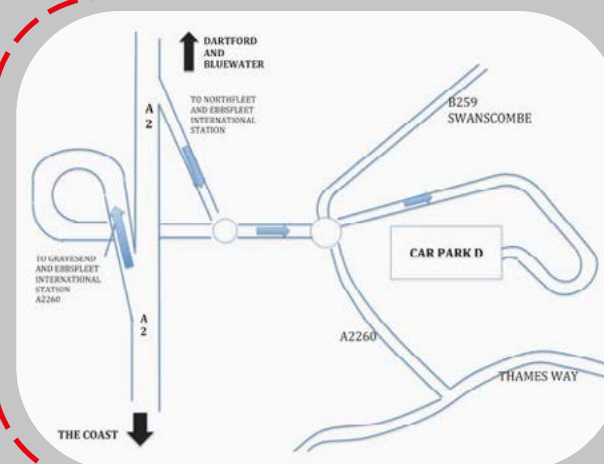
Arrival time: 08:45 for 09:00 start
Finish Time: approx 13:00 Hrs

Saturday April 7th 2018

Saturday June 23rd 2018

Saturday July 21st 2018

Saturday September 29th 2018



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.**

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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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