

S U M M E R 2 0 1 8

MAKING PROGRESS

PLYMOUTH ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS NEWSLETTER



Official Provider

In this Issue

Firstly a quick hello from me, as the new Newsletter editor.

My hope in taking on this task is to connect people with the PAM Group and inspire or encourage people to take part and enjoy the Club events and Skills days.

The aim is to keep everyone informed of what has and will be happening each previous and next quarter. (March, June, September and Christmas).

I will happily welcome any contributions and content from any Group Member!

- ✚ Treasurer's Update
- ✚ Welcome and Congratulations
- ✚ Remember the Snow?
- ✚ Website Make-over
- ✚ Your committee members
- ✚ Continuous Riding Development
- ✚ Refresher Rides
- ✚ IAM Thruxton Fun
- ✚ Philip Head goes i2i
- ✚ GS Trophy Challenge
- ✚ Slow Riding Skills
- ✚ Appeal, Thanks and Close



Treasurer's Update



I've been asked to write a regular report for the Pam newsletter!
So what do I do?

Well, I have 2 roles really.

I started as treasurer towards the end of 2014, a role in which I am responsible for the health of the club finances. This means that I run the PAM bank account, receiving statements monthly, checking payments are correct, and I pay the club bills.

I update the committee monthly with the club bank balance, which was £8052.53p on 5th July 2018.

I produce a balance sheet, which is audited at the end of the financial year on the last day of February. I also submit a gift aid claim at the end of the year, which is a valuable source of income for our club.

As treasurer, it quickly became obvious, that there needed to be close links with the membership secretary, so that the club knew who had paid their membership fees, and who needed reminding. There was a vacancy in this role at that time, so I took that over as well! This means that when I receive the PAM bank statement, I record who has paid, and send reminders to those who have forgotten. I used to send 2 reminders by letter, but since the introduction of General data protection regulations (GDPR), we as the committee decided that email reminders were all that is required, so no more letters by post. Again since GDPR, after members have paid, I send out a '**Group required contract statement**', which means every year, after you have paid your membership, you are given the option to opt out of certain legitimate things the group use your data for. If you would like one of these forms before your renewal is paid, just contact me and I will send you one.

After membership reminders are sent, and 1 month has passed, I remove non-paying members from the club records and also from our website.

On the last check on 5th July 2018, we had 112 members, of whom 23 are associates, and 2 are fellowship members and I have just sent out 2 reminders.

I love getting out as often as I can, on my Yamaha Diversion 900, with my favourite roads being those almost secret (well from the tourists anyway) B roads. On a map they look like narrow country lanes, but when ridden are glorious wide roads, with sweeping bends, beautiful views and little or no traffic. Biking heaven. My membership of PAM has shown me so much more of these roads and enabled me to practise the safe riding that is so important to me with a group of like minded people.



John Obrien. Alan Brittain. Graham Willson. Zac Anderson. Stephen Howard

CONGRATULATIONS

Glenn Lewis successful re-qualification as a National Observer

Kevin Yeo for passing his National Observer test

Mark Haines for gaining his Masters with Distinction

Remember the Snow?



As I started to think about this Newsletter in April, I realised, not for the first time, that it seemed to me to be a long Winter; with Sunday Rides in February and March plagued by snow and ice and our motorcycle tyres sometimes having a life of their own on the slushy, potholed, ever changing surfaces they had been subjected to.

The weather warmed in April and on a certain Saturday the neighborhood roads and countryside were awakened with the sound of a myriad of different exhaust notes from the growls of Big Twins to the buzz of nippy two-strokes.

As I joined the madding crowd, in search of the twisties, I witnessed scary riding, odd positioning, strange judgments or decisions from some riders who seemed to have just ridden out for the first time following winter and feeling like Rossi.

At some point during my day I understood 2 things:

- (1) I felt happy that having ridden all though the Winter I was well practiced, smooth and calm and “Ride Fit”
- (2) I was grateful for our Motorcycle Club who gave me a reason to get out on the bike and have some fun with the other ‘Mad Fools’ and as a bonus, meet some new friends

I (MJ) took the IAM RoadSmart course in 2017 to “check myself” as having ridden motorcycles since the age of 16 and having helped my wife pass her test on her 900cc bike I thought I should get some feedback for myself, (despite me knowing that I knew everything!) The observed rides feedback was honest and enlightening and I happily passed the test - More importantly consistent riding within a group of accomplished, safe and progressive riders is helping the ‘system’ to become my habit - lets call it “Work in Progression”

My View?

I would encourage everyone to take part in the events whenever they can be it a Sunday ride, Skills Day or the evening Fish ‘n’ Chip runs.

As a clever chap I now call ‘Mr.’ Perkins recently said, “your skills are either rising or falling – you can choose to control their direction of travel” (or words to that effect).





Website

As most of you are aware, the IAM has over recent times been rebranding.

We too have rebuilt our website which can be found here iampamroadsmart.org.uk



Your committee members

Chairman:	Barry Hine
Treasurer:	Kevin Moorey
Secretary:	Philip Head
Training Team Lead:	Simon Gent
Events Team Leader:	Alan Mansell
Ride-out coordinator	Jonty Johnson
Group night coordinator	Alan Mansell
Newsletter Editor:	Mark Jensen



Continuous Riding Development

PAM Event - 14th July

The Invitation was as follows:

Want to keep developing your skills post test?

Adrian Perkins is leading this training event aimed at providing an opportunity to ride at Masters / RoSPA Gold standard. The members who have already achieved this level are ready to give up their time to share some of what they've learned. Want to get better or prepare for a F1rst? Indicate your interest here or email me to book a place.



Well what a great event it was, well attended, brilliantly led by Adrian aided by our own National Observers and Masters level Riders.

After a coffee and a briefing we, after discussion all decided what our Ultimate aim was (F1RST

Once established we were split into appropriate groups of three, typically this was 1 Observer to 2 members. For our sins Tony and I were teamed with Adrian and, as I had elected to aim for my Masters eventually, I was on an assessed ride of 90 minutes. Adrian followed me Tony followed Adrian with Directions (only) given through a headset (Which I hasten to add also had a microphone allowing Adrian to take pleasure from hearing all my expletives, general telling's off I was giving myself and at one point, I confess, a rendition on 'Roll with it' by Oasis)



After riding through some roads that, having not been cut back seemed more like Devon Jungle Trails (most of which I did not recognise at all) we arrived safely back at Costa for a de-brief .

I must say, I found this 90 minutes ride pretty intense, trying to maintain the highest awareness of "The system" knowing I needed to up my game for the masters which judging by my score sheet really is a 'Whole new Level!'"

I MJ (and all who attended) agree we had a great time learnt lots and benefitted from participating. We all strongly recommend any Full Member to join in the next CRD Event on 22nd September

Jo Cameron writes,

It was most heartening to see so many members turn up for this event and it didn't matter whether some were interested in training for the Masters. First/Observer training or whatever, the fact that everyone there recognised the need for further development and to keep their skills well honed! Adrian gave an excellent introduction, which included the core reasons for Continuous Riding Development and how quickly skills learnt during initial training can quickly tail off.

We were paired with our Observers or Masters Riders and went of on various directions and routes to arrive back at Costa some 90 minutes later for some honest and useful feedback. Afterwards some went for further Practice in the guise of Slow Control Skills (write up further on in this Newsletter).

The consensus was that the day thoroughly enjoyable for all involved

On a personal level, I feel very strongly that continued development and assessments are vital.

Like most of us I dislike being "observed" but the feedback you get is invaluable, So why not challenge yourself, come on the next free CRD Event Day and receive great feedback from an Observer. £39 will pay for an IAM first testor go "All in" and reach for the MASTERS



Refresher Rides

- Has it been a while since you passed your Green Badge test?
- Being honest with yourself - do you think your riding standard may have dipped?
- Have you engaged in any further training?

If you, like many of us, would answer 'yes' to any of the above statements you may benefit from a refresher ride.

What is a refresher ride I hear you say?

- 1 An informal discussion about your riding and any issues and/or concerns you may have, and an overview of the current Advance Rider documentation.
- 2 An observed ride over a pre-arranged route that includes all types of roads.
- 3 A discussion and debrief about the ride followed up with a written report.



Analysis of data by Surety Insurance has shown that the rate of claims by IAM RoadSmart Members goes up markedly after a member has had their Green Badge for more than five years

Adrian's Thruxton Fun

IAM Thruxton Skills Day

For anyone who is not aware (despite Stuart Riley's enthusiastic tails), the IAM run a series of skills days on the racing track. One of these venues is Thruxton where you get chance to ride your own bike at speeds which allow you to challenge yourself and develop skills which may save you from a situation on the road.

The idea is that you stretch yourself so can regularly ride to the recommended maximum of 80% of your ability (on the road) to allow for the unforeseen.

By riding at higher speeds in a "safe" environment, you can practice your favourite bends time and time again, each time honing your cornering skills and learning what works and why.



The participants are split into 3 sections (self-selected according to perceived ability). Each section subsequently splits into groups of 4 and assigned a very experienced instructor. The day is structured to provide the best opportunity to develop your skill, with 20 minutes instruction, followed by 20 minutes on the track and 20 minutes rest. Typically leading to 120 minutes total track time.

I have been before and was encouraged to enter the most advanced group, whilst my friend (and now PAM member, thanks to the £50 discount offered on the day) decided that the intermediate was for him. I rode my ZXR750, old but fun, whilst my mate Steve H put his Ducati 828 through its paces. I had said that the idea is to challenge yourself and within my group challenge we did.



One of the guys riding a 1200 air cooled GS managed to scrape his crash bars a few times whilst cornering. I made maximum use of my tyres...I hate paying for rubber that isn't used! Please don't be alarmed, you ride at the pace that is a challenge to you....there is, as you would expect, a great emphasis on safety at all times! You are encouraged to ride in the "Challenge Zone" which lies between comfort and panic zones, neither of which leads to successful development of skills.

The idea is to have fun, challenge yourself, develop your skills and train your sub-conscious to behave in an appropriate way if the unexpected occurs.... I can thoroughly recommend it!



In my opinion, you should never stop developing your skills otherwise you will allow them to slip back!

Philip Head goes i2i

During June I undertook two days 'Control' training with i2i. This is a small company, based in York, which comes to Exeter periodically, making their training accessible to those in the South West.

i2i's control training is NOT in the 'Roadcraft' book.

They clearly demonstrate how stable and safe a motorcycle is, and that very often it is the rider alone who destabilises the bike. Although their methods increase awareness and safety *per se*, it would not be advisable, necessarily, to ride on the highway the way we were taught on these Control sessions.

The course is set out on good, clean, firm tarmac; a car park about 300 yards long by 80 yards wide. Cones mark out the places for the various actions to take place.



Session 1 – Core Balance.

There was a series of unusual exercises to help us learn how to maximise the stability of the bike. We were encouraged not to steer with the lean, but to steer with the counter-steer. At a speed of 25 – 30 mph we did large left and right curves, steering only with the right hand, pulling it towards us to steer left; pushing it away to steer right. Then, using the right hand loosely to maintain a steady throttle, we steer with the left hand only, pushing it away to steer left and pulling it towards us to steer right. Eventually, an intermediary cone was introduced, tightening the curves and increasing the severity of turning. Whether we got it right the first time or the twenty-first time didn't matter; what mattered was learning how stable and responsive the bike is – even with a single hand in action

Session 2 – Advanced braking.

We explored the stories around braking, including why panic braking occurs, how to avoid it, and how to quickly and confidently bring your bike to a halt. Again, we got up to 30 mph, held the bike with our thighs and using the front brake only, introduced 2-stage breaking. The first stage is gentle, throwing the weight of the forwards and compressing the front suspension – then almost immediately we break hard whilst pulling in the clutch, bringing the bike to a crawl, release the brake and continuing.

The important thing here was NOT to use the rear break. Whilst the rear wheel is turning it is providing stability. Applying the rear brake whilst all the weight is forward can cause the rear wheel to lock, with a loss of stability.

Session 3 - Changing Direction

This looked at how to use counter-steering to improve the speed, accuracy and confidence of cornering.



Session 4 - Hazard Avoidance

We discussed behaviours and instincts created around dealing with unexpected hazards. Building on the earlier braking and counter-steering sections, we learned how to control the bike quickly and confidently to avoid a hazard.

Session 5 - Slow Speed Machine Control

We looked at slow speed control and learned advanced techniques for controlling at low speed. I must confess, until this session I was of the belief that you had to ride fast in order to lean the bike over. I was doing only 25 miles per hour with my hero pegs touching the ground. I had to take my panniers off as the bike was leaned so far over they were in danger of becoming scratched and in danger of taking weight, which would have been counter-productive. Sadly, I snapped the right hero peg off, leaving the screw thread inside the foot peg and am now struggling to get the damaged peg removed!



This was the end of Machine Control 1. ...

On Tuesday I returned for Machine Control 2.

Session 1 - Advanced Braking for higher speeds

This session built on the advanced braking exercises in Machine Control 1 helping us learn more advanced techniques to confidently bring the bike to a halt from higher speeds.

Session 2 - Advanced Braking through core feel

This session brings the braking technique together with an awareness of weight transfer and a powerful core connection to improve the smoothness, speed and ability of the rider to brake harder, faster and with more precision often referred to as developing a “feel”.

Session 3 and 4 - Braking on bends

We explored the stories around braking on bends. We learned advanced techniques for maintaining bike stability while either reducing speed or braking hard in a bend using the front brake. I am now quite confident whilst braking on a severe bend, because, although the application of the front brake causes the bike to sit up, application of the counter-steer keeps the bike going where you need it to go. We learned advanced techniques for maintaining bike stability while either reducing speed or braking hard in a bend.

Session 5 - Advanced Cornering

We explored the stories created about cornering and learned advanced techniques for cornering. This session transformed my ability to safely and confidently lean the bike further; quickly and accurately change direction; and use body position to increase corner speed. I found leaning hard, to place my body weight out of the bike in the direction of the corner quite difficult, yet it is because the body weight is transferred in the direction of the corner that the bike doesn't need to lean as far, reducing the likelihood of dragging hero pegs along the ground or snapping them off. And of course, the more upright the bike is, in theory, the more stable it is.

I have made it a resolution to do some training every year. This was the first time I looked at techniques, which although increasing confidence and safety, are probably not all appropriate on the highway. It was extremely beneficial though, and I would not hesitate to recommend i2i.

Note. For further info take a look at - www.i2imca.com

The GS Trophy Challenge

Every 2 years BMW run an international competition known as the GS Trophy Challenge.

The qualifiers for the UK are held in Wales and the winners compete in the main event, in perhaps Mongolia or other far flung place. Due to popular demand, BMW Offload School decided that they would offer the equivalent to the qualifier in the interim years. Jerry R, Adrian P and Steve H, headed to Wales to take part in the event this year.

As you might expect for Wales, we had all four seasons in one day, which added its own challenges, let along those offered by BMW.



The challenge includes a “treasure hunt” type ride of about 100 miles (8hrs) through the beautiful countryside of Wales, with a few bike free challenges along the way. Additionally, you go to Walters Arena, the home of BMW’s Offload school, to ride their bikes (mainly R1200GS Rallye) on a series of Offload Challenges.



You would be forgiven for questioning whether some of the roads were in fact roads, but somewhere under the mud, I am sure there was tarmac. Despite having an IAM Masters and applying the principles of advanced riding (honest), pride led to a fall. I hadn’t taken sufficient account of the mud on the road, so after about 10 yards of reduced traction, it happened and we ended up in the hedge at 10-15mph. There was plenty of help and concern from other participants, but what about my true love....she had just crashed too. I checked her over and apart from a few scratches, I was relieved to find out she was OK... a few bits of broken plastic and a mirror which needed to re-secured, otherwise she was back in action....Nothing a quick visit to Ocean BMW could not resolve....phew!!



Oh yeah, my wife was fine too.



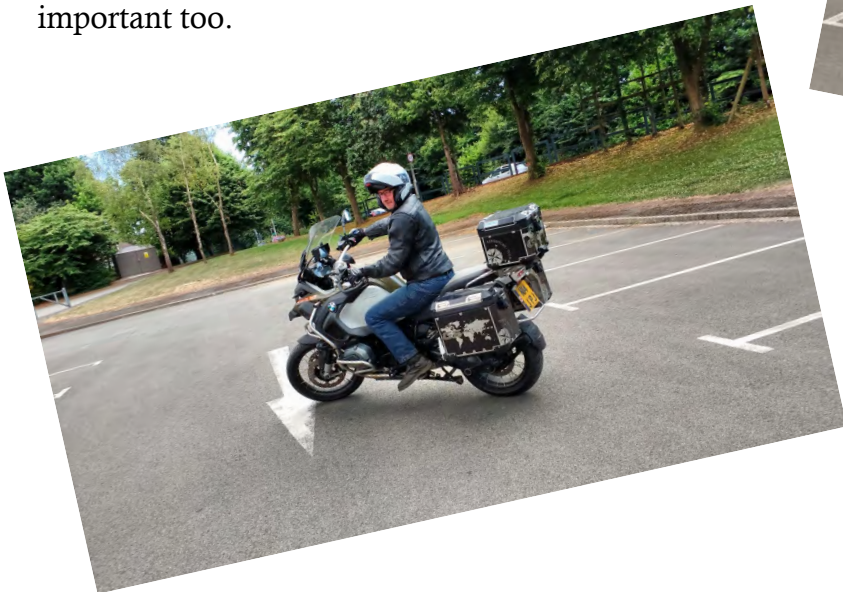
A fantastic weekend, which is held every Whitsun weekend, which I can thoroughly recommend to anyone who owns a BMW bike, although perhaps not suited to the S1000RR. Inspired, Jerry and Adrian are going to create a similar (road only) event for PAM and perhaps the wider riding community for 2019... dates to be announced in time.

Slow Riding Skills Practice

Some believe the “IAM is a club for silver haired gentlemen, riding BMW’s, who are a bit on the slow side”. A myth we are working hard to dismiss.

It could be something to do with 3 BMW riders practicing their slow speed skills in B&Q car park in Saturday... Cue Jonty, Mark Haines and Adrian. You can see the techniques being beautifully demonstrated by Jonty and Mark and for those that may have forgotten....

A little (reasonably constant) throttle, feathering rear brake to provide drag, feathering the clutch to manage speed and look where you want to go. At low speeds there is no gyroscopic effect, so balance is important too.



There is no substitute for practice... Through discussion we established that those that have honed the skill, practice it every time the opportunity presents itself

5 to 10 minutes is more than enough time to practice, so the next time you call into a car park, perhaps give yourself the opportunity to develop the skill.

Our thoughts and best wishes go out to Jonty (featured here) and Suzanne following their motorcycle accident for a full and swift recovery to full health



Appeal For Ride Leaders

Do you have a favorite route you like to ride?

Would you be willing to share and Take the lead for our Sunday Rides?

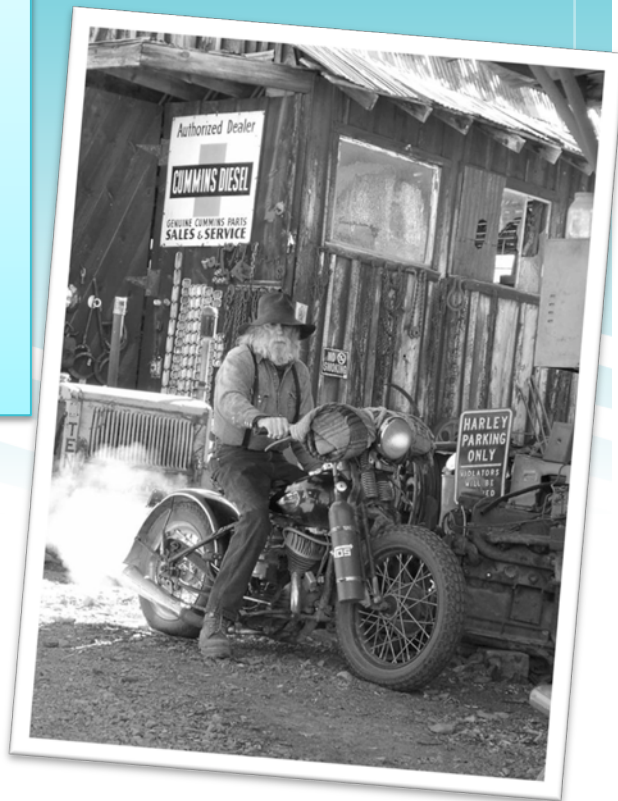
The route doesn't need to be Spectacular or Challenging
As long as it has coffee opportunities along with other necessary facilities

Having recently led a couple of rides including one that involved closed roads and U-turns I can assure you that it is fun and not at all daunting ... We're a tame bunch as you know!

Contact Jonty Johnson to let him know your availability

Thank you

to all the Observers who give their time freely to the group for the benefit of all and anyone who wishes to participate.



And Finally....

My first attempt at the PAM newsletter!
I hope you have enjoyed at least some aspect of it

Thank you to all the contributors
I would like to once again make a plea to all out there to send me their anecdotes, experiences or even their moans about life on two wheels.

If you have any suggestions as to what should be included in your newsletter please let me know. It can be as long or as short as you wish and, if you have a picture or two even better.

All contributions will be gratefully received so if you have anything for inclusion in the next newsletter (September) please don't hesitate to get in touch

See you down the road
MJ