

WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



OCTOBER 2019

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

TWO UP

WHAM's new holiday venue at Le Fosso in Brittany gave us access to great roads with stunning rural scenery and, for the longer rides, sea food lunches overlooking the beach. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Last month I mentioned I intended to retrace my teenage biking trip to France. This meant getting the night ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe which made sense when I lived in South London but not when travelling from Worcester. In the queue for the ferry we met a Suffolk Advanced group heading to Ypres and Normandy in "Dad's Army" logo'd hi-viz complete with name badges (don't tell 'em your name Pike!). Meeting Captain Mainwaring:



CHAIRS FOREWORD CONT'D

Then a short crossing, and therefore short sleep, before disembarking into a dark, quiet Dieppe. We were negotiating unsurfaced roadworks almost immediately! Anyway, we rode on to Chartres.

A memory from the first trip (BSA Bantam – 2 up) was of Chartres Cathedral framed at the end of an avenue of trees. The road hadn't changed except they had added a second carriageway to one side. On the original trip my mate had broken down at Evreux, again memories of waiting outside of a bike shop from dawn until it opened. The first night was at Chartres Youth hostel; this time we rode on to the second stop – near Bourges.

From there the BSA Bantam made it all the way to the Camargue (via Avignon, Arles etc) and a ride along the Mediterranean beach! Returning via Chambéry. But this time Gill and I now headed west to La Rochelle for a couple of nights exploring the historic town before turning north to Brittany to rendezvous with the WHAM gang who arrived a couple of days later.



We had Le Fosso to ourselves for 2 days!

We met everyone two days later, 16 bikes, 3 pillions. A real mix of experience and 'never ridden in France before'.

CHAIRS FOREWORD CONT'D

Now, editor-Richard wanted a perspective from riding with a pillion. What's the difference? Some of you already know. if you want to read more please look here:

<http://www.wham-motorcycling.org/library/>

The main differences are subtle; the 'system' remains king but plan to avoid braking, especially hard braking, and check & double check the ground as you stop in order to decide which foot goes down. If in doubt use both feet! U-turns are OK with an experienced pillion who stays still during slow manoeuvring. Acceleration can be brisk but a pillion and luggage will lower the bike's performance – hardly noticeable when I had 150bhp available on my Multistrada! There's the added responsibility of another person but perhaps my "progress" wasn't too bad if I was leading? There are advantages, someone to thank cars who have moved aside as we filtered on the M25, someone to manage documents at the ports and someone to get the coffee whilst I "faff" parking. Perhaps it wouldn't have been too comfortable if I had ridden with the....er...quicker group (*Christened "The naughty boys" - ed*)

Overall it's great to share biking with your 'other half'.

Ride Safe.

Ant Clerici

WHAM Chair



PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018



20/21 May

We were a bit nervous crossing the border into Slovenia. It was the first of the Balkan countries we hoped to visit; we didn't know much about it, or the riding conditions we would meet here, and subsequently as we head further south; and we were definitely leaving our language comfort zone. I should add the Rider is comfy in Spanish; both of us have more than enough French to get by; and the Pillion has rusty Italian that works well enough. Slovenian? Nuh uh.

We soon found there was no need to worry, not yet anyway. Someone has thoughtfully spent an (EU?) fortune on the trunk road system in Slovenia, and it shows. We began to be embarrassed about the parlous state of the UK motorway system as we sailed along pristine near-empty roads. And guess what? It turns out the Triestine Italian dialect we'd heard in NE Italy remains an official language in Slovenia. So everything looked and felt familiar, and very much like the country we'd just left.

We stayed overnight in [Koper/Capodistria](#), our first and probably last Slovenian stay as the country had only a tiny sliver of coastline to be crossed on our way south. We discovered that Slovenia has been recovering ground quickly after the Communist years. Granted some of the ancient magnificent buildings going back to Venetian and Habsburg times are frankly rotting. On the other hand there was evidence in Koper of a lot of attractive new development, presumably since the Slovenes managed the neat trick of both avoiding the horrors of the post-Tito break-up of the former Yugoslavia, and successfully becoming an early joiner of the EU. Now fully integrated into the Eurozone, this country feels welcoming and outgoing, and will soon rival neighbouring Italy for economic growth and cultural sophistication, I suspect. It was a brief acquaintance for our first visit here, but we both liked Slovenia and will happily come back.



PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018

We stayed in the good value [Bella Vista hostel](#) right in the centre of town. It was new and very clean, albeit with rather small four-bunked rooms. Fortunately we had a whole room to ourselves. The English-speaking owner, Essa, was young and friendly. Recommended.

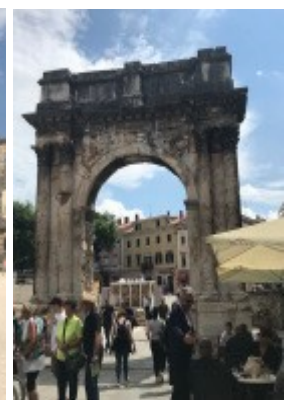


We also recommend the fantastic waterfront [Capra](#) restaurant, where we ate a meal any Italian or French chef would be proud to serve. The local Capra wine is very drinkable too. A lengthy passeggiata along the pleasant Koper waterfront whiled away the rest of the evening, and we went to bed well-pleased with our brief Slovenian experience.

The next morning we gave the Tigger a much-needed jet wash. This was not entirely straightforward. For once my Italian didn't help with payment in the petrol station; it seems the lady at the till didn't appreciate my Italian accent, as she insisted on speaking to me in German. Eventually a helpful bystander explained in perfect English that I needed to buy tokens, and two was the suggested amount to get enough time with the jet wash. I subsequently abandoned efforts to speak Italian, as being mistaken for a German upsets me.

Clean now but a bit wet under the treads, we crossed into Croatia. Despite the completely empty road ahead of us, there were miles of traffic waiting to cross the other way from Croatia into Slovenia. We were reminded that this border is the subject of ancient and disgruntled dispute. Oh lucky EU, to have inherited that mess to sort out!

We headed along a pretty back road to the ancient port of [Pula](#), through a heavily-wooded country of rounded hills and flat valleys. The road was empty, and riding conditions good although the road was clearly not as well-maintained as the motorways. The darker growth of the mostly Mediterranean conifer trees we passed showed we were heading south into a longer growing season.



iam
RoadSmart

Official Provider

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

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



PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018

Pula is a busy town at the tip of the Istrian peninsula, being a large port and quite a tourist attraction to mainly German visitors. The town has a very long history, and the surviving Roman buildings here are staggering. In just two days we visited the world's best-preserved Roman amphitheatre; the intact and serenely beautiful Temple of Augustus, built while that revered emperor was alive and able to visit in something BC; three wonderful celebratory aches; and the fourth century cathedral. I didn't know they even *did* cathedrals that long ago.

Altogether a lovely town, and having booked into the convenient and very new [Top Center Rooms](#), we stayed a second night to make the most of a rest before heading off to zigzag our way further south. Hopefully by ferry, but there seems considerable doubt as to which ferries are actually running, and which might deign to allow the Tigger on board.

It could be a long ride to Dubrovnik if not.

View from the Front Seat

Day 12 from Vicenza, Italy to Koper in Slovenia, was ridden on Italian, then Slovenian toll-motorways. This so we could get to Trieste for lunch. Day 13 from Slovenia to Pula was likewise was half ridden on toll roads. Which brings me to the subject(s) of tolls and motorbikes...

Our less than 100km in Spain cost us around 30€ – a rip off. I don't recall seeing tolls on those same roads 8 years ago. Similarly France seems to have been installing tolls on just about every dual carriageway. 1/2 to 2/3 the pricey Spanish rate but a pain nonetheless.

In Italy about half the main roads seem to be tolled – similar charges to France. And both of the main roads we've used so far in Slovenia and Croatia ditto.

Nearly all of these roads are in excellent, spanky new condition. Whereas the parallel A roads are rutted, pot holed and generally run down. And everywhere we've gone the road signage has been changed to remove the local route variants in favour of directing everyone in to the tolls. Sometimes even the A road exits seem to have been obscured.

Call me a cynic if you like, but what seems to have happened is that (possibly EU) money has been used to install grand new infrastructure and then the 'system' has been 'managed' to earn cash from it.

There are obvious benefits to this – reduced traffic in villages etc. But several negatives too. For example, we've seen a lot of local petrol stations and cafes closed down; local roads are falling to pieces; and poor suckers like us are accidentally straying onto toll roads being misled by the toll-biased signage.

And another thing (moan actually):

It's all very well pulling up in a car or truck with a dashboard full of cash to quickly pass through a toll booth. On a motorbike it's a pain: We wobble up to a toll booth or machine; struggle to either understand the multiple slots and buttons or comprehend the bored attendant; take off gloves; drop one of them; strain to pick it up; take off inner gloves; unzip two layers of waterproof to get to a wallet; fiddle with cold hands to extract the right card (having previously stood up with legs akimbo forcing my hand into over-tight jeans to discover I've only got £1.70 and 30€ cents cash); reverse the cash-card-wallet-zips-gloves process; all the while holding up irate Italians in Porches, French in Ferraris, caravans of Dutch caravaners and suspiciously organised ut calm formations of German campervans.

We'll be sticking to the smaller roads from here on.



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

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



CO'S COLUMN—ALEX HOYLE

Written on a PC, but not necessarily so

We all have perceptions and misconceptions about certain types of people; and I always joke at least, by saying when I'm referring to people who ride Harley Davidsons, fat blokes on Harleys, riding in the middle of the road. Now of course that's not necessarily so, and it's not right to tar everyone with the same brush.

In the summer I went to the Ardennes with some friends on our motorbikes. We went through the tunnel, however when we got there, there must have been literally hundreds of other bikes, and all, or most of them were ridden by Hell's Angels.

There had been some kind of Hell's Angels get together, or bash, down at Brighton (I use the word bash fairly liberally here) and all of these guys are now trying to get back home, and yes some of them were fat, and most of them were riding Harley Davidsons. But when you took a look around all of these bikes were really well cared for and seemed to be in pretty good order. Now, as you do, we started to have a chat with some of them about bikes, and where they had been, what they'd been doing, and soon realised that for the most part, that they're just ordinary folks like you and I. In fact, when we got talking to them most of them seemed to be businessmen who at the weekend don their Hell's Angels gear and go out riding with their chums, much as we do. I'm pretty sure you could have washed most of the tattoos off.



If only to reinforce this, I've just come back from a few days away in the Lake District. So, as you do, we got chatting to the folks on the next breakfast table. Once again the subject turns to motorbikes and this person was telling me about when he had recently been to America and had gone out for a drink in the evening to one of the local hostelrys; where there were three immaculate Harley Davidsons parked outside, he started to have a look around these bikes, when three rather large chaps in Hell's Angels gear appeared from nowhere, now he's wondering if this is going to turn into a scene from Deliverance. But, when he starts to talk to them about their bikes, and about how clean and shiny they were, it simply turns out that these guys are three solicitors from Tucson in Arizona.

So where is this going, it is just to say some times we get stuck in our own ways, and we have ideas and misconceptions about other groups in society, and we make our decisions sometimes based on bias, without really having a good knowledge of what these other people are about.

CO'S COLUMN—ALEX HOYLE

This translates to the road and our motorbike riding when sometimes we find somebody in front of us who is riding or driving very slowly, or someone behind us, who is tailgating us, and trying to push us along, and to try and force us into doing things that we don't necessarily want to do.

In situations like these, the best thing you can do is simply pull over and let these people go. I always say to Associates, remember that you control the bike, the bike doesn't control you. You can make a conscious decision while you're riding to defuse these situations simply by stopping the bike and pulling over to the side and taking a few minutes to cool down. Now it's not an easy thing to do once the red mist starts to descend, but you will achieve far more by pulling over and letting things cool off, so remember you should never let those around you dictate your ride. One of the sayings we often use is The Betaris Box model.

"My Attitude, Affects My Behaviour, Affects Your Attitude, Affects Your Behaviour. It's imperative that you keep control, and do not take the bait."

One of the classic situations we see all the time, is Mr or Mrs 45 miles an hour everywhere. You see this coming in to 30 mph zones into villages, you slow down, and write up your chuff is Mr 45 mph, trying to push you along, if this happens to you, simply pull over, and let them go.

As an end to this story of course not everyone who rides a Harley Davidson, is a fat bloke. In fact, if you take our own Roger Brooks, he's probably one of the thinnest and fittest people you will ever see on a Harley Davidson.

That said, if all else fails simply get off the bike and just deck the other guy. (Only joking).

Alex Hoyle, CO WHAM



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

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



BRITTANY 2019—JEREMY DAVIES

When Richard asked if I could put a few words down for the club newsletter about the recent trip to Brittany, I wondered what could I possibly put in the presence of so many seasoned Tourists. Did I give just a factual account of how seamlessly the tour ran. From the sensible ferry arrangements, to the interesting routes on Brittany's very well kept roads and the comfortable accommodation which lent itself perfectly to a largish group, nuff said, but thanks to Richard Hewitt, Tony Davis, Jill & Ant Clerici for all of the above, and any others I should have mentioned, book your place for 2020 when announced, is all I can say.

Now how did my Tour go? well I had a great time, travelling down independently to the port, with Mike Franzen (apologies for what follows Mike), it all started quietly enough, in fact too quietly. We arranged to meet at The Air Balloon Pub on Birdlip hill as he was coming from Hereford and I was travelling from Worcester. We gave ourselves plenty of time, and it was a good job too as after waiting for our meals for well over half an hour, I felt it prudent to check



when they would arrive? To my horror (perhaps a slight exaggeration), the Waitress confessed to forgetting to put our order through because we looked a bit rough! , (I made up the bit about looking rough), anyhow I did give her one of my best ever 'Black disparaging looks', whilst looking at my watch in a very concerned manner, for which I am well known. Her response was apologetic, and she skulked off to the bar to put our order through, she soon returned to tell us that due to her mistake, our meals would be on the house! Well , it does pay (metaphorically speaking) to complain, anyway we had a great meal and our delay only meant that we had to emulate 'The Fast Boys' and open the bikes up and even managing to get into fourth gear, for short stretches, and only overtaken by the occasional Milk Float , and cyclist, to make the time up. As you might expect, Mike & I beat the Fast Boys to our Coffee Stop near Newbury, sipping our Flat Whites in total serenity as the dishevelled bikers arrived.

BRITTANY 2019—JEREMY DAVIES

We set off for the final leg to Portsmouth and had to do some fancy footwork to overcome the manifold road closures on our scenic run to the Port. Then suddenly I had a thought, yes I know, a very dangerous thing to do! I remembered a conversation with Tony at the coffee stop, which was only 15 minutes earlier, so it shows I haven't lost the plot completely yet. Anyway, the conversation, what was it about? It'll come to me in a minute, ah yes, I've got it, he thought they would hang on for another 45 minutes, to avoid arriving at the Port too early. I have to say, arriving early has never been a feature of my road travel in the UK, but hey ho, each to his own. The reason I am telling you this is that in our wonderful Garmin's attempts to re-route us around the road closure we didn't seem to be getting any closer to the destination as the mileage remaining stayed stubbornly static or started increasing. So, I had a brainwave, I would stop and phone the others and inform them that it may pay to leave a little earlier due to possible delays. It seemed the right thing to do, except it wasn't executed all that well! Having ridden through lots of narrow Country lanes, we entered a small village which would be a safer place to stop, or so I thought. I was leading with Mike in close formation, Police Style, and I spied a good place to stop behind some parked cars on the other side of the road and put the brakes on firmly to position myself safely from on-coming traffic, then Mike, who quite frankly hadn't got a clue what I was doing pulled up alongside my left side. Unfortunately, he had perhaps underestimated the widths of two GSs with Panniers, so what occurred was his offside pannier contacted my nearside one as he pulled up, this regrettably caused him to lose balance and he had to lay his bike on the road in a heap, to the disbelief of a couple walking their dog, who witnessed the spectacle. We needless to say remembered our Advanced Rider Training and calmly dealt with the debacle as if it was totally normal. This wasn't easy to pull off, and anyway having got Mike's bike shiny side up, we still had the composure to ask the locals which way Portsmouth was anyhow? Just for validation purposes of course, before screaming off into the distance before the Fast Boys happened upon us!

For your information the rest of the Tour went, pretty well to plan, apart from Gerry's Garmin which seemed to be cunningly set to prioritise Farm Tracks on our subsequent routes. The incident involving Mick and Judy whose love of botany became apparent after performing a 'U' turn on a narrow lane with a steep camber and some soft bushes to sit on at the side of the road. My final plea to the biker world is to develop better ear plugs, as the standard ones were simply not capable of suppressing the sound of Mike's World Class Snoring as Gerry & I discovered!

If you're asking would I do another Tour with WHAM? Well, not on your nilly, joking apart, of course, it was great fun.

Jeremy Davies



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

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



SAFE & LEGAL—ANT CLERICI

Apart from which bike to buy (the 2020 models are in every publication!) for many of our riders there are few issues more contentious than speed or to put it another way: 'making progress'. (Actually making progress means so much more....)

First the basics, here I'd like to quote Robbie Downing's brief to me when I took my "Masters" last year: 'your ride should be **SAFE and LEGAL**'. A succinct explanation of how we all should be riding.

I could leave it there but we all like a debate so here goes.

When you are on your own then there's only one rider interpreting "safe and legal". You might "correct" your speed from what your speedo inaccurately reads to what your satnav shows – which is almost, but not quite, a calibrated speedo. My Africa Twin along with many Hondas is 9% out so **70mph** equals a displayed **76mph**. Then what about adding 10% + 2 because that's the setting for most speed cameras...isn't it?

That would see my speedo reading **86mph**. Crikey almost 90mph!

Guidance provided by the NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council, formally ACPO, Association of Chief Police Officers), suggests that officers do not seek prosecution of a driver until they have exceeded the speed limit by 10%, plus 2mph.

Brake (the road safety charity) says: "It is important to note this guidance is not legally entrenched and that officers have the discretion to act outside it – drivers should be aware that this guidance also does not mean that they can break the speed limit legally."
(Obviously)

But there is a trend towards lower limits with less tolerance.

Chief Constable Anthony Bangham has called for the 10 per cent buffer on speed limits to be scrapped and for an increase in the use of fines and penalty points for those caught.



'Cameras of the future' – as well as speeding, they can catch you using your phone, illegally overtaking and tailgating. Sacrebleu!

As we discovered in France they've already reduced limits on rural road from 90kph to 80kph, except in some Departments where they are reverting to 90kph. In Brittany 2 of the 4 Departments have decided to revert to 90kph. However the speed limits are enforced with their new cameras which are multi-functional – dubbed the

So far so good, but what happens in our riding groups?

Again back to basics: **ride safe and legal** but crucially **ride your own ride**.

SAFE & LEGAL—ANT CLERICI

The tricky bit of group riding is when one group catches another. There's a speed differential.

What are the options?

1. The faster group can pull over for a minute then resume.
I've seen many of our more experienced group riders take this option which is safest and crucially will still get you into the same queue at the breakfast stop.
2. The faster group looks to overtake the slower group. Now this often becomes a point of tension: when the faster group is frustrated by "being held up" especially if
 - o the slower riders speed up (surely not!)
 - o If the tail end riders of the slower group don't see and acknowledge the lead rider of the faster group

If you find yourself in the slower group it is important to avoid impeding the faster group: whilst if you are in the faster group it is your responsibility to execute a safe overtake. As always if your group is overtaking a slower group don't assume the rider in front has seen you or is ready for you to pass. Treat each rider individually and avoid multi-overtakes.

Our Group Riding best practice will see

- the rider in front acknowledge the presence of the rider who has caught up and
- the overtaking rider wait for a safe opportunity to pass.



One thing to avoid here is prolonged mixing the two groups which often leads to confusion. Finally, be aware of other opportunities to allow groups to safely pass each other such as at temporary traffic lights and on dual carriageways (but we all know Tony's routes usually avoid dual carriageways!).

NEWS—RICHARD HEWITT

On Friday 11th October Chris Walden passed his advanced test with Rob Edwards as his Observer. This was a double celebration as Chris was Rob's very first Associate. Well done both Chris and Rob.

In addition to the usual (now somewhat colder and of 'variable surface debris' (read farmers muck)) Sunday rides we've got the annual National Remembrance Arboretum run coming up on Sunday 10th November. For those new to WHAM this is a ride that manages to wend its way through more-or-less countryside up to Stafford. Quite how long it took Routemaster Tony to figure a countryside route through the urban sprawl that rests between Worcester and Stafford is beyond my comprehension.

Anyway, the cold ride up there is worth it for the opportunity to visit this superb site where our fallen are remembered in quite superb surroundings. An added bonus (Alex H) is the ability for us all to chow down on a freshly cooked full Sunday Roast, all together, in the canteen there. Pillions, of any connection to the Pilots, are welcome.



The WHAM Christmas do is now up and being advertised on the WHAM website. Your fellow WHAMMERS have been booking themselves, both solo's and with partners, through the website and there's spaces yet for more members to join-in. Venue is the popular Falcon in Bromyard on Friday December 20th. The Ed understands the 'on the evening' entertainment so far extends to:

Matt 'Lairy' Dent—putting on a very interesting routine that he first observed from an old copy of 'farmers weekly' magazine involving feather dusters and Vaseline.

Tony 'Routemaster' Davis— expertly performing a fabulous Elvis impersonator routine including platform boots and shining black hair piece.

And

Our Esteemed chair, with Choreography from his lovely wife Gill—a brief rendition of the ever popular 'Nutcracker' ballet fully resplendent in pink tutu and off-white tights.

And then there will be our treasurer, Eric Reynolds, doing a lot of drinking, laughing, and debating; but that's staple fodder as we all know. Did anybody say 'Brexit' (Tony Cook...)



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

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



THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

“Size doesn’t matter!”

My mate Big G’s eyes narrowed and slunk sideways “*Biggest lie ever told!*”.

Incoming from Sneaky G. - a colleague from decades back:

“*It’s not what you’ve got, it’s how you handle it!*”

My being depressingly average in most aspects of life, this disturbing contradiction demanded clarification.

“*We are talking motorcycles, yes?*”

“*Yes!*”



So does it or doesn’t it - matter?

I thought I might buy a motorcycle recently, seeing as how the slow riding day struggles for relevance without one, though there’s tempting, waist-embracing food and delightful female company in the tent; a vastly more attractive proposition than slipping clutch burn-out. BTW have you noticed how Triumphs have a habit of seeping Castrol when put to Tony’s snake course? And while we’re on this diversion, I’ve heard Chairman and Treasurer seem reluctant to engage with it on their twist ‘n go Honda Twins.

Thus tricky questions face your scribe as he trots from showroom to showroom: What am I going to put in my garage? How do I choose? What size is it to be, or, getting technical, how substantial? This is a far more astute question than ‘What cc?’ Do I choose a Twiggy lightweight at under 200kg (440 lb in American), perhaps a seductively proportioned Scarlett Johansson goddess at 230kg or go for a bit of a Momma at 275kg plus with all the implied comfort? More than 300kg? Now we’re talking Big Boy. Out of my league. Distinctly not average.

Then again, what about image? What might my choice say about me? Do I care? (You bet!) What is it that draws so many in less than first flush of youth to BMW GS’s. Is it the oh-so-manly bulk? On my showroom tour the 1250 Adventure was awesome. We are talking serious dimension now. Very nearly taller than my wife who’s 63” tall, your GS is 57” tall, just about her shoulder height. And how wide at the widest point? A daunting 20mm short of a metre! GS, not wife. Seat height at 830mm lowest option. GS again, not my wife’s neat seat. Off road capability. Don’t kid yourself you are going to drift it on dusty off-road trails (not here anyway and come B*****T not there either). Those showroom pix of opposite lock Gee Esses are piloted by *expert* riders and in Spain I’d wager!

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

You see there are issues with weight. A BMW K1600GT weighs 319kg wet and that's before you add all those life support items like your choc bars, spare underpants, hot water bottle and so on into the top box. Like the (very) large person distraught at reaching her seat, the one in front of me, in premium economy: "I can't fit this seat!" This was an admirable insight. "Why isn't this seat bigger?" "I've had bigger seats on other aircraft". One ponders the miracle of flight.

Anyway, you get my point. The larger the motorcycle, the more and more challenging the situations one faces. Stopping, starting, moving it in the garage, achieving centre stand status, adverse camber U bends uphill, slow traffic, Tony's SRD Snake Course...it's all about dimensions!

I'm aware of the attraction, the unrivalled puissance, of say a Rocket 3 at 164 lb.ft. of torque (Wiki). Let's say you fit one. But from what I have read in this esteemed journal, some extensive compromises have to be made in order to be truly skilled in 'how you handle it' as Sneaky G suggests. A bit like my plane passenger - the upgrade to Club World was an additional 3000 quid she was politely informed! That buys a lot of upgrades to a 792lb. or 362kg. Rocket 3, I imagine. And yes, it's like Club World, it's a whole different kettle of fish.

And weight isn't the only issue. As noted, there's height or more precisely seat height. This becomes the defining issue competing with our desire for a 'Suits You Sir' perfect motorcycle. None of us want to be a crowd-pleaser at the Stop sign, let alone doing a Pope on the tarmac at Thruckmorton thanks to a 30" Inseam on an Africa Twin. How can your scribe be so dastardly clever to tell you this nugget of wisdom? Ah! This is where you need the Revzilla Motorcycle Ergonomics Simulator (www.cycle-ergo.com).

You see, our desire to fulfil our self-image might obscure our good sense - and I quote the Daily Mirror¹ with apologies non-tabloid newspaper readers - you may just be the modern Mr Average!

Back in 1967, when Flower Power was all the rage, the average British man was 5ft 7.5in tall, weighed 11st 8 lbs and had a chest of 38in and a waist of 34in.

Fast forward 50 years to 2017 and Mr Average is considerably larger - thanks, not least, to his beer belly.

But the truth is that the average British man hasn't just gone up in size, he has also gone out - getting fatter but also more buff in his chest and neck because he is far more likely to **exercise** regularly.

The 2017 version of Mr Average is 5ft 10in and weighs 13 stone 3 lbs, with a chest of 43 inches and a waist of 37 inches.

But there's 'Good News!' You may have the torso I can only dream of.....

At 5ft 10in, James Bond actor Daniel Craig, 45, is not only one of the hottest heart-throbs in the world but he also partly typifies the body upper shape of the modern Mr Average - weighing just over 13st, with a 43in chest.



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

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



THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

So bulk, weight and height are all under the spotlight along with the beer-enhanced cuddly bit. There are better teccies in WHAM than I to explain the impact of too much of **any** of these. Some with personal experience of the limits of tyre adhesion and ability to stand upright even without a bike, dare I say.

My conclusion? 'It matters' **and** 'I can handle it with ease'. As age bestows it's blessings on us, keep it as light as possible, low enough to avoid embarrassment, manoeuvrable in the garage, lovely when you look at it and just a couple of pints. And on that miserable note I'll take my leave. Have a nice day.

¹<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/uks-mr-average-extraordinary-change-10127526>



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

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

