

WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



FEBRUARY 2018



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It's a real privilege to be WHAM's chair and a little bit daunting to follow Stuart's outstanding productive year. Thank you Stuart! Last year saw WHAM being accepted on two IAMRoadsmart pilot schemes reflecting our status as a well-run group offering best practice. Del also stands down as Chief Observer leaving the group with over 20 Nationally Qualified Observers; a tremendous resource. Thank you Del! His role is being taken by Gary (Worcester) and Alex (Hereford).

Tony continues as webmaster and route master, these titles don't really bear justice to his contribution to the group, an example can be found on this issue as he delivers the results of our annual survey. The survey shows that you think we are doing well across most areas but as former Chair Paul Whitcombe might say "... excellent result...but room for improvement" So the committee will review your suggestions and comments and look to address the issues. An example will be the creation of a WhatsApp Group to allow speedy arrangements for ad hoc rides outside of the usual Sunday trips.



I also have to thank our new vice chair and magazine editor, Richard, who is producing a magazine that, according to the survey, everyone reads! (It's always a good idea to stay on the right side of the editor!)

So what about 2018?

Two main things.

A drive to recruit new associates through free tasters, Facebook and face to face recommendations. And a reminder to our members that there are always opportunities to improve your riding: from check rides with one of the training team, to our slow riding day, 1stPass, IAMRoadsmart Fellowship and Masters. Just ask any of the team for more details.

I hope to see you out on your bike soon...ride safe

Ant Clerici

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CHIEF OBSERVERS COLUMN—WINTER RIDING

Weather 2° or whether not to....

As winter seems to come and go with odd temperature rises leaving us fooled into thinking it's gone, only to raise its ugly head again the next day, I thought it a good time to bring the subject to the newsletter.

Sunday rides for me, as I'm sure it is for many, are the only times we can get out on the bike especially with work commitments. So weather watching from midweek onwards to get a picture of what's ahead brings us disappointment or happy days.

I have heard so many theories on "if the temperature is 3 to 4 degrees it's good to go." Or "if the sun is out it will be warm later".

There is nothing like COMMON SENSE when it comes to "shall I ride or not". Temperatures given in urban areas may reach 3 to 4 degrees above zero but out in rural areas they could be 1 or 2 at best and shaded areas below zero. A good rainfall the night before will leave some roads unprotected with the dilution of salt/grit and worse for minor roads that remain untreated.

The above mixed with farmers sharing their muck from the fields, suicidal wildlife flying low across the highway and fallen leaves from trees/ hedges, it's a great ice rink for motorcyclists.



I am not trying to put anybody off riding in wet weather, the more often we do the more skilled we become. Having a combination of good tyres and miles in the saddle is always a bonus. So here's something solid to remember, it doesn't matter how good you are on a bike you can't force rubber to grip ice and COMMON SENSE is your best tool for staying alive.

IF IN DOUBT DO NOWT

It won't be long before the winter months are over and we can enjoy the great roads. STAY SAFE BOYS AND GIRLS and look forward to seeing you all for another great biking season together.

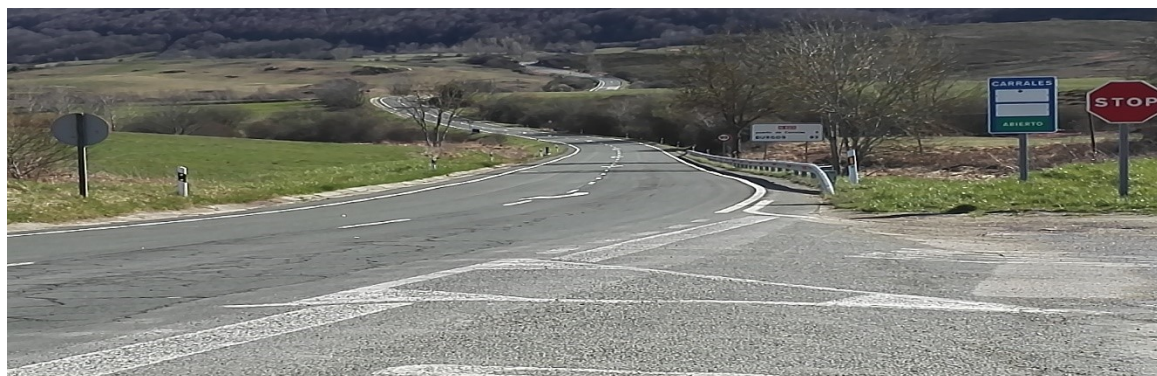
Gary C.O Worcester.

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

Adrian and John's adventure to the Sahara Dessert and back

Day 1. Dock in Santander, destination Segovia – 230miles

We head off towards the mountains – with storm clouds in the distance....!



Temperatures drop to 8 degrees then to 5, 1, and eventually -1 and guess what?! It starts to snow!

At 7:30pm, we find ourselves riding in settling snow, which as you can imagine dramatically slows us down, although on reflection, I can't remember ever riding in snow. We still have 20 miles to go until we reach the Hotel and the snow is now freezing to our visor's. We arrive exhausted as the snow continues to settle. Motorbikes parked up in the underground car park, we hang the gear up to dry for the big ride tomorrow - 350 miles, with the course dependent on the weather, in particular snow!

Overall a fantastic first day and I was very pleased I bought my heated gloves, boots and extra insulated jacket J – although not sure John and Dave's choice of air flow jackets was such a good idea..?

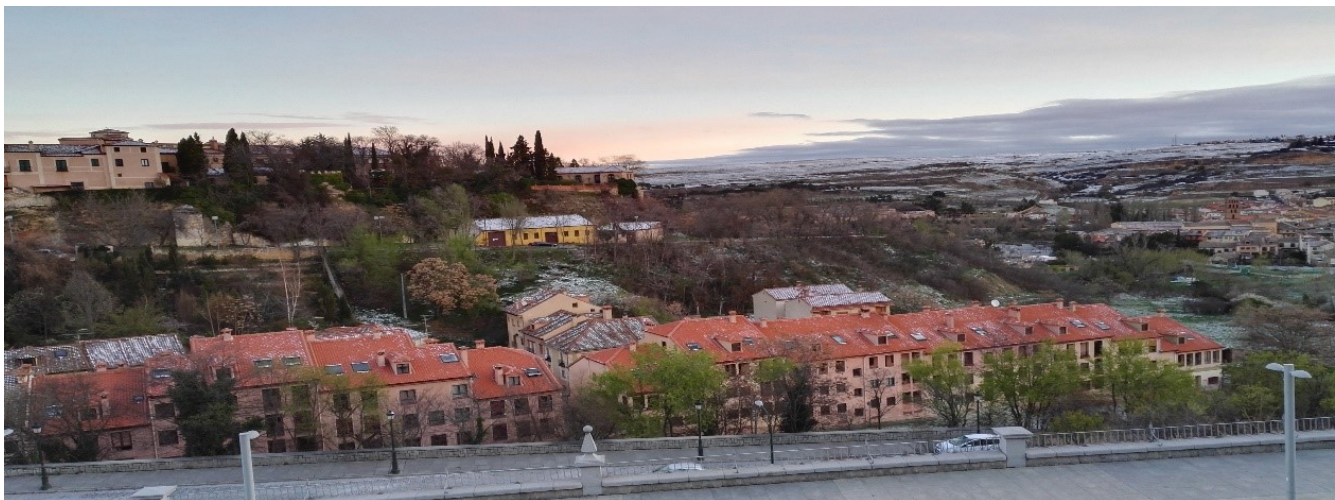


Surprising how "Air Flow John" is in such high spirits considering he's freezing! The same can't be said for Dave who's not feeling very photogenic – the guy on the puffer is Mo – more about him later.....

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

Day 2. Segovia to Guadix - 350 miles

Amazingly, we wake up to clear blue skies and dry roads with snow-capped mountains in the distance.



However, like all good things it just doesn't last.....

We spend the following 5 hours or 350 miles driving in either very cold, very very cold (- 3), rain, sleet and/or snow. Words just can't explain how challenging, although truly epic an experience this is. Add to that my back aches "SO MUCH" I feel physically sick. The last 70 miles, however, are terrific as the sun comes out and temperatures rise to 10 degrees, topped off with a fantastic ride through the Sierra Nevada Valley – a clear example of what a difference the weather makes!

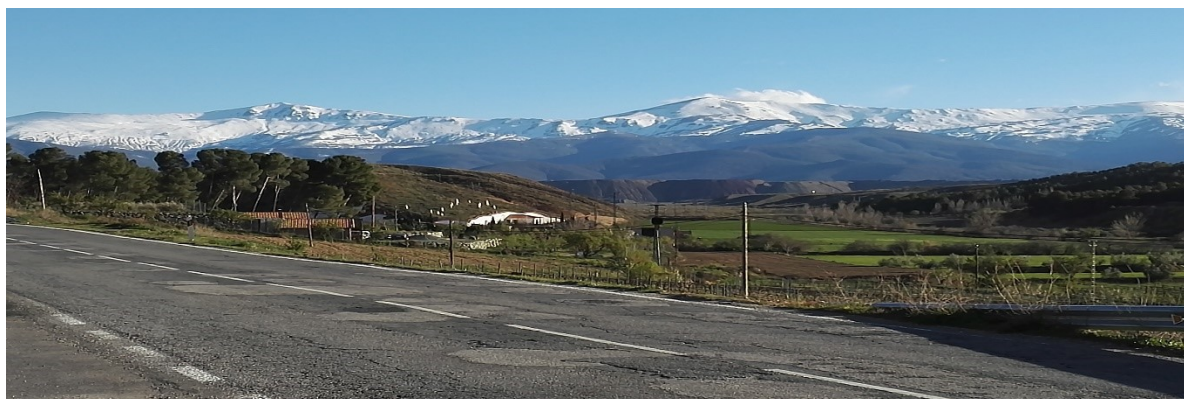
MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

Accommodation tonight consists of rooms buried into the side of a hill - hobbit style!



Day 3. Guadix to Algerias port via Sierra Nevada – 225 miles

It's 8am and we wake up to frost on the bikes, clear blue skies and bright sunshine and by the time we head off at 9 a.m. the temperature has rose to 4 degrees, although as we head up the first mountain pass it drops to -1, heated gear back on sharpish!



MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

As we leave Sierra Nevada, the sun comes out again pushing temperatures to 14 degrees.

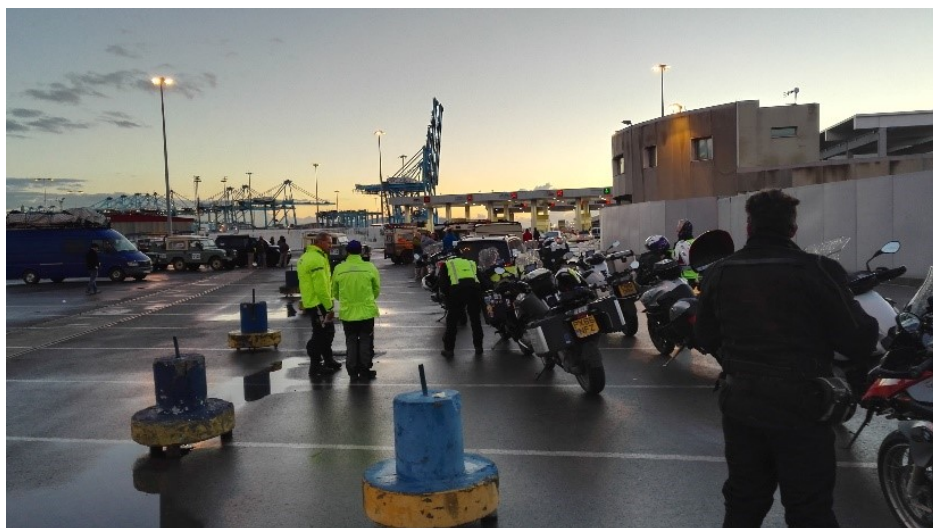


We then head to the coast and it continues to get warmer, although as the weather trend continues, the final push to the port brings more rain. 220 miles later, we arrive at our hotel for a much-needed rest. We have now crossed Spain, which means we take the ferry tomorrow to Morocco and will hopefully be greeted with warmer and drier weather.

P.S. John demonstrated a power drift without the power but he did have the wobbly foot! Oh, and he's loving his new bike as you can tell...

Day 4. Arrive in Africa, head to the blue city of Chefchaouen -120 miles

Early start as we leave the hotel at 6.45am to make the 8am crossing. At last the weather has picked up with clear blue skies - may even be taking out the insulated linings!



Through border control, get the currency, import certificate (VERY IMPORANT!! More about that later) bike insurance and off we go - Africa here we come....

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION



18 degrees crystal clear blue skies – although interesting how they put the potholes and gravel on or around most 90 degree bends!



The fun starts when we enter the RIF Mountains, and to add to the fun, solid white lines are all treated as an advisory and everyone crosses them whenever they wish even if something's coming the other way so you need your wits about you!! Also saw what looked like a dead body on the side of the road - seriously - but I won't go into that here ...

We arrive at the blue city of Chefchaouen - stunning! Where we settle into our hotel for the evening. Been offered marijuana numerous times but no chance of wine or beer (unfortunately!!!)



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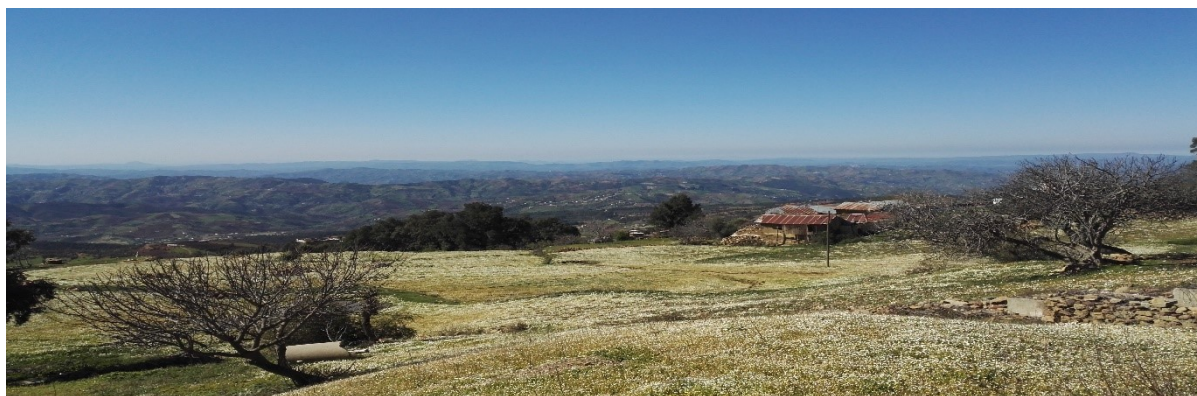
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MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

Day 5. Chefchaouen to Fes - 167 miles

Absolutely fantastic ride today as we head through the RIF mountains passing some left-over snow down to the valley and then up the Atlas Mountains. I just can't believe how beautiful the countryside is and how great the riding is with sweeping bend after bend. We arrive in the hustle and bustle of Fez 250 miles later and temperatures now touching 25° C.



Only downside is my lower back is still really aching.

Off to get some late lunch then a good rest as we have a big push, 285 miles, tomorrow again through the mountains!

Day 6. Fes to Merzouga via high atlas mountains towards Sahara desert – 285 miles

We leave the hotel early at 8 a.m. for the next destination taking in the mid and high Atlas mountains - some great scenery although temperatures drop to 2degrees as we approach 2000 metres. We then enter the mid atlas plains, which consists of a high speed road that bends left and right for 50miles! Great fun.

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION



After clearing that, we see the high atlas snow-capped mountains in the distance.



This is the poorer side of morocco. We stop at the base of the high Atlas mountains for a traditional tagine lunch very basic not sure what we ate but it was tough.



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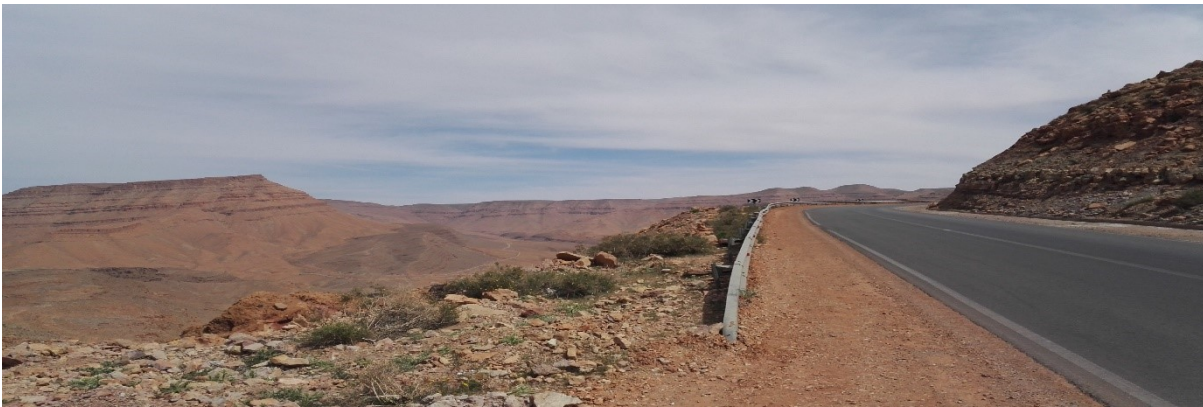
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MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION



Up and over we ride some fantastic roads and as we descend it gets much warmer.



We pass a blue lagoon reservoir, then through a canyon / gorge and an oasis of green palm trees. We stop for fuel before the final 100miles into the Sahara.



It's now 27degrees but feels like 40 and all greenery disappears.

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION



We now enter the Sahara with wide open plains and very strong winds. We pull off the road and take the dirt track to our stop over - a traditional Berber clay and straw house / Kasbah - but beautifully furnished and decorated.



MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION

This is the best adventure ever!



View of the Sahara from our roof terrace and guess what - No pains today - well and truly bike fit 😊 and very pleased I brought the air hawk seat cover.

Ed's note—This is Part.1 of this trip. There will Part.2 and maybe 3 in following months. The pictures alone are spectacular.

IAM ROADSMART TRACK TRAINING DAY

Thursday 14th June 2018—Cost approx. £150 tbc

Castle Combe RideSmart Training Day – All about machine handling

The day will take and at times challenge published advice on motorcycling, the emphasis will be to pull out the best of what is offered in several other locations, including methods used by the Nurburgring Actionteam.

The Day

The mostly practical day will comprise machine handling instruction at slow, medium and circuit speeds. For example what happens if:-

- I grab the front brake? The front wheel is likely to lock up, control is lost so how can I get out of THAT one!
- I stamp on the rear brake. The rear wheel will certainly lock up so how does that help me stop?
- Why do braking, turning and apex points matter and how do those spinning gyroscopes called wheels help us control our machines?

Instruction

Designed to run alongside Roadcraft training with an emphasis on machine dynamics and handling. The day is emphatically not a track day with some extra bells, but will challenge some published techniques by intensive use of the circuit including free lapping.

The day is built around road riding motorcyclists and is about safety and machine control with a ratio of no more than 5 students to 1 instructor and will encourage experimentation and challenge. The circuit is used because it offers acres of tarmac without kerbs, street furniture and oncoming traffic.

Only road legal bikes will be permitted. Outer clothing in textile is also permitted the only stipulation is that two piece suits must be zip and link.

Instructors

Provided by Castle Combe's dedicated team led by Rob Jones and augmented by experienced volunteer trainers tailored to particular requirements and skills.

Speed and control

The overriding aim of the day is to ensure that no participant finds themselves overwhelmed and for everyone to enjoy themselves.



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IAM ROADSMART TRACK TRAINING DAY

Most advanced riders will recognise from their training journey, that as their skill in Observing, Anticipating and Planning(OAP) increases so does safe progress.

On the Castle Combe Circuit those skills will be further developed so that in highway conditions we may well find we have a little more in hand, greater confidence in our own abilities and a better understanding of our machinery and how to control it. AND THEREBY BE SAFER RIDERS.

Day logistics

1. Gymkhana type layouts but ridden at low speed (David Blackledge and Hector Vass supervising)
2. Braking (Jim McCarter supervising)
3. Tyre warming
4. Picking up

Group B on circuit in 5 sub-groups for section training as follows:

1. Braking, gears, turn and exit
2. Turn in determines exit/set up for next bend
3. Double apex
4. 1 handed cornering no hands on straight

Then swop.

Timing logistics

- 0745 registration/noise
- 0830 circuit briefing (Rob Jones)
- 0900 groups split and commence activities
- 0915 section training/slow speed activities
- 1130 all groups assemble in paddock and swop activities
- 1315 lunch (Alex...)

- +/- 50 delegates
- Split into 2 groups of 25 – group A and Group B
- Sub split into working groups of 5
- 1 instructor per sub group when on the circuit

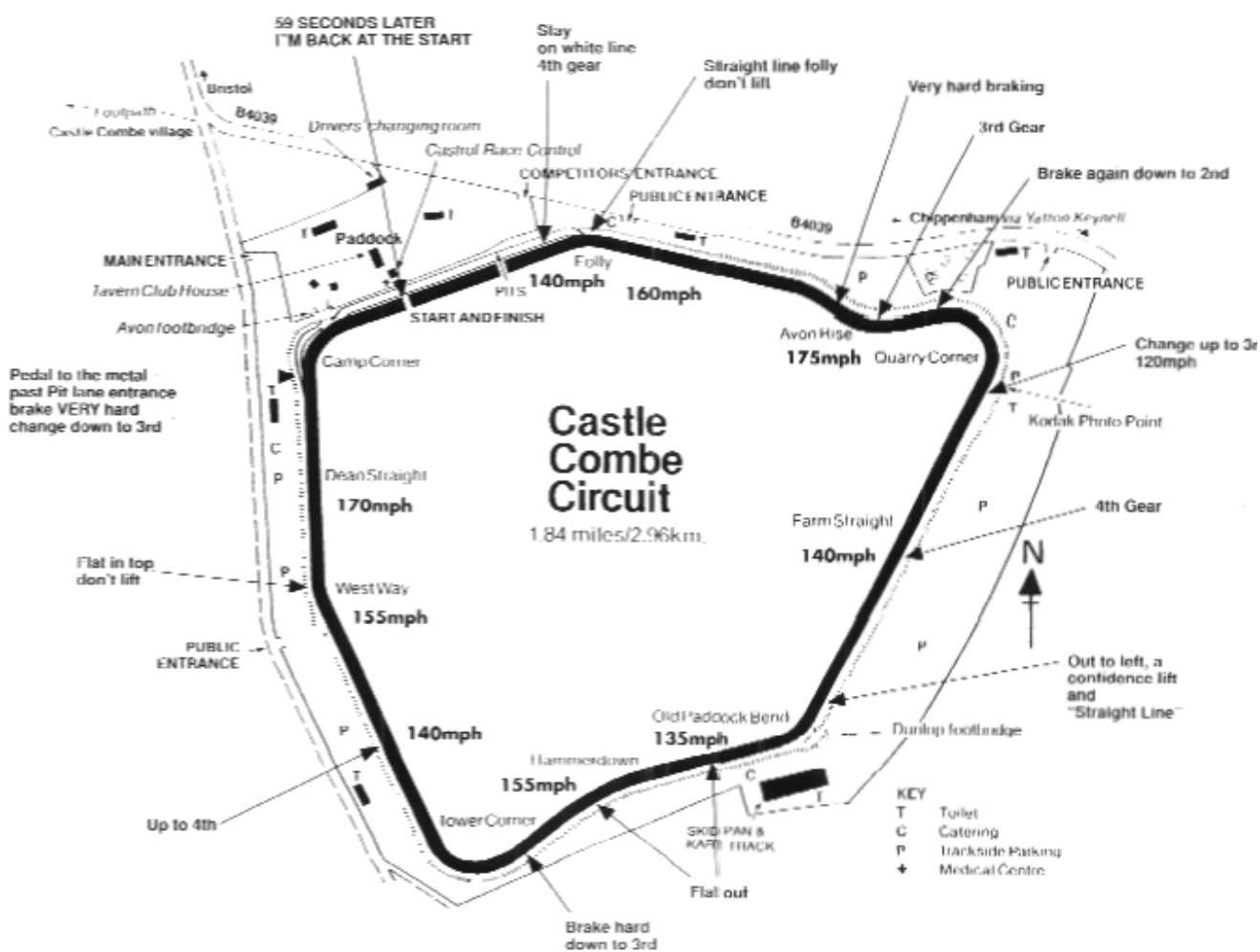
IAM ROADSMART TRACK TRAINING DAY

Activity logistics

- Group A use tarmac/ car park area for low speed riding, including:
- 1400 Theory session (Eddy Lambah-Stoate)
- 1430 on circuit in sub groups as called by marshals - 1st session for each group 1 handed.
- 1630 sessions end
- 1700 debrief and home

Theory session will range from machine dynamics, comparing road and track techniques, the rider's mind and body.

Interested parties should contact [Derek McMullan](#) before the 1st March please.



INTERVIEW WITH GARY BARNES BY ANT CLERICI

This month we interview our new Chief Observer (Worcester) Gary Barnes.

You can see his "bio" on the WHAM website <http://www.wham-motorcycling.org/observers/>

Here's the conversation.....

Good morning Gary thanks for the coffee and a chance to chat

That's OK

My first question is the all-important 'what bike do you ride now?'

It's a BMW R1200GS. The air-cooled model so no fancy stuff like ABS.

love it, it's just a brilliant bike that is perfect for my riding.



What age did you start biking?

Really early, when I was 17, me and my mates had a Vespa, it was always stuck in 2nd gear. We road across local fields, one up, two up...even three up. And fell off a lot!

But that gets biking in your blood – a lifetime's passion.

What has been your longest trip?

It was my trip to Norther Portugal with Smudge (Richard Smith). We

met other WHAM bikers in the Picos for a few days before heading further on. We rode through the national parks.



And your longest single journey?

Actually, it's on the same trip. The weather changed in Portugal and decided things looked better in Spain. But not western Spain – Valencia.

That's impressive – Portugal to Valencia in one day? Over 500 miles?

Yes, all on the autovia at speed; it was an amazing journey – me the bike and the road with no other distractions - but all I wanted to do when we got there was to throw the bike in the sea and never ride again. But that

changed after a cold beer!

What is your dream bike – money no object?

A new 1200GS TE There's nothing to add! (Just an upgrade!)

So when did you start observing?

I passed my advanced test in 2008 and begun observing a year later.

What do you get from observing?

Two things, first it makes me keep up my skills.

Riding is always being refreshed through riding with other observers

and our training days. Second, seeing associates become better safer riders



Finally Gary what are you looking forward to this year?

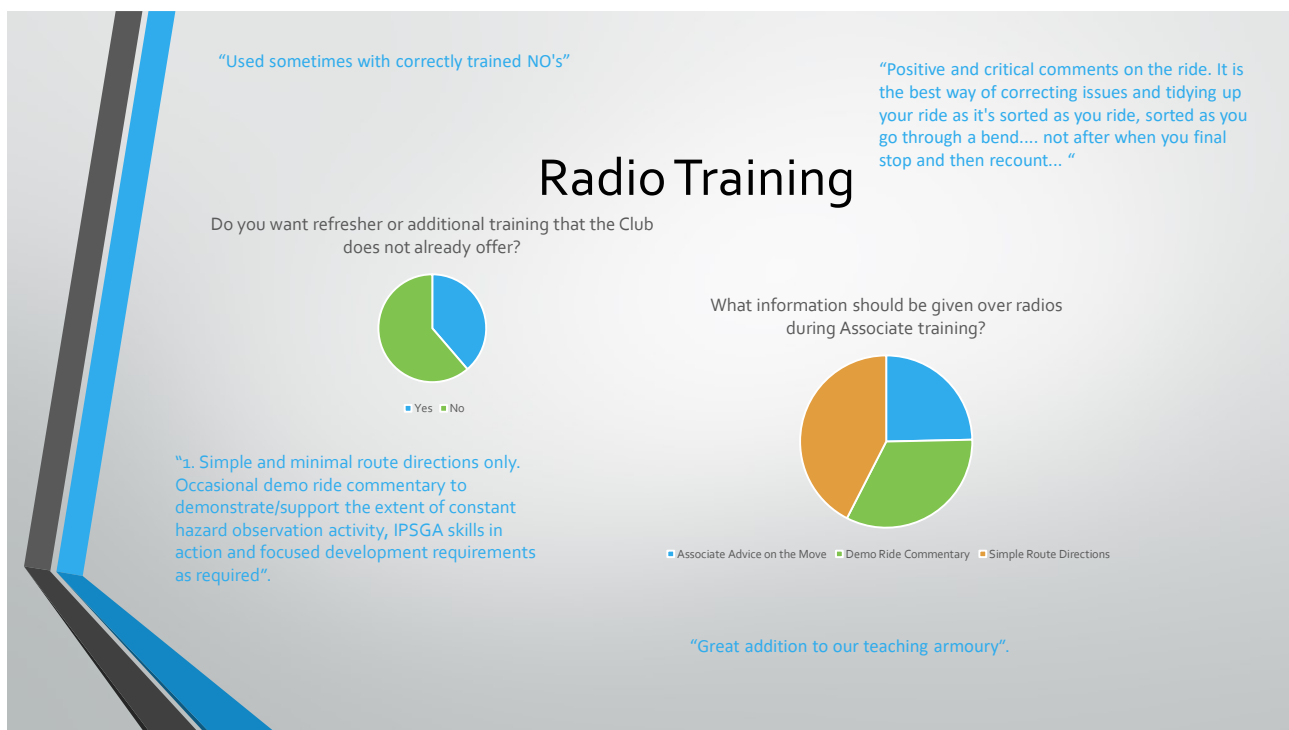
The trip to Luxembourg and continuing to help associates.

What about your new role as chief observer?

Yes, a challenge but should be fine working with Alex and the rest of the team.

Thank you Gary – can I have another coffee.....?

WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....



WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....

Video Camera / Radio Training Actions

- A number WHAM Observers have access to video cameras and radios that can be used for training.
- Associates should speak to their Observer about access to video or radio training training .
- Members can request Video or radio training as part of any refresher training, please speak to any of the Observers about this.
- WHAM's Training Team will formulate a policy on Radio training in response to the Survey results and inline with any IAM policies.

Ride Programme

Are Summertime Evening Rides good?



Are the current ride start points OK?



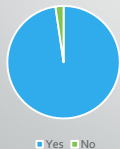
Are members interested in rides during the working week.



Are the current ride start times OK?



Does the club organise enough day rides?



Does the club organise the right amount of rides?



Are Observed Runs acceptable on all types of group rides?



"A bit earlier would be ok for me."
"Maybe an hour or two later?"

WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....

Ride Program Actions

- Canvass Members for mid-week ride organisers.
- Add the 'Trumpet Crossroads Café destination to the ride program.
- Make some day ride destinations places of interest (e.g. RAF Cosford).
- Discuss changing ride policy to accommodate Observed Runs (Safety is the main concern here).

Natter Nights

"Good central location for both Hereford and Worcester".

"Do we have an examiner who could attend to give advice on a regular basis?"

"Different venues on a rota perhaps?"

Would you like more time for social chat at natter nights?



■ Yes ■ No

"I always find the talks very informative and useful, first two that instantly come to mind is Del's camo talk, then Night riding with Derek. Both great as they interacted/involved with the audience well".

How often would you like speakers at natter nights?



■ Sometimes ■ Always

Is the Current day & time OK for natter nights?



■ Yes ■ No

"The Falcon have supported WHAM for a long time, so from that point of view I'm happy enough. But wider variety of food would often be welcome".

Opinion of the Falcon as a meeting place



■ Poor ■ Average ■ Good ■ Excellent

"Central to group but could be alternated with venue nearer East Worcestershire."

WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....

Natter Night Actions

- Arrange Night Riding Training.
- Put on a 'Tech Night' e.g. GPS Training / explanation. Motorcycle maintenance etc.
- Engage more IAM Staff for talks (examiners etc).

Special Events

Are you interested in off road riding?



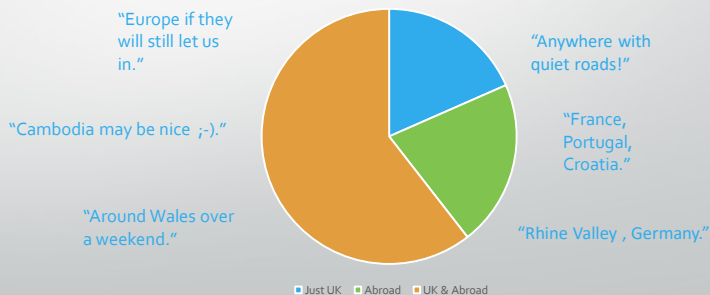
Are you interested in touring with WHAM?



Are Trackdays of Interest to you?



Where would you like to go touring?



WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....

Special Event Actions

- Advertise IAM Track Days in the Newsletter and Website.
- Look at organising Off Road training.
- Publish club touring events on the website and Newsletter.

Social Media

Do you use Social Media?



■ Yes ■ No

Should we have a presence on other social media?



■ Yes ■ No

If yes to us having a presence on other social media, what do you suggest?



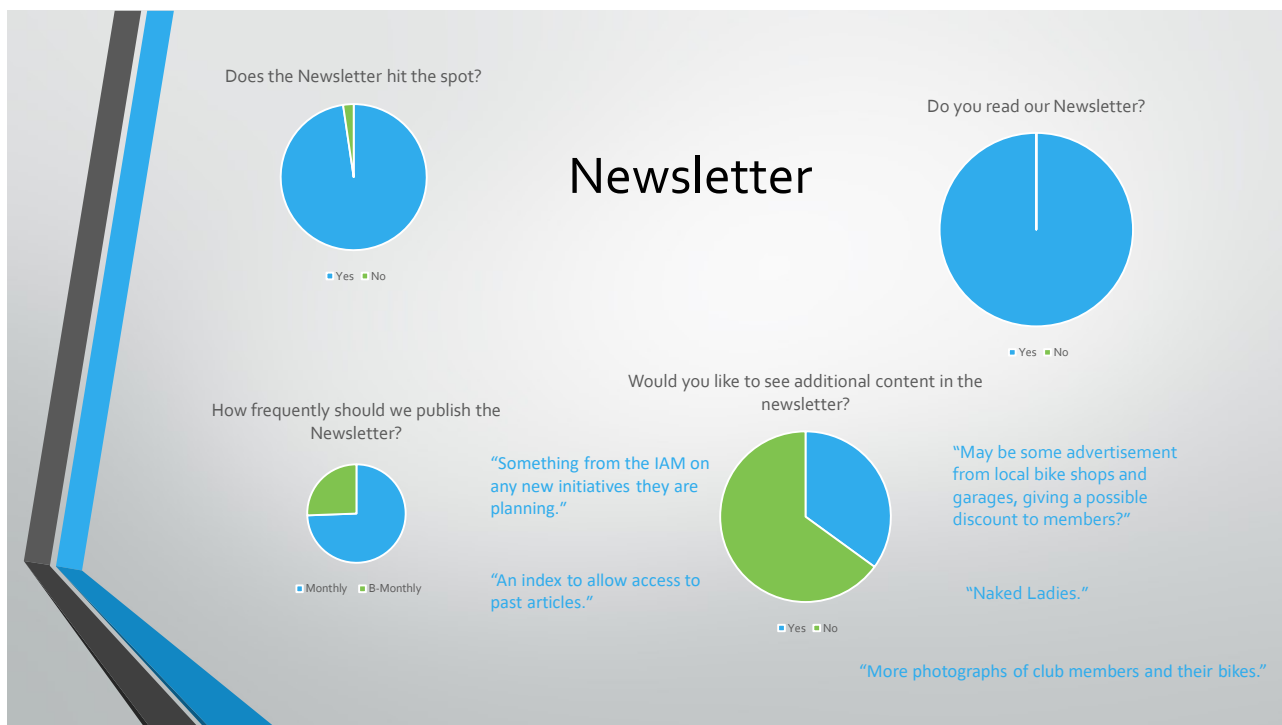
■ No idea ■ Whatsapp ■ Twitter

If you use social media, are you also a member of WHAM's Closed Facebook group?



■ Yes ■ No

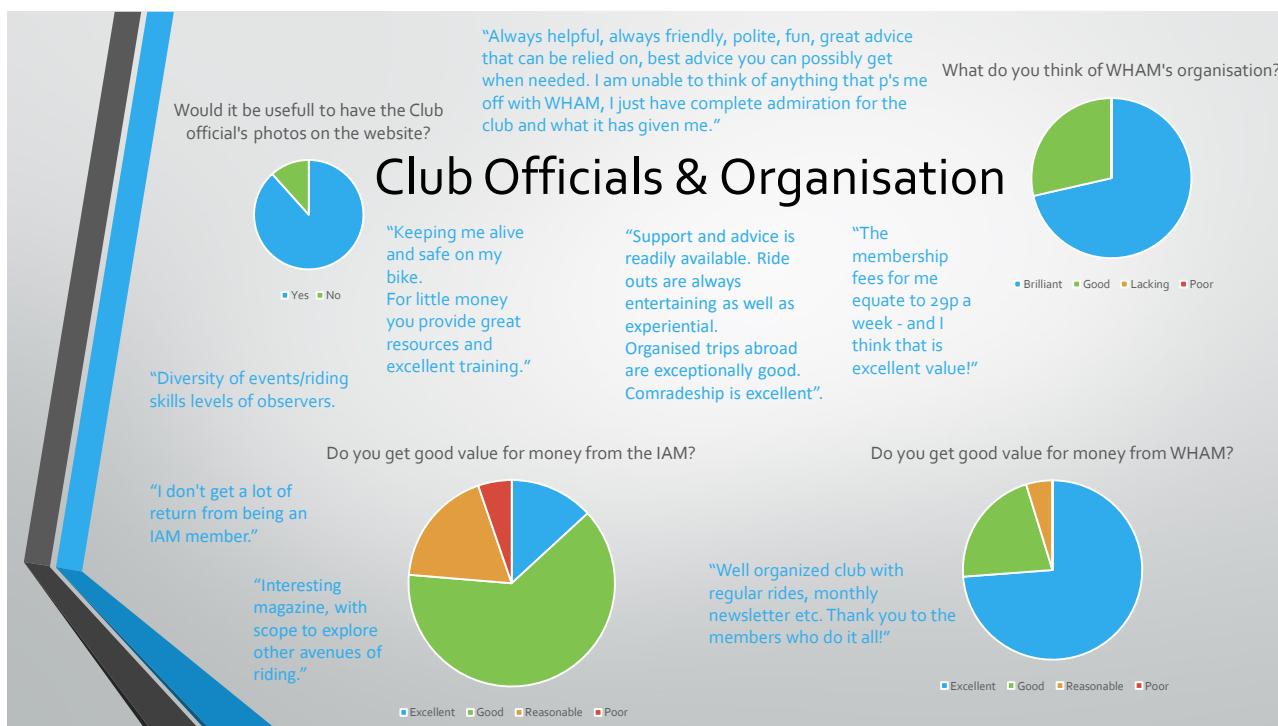
WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....



Social Media & Newsletter Actions.

- Look into free advertising from local bike shops (with potential member discount).
- Include a note in the Newsletter on how to use the website (e.g. searching for old Newsletters and articles)
- Encourage Members to take photos on club rides for inclusion in the Newsletter and on the website.

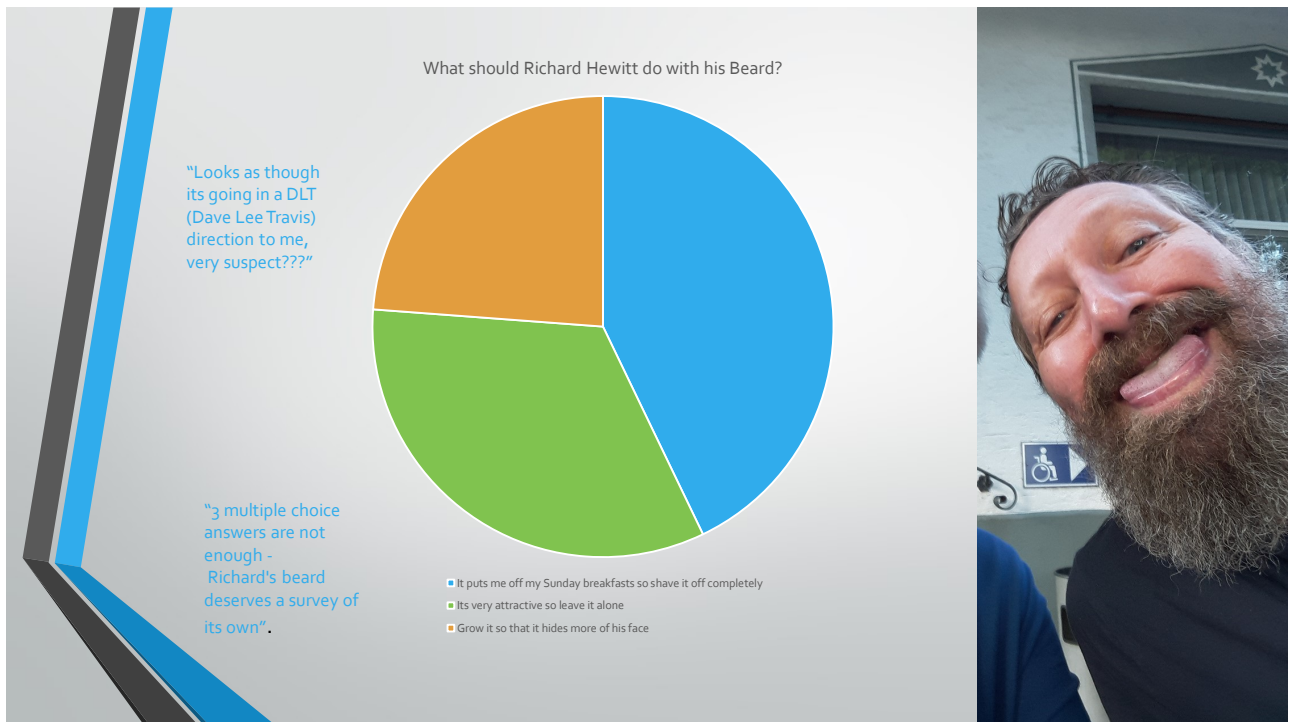
WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....



Club Officials and Organisation

- Gather Committee Member and Observer's photographs and Boi's for the website and publish.
- Challenge the IAM to give us ten good reasons to remain a Member.

WHAM ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS....



End..... Thanks for your attention!

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

Men, bikes and talking err...rubbish!

Just the other day, over the Christmas period in fact, I was introduced to a Haynes manual. My younger readers will not know what that is. They won't, partly because it doesn't require stored electricity to function, but mainly because it has words and is constructed from illegal logging (probably) versus some recognisable (to them) derivative of oil. When was the last time you saw anyone under the age of 40 reading a book? I blame Alan Sugar, his Commodore computer and space invaders. Therein lies the root for the demise of reading. And apart from all that, no self-respecting motorcyclist under that age has any need to tax their grey matter any further than feeding their steed, attempting the largely futile act of cleaning it (spoked wheels? Hah!) and 'pop your PIN in now' at the service desk. No need to get a Deep In Yuk manual at all.... ever!

But my older reader(s) (*ed – confidence Alan confidence, this goes global on the interweb*) will fondly recall the oil smeared pages of focus-challenged, monochrome photos revealing Haynes' utterly commendable efforts to demystify the ever-dragging Velocette clutch adjustment technique or the dark workings of the inevitably rusty, peeling, black voltage regulator: courtesy of Lucas, Prince of Darkness, whose mysterious mission in life was to withdraw the gift of light at the precise moment of leaning into a greasy B-road corner, on a very dark, windy and wet night.....that isn't actually there!

I digress.

This manual was not aimed at who you think. No, not your gracefully ageing, grey pound endowed, unjustly lucky generation (as my under 40's view them), dewy-eyed, nostalgia intoxicated, would-be Vincent owner but ...wait for it ...AMERICANS! Yes indeed. It explains the curious nature of British or more accurately English, gentlefolk and Northerners. It's well written and much wittier than your faithful columnist. For the record it's called 'Haynes explains the British'.



This led me to thinking about how we talk about our motor bicycles and motorcycling. That's bikes and biking if you insist. The trouble is that our enthusiasm just isn't infectious. It never was!

Him: "Hi Love, I've managed to extract the layshaft from the RRT2 (*that's a BSA gearbox -Ed*) and whad'y'er know... second gear is missing a tooth which was fortunately clinging to the sump magnet or I'd have been a gonner last Sunday."

Her: "Would you now like your supper on a plate or on your Haynes manual?"

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

And it could be worse. Much worse...

Her: “Why does the chicken taste of engine oil?”

Him: “Oh my pretty wife, it’s because I used the oven to heat up the crankcase to get the main bearing to drop out. Worked a treat!”



In desperation we turn to each other. Like-minded souls who find getting wet, cold and financially embarrassed worth it for the illusion that we could take on Guy Martin if only he'd visit our favourite stretch. But is there a difference between our cultures? Do Northerners talk different rubbish to that of Southerners? Do the Welsh boys talk about anything other than sheep? Can anyone even understand the North East lads or Black Country boys, come to think of it? Now I realise that WHAM members are above all this and like to discuss the merits of choosing the gap between the S and L versus the O and W but when the Chief Observer leaves the room, I'll wager it turns to stories of bravado and daring-do. Okay, (sigh!) between the A and R and the A and F. Happy now, Boyos?

Would we hear them Northerners talk about “Us ruwads t'moorwah in nowt' but t'vest n t'box” ? Do Southerners fret about breathalysers after a half of Courage? Do the Scots regale us, “ Aye....a well tidy hoondre'tousand mile frim ma chayne, isnae belter, d'yer ken?” (*Aye Right! - Ed*). Do our friends from West of the Severn discuss the grip characteristics of sheep excrement over ShellGrip? Do the Scunthorpe crew talk about the length of their swing arm while Londoners rave about their roadkill badger-fur adorned helmets? Our Scouser comrades would just eat the blessed thing!. What do we think of teddy bears attached to female pillions? Floppy hands stuck onto helmets? GoPro's stuck all over the place. Ah! Lots of rubbish talk potential there.....

“Heh! I got this film of this d***k doing a three point on the M57!”

“That’s nothing mate, I filmed a Welsh biker.....”

You get my point. We need to stick together. Not to be separated. Like horse dung baked on your radiator. Long live the Natter Night!

PS. Apologies to our lady members for the gender specific title. Forgive me, it's just that you good folk don't talk such utter b*****s as we do.



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