

WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



APRIL 2018



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

WHAM has the ability to surprise! Last Sunday I was being shown by Eric, yes Eric, to make a balloon doggie. A few minutes later Derek was chucking balls at Stuart who then picked up a cricket bat and defended himself. Later we were riding in the warm spring sunshine. There's more feedback on the observer training day later but before I leave the subject I must thank the WHAM training team, our chief observers Gary and Alex, John Nixon (with an X) and our guests, the Inter-Group Training Team, for an instructive and well run day.



The other news is we have booked Throckmorton for our Slow Riding Day for the weekend 2nd and 3rd June. The Training Team will be looking for help in setting up on the Saturday and clearing up for an hour or so when we finish. Your observers will be there as usual helping, guiding and advising (*whilst making balloon animals?* - Ed). If you've been before you'll know how the day hones your skills, for everyone else new to the slow riding day, it's brilliant fun, instructive and culminates in WHAM's slow riding race.

Ant Clerici

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CHIEF OBSERVERS COLUMN

Back in the saddle

At last the weather is easing up and Sunday rides look more on the cards. In last month's newsletter our esteemed chief observer on the Hereford side gave us a reminder of the bike check we should all execute regularly. So with that in mind I thought it would be good to recap and set our minds to safe riding.

As an advanced rider we use a system of motorcycle control to negotiate today's HAZARDS. (Anything that is an actual or potential danger). This system of control is known to us as IPSGA.:

INFORMATION
POSITION
SPEED
GEAR
ACCELERATION

For some members who have not been out regularly over the winter it's a good time to dig out the HTBBR and refresh the theory side of the system. Bringing this to the forefront of your mind will help remember when out on the road and ease you back into a thinking rider.

REMEMBER it takes time to get back to the level you attained at the end of last season.

All WHAM'S observers are nationally qualified so if in doubt ask we are here to help whether you are full member or an associate.

Enjoy the new season and safe riding.

Gary Barnes



MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3

Adrian and John's adventure to the Sahara Desert and back...

Day 10. Rest in Marrakesh around the pool and in the Grand Bazaar



MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3

Roof top lunch – chap on the top right is Willie – little does he know he’s left something quite important in the last hotel!



Day 11. Marrakesh to Meknes – 335Miles

We head off at 9 o'clock saying goodbye to Marrakech and heading north to Meknes.

We stop off at the waterfalls but just have a coffee as have seen them before, back on the bikes for another 335mile ride to the next hotel.



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MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3

Temperatures are rising rapidly, hitting 30 degrees though it feels much hotter in the bright sunshine. As we are covering such a large distance, we see the scenery change from sand and rock to green fields and the sheep getting fluffier!



We then head up the mountains again with some fantastic climbs and descents.



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MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3



We stop at petrol station to fuel and get something to eat, there's not much choice but with over 100 miles we get what we can - microwaved tagine chicken - not that bad actually!

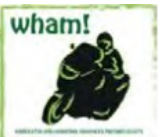


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MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3

As we head further North it cools to 17degrees. Zips up and warmer gloves on – it's now 7pm and we still have 50miles to go. Arrive at the hotel at 7.45pm, with the total miles covered so far equalling 2,500! Time for food and beer!



Day 12. Sedate ride from Meknes to the port of Tangier as only 185miles to cover

Lovely temperature and easy roads. We stop at a roadside shop and pick up a couple of pots which just about fit in the top box. Dave's not too well today so we take it very steady. Gets me really thinking about road safety again as we soon cross back into Europe. Some interesting video footage today including the local driving styles! 100 miles covered, we stop for a basic kofta lunch before heading up and over the RIF mountains for the final time.

Great ride across the mountains although with the amount of pot holes is more of an off road adventure! The GS is in its element flicking left and right as it weavers its way and when the inevitable happens it soaks up the punishment with ease. The tyres are also holding up well conti attacks for life! We stop for coffee and let the group go ahead to give Dave some chill time.

Our last day in Africa was certainly fun packed topping off what has been the adventure of lifetime conquering Morocco via the Sahara desert.

Day 13. Tangier to Cordoba - 225 miles

Early start, up at 6am for a 7.30am departure to the ferry port. Have allowed an extra 30mins as Willie has left his bike import certificate at the hotel in Agoudal (800 miles away) but he's sure it won't be a problem!!!!!! Mine also has water damage so hope they don't make an issue of it.

Apparently says something nice and religious in the background....

MOROCCO BLOG—A WHEELER & CONWAY PRODUCTION PART 3



I get through customs ok- but Willie gets sent back to see the police and they won't let any of us turn around - 45mins to board and still no Willie! The ferry pulls away, still no sight of Willie!

Apparently, he has been told to go to a police station but no idea where that is and not sure what they will do. Not good and a warning to anyone who travels to Morocco - don't lose your vehicle entry paperwork!

220 mile day through the Pico mountains so should be great riding but quite slow going - sadly Willie won't be with us today!!

Very hot today - arrived at hotel, Shower, beer , wine, bed, rest as 350miles tomorrow !!!!



FOR SALE

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OBSERVER TRAINING DAY 2018

All bar one of WHAMS >20 in number Observers are qualified to 'National' level. This was a fantastic achievement for all in 2017 and was testament to the sheer amount of effort and commitment that is the hallmark of all that WHAM does.

However, hard won skills go 'off' if not refreshed and nurtured and so this April saw as many of those National Observers as possible attend a days further training day, hosted at The Falcon in Bromyard. As mentioned in our chairs opening article we had a number of experienced chaps and chappess's from the inter-group training team and it must be said the whole thing went off rather well.

WHAM stalwart, the venerable John Nixon, expended literally a full weeks preparation into developing an fun yet meaningful adult learning session on developing the best communication skills to deal with all sorts of associates and with the help of the more experienced Observers, and the National Inter-Group trainers, we all took to the road to practice our newly tuned communication skills.

Thanks obviously go to our newly appointed Chief Observers (Barnes & Hoyle) and also all of those that attended in whatever capacity making the day the resounding success we hoped it would be.

Now to share a few nice pictures and look forward to us all being able to hone our skills further during 2018 with lot's of new associates (more about that shortly....)



WELSH NATIONAL RALLY 2018

Annually, roughly on the second weekend in May (this year on Saturday 5th May), the Clive Motorcycle Club of Welshpool lay on a 'scatter rally' that can take you to all points of the compass within the wonderful country that is Wales.

There's a choice of awards on offer and dependant on stamina, commitment, navigation skills, and available time you can cover hundreds of miles in a quest for a lovely piece of Welsh slate celebrating your achievements as you visit countless beautiful locations, most off the beaten track, scattered around the country.

In the past 19-years I've completed the rally 16-times and each one holds special memories, not all of them enjoyable, yet each memory was hard-won and will last a lifetime.

This year I'm looking for a team to take-on the challenge in the hope that by employing WHAM members shared intelligence and navigational skills we can compete for the highest award (Platinum & Dragon award). This is something I've struggled to complete solo, although I do have a very good idea of how to structure a winning team to achieve this challenge.

Further details can be found [here](#).

The team(s) should be no more than four riders a piece, with duties such as team leader, fuel/rest monitor, scribe (yes you have to write stuff down) and 'final mile' lead all assigned given individual skills.

The cost to enter is £25 per individual and if you'd like to pull a team together please do get in-touch or just go ahead and enter as you like.

There are also Scottish and English equivalents yet Scotland is just too far away to make there and back in a weekend and the English one is a pale comparison to the wonderful near empty roads and beautiful scenery we find west of the border (as we all know) - Richard Hewitt



WHAT DOES THE IAM DO FOR ME...?

What does the IAM do for me?

From time-to-time there's an inevitability that we hear the question "What do I get for my IAM membership fee?", or, "Why do I pay WHAM and IAM?", or other similar questions you may have heard. All of these indicate the speaker does not see value in the IAM.

For all our members WHAM, the local Group, is the face of IAM. We don't often see other IAM members or staff on our local events. So, it is perhaps the lack of physical presence which causes the "What..." questions. The list below isn't comprehensive, but it does cover most of the IAM's support to WHAM and some 200 other local Groups around the British Isles:

IAM provides the **entire infrastructure** supporting the operation of local Groups, amongst other things this includes:

The technical standards and QA regime to which all Observers, Groups and Examiners work (independently assessed by IMI).

All the training materials every Associate and Observer uses. As well as initial training this material remains useful and relevant to those who passed their test some time ago (...prod, prod!).

Independent QA of local Groups' training through an Associate test with an Examiner and National Observer tests with an Area Service Delivery Manager.

Training, qualification and continuing QA of all IAM Examiners.

Regional Training seminars for Observers and Masters Tutors.

Development opportunities for IAM members through the F1rst, Masters and Fellow routes. It also provides excellent track-based training at Thruxton, Castle Combe, Croft, Silverstone and other UK circuits.

Public Liability insurance of Observers and the local Group in organised Group rides.

Support to recruitment into Groups by providing a web and telephone presence to guide potential members to their local Group. In addition, Marketing literature is prepared to assist local Groups with recruitment and awareness.

Organisation of national conferences and regional forums for the Groups.

Provision of a network of Regional Service Delivery Managers whose role is to support the Groups in any way they can. Robbie Downing, our Regional manager, recently spoke to us about the motorcycle Masters.



WHAT DOES THE IAM DO FOR ME...?

So, that's what it does for WHAM and other Groups directly. Let's switch tack for a moment and consider that IAM RoadSmart is a Charity: so your membership is your way of supporting a Charity with whom you have a common interest: Road Safety – specifically your Road Safety. To support that objective IAM does:

Independent road safety related research. This ranges from simple desk research to major academic forums and the sponsorship of doctoral research topics.

Lobbies at Ministerial and Mandarin level with just about every relevant Government department:

IAM has a seat at the Road Transport Minister's Motorist forum. In a spin-off from that IAM has now formed, and is leading, an Industry coalition as Government will no longer issue road safety targets.

Is involved in Highways England's investment plan (next 5 years of road infrastructure development).

Works internationally with FIA in Brussels on research topics and provides driver training expertise.

Publishes its own and relevant third-party research to the conventional Press and the web to raise awareness and debate on road safety issues.

Frequently provides expert comment to TV and Press on topical road safety issues.

Provides weekly news to Observers and Committee members to keep them aware of all this activity.

Provides the IAM RoadSmart Magazine 3 times a year to you to keep you informed.



Advanced riders and drivers represent only 0.3% of the UK driving licence-holders. To make an impact we need more awareness and more “chat” to engage a wider cross-section of the riding and driving public, the opinion-formers and legislators. That's what IAM is doing.—Derek McMullan

TEST PASS

Good news reaches the Editors desk in that Andy Powell (pictured next to some bloke not called Alex) passed his advanced test recently at F1rst standard—*well done and welcome Andy—Ed*. We understand el supremo Mr Alex Hole (CO Hereford) was Andy's National Observer for this triumph.



CHARITY RUN—MARTYN HILLIER

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MORRIS MINOR

...& JOHN O'GROATS TO LAND'S END!

20TH APRIL 2018

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wham!



MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2

Well as it turns out we are a real globe trotting collective here in little old Hereford and Worcester. Some fantastic beautiful pictures to follow of another great motorcycle expedition in 2017. If YOU, Yes YOU, want to organise something like this, either on UK soil or abroad, don't be shy, come to a natter nite and tell your fellow members your outline plans.

Mongolia by Shineray Mustang, Jem, Menna and Lili, 2017 Cont'd

Sometime in the afternoon, hot, tired and hungry, though with still inflated tyres, we reached a large river, the Har Bukin Gol. At the crossing was a sturdy bridge and thankfully a little village, not marked on our map. Here we refuelled and shopped in the Mini Market, helped by the shopkeeper's tiny daughter, Namona, who was learning English at school.

The next village was said to be 100km ahead, so off we trundled in that direction, only to be rudely interrupted by Menna capsizing in a nasty, rutty dip...rear tyre totally flat again and this time no inflating would coax it to life. We had passed a fairly convivial patch shortly before with a few straggling trees and a dry river gully, so back there we limped and set up a cosy camp.



We were amazed by the size of lorries which wended their way slowly past. Numerous small birds fluttered around and we glimpsed our first hoopoe among the rocks. Next morning, before it got too hot, Jem replaced the punctured inner tube.

MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2



It took all day to get to the next town, Orchon, on the Orchon river, where we tried to get help with a dead electric start at a fuel stop. As the proprietor advised us to try in the larger town of Bulgan, a helpful Mongolian with tee-shirt rolled up over his tummy got out of his car, delved into the bike and threw out a fuse. No more problem.



MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2

We camped next to the river, enjoyed a well-earned wash and splash and admired huge demoiselle cranes on the far bank.



As we relaxed and set up camp, a whole family descended on their Shineray from a hilltop ger: dad, mum, baby, toddler, small child and washing. After a family wash the children played happily nearby as mum washed clothes in the river. While we cooked we were investigated by four or five large hounds, a bit scary so we collected piles of stones and several stout clubs for emergency use. However, they responded well to stale doughnuts and didn't cause any trouble.



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MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2

We got to Bulgan by midmorning the next day, and treated ourselves to lunch in a café. It wasn't easy to decipher the menu nor to ask for anything vegetarian! The road from Bulgan onward surprised us by being immaculate tarmac, faster going but fewer options to get off the road due to it having steep banks/ditches on either side. A torrential downpour left us less than keen to camp; we lodged in an exorbitantly priced, very basic wooden cabin among larch trees, toilets too unmentionably foul to use.



It turned out that the road was tarmacked all the way to Moron, our next destination, and we covered many scenic but less engaging kilometres, stopping at a collection of trucks on a hilltop selling produce such as bilberries out of big plastic drums - which we bought – and fermented mares milk – which we didn't. Here we met the first Europeans of our travels, a couple of enthusiastic and intrepid cycling Belgians who we assisted by giving them some of our cooking-stove petrol.

Later we stopped for lunch at a tiny roadside eatery, yum! Met two elderly German bikers, seasoned Mongolian explorers, with whom we discussed the merits of Chinese v. Japanese motorcycles.

MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2



As a diversion from riding all day we had noted some historic sites marked on the map. 'Ancient Babylik' sounded interesting so we diverted off the road through a rough looking village in search of cultural highlights. We rode to the top of an extremely steep grassy hill, replete with a ovoos, bits of wood, cloth rags, the odd crutch, and devotees in a couple of local busses. The views were totally amazing atop sheer cliffs to a river below, but there was no sign of anything remotely like an Ancient Babylik. We later found out that this elusive Babylik was once a main city of the Uyghurs who were the first to define and amalgamate Mongolia centuries before Genghis Khan.



MONGOLIA BLOG—BY JEM, MENNA AND LILI PART 2

As night began to fall we were disheartened by finding nowhere pleasant to camp in the bleak emptiness and no way off the road, but our luck was in; among a lonely cluster of wayside shacks stood a hotel, and yes, they did have a room in which the three of us could share two twin beds.



One of the girls working there, Nomin, was very friendly, spoke a bit of English, and looked after us well. We enjoyed a hot meal and beer while a large bunch of rowdy Mongolian travellers ate and downed copious amounts of vodka in a back room before piling back into their vehicle and driving off into the night.



THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

Trump, Trade and Harley Davidson

Hello readers! I'm back!

Some of you may have noticed my absence from the last newsletter and this was due to me taking a cold bath after rabbiting on about matters 'non-PC'. The editor reminds me, "you can't please all of the people all of the time"; yet please do remember my brief is to round-up the newsletter with a tongue in-cheek look back at matters cyclomotive and I aim to entertain!



So, let's move on.

As I write the EU is considering retaliation with tariffs of their own on Harley motorcycles and Levi jeans, two quintessential American icons joined at the saddle, if unpredictable President Trump slaps tariffs on European steel and aluminium. He might have pressed the red button by the time you read this but be consoled, it is infinitely less perilous to your motorcycling future than him launching Armageddon with Rocket Man.

Whatever you think about President Trump it's hard not to admit the applecart is well tipped over, if not actually upset. The sight of him in the Oval Office signing papers to slap tariffs on China is enough to make your tummy turn. The largest economy in the World facing off the second largest...hmmm....

Trump and Harley Davidson have a lot in common but not everything. There's no evidence to suggest Harley D's involvement with Stormy Daniels. Yet both have nurtured an image of being rebels with a cause. In the case of Mr Donald Trump, almost unfathomably - though from what we now suspect to be skilful manipulation by Cambridge Analytica - his 'let's be disruptive' cause is being realised in his Presidency. What next...World Domination?



So what is the Harley 'cause'?

My take is that it hasn't got one! Yes, yes, I know one was created for it courtesy of Hollywood. The whole open road and freedom, individualism and 'definitely not mainstream'. And yes, there were some 'badass' gangs in the US that gained notoriety far beyond their numbers deserved. But really, what is individual or rebellious about Harleys now?

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

Some while ago I fancied a change of bike. So I decided to visit a Harley Davidson dealership and after parking my oriental motorcycling masterpiece, which my Harley-owning mate remarked was like wearing a plastic watch only for him to admit, under pressure, he wore plastic underpants, I entered the busy showroom. It was like stepping onto a 60's Fonda film set. First mistake: Hi-vis. Second mistake: no beard. Third mistake: only 11 and three quarter stone. Fourth mistake: no macho waistcoat. I could go on. I stood tall in the face of a swathe of dark glassed eyes simmering from clumps of impenetrable facial hair, inflated my 37" chest till the hi-vis strained taught and swaggered.....out!

Now that was a decade and a half ago. I learned just last week of some of our WHAM guys who visited the self-same dealership recently. The shop was still full of the same people, amazing!

Our foolishly intrepid boys, garbed in their rugged and oh-so-practical adventure kit (*also mostly caked in 'rural road-grime' – (Matt D) – Ed*), looked as tender as three blind mice stumbling into a cat's protection rally. A showroom crammed with razor-spurning rebels sporting cobwebby tassels, Stetsons, bandanas, tattoos, studded everything, bare flesh, yes! in winter, and our lads felt as comfortable as a spotty youth in an Ann Summers outlet. Derrières clenched to crack walnuts and staring pointedly outside, they sought to be spared impending humiliation by loudly admiring the mighty steeds of these daunting human images. But not a parked Harley to be seen. Just a clutch of smart cars, nice desirable cars.



Which goes to support my point. Trump has a self-image of being disruptive, swamp draining, and unpredictable. No doubt he's living *his* dream. It's not mine and probably not yours either and we have to live with as yet unknown consequences. But I contend, Mr Harley's and Mr Davidson's incarnations are no longer disruptive to the motorcycling scene; there is no swamp of undesirable brands to drain away and they are utterly predictable in terms of cornering ability, if not exactly knee-down.

So why would you buy a Harley? Now please, before you Harley owners get onto Ed to complain, please bear with. I respect your choice. No ifs, no buts. At least three of my mates have them, and they love them. In secret, I've HD envy.

A long while go I was so nervous of riding one that my mate accompanied me to an off main road area where we swapped bikes. I got aboard, feet first and yo! I wasn't terrified at all; until we ventured onto the lane and met the first corner. Despite the ensuing Olympic standard slalom impression, I totally, absolutely, get the awesome, grumping, thumping, aural-damaging percussion output affecting Rottweilers to whimper and car alarms to trill their happy sound from your passing.

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THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

Another mate says it would be like having a mistress! You'd have a secret thrill, knowing that at any moment it could all go so terribly wrong. A kind of dodgy relationship where you slide surreptitiously off to the shed, don the dark glasses, get the kit on, affix the beard, hide in your matt black jet with kaleidoscope shades and push, if you can, out of earshot to swing your leg over the Sundowner saddle - so named 'cos the ad claims "You can ride till sundown!" – though personally I doubt that - and no one knows who you really are. You're living a dream. You've stepped into a different world - for a time. And I think we all like a bit of that! And Mr President would have been in a lot less hassle if he'd just bought a Harley Davidson instead! There is no 'cause'. It's about feeling different because when we're on our Harley we're someone else. We're in a virtual reality because it's not really us, is it? With a Harley we're not endorsing a cause, we're simply bringing a personal fantasy to life and it's brilliant! It's magical!

And the irony of Trump's tariff on steel is it could hit Harley badly. And they don't need that. And we don't need that. Long live the American icon.

