

WORCESTER & HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



SEPTEMBER 2019



CHAIR'S FOREWORD

What's to be gained from just looking?

This note was triggered by a chat with someone new to Sunday rides who talked about continuing to learn beyond the advanced test....

We were on the last day trip of the year: over 20 WHAM riders met at Leominster and headed into Wales....



Well it appears that the act of “observing” has a lot of potential. You’ve all experienced being followed by your observer however the occasions when they give a “demonstration ride” has a greater importance than many of us realise. This is supported by many of us who recognise we’ve learnt more since passing our advance test by going on WHAM’s group rides and seeing how others do it. You build up a confidence in yourself and others as you negotiate Tony’s routes with different riders. The challenge of the roads throughout the year with weather that will range from 35C, to low sun, to rain and wind. The common factors being the excellent café stops and the enjoyment of riding well.

CHAIRS FOREWORD CONT'D

However blindly following isn't what we're talking about; avoid following with your brain in neutral. We can learn a lot by observing others on the road but that requires focus and attention. Difficult sometimes as the base line is to "ride your own ride" and as you cope with that, then begin to see what other bikers are doing, managing speed, hazards and overtakes. Recognise who can provide a good model for you. It takes time.

Next is to remember what you've learnt and put it into practice. Build on your own advance techniques and your riding will continue to improve. IPSGA remains the basis for how we ride be it on the A44 near Bromyard or on tour in Europe.

But crucially you need to WANT to do it! Sometimes this is a real challenge, however much you observe an expert it can be virtually impossible to replicate what they've done, here perseverance along with achievable goals are the key to success. Challenge yourself to ride better, perhaps even by going for a 1stpass or Masters.

So maybe observers are getting more out of their observed rides than we thought?

This month saw the long delayed Ducati Worcester finally opened in last Sunday's heavy showers. The place was buzzing with riders admiring and sitting on bikes accompanied by a band and burgers. I expect it was an expensive Sunday for some – I have resisted (so far...) but the 960 S Multi does look nice!



In 2 days I'm on a ferry in advance of meeting the Brittany trip. I'm going on a replay of me on a BSA Bantam (aged 17) Newhaven/Dieppe/Chartres/Orleans.
But more on that next month.

Ant Clerici
WHAM Chair

PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018



17-18 May

Ok, I hear you. So this won't be an embarrassing side trip into elderly intimacy. Suffice to say we both fell in love again, with Nice.

We first visited this divine city in the early days of our relationship, before we even became The Rider and The Pillion. That long ago. Two Pegasos, four Tigers, two Yammies, one BMW, one Thunderbird, and a Speed Four ago. Well over 50k miles on the road ago. And guess what? This old lady of the Cote d'Azur just gets better and better. Nice is the ebullient retired actress of France who won't give up the game. Raffish, a bit long in the tooth, but so full of quirky personality and garish in-your-face fun that your heart just melts. And you never want to leave. Simple as.

We spotted a gem of a hotel to match this exquisite painted city by a painted sea. **Hotel Le Meurice** is a stunning little restored Art Deco masterpiece, built in 1926 and beautifully kept by the current owners. We adored it. So much we stayed two nights, and did not begrudge one dime of the reasonable €70 per night fee. Plus breakfast, which was actually very good, and took place in typically Nice brassy style in the main (small) foyer of the hotel, cheek by jowl with all the other guests, and in full view of passers-by in the central rue de Suede. We could not work out how everyone staying at the hotel could possibly be accommodated at once in this tiny room. We just assume that the magic of the gorgeous sexy little place keeps most of the guests in bed till long after breakfast has been swept away.



Sorry, I did promise I wouldn't mention sex. Just blame the Jazz age and Nice.

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PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018



Anyway, moving along. We spent time doing holidayish things. We walked along the Promenade Anglais, several times. We sat in a chic cafe on the beach, and drank coffee. We walked around the town, a lot. We drank wine. We sat again in some strange yellow warm stuff – the locals call it *soleil*. We drank more coffee. We visited the [Musee Massena](#), which was beautiful and funny in equal measure. This was the home of Napoleon's buddy Marechal Massena, a native of Nice who entered with early enthusiasm into the French Revolution, won several battles as general for the Little Corporal, and then had the great good sense to bow out before it all went horribly wrong. He ended up with multiple gongs and titles, in the stunning villa that now houses the museum. We laughed a lot when we realised this Nicoise native's descendants adorned French aristocracy for generations after. The family eventually retired and left the house to the people of Nice when it got a bit too pricy to run.

We salsa danced to applause in the square featured above, as the sun went down. The DJ/busker kept playing Latino music for us, but we bowed out after two dances.

And then it was time to leave. Broken-hearted, but with dry leathers now and much better packing skills, we left Nice behind on the high road to Italy. Just pausing to let the Tigger have her final moment in the sun of the French Riviera above Monte Carlo...

PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018



18-20 May

It was a fast passage across northern Italy. Not because we don't like Italy, but this trip is intended to focus on the Balkans and beyond, so both uncertain weather and a tight itinerary decided us to merely dip into this lovely country. We thought we'd seen impressive civil engineering works when we travelled through the Netherlands in 2016, but the roads across Liguria in northern Italy are just breath-taking. (The speed we were travelling unfortunately precluded me taking any pictures.) From Menton at the French border to the big Italian port city of Genoa, which is some 200km, the A10 autostrada is a dazzling sequence of swooping viaducts and long tunnels. We didn't mind paying the tolls at all; this is an amazing road which must have cost a fortune and huge effort to build.



Consequently we got all the way from Nice to our overnight stay in remote mid-Apennines in a single day. We passed Genoa, and left the motorway for the central Italian mountain range by mid-afternoon, ending up a couple of hours later just below the crest of the range at the tiny village of San Pietro Vara. Here we rode around till we found a farmhouse homestay with French-speaking host Patrick and his utterly silent wife, who we suspected of disliking the business of running a farm-stay. It was a lovely warm late afternoon when we heaved our sweaty selves off the Tigger. Patrick was distracted by their young daughter who kept losing her pet tortoise. I've never seen a tortoise run so fast. Patrick thoughtfully handed us wine and beer and sat us in the shade outside. So we didn't initially mind

the overheard bad-tempered words between our hosts as our room was readied. Later, when we realised there was no hot water to shower, no heating at all as temperatures rapidly slid in this high altitude locale, and that the only place to eat in the village was over-priced, we were a little less impressed.

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PETE & JAC ROGERS—THE ORIENT EXPRESSO TOUR 2018

Moving on after a poor breakfast the following day, we had a wonderful ride down the east slopes of the beautiful Apennines, then a less thrilling flat haul across the endless Po river plain to



Parma (see the Rider's notes below.) Parma is a UNESCO city of gastronomy, and I swooned with delight at my simple but fabulous lunch of aubergine grilled with cheese and tomato. It was exquisite. The city's reputation is well-deserved: shop after shop was bulging with wonderful locally-produced food, from salami, to cheeses, to sweets and cakes. Fortunately for our waistlines, there is no room for any souvenirs when you travel by bike.

On to lovely Palladian Vicenza after lunch. Vicenza is an old friend, and that was fortunate as the sat nav played us up badly and we arrived late, and really tired. The bargain Hotel Cristina soon sorted us out, with lashings of hot water and a large cool room. (The picture at the top is also in Vicenza).



The last day of our quick dash across Italy saw us take the fast road to Trieste. Trieste is to the north-east of Italy what Genoa is to the north-west – a large modern port city with long antecedents. The city is set on a beautiful coastline, and we enjoyed a couple of hours after a lateish lunch wandering along the seafront and around the impressive buildings reflecting Trieste's changing fortunes. A wonderful mix of Venetian, Habsburg and other influences. The Rider's father had served as a young man in the British army right here in 1948, so it was a particularly poignant stop for us.



Realising then we were only 20km from the Slovenian border, we took off on the Tigger, south into the increasing heat of a lovely late spring day.

We felt as though now we were really heading into unknown territory at last.

USING THE THROTTLE—DEL B

Using the throttle!

Open the throttle:

- To *increase* road speed.
- To *maintain* road speed, for example when cornering or going uphill (referred to as '**positive throttle**').

Close the throttle:

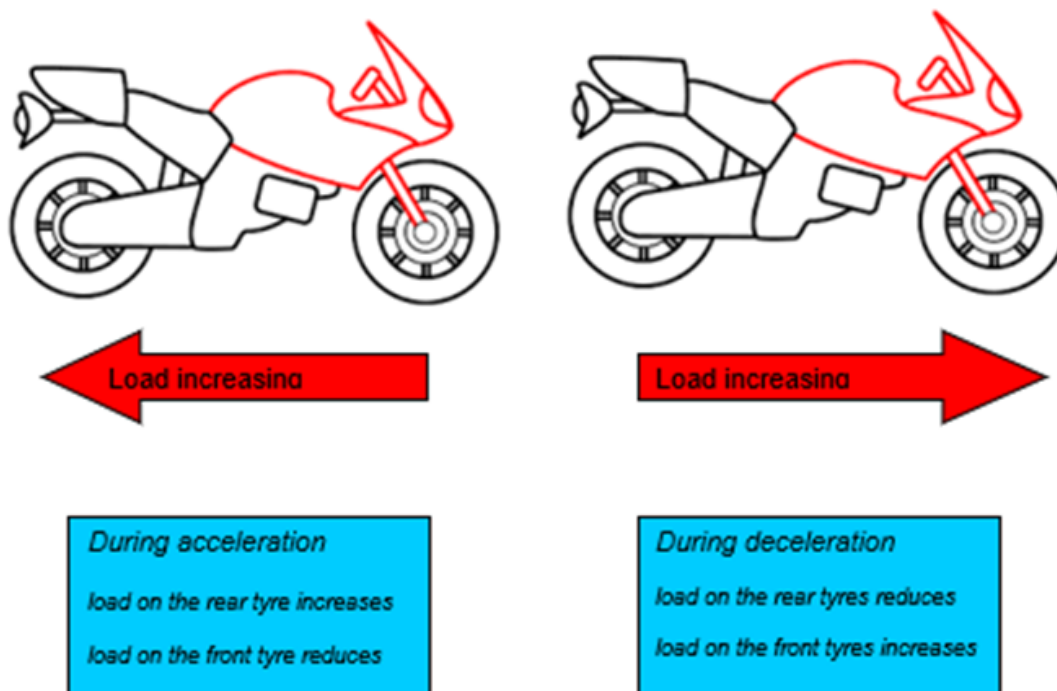
- To reduce engine speed and slow the bike down.

If you are in the correct gear for your road speed, opening the throttle will give you a responsive increase in bike speed. If you are in too high a gear, the engine will respond sluggishly because it is being asked to work outside its power-band. Changing to a lower gear allows the engine to work in its power-band and so makes for a more responsive machine

If you close the throttle, you get the opposite effect – deceleration. The engine speed slows down and cylinder compression slows the machine down. The lower the gear, the greater the slowing effect of the engine, or engine braking.

Acceleration and the machine balance

Acceleration alters the distribution of weight between the wheels of the bike. When a machine accelerates, the weight lifts from the front and pushes down on the back wheel, increasing the load on the rear tyre. During deceleration, the opposite happens, increasing the load on the front tyre.



USING THE THROTTLE—DEL B

Develop your competence at using the throttle

How you use your throttle affects your own and others' safety. Motorcycles are very responsive to use of the throttle during acceleration and deceleration. Sudden sharp use of the throttle reduces tyre grip and jeopardise stability and control, especially when cornering. It could lift the front wheel of the bike or cause the rear wheel to spin.

Jerky use of the throttle is uncomfortable, put unnecessary strains on the machine, reduces tyre grip and increases fuel consumption. Develop smooth control of the throttle: use gentle, progressive and accurate movements to open or close.

Acceleration capability varies widely between machines and depends on the fuel or power source, the engine output, its efficiency, the power-to-weight ratio and its load. Take time to get to know the acceleration capability of any machine you ride. The safety of many manoeuvres, particularly overtaking, depends on judging it well. Remember the faster you go the further you will travel before you can react to a hazard. It will take you longer to stop and, if you collide, the results of the impact will be worse.

Acceleration sense

Acceleration sense is the ability to vary machine speed and response to the changing road and traffic conditions by accurate use of the throttle, so that you use the brakes less or not at all.

You need acceleration sense in every riding situation: moving off, overtaking, complying with the speed limits, following other traffic and negotiating hazards. Acceleration sense requires observation, anticipation, judgement of speed and distance, riding experience and knowledge of the machines capabilities.

When you come up behind another vehicle, how often do you need to brake to match the speed of the other driver in front? If you answer is 'always' or 'nearly always', work at developing your acceleration sense.

Ride along a regular route using acceleration sense rather than braking. Notice how it improves your anticipation and increases the smoothness of the ride.

USING THE THROTTLE—DEL B

Using the throttle on bends

To get the best stability while cornering, you need to keep your speed constant. Do this by gently opening the throttle enough to compensate for the speed lost due to cornering forces. Your aim is to maintain constant speed, not to increase it. Practice will help you judge how much to open the throttle for a steady speed.

Maintain a positive throttle (use the throttle to maintain a constant speed) through a bend. A constant speed keeps your weight evenly distributed front and rear, and ensures maximum tyre grip.

If you accelerate to increase road speed and alter direction at the same time, there may not be enough grip available and you may lose steering control. When you need to steer and increase speed together, use the throttle sensitively and smoothly. Take extra care when accelerating in slippery conditions. If you misjudge it, you may experience loss of traction and control.

TEST PASSES & NEWS —RICHARD HEWITT

On the 30th August Ray Bates passed his Advanced test with Martyn Hillier as examiner and Andrew Culley as his Observer. Well done both!



Now that you're a full member Ray it was nice to see you out on your trusty Honda the very next weekend on a club Sunday run (Picture courtesy of Del B.



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WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....



But first, a bit of background

My first experience of off-riding involved trying to ride my school friends' Honda c50 over a muddy field at the back of his house. The thrill of moving without having to pedal was fantastic! Suffice to say, Neil was one of the most popular kids in our class as a result of his mechanical marvel. I was about 12 at the time and, from then, I was hooked onto bikes.

WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....



As soon as I was 16 I traded in my first bike, a Kawasaki KE 175 (ridden on waste land only...and the odd canal path), for a Yamaha DT 50 (it was actually an 80cc but some new stickers and logbook change were easy to acquire in the 80s). Over the following 10 years, the bikes got bigger, more road orientated and faster; Honda 250 super dream, CBR 600 and a brand new ZXR750!which was sold a month later when my wife and I found out we were expecting our first child. I can still hear my mom saying to me “you have responsibilities now and motorbikes are dangerous”, which was true and I was riding faster, much faster, without having any greater ability so bikes were traded in for cars. Until I discovered green lanes - legal rights of way for motorised vehicles, including motorbikes, but the thing is, cars, even 4x4s rarely used them - so virtually risk free biking right??!

The thing with off-roading is, the principles aren't quite the same as road riding, in fact, some are completely the opposite! Not to mention having to contend with rocks, logs, mud and tree roots. Some of the differences include:

- On road bikes we avoid loose gravel - Off road bikes are built for this as their knobbly tyres cut into the loose surface to find grip whilst drifting (with some generous throttle)
- On road bikes we mainly use the front brakes whereas off-roading relies on engine braking and the rear brake. Caution: if you are too heavy on the front brake on gravel you WILL fall off!
- Road biking involves sitting down - with off-roading you mainly stand up with legs straight, leaning forward to weight the front wheel and maintain greater control (similar to skiing)

This list goes on but you get my drift – it's different , very different.

Wind the clock forward circa 25 years and what's changed?

WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....



I'm having the most fun I have ever had off-roading, I repeat, EVER had, exploring off-roading here in the UK and further afield in Romania and still falling off!

Now don't get me wrong I'm no expert off roader – although I tend not to fall off and damage myself nowadays. If anything, I'm probably over cautious - case in point - Matt and I both agreed not to try the "hill climb from hell" in Romania - then Matt just went for it and fell off while I watched with a wry grinwhen off-roading "know your limits"!

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WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....



But what I can say, from a personal perspective, is that nothing beats the sheer thrill of riding challenging trails in open and unspoilt hills and forests!

We shared our adventure with the club at a well-attended natter night and the interest was so great that I agreed to organise an off-roading day for new and experienced riders at the Mick Extance experience. 10 spaces were available (only limited by the number of bikes) and all were filled within a week of the newsletter profiling the day.

The day was booked with a recommended stop over the night before at the New Inn. 9am Saturday morning we were picked up from the New Inn and taken to the centre to get kitted out and have the mandatory safety briefing. After a short mini bus ride to the start of the off-roading track, bikes were allocated based on experience and preference then we were straight out up the long gravel track to the first of the assessment areas.



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WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....

The first one involved a loop on the “warm up” track. This was quiet easy with a focus on learning the feel and control of the bike. Mick explained about weighting the front standing up and covering the clutch to control the drive. After a few laps everyone was doing well and were progressed onto a more challenging hill section with very deep ruts - the learning here was to not be concerned about using your feet to get through and careful clutch control. As confidence grew, the pace increased and, although the group could have been split, everyone was progressing well so we all stayed together.



It was then time to move onto the more technical ‘trail type’, riding over larger slate rocks which would have been much trickier in the wet - luckily it was dry that day. Caution was also encouraged when crossing the steel Bridge as this, like the slate, was deadly in the wet - same principle with cattle’s grids apply - maintain momentum and coast over with the bike fully upright.

WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....



With the mornings coaching complete and packed lunches consumed we headed out onto the forest trails. These included riding up and down narrow rocky tracks. At all times, the focus should be on the track ahead rather than what was immediately in-front of you whilst keeping a steady momentum.

On ascents, lean forward to maintain control of steering!

Proper Uphill Riding Position



WHAM GOES OFF ROAD!!! ON PURPOSE.....

On descents, keep standing but lean back a little to weight the rear and straighten arms to absorb the bumps. Cover the back brake, select a lower gear and release clutch to engage engine braking. In extreme descents feather the front brake to avoid locking the front wheel as this will have you off in an instant!

Proper Downhill Riding Position



The whole process of training was to build confidence in a relaxed and tailored manner - and at the end of the day the difference was quite remarkable as everyone rode the final challenging trails without a fall!

Throughout the day, Mick used his extensive off-road Dakar experience to bring to life his guidance. For those of you that have never heard of Mick he is a multiple Enduro champion, Gold medal winner in the International Six Days Trial, mountain bike champion and seven times Dakar racer. He's finished the race five times, but even with that level of talent and experience has yet to make it into the Top 20 at the end. Remarkably, he also battles with a brain tumour and continues that fight with a message that "life should be lived to the full" and "just get out there and make a difference"!

Mick had applied to compete once again in the Dakar and has since received approval and is currently raising the funds to compete the race with a goal to donate as much as possible from sponsorship to the hospital that saved his life.

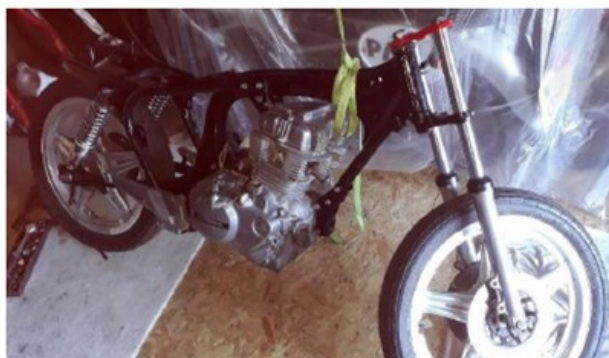
If you have never tried off-roading, my only advice is to; either find a friend with Honda c50 and a field or better still get yourself onto next year's WHAM off road day.

Adrian Wheeler (With the ever humorous Matt Dent in pics...)

SUPERDREAMS....—EDDY LAMBAH-STOATE

Episode 3 by Eddy Lambah-Stoate

Last time, we left the project with the yoke, engine and shockers dry fitted to the repainted frame. Before rushing to buy any more parts I find myself anxious to see whether the engine is a runner or not. First however I thought a bit of a shampoo for the engine and wheels would go down well, so off to brother Roland at Yattendon Classics and Garage to use his steam cleaner.



Ahead even of that, I had spent a sensational day at Aberdare Park for a classics race meeting. I wanted to see how those 50cc machines performed, but the day was much more rewarding than that. Firstly the 50cc issue. In the paddock I met Kriedler rider



Steve Porter (amongst others) who whilst very complimentary about the pictures of my pretty little Benelli reckoned on a good day I might get 3BHP out of it, whereas those on the circuit these days were approaching 30 BHP! – In short don't contemplate competing, leave it as it is. He did however offer to send me an old seat cone that I might use on another 50cc project I have in mind. I

was also able to see the results on some aluminium castings after aquablasting. The finish was rather more satin than polished. I then went on to TAB2 Classic's tent to talk about having that bespoke aluminium tank made up. Their view on the aquablast finish was that it was equivalent to around 800 grit and would polish out quite easily on a decent wheel.

The circuit and racing at Aberdare Park is like nothing I have witnessed before. It's the town park, the track is no wider than a single carriageway. The run offs include rose beds and a boating pond. Trees decorate every bend, protected by straw bales fixed with brown parcel tape – so that's alright! The paddock is just that – a field, and the park ferme is the rough track leading from the paddock to the circuit. Fastest lap time something like 83 mph average or some 38 seconds! Unbelievable even when watching.



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SUPERDREAMS....—EDDY LAMBAH-STOATE

Anyway, back to Yattendon Garage; dealt with the steam clean soon enough and took the opportunity to use Roland's airline to pop the callipers. No real surprise to find some rust on the outside of the pistons, so later on I'll renew those and the seals and ride over to Griffin Racing at Castle Combe to have new braided hoses made up. I got talking Roland about polishing the casings. 'Oh,' Said he, 'I have a polishing wheel at the back of the paint shop, it used to work but doesn't now. If you can fix it, feel free to come over and give it some exercise'.

When I plugged it in to see where I should start, the answer was plainly delivered – there was an almighty flash and bang and the fuses to whole establishment went down! Luckily, I had brought my own extension lead with me so having shortened that by 5 feet or so, I substituted the length with the plug on the end into the machine and Joy!

The plan later, rather than going through the aqua blasting process is to see if, with a sisal wheel and decent Lea Compound, I can get a respectable finish on the fork yokes, engine casings and hangers using Roland's wheel first off.

So finally, time to play with the bike itself. At Roland's where there was an engineers vice I had stripped and re-assembled the forks, using his man-sized hex drive which is something my tool box lacks. A job I would be doing again with new seals later but that would involve cost - I just wanted to familiarise myself with the process. So I slipped them back into the yoke, refitted the engine – not an easy job on your own, involving ratchet straps scissor jack and lots of patience - and nipped up the mounting bolts. I also lubricated the throttle



cables, assembled them on to the twin Carbs and twist grip and bolted the lot on to the cylinder inlet. The exhaust tubes had been subjected to some rudimentary polishing and they too were fitted, noting on the way that one of the studs had stripped the threads in the cylinder so a helicoil job for later. The comstar wheels had also been treated to a steam bath so on they went. So now we have a rolling chassis.

Showing a hint of impatience, I have also used up what was left in a tin of Christmasy silver spray paint so that the old rat bike mat black tank is now silver – seducing me into that mega ali tank decision.

Now, as luck would have it my wife Kitty had been down in Devon for a week, so I abused her holiest of holies and spread out the wiring loom on the kitchen floor – in fact I also did the Carburettor cabling and inspection on the kitchen table, but don't tell her that! Suffice to say I shall be needing a service kit for the carbs in due course. Whilst all this was going on I had also ordered a set of clip-ons, (with extended delivery time it seems). I had been oscillating between wiring from scratch and using the loom (blanking off those parts I wouldn't be needing). I may yet change my mind again, but for the present I am planning use the loom. I realise it adds weight but as I intend to have the bike daylight MoT'd I reckon

SUPERDREAMS....—EDDY LAMBAH-STOATE

a brake light and electric horn would be handy, therefore a regulator/rectifier to charge the battery would be useful and suddenly there's quite a bit of wiring to make up.

A few days back Glyn, the guy who races a Super Dream in the VMCC series, had sent me some detailed pictures of his bike so I could see how he arranged his rear sets and seat. I was delighted to see that the original cast aluminium hangers, a real feature of the machine and which I plan to mirror polish, were still used. All he had done was to share one of the alan bolt mountings to fix turned billet foot pegs. On the right side he had cut and welded the original brake lever to match the new peg position. On the gear side he had used a rear set he had left over from a Bandit he used to race with NGRRC. As luck would have it, I already had a couple of peg billets still in their packet and luckier still knew where they were, so I'm now figuring out how I will tackle the gear side of things, for the brake side I will simply follow Glyn's example.

But let's return to the main issue does the little darling run? Having refitted the wiring loom, put in a battery, fresh juice in the tank, oil topped up, ignition on, a spin over without plugs to circulate some oil then plugs in, jump leads to my car battery to give some wallop, a bit of choke and.....one cough and YESSSS she purrs away like a good un.

The ongoing list:

Day with Eric – rear set bush, cutting and welding rear brake lever, cutting and welding rear set gear linkage. Helicoil exhaust manifold

Forks

Seat

Brakes

Speedo binnacle

Choke cable

THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

I've been enjoying relaxing on my yacht (thank you Ed. for giving that secret away) and gazing, as you do, at the beautiful surroundings of places like Cap d'Antibes with its flora and fauna...a lot of it skimpily adorning other yachts and the beaches - naturellement!



Thus I came to be musing about sources of human pleasure whilst trying futilely not to fantasize given the arresting view. There's a lot of pleasure in the act of riding a motorcycle. And there's a ton more of it simply connected with motorcycles and a lot of it iswell...shall we say 'fashion oriented'. Nah! Let me be clear about this (typical political segue) the word I'm trying to avoid is 'sexy'. If this causes you offence, then the ever-popular travelogues in this esteemed journal are more suitable reading for you – apart from pictures of curvaceous males cavorting across streams in the Pyrenees.

Let's just look for a moment at some of the most stimulating pastimes in the UK and relationship with sex. I propose that Gardening must come top of such list as being so widely enjoyed by more people than any other single activity. In the UK, there are around 27 million people who partake. This is a huge proportion of the 64 million souls amply filling this country¹ - though I recently learned some 400,000 of us have applied for Irish passports in the last few months and you know why...B*****t!

Gardening is like motorcycling – bear with me now – there's always something to do and somehow one never gets to the point of full, total, all consuming, let's have a smoke after, satisfaction. A garden is never 'finished'. For us, every good bike ride just lays the groundwork for another. We can always enjoy more, and when inclement conditions are afoot, there are shows to go to, magazines to read, internet searches to indulge and yes, lovely, sexy, fashion curvaceousness oft increases the appeal of all these distractions.

The plant hunters of the 18th and 19th century were no slouch when it came to sex and gardening. They dived with death to bring beauty to our environment and some never came home (just like some poorly trained motorcyclists, but let's not dwell on that). I read that one collector, a Frank Kindgom-Ward, narrowly survived being lost in the jungle by drinking the nectar of flowers. Not that you should drink your bike's nectar if you suffer the same in Wales. And when they named plants, they simply had to connect with sex, perhaps because sex was all so tut tut back then but more seemingly because plants, like us, reproduce. To illustrate my point I quote from 'The Scientist' – “*Carl Linnaeus's lasting legacy, hands down, is binomial nomenclature. (lost you already?) Linnaeus's focus on the arrangement of plants' sexual anatomy afforded him the opportunity to make salacious puns, and he took it, referring to stamens as husbands, pistils as wives, and their arrangement as a marriage. The “bridal bed” became a rather crowded place for certain plants and more sensitive botanists took offense at such indecent descriptions*”.



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THE TAIL ENDS— BY MR ALAN RIDER

This reminds me of the time my mother, bit dotty in her late seventies, speaking to my wife “*Isn't that a lovely clitoris my dear!*”followed by.. “*Oh dear, that sounds a bit rude*”. The delicate, shimmering blue clematis ‘Princess Diana’ didn't wilt in offence and neither did my equally delicate wife.

Sadly, I opine, motorcycling lacks the vivid colour of component descriptions afforded plants with their voluptuous Latin names – Solanum insanum (eggplant to you and me), Adonis vernalis, Thymus vulgaris....

Best we can say about our bike is, wholly on the assumption you bestow a gender - “She's got a sound Big End, tremendous Legs on a tour, a lovely Chassis, deliciously firm Clutch, Handle's a treat, amazing Grip in the wet, I love the Naked look....”

Oh yes...pleasure! I remember my father talking about his brother, a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps on biplanes, saying: “Flying is nowhere as exciting as motorcycling..” I know my reader will agree. So what is the attraction of motorcycling. Speed? Not really I think. Like a beautiful flower or human being (being politically sensitive here), we gaze on our bike in the garage and it looks svelte, curves in the right places, pointy bits where they should be and all the time holding out the promise of joy, tinged with danger. If that's not sexy....I mean, let's face it, you absolutely wallow in the risk attached to cornering. Getting it spot on through a set of curvaceousness is satiating, titillating, sweet and you want more, so soon after!. As age creeps up on you, you're more likely to get this gratification on your bike than ...elsewhere!

Will electric bikes do it for us?

<https://www.lovethegarden.com/uk-en/.../gardening-popularity-it-growing-or-declining>



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

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