



TREADS

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The February 2013 Newsletter of AAMC

Editor's Bits

I read Mark's item last month and it reminded me of the time I replaced the Spherical Gear on the end of the Drive Shaft on the BMW Trike I had. I used a Gear Puller to remove the old one, which came off fairly easily. When I was refitting the new one it was obvious that it would require a lot of pressure to refit onto the spline and I was concerned that I may damage the spline, so I had a 'brain wave'. I wrapped the Shaft in Clingfilm and put in the Freezer, left for a day to get really cold then put the Gear on a tray in the oven, heated it for a while and then removed it (using oven mitts).

When I opened the oven the smell of oil!! I knew I would have to do something about it but carried on (you have to get your priorities right!!) and fitted the Gear to the Shaft, which only required gentle tapping with a mallet. Job done, now back to the smell. Thank heaven for Febreeze. Better still, Val never knew!

Has anyone else any more 'Oh Dear' stories?

This year we are not having a 'Skittles Evening'. Instead we are going Go-Kart Racing at the Cheddar Go-KART Circuit on Saturday. If you have not booked but would like to go, please contact Mark asap.

After quite a few years I have decided to stand-down as Editor and will not be seeking re-election at the AGM. I have been Editor since 2005/6 and think it's time for 'New Blood' to take over. Thanks to all who have sent in items for Treads. Please continue to do so for the next Editor.

Keith

View from the 'Saddle'

I always find it difficult to think of something that I think might be interesting for Members to read as VftS, but this month something struck me as worthy of some thought. I am going to do a "Stuart" here and not give any answers, but hopefully just ask some thought-provoking questions!

Over Christmas, I was watching (yet another) repeat of an old Top Gear where Jeremy Clarkson (love him or loathe him) was testing the Bugatti Veyron and in particular he was exploiting the traction control and the myriad of other electronic driver aids that enable Veyron drivers to be relatively safe when driving the 1000bhp supercar. Even when he tried to deliberately over-exploit the immense power under his right foot, the inbuilt systems would manage the demands he placed upon it and would not allow the car to become out of control. However, even when he switched off the traction control, he discovered that the chassis was in fact

still extremely capable of controlling all that power.

A few days later, I was reading MCN online and specifically a test report of the new BMW S1000RR HP4 compared with the S1000RR and the benefits of the semi-active suspension now fitted to the former. The HP4 sounds fantastic and I am sure it will be a great bike to ride and having seen one in Dick Lovett's showroom, it is very easy on the eye too.

The report described making progress on a poorly surfaced, roller coaster of a twisty B-road, and I quote,

"With its semi-active suspension, the HP4 seems to flatten the swoops and repair the broken Tarmac. It throws rose petals in its own path, for its Pirellis to glide softly over. Attack the same piece of road on the S1000RR and it's just like any powerful superbike - the faster you go, the more you feel like the tyres are skating the surface, and the bars come alive in your hands. You're riding with your fingertips, on the balls of your feet, with your eyes out on stalks."

It continues to describe and contrast the same section of road when riding the newer model:-

"On the HP4 it's the opposite. The faster you go, the more the tyres dig in and the more stable it becomes. Bars stay solid in your hands and the HP4 gives you the confidence to push the front ever harder into corners and twist the throttle sooner coming out. You're hitting the throttle stop in places where it's feathered on the standard S1000RR."

This immediately made me recall watching the Top Gear Veyron test and contrast the two machines. I accept that this is an academic exercise as few of us are ever likely to be fortunate enough to have the

opportunity to drive, leave alone own a Veyron! Equally not many riders will be able, or prepared, to spend £20K on a sportsbike, but at least it is more reasonably accessible. However there is a fundamental question here. Where VW have engineered their supercar to be fail-safe in the clumsiest hands, BMW appear to have engineered an ultimate road missile that enables the rider to have the benefit of technology that makes him (or her.... Let's face it; equal opportunities ought to apply equally to stupidity too!) feel invincible on the road and make the ultimate progress without the benefit of fail-safe systems to protect against over-enthusiasm.

Several questions spring to mind.... Should manufacturers really develop such systems?

Is there really a benefit?

Is it responsible of a manufacturer to market a machine to the layman with systems providing the ability to be ridden on twisty roads to the throttle stop? Or is this testosterone-fuelled bravado?

Should the manufacturers be obliged to deliver training with a product that gives a rider the enhanced capability that would otherwise only be available to those with the necessary expertise honed on a racetrack?

Will there really be any issue with such technology, as the expense will prevent the technology becoming available to those incapable of reasonable behaviour?

However, the access to wealth is not always commensurate with the responsibility necessary for restraint, so there could always be the rich nutter out there!!

Before you dismiss this by thinking that none of this actually applies to you. Bear in mind this further thought. One day, the invincible rich nutter may be travelling on his HP4 on the same road as you, but coming in the opposite direction!!!!

If you are interested, the full HP4 report may be read by following the link below: - <http://www.motorcyclenews.com/MCN/News/newsresults/First-rides-tests/2013/January/jan0313-bmw-s1000rr-vs-s1000rr-hp4/>
See what you think.

View from the Chair

Renewal time has been and gone, so if you haven't yet renewed your membership this is definitely the last edition of Treads you will get. You should also expect to get a chasing note from me!

I'm sure you will have heard by now that I managed to break a bone in my left wrist in two places whilst away skiing this year. I must remember not to go back to those two places next year... (an old Tommy Cooper joke)!

On a more serious note, this means I cannot currently ride the bike or even drive the car, so the first Club ride this year will now be led by Andy. Several people very kindly offered to lead it for me, but Andy was the first, so he gets the job to do. Thanks very much to everyone who offered help and for all your messages of sympathy. It was my own stupid fault, I'm afraid, so I must live with the consequences of being in plaster for the next few weeks. Hopefully I will be back to normal (whatever that is) by the beginning of April, ready for the training course to start.

Skills Development Course

The annual training course will start this year on the evening of Thursday 4th April and continue over five Thursday evening theory sessions and five Saturday practical sessions. I have enclosed a sheet with further details as well as a booking form. Everyone is welcome to come along and

there will undoubtedly be a wide cross-section of members and riding abilities present, so there's no need to feel awkward or different. Training is all about learning to do things better. We all need it from time to time however good we think we are.

Over the past few weeks I sent out draft details of the course to a few members who asked, but those people need to re-check the dates against this form as I have had to change a couple of them.

Diary of Events

The diary is just about complete, apart from a couple of specific ride dates: -

Sunday 16th June and Sunday 20th October.

I'm not sure why those haven't been taken, especially the June one.

We also have room for some more evening rides, so if you can help with any of these things or indeed suggest something different we could do, please contact Mark. Thanks.

I expect to send out the Diary with the March edition of Treads.

AGM

It's that time of year again when the AGM is upon us, and this year we've found a new venue closer to the centre of our area - the Crown Inn. You can find the Crown just opposite the rugby ground. It is on the right just inside the 30mph speed limit. They have a small car park or leave your vehicle at the side of the road. Wednesday 7:15pm for 7:30pm. See you there.

Welcome

I would like to extend a warm welcome this month to two new members - Andy from Hinton who rides a Fazer FZS600, a Fazer 1000 and a Kawasaki ZZR600, and Neville from Bradley Stoke who rides a BMW R1200GSA. Neville has already

booked his place on the training course and we hope to see both of you out on a Club ride or other function very soon.

Simon

The Diary of Events for 2013 will be issued next month.

From our roving reporter

Following my plea for someone to lead the first ride of the year after my recent fractured wrist, we received the following kind offer from our intrepid roving reporter in the Ukraine: -

Hi Simon,
Sorry about the wrist. The Ukraine branch of AAMC will gladly stand in.
Meet 6am in Kiev Independence Square, wrap up warm as the temp forecast is about -10C for Sunday.
We will then ride the "Ukraine Road of Bones" for 5 hours to the city of Poltava, where we will visit the WWII battle fields.
Afterwards we will then ride 3 hours to my city of Kharkov, where we will all have a Russian Banya, which is a hot sauna followed by cold water deep tub bath and repeat the sauna again, followed by massage with birch branch whipping!
Then get drunk on Vodka!

How does that sound?

Yours sincerely,

Simon

Ed. I'll see you there, then!

We endeavour to issue Treads on a regular basis during the third week of the month. Therefore if you have any items to be published in Treads, can you please ensure that they reach the editor before or during the first week of that month. Contributions for Treads are always needed, whether they are motorcycle related or of general interest! Please don't be shy.