



TREADS

www.aamc.co.uk

The April 2018 Newsletter of AAMC

Editor's Bits - Morton

We've mentioned Saietta before - "Yes, November 2015" - I hear you say. For newer members: They won the first Isle of Man electric bike race, the TTXGP (forerunner of TT Zero) race in 2009 (as the AGNI team).

In 2010, two of their motors powered a plane to the world speed record for an electric aircraft at 163mph.



In 2011, two more of their motors powered the world's first manned electric helicopter.

The 2015 Saietta R bike performed well with 100hp/220kg, and 100 miles around town cost 60 pence - offsetting the £17k price.

The 2017 NGS (New Generation) bike:



promised double the power and double the range, but at nearer £60,000...

It perhaps comes as no surprise that a recent press release said: "Motorbikes remain part of our DNA but we no longer intend to become a motorbike brand/manufacturer ... we are working with multiple electric vehicle brands as ... the 'go-to' brand for manufacturers of light-weight vehicles seeking to go electric." A shame - I'd been looking forward to seeing some of these striking bikes on the road.

I see the Prescott Bike Fest has been postponed from May 14/15 to June 16/17, due to "horrendous ground conditions". It's an ill wind ... we couldn't have made the original dates but we should be able to do the new ones.

Liked the HJC Lego Head helmets advertised *earlier* this month:



Legal Questions

NB: the law changes all the time, so while the answer was correct at the time of writing, things may have moved on – so check before making any decisions!

1. Dope on a rope

Drugs and motorcycles don't mix. Here's why...

Eight years ago I was done for drink driving. It was a wakeup call for me, as I realised that I had fallen into being an alcoholic, and I am now a recovering alcoholic, I have been abstinent of alcohol for six and a half years, I have really turned my life around, and I am in full time work.

I was pulled by the police a few months ago for having an illegally small number plate and the police officer told me that he suspected that I was intoxicated through drink or drugs, and he then proceeded to give me a mouth swab by the side of the road.

I had smoked a spliff the night before as I do most nights, but it was a weak spliff and I was not really that bothered. The police officer put the swab into some sort of testing solution, and he then told me that I was nicked for driving while having taken cannabis, I lost it with the copper, and I probably did not react very well.

The police officer told me that he was going to have to take me to the police station for a blood test, I had a load of sarcasm off the police about needing a bicycle when the blood tests came through, I told the police officer that I would hold the police force liable if my motorcycle was stolen. He told me it was no problem, they would get a recovery vehicle in, and I have now been presented with a bill for £150 for the recovery vehicle.

Apparently, though, that is the least of my problems. I was done a little less than three years prior to the police officer

arresting me for cannabis for 127mph in a 70 and I received a 56 day ban for that.

I have had my first appearance at the magistrates' court, my licence was instantly revoked, and the magistrate's lackey, sat in the front of the court told me that I would be facing a minimum three year ban. Surely this cannot be right.

Answer

The magistrates are not trying to scare you. You are facing a minimum three year ban. You have been particularly unlucky or irresponsibility has caught up with you, depending on your perspective. You have been hit by a triple whammy. The cannabis in your bloodstream would be a one year mandatory ban. Your blood results show you had a reading which proves intoxication albeit not by a massive margin.

Because there were no particular aggravating factors – for example you had not been involved in a crash, nor were you carrying a passenger, you fall at the bottom end of the sentencing. Had you been involved in a collision, for example, you would probably be facing a ban of around two years.

The drink driving is a relevant offence. It was an offence of driving while intoxicated by alcohol. You were now riding while intoxicated with cannabis. The speeding very unluckily for you, falls within the three year ban that the magistrates are obliged to take into account.

Because you were banned for a period of 56 days or greater, within three years of the offence of driving with cannabis, this is the third factor the magistrates have to take into account. The magistrates have no choice other than to ban you for three years. You have come up with what might well be regarded as special circumstances, for example in speeding. The fact that you will be losing your job is something which does not really carry any weight, because it is supposed to be a punishment.

I am not trying to be unsympathetic here, if you had been done for speeding and the loss of your licence would have impacted on, for example the support that you can give your children and the contact that you can have with your children this is a factor the magistrates might well have taken into account for other offences, but driving or riding with intoxicants is something where the magistrates have no discretion.

The fact that you have “turned your life around” does not really bear close scrutiny. You stopped drinking alcohol, and turned around your problem with alcoholism. I commend you for that. However you have replaced one intoxicant with another, and the fact that you might well think that cannabis is less harmful to you than alcohol, and it probably is, does not really get around the fact that you were driving while, according to the law, you were stoned.

You have not lived an entirely blameless life since you gave up alcohol, not least because you were riding at 127mph in a 70mph zone, which is not going to get much of a shock horror reaction from me, but so far as the magistrates are concerned you have been in front of them fairly regularly for the last eight years all for some quite serious motoring offences.

The magistrates’ “lackey” – the legally qualified clerk – has got it right. The police are not being sarcastic, you are going to be banned for at least three years, and, regrettably, if your life collapses around you as a result of you riding a motorcycle while having smoked cannabis that I am afraid is a direct consequence of your actions. Your situation is bad but so far as the magistrates are concerned you have been the author of your own misfortune so raging against the law is not the best plan.

Andrew Dalton, [Fast Bikes](#) November 2017

2. The curse of gravel chippings

The biking season coincides with Councils ‘top dressing’ the carriageways. This is a process by which the top 30 to 50mm of the road surface is replaced with small granite chippings. The top layer of a road is designed to slowly wear away. Bitumen binds together gravel chippings and the bitumen, which is intrinsically soft, wears away leaving loose gravel. In order to extend the life of the roads a superbly bike-unfriendly method is used to replace this top wearing course.

At its most basic, tonnes of gravel chippings are rolled into the road, raw and without binding agent, which creates a hellish surface for just about any bike, with the possible exception of an enduro bike on knobbies. If you hit this stuff and you brake or steer you can reasonably expect the worst to happen. So how can you ride and the Councils keep the roads serviceable?

There is clear guidance as to signage, sweeping, advisory speed limits and reopening any stretch of road which has been top dressed. If these were all adhered to top dressing would be safe, but these jobs are carried out by cash-strapped Councils and private contractors on tight time schedules, so with alarming frequency the roads are left with a thick coating of loose gravel. The law is on the motorcyclist's side on this one, but you need to be able to prove the presence of a dangerous accumulation of gravel. Your mobile phone at this point is your best friend. Take photos, and if you can, drag your foot through the accumulated gravel on a video clip which demonstrates the nature of the gravel. Do take away as big a sample as you can carry of the material, because it is easy to prove the material is granite road chippings, because they are of a particular size, consistency and material. Proving a sample is road chippings is straightforward for a forensic geologist and such a trade does exist!

Councils and their lawyers rarely deny loose gravel is a danger for motorcyclists and there are numerous published works which confirm this. If you can prove it's gravel you can show that the works constitute what in law is a public nuisance on the highway. There are chapters in law books as to the varying degrees of nuisance but at its simplest, if you put something dangerous on the highway and somebody hurts themselves as a result thereof, you are liable.

When I bring these claims there is always a second string which is that the Council is in breach of its statutory duty to maintain the highway so that it is reasonably safe for all persons that might be expected to use the highway. However, these cases do not turn on law. The law is simple and settled. These cases turn on evidence and if you can prove significant amounts of loose chippings you are a long way home to proving your case.

View from the Saddle –

Simon

When I'm out and about on the road, one of my bones of contention is the way Bristol City Council – under the former Mayor, Mr. Ferguson – introduced the 20 mph speed limits. Now before you get the idea I'm against these, think again. There are plenty of places where we need these lowered limits – outside schools and on roads through areas with high concentrations of pedestrians and other hazards – but I'm definitely of the opinion they have been over-used. I regularly drive along a fairly main and wide road through Clifton where the houses are set-back with wide pavements and there is plenty of view and few pedestrians or other hazards. Why here? Did no-one do proper research?

A high number of vehicle drivers will drive at a speed they think suitable for the conditions. If they think that the limit is

wrong, they just about ignore it. All that does then is bring the whole system of limits into disrepute, so more and more limits, including the ones correctly set, become ignored, unless there is a good chance of being caught.

The current mayor said when he came to power he wanted to revoke some of the 20's back to 30's, but they couldn't afford to change the signage again. Marvellous.

Last December we read in the newspapers that since the introduction of the lower limits in Bath, the number of accidents had actually increased. A couple of months passed and the headlines changed completely, now saying they had decreased. What is it we are supposed to believe? It's a pity they never quote exactly where these figures come from, just statistics plucked from some sort of study and then manipulated to give the answer they were looking for.

Common sense would tell us that you can stop in a much shorter distance at 20 mph than at 30, so you'd be inclined to think it would be safer at 20 mph, but unfortunately drivers appear to concentrate far less at lower speeds because things happen more slowly, so that increases the thinking distance before they even start to brake, thereby increasing the stopping distance. It's a conundrum.

My final word on this is based on what I've seen whilst out driving the roads in Bristol. There has been a reduction in traffic speed in the 20 mph limit areas, from the mid-thirties to just under 30 mph – nowhere near 20, but a whole heap better than 35. The limits are there for a reason.

Some detailed and factual research that isn't politically motivated or skewed would be useful.

Eddy's Café Racer

From full-on plastic racer to 1960s Replica Café Racer - Part 1

Having tried my hand at racing the Clockwork Orange, a pre-injection Yamaha R6, in 2017 and finding myself some 30 to 40 years older than the rest of the field and wanting in courage and talent, I thought I would try to re-re-live where I would like to have been in the early '60s. Instead of that 197cc Villiers 2-stroke-powered James Captain, the 125cc BSA Bantam and the 250cc BSA C10 and 11 what about recreating a modern version of the 1959 Silver and Black Norton International café racer?

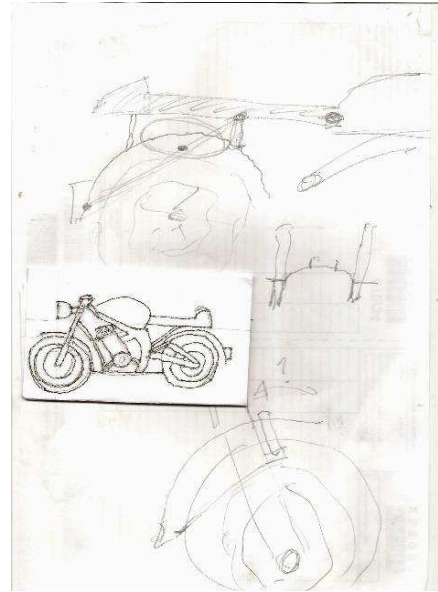


My character was largely formed on my parents' farm in the 1950's. We had less than no money, everything was too expensive so it was make do and mend - and we did.

So this is not a story of "into a shop, buy the bits and assemble", but rather conjure the idea and keep your eyes peeled in the hedgerows and the like to see what might be re-cyclable.

The essence of modern 2-wheeled machinery design seems to be sharp and angular whereas what I was seeking was the flowing horizontal.

Leonardo started with sketches and so did I.



In terms of bits, what I needed was mudguards fore and aft, a nice round headlight and most importantly a 'humpty' seat. For the humpty seat to work however I first needed to get that 'harsh' diagonal lined sub-frame down to something like horizontal. The R6, unlike its cousin the R1, thankfully has a bolted-on sub-frame. Following my rear ending at Donnington I had a mangled one in the shed plus the replacement one on the bike so off to Denis Evans at DH Welding in the Broadmead Lane industrial estate, Keynsham, the man with the TIG welder and skill to chop and weld aluminium. A man who wears shorts in mid-winter and beats skins - i.e. a drummer.

Basically the sub frame is attached by 3 fixings on each side making a potential total of six fixing points to re-engineer. Well the design idea was mine the implementation was down to Dennis. When I collected the machine, I had the lovely horizontal line I was seeking. The downside was I could no longer fit the Electrics and battery tray let alone the rectifier underneath it - and that was before the rear shock was loaded. So next job was - yes - on to eBay to buy a third sub-frame (£30) and re-think the engineering.

Cunningly, by keeping the lower



fixings as the pivot point and rotating the frame downwards to the point where the tray etc. could still be accommodated, gave me the precise dimensions for the extensions to the bolt lugs to the chassis for Denis to weld. For the upper lugs at the rear of the tank I fashioned two 1.5 inch fishplates out of stainless plate – more of which in a later article. The result, no surprise here, was a compromise. Not quite horizontal but close enough to employ a trick of the eye when trimming the seat.

As night follows day, when one alters one dimension on a bike there is the inevitable knock-on that something else becomes out of kilter. Rotating the sub frame compressed the dimension between the seat and foot pegs, I am a long-legged beast and knees round my ears didn't appeal. As it happened the bike had already been fitted with non-standard rear sets. These gave some flexibility but not enough, so it was off to Avery Knight Bowlers in James Street West, Bath to see what was in the scrap bin. £2 later I had 300mm of aluminium flat bar that with some chopping, drilling and polishing gave me a billet that allowed me to rotate the pegs backwards. The gear side was made easy by Messrs Yamaha as the splined shifter connecting rod could be taken off and rotated.



The exhaust side came back to bite me when Terry Doman at D&H Motorcycles Green Park, Bath failed its MoT first time round as the brake pedal ended up touching the exhaust pipe.

To be continued ...

Parish News – Simon

This month I'd like to wish a warm welcome to new member Norman Parker. Norman lives in Portishead and rides a Ducati ST2. We hope he will become a regular rider with us and support all our events.

Stuart has had to change the dates of three of his weekday rides.

May: Tuesday 15th will now be run on Friday 11th;

June: Thursday 28th will now be run on Wednesday 20th; and

July: Thursday 12th will now be run on Thursday 5th.

All other details remain the same.

I'll remind everyone via email well in advance, nearer the time.

A few weeks ago I was out on a Club ride and encountered something I never thought could possibly happen. I was tail-end Charlie with a few other bikes in front, and as we approached a set of traffic lights with a right turn, there were two

Club members marking the junction, each in different directions – one straight ahead, the other turn right! How on earth did that happen? Anyway, we sorted it out and everyone made it to the lunch stop, so that's all that matters.

AAMC Weekday Rides – an update

With the unusual weather carrying winter for longer than normal, the first ride, 27th February was cancelled.

29th March, saw Bryn, Adrian, Tony and I meet up at Bridgwater on a cold and damp Thursday. The intended route was to Exmoor, but impending heavy rain caused a diversion towards Dorset. That didn't do much for our dryness, or indeed our warmth. The final insult was the chosen café, Hive Café, Burton Bradstock, would not let us choose from our chosen menu, because we were 15 minutes late. Not a great choice, but the first and last visit has been had. So, after tea and cake, we did a 'bomb burst' towards our various homes. Would you believe it? The sun broke out for at least my journey back to Somerset.

7th April again saw AAMC members meeting for a ride out. How can a weekday ride be held on a Saturday? My advice is not to overcomplicate the situation. The Cross Hands at Old Sodbury greeted me with warm coffee on a wet and cold Saturday morning. Something familiar here! After about half an hour a goodly sized group of 10 bikes set off through the lanes towards Stroud. All went well until a road closure forced me into Cheltenham. My 'little grey cells' were working overtime but plan B was thwarted by another closure, this time towards Prestbury. Plan C took us into the traffic and onwards to Tewksbury. Soon enough for bladders we arrived at Croome Park, near enough to Pershore. It's a big house and the remains of what was RAF Defford. Both interesting in their own way and the

café is sited in what was the RAF Hospital building. So, an old RAF Hospital on an airfield? The answer is that in the Second World War from that airfield, crews flew small bombers with blackout canopies in order for scientists to develop radar.

On leaving, the group was reduced by one and then riding back through the countryside and Winchcombe, Belas Knapp, Andoversford, A40 (criminally reduced to 40's and 50's by 'the orforritees') to Northleach, A429 to Cirencester. People dropped off on route, which caused some confusion to the drop off system. I mean, they did 'drop off' just not in the expected way. A smaller gathering of the usual suspects Bryn, Al, me and Simon set off on the last leg. However, I needed fuel to get home before dark, and a decision was made to force more tea and cake down as well, this time at The Tollgate Café, Dyrham. The result was that a group of one set off towards Somerset just before 5pm and I chose the M4/5, simply because watching the antics of the travelling public provides me with endless entertainment. It's like a 55-minute U-Tube of "what planet are you on?"

So, what's next? Well, I do apologize for making several changes to dates in your superb calendar but here they are so that you can amend your version: -

Friday 11th May;
Wednesday 20th June;
Thursday 5th July;
Thursday 30th August; and
Tuesday 11th September.

All other details remain the same but, please keep an eye out in TREADS for any other changes that may happen. It isn't perfect but I still work and often have little notice of when I am required.

So, there we are for now. I hope more of you can attend our weekday 'specials' as they often reach the parts that other rides don't! Best wishes,
Stu.

GWAAC

To: mail@aamc.co.uk;
Subject: Donation
FAO. Sue

Dear Sue,

Many thanks for the cheque donation in the sum of £50 – it is greatly appreciated although we are sorry you are unable to attend the Rideout event this year.

Hopefully we will see you again next year but in the meantime thank you for the generous support you give.

With best regards
Jenny James, Volunteer Administrator.
Great Western Air Ambulance Charity



[Great Wall of China Trek – September 2018](#)

Lady motorcyclists wanted for two-day ride in France with around-the-world biker Elspeth Beard - *Motolegends*

We've had quite a few lady bikers here in the shop in Guildford who have never, for various reasons, ridden on the continent.

And that's why Sara, our MD, thought it would be neat to pop over to France for a couple of days with a group of lady bikers for a bit of continental riding.

"Why don't we ask Elspeth Beard to come along with us", somebody asked. "She

could ride with us and, over dinner, she might talk to us about her amazing global circumnavigation".

Elspeth is a heck of a lady. Back in 1982 when she was just 19 years old, having passed her test just a couple of years earlier, she set off around the world on her trusty BMW R60/6.

As you might expect, it was a mighty adventure, with plenty of mishaps and incidents on the way. There were, of course, amazing highlights too. Not to mention the occasional love interest.

If you want to read about her exploits, Elspeth recently released a book called Lone Rider. It's been a huge hit, selling in the kind of numbers that travel books rarely do. We've also heard rumours that a film deal is on the cards, and in the summer Elspeth is off to the States on a promotional roadshow.

Luckily for us, Elspeth has agreed to be guest of honour on our little trip. And yes, she'll give us a talk about her trip. Right now, the trip is just an idea, but we'd love to hear from lady riders out there who would be interested in coming along.

The brief outline is as follows. Nothing is written in stone, but we're thinking about a fast ferry on, say, a Friday morning from Portsmouth to Cherbourg. It arrives about mid-day, and that afternoon we would ride down to the Loire Valley.

We'd find a nice hotel, nothing too fancy but certainly somewhere comfortable. That evening we would be looking to have dinner in a local winery, where some light tasting might take place. During or after dinner, Elspeth would regale us.

The following day we'd ride back to Cherbourg the long way, with dinner in Ouistreham, before catching the overnight

ferry back to Portsmouth. We'd all be home early on Sunday morning.

That's the general gist of it, but nothing has been decided, so open to suggestions; we could do it over three days if that was preferred, for example.

But it will be strictly ladies only. The riding will be leisurely; and we'll be able to accommodate riders of all abilities; from IAM instructors to newbies. After all, if Elspeth can make it around the world at the age of 19, we shouldn't have a problem getting any rider to the Loire Valley and back.

We've not set a time yet, but we're thinking May or June; and certainly before the summer holidays when the roads get too busy. We will have a backup van, by the way, to carry everybody's luggage, and to rescue bikes if anybody breaks down. We've done trips down to Biarritz for the last few years, and they're always great fun. We're pretty organised, so we'll have recce'd the route in advance, and will check out any accommodation and food stops.

Elspeth tells us she's as excited as we are. She loves the idea of getting more women into biking. She's done some lady-only bike stuff before, and she says there's always a great feeling of camaraderie on these trips. We can't wait!

So, if you're interested, email Sara at ladies@motolegends.com We'll let you know when we've got more information.
Motolegends

Diary of Events

New items in red

April

Sunday 29th - Club Ride

Meet at Farrington's Farm Shop, Farrington Gurney BS39 6UB at 9:30am for a 9:45am start.

Nigel Billingsley - 07788 442428

Sunday 29th - Sarum Spring Bike Show in aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance, Laverstock and Ford Sports Club, Salisbury SP1 1QX
Tel: 07921 854834

MAY

Thursday 3rd - Weston Bike Nights start

Every Thursday night from 6pm to 9pm.

Friday 4th - Monday 7th - The Taffy Dakar

The Ancient Briton Pub, Brecon Road, Penycae, Swansea, SA9 1YY

<http://www.taffydakar.org.uk/>

Saturday 5th - International Female Ride Day <http://motoress.com/international-female-ride-day/>

Sunday 6th - Bowood Spring Classic Car and Motorcycle Show

Bowood House, Derry Hill, Calne SN11 0LZ
10am - 4pm. www.classicshows.org

Friday 11th - Weekday Ride to the Dorset Coast. *Please note new date.*

Meet at

at 9:45am for a prompt 10am start. Stuart Bullock - 07711 898178

Friday 11th - Sunday 13th Touratech Travel Event

Woodlands Business Park, Ystradgynlais Swansea SA9 1JW. www.touratech.co.uk

Saturday 12th - Jeff Mountjoy's Big Ride Out

Paulton Rovers Football Club,

Winterfield Road, Bristol BS39 7RF. All-day charity event and ride out.
<https://www.facebook.com/jmbro4/>

Saturday 12th – Despatch Rally

Choose which and how many challenges around Dorset (incl. clay pigeon shooting) to accept. Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, New Milton BH25 5SZ
www.despatchrally.co.uk

Sunday 13th - Club Ride

Meet at
at 9:30am for a 9:45am start.
Paul -

Saturday 19th – Ride the County

Paul Long, www.ridethecounty.org.uk
facebook.com/ridethecounty

Saturday 19th – Sunday 20th - Castle Combe Steam Rally incl. Wall of Death and Tigers Children Motorcycle Display Team

Sunday 20th - Club Ride

Meet at
t 9:15am for
a 9:30am start.
Simon Gough - 0117 973 4120

Saturday 26th – Bideford Bike Show

12 noon – 6 pm, Bideford Quay, EX39 2HW
www.bideforedbikeshow.org

JUNE

Sunday 3rd - Club Ride

Meet at
at 9:45am for a 10am start.
Eddy

Thursday 14th - Ride Smart at Castle Combe — a machine handling course.
Eddy

Sunday 17th - Club Ride

A 200-mile scamper around West Somerset and Devon. Meet in the car park of

at 9:15am for a 9:30am start.
Morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea stops assured!

Andy

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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.

E-mail editor@aamc.co.uk

NB – We publish articles for the benefit of members – it is not an endorsement or recommendation. You must make up your own mind if you think something is suitable for you.