



TREADS

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The November 2013 Newsletter of AAMC

EDITORS BITS

– Chris

The Iceland holiday was great but this isn't a holiday review. However, the country is, quite simply, beautiful.

I like a good road surface when out on a bike and I wouldn't hesitate to ride on the paved Icelandic roads. I wouldn't hesitate to ride on the unpaved roads either but then again, I like off-road biking anyway...

FYI off-roading in a car (and I assume on a bike too) is illegal as it seriously damages the environment long term.

Good biking roads then? Well, the shot below right shows part of the main ring road around the island. It took almost half an hour to cross this plain at 55mph. I think we saw 2 cars going the other way and as many corners!

Maybe not the most exciting biking but we didn't set to see the whole island. Definitely worth a holiday though!

View from the Saddle

– IPSGA

As I haven't been out on my bike or followed 'biking' topics much over the last couple of months the 'view' will be short but a couple of things have made me think about protective clothing.

We, as advanced motorcyclists, advocate the use of head to toe protective clothing at all times – even when, as on a few days this year, it is rather uncomfortably hot to do so. To my mind the argument is clear; I rather sweat than bleed! However, whilst on holiday in a warm & sunny Majorca recently I noticed that the motorcycle police [on Honda Transalps] were attired in short sleeved shirts – this, of course is de rigueur for the fashionably dressed gendarmes in France. It made me think, is there a greater or lesser incidence of gravel rash on the continent? You never hear of it. Any thoughts? Tell Treads!

Wearing a safety helmet on a motorcycle has been the law now for about 40 years. To do so on a bicycle is not compulsory and I am not going to enter a debate about this – there are some who say that helmets cause more injuries in accidents over 15 mph. I had the misfortune to come off my bicycle last Saturday at considerably over that speed. I was lucky in that I 'lowsided' and slid under the bike rather than going up and over. I did not hurt myself [the friction cohesion of greasy well worn tarmac being quite low] but I do remember the moment that my head hit the road. It was some bang but it did not hurt a bit and I was able to cover another 45 miles to complete the ride without the need for A & E. The reason? My helmet. Completely scrap now but it did its job when called to do so.

Protection – is it such a racket?



An unpaved road on the map – but do you want to take your bike down there?



2 cars and 2 corners in half an hour of driving.

Where Have I been?

– Al

I had meant to get in touch before, but you'll see from the message that things have not gone terribly well.

Things were going swimmingly back in July, managed to spend 2 weeks in Spain on holiday with the family and generally taking it easy and repairing the tendon. Most importantly, got a couple of rides in towards the end of August too!!

Was recovering so well that my wife and I decided to join one of my friends on his 50th birthday celebration with four other couples on a week's sailing holiday in the Greek islands (one of those 'what shall we do for our 50th' type conversations in the pub a couple of years ago!). The flight to Athens was fine, even the 45 minute bus ride to the marina was good, with September temperatures in the mid 30's and the sun shimmering on the water. Arrived at the marina, left our luggage and walked 300m to the local supermarket for some supplies and whilst walking

back with 2 bags of shopping, I ruptured the tendon again!! Never actually saw the yacht!!

To cut an even longer story short, went to Athens hospital got strapped up, managed to get flights (£1500) for my wife and I back to Heathrow via Cairo and having left for the great adventure Saturday morning 14th September, arrived back in good old Weston early hours of Monday 16th. Trip to A&E confirmed ruptured achilles again but in different place, I had an operation to join it back together, and after a couple of weeks in a plaster cast, I have progressed to a 'walking cast/boot' and will be in it until December.

Have just returned to work in Bridgwater (travelling by train) having worked from home for the interim.

Absolutely desperate to get back on the bike, but have had to console myself by cleaning and polishing the Suzuki (I think the polish is so thick you could

measure it with a ruler), fitted an engine fairing, changed the handlebars, changed the leaking fork seals and charged the battery up now and again, I even polished my boots!! Watched every piece of motorcycle sport on the T.V. as well as keeping up to date with the club news via 'Treads' - had thought about doing a small article about how to keep interested in bikes without being able to ride one, but thought it may appear a bit negative.

Conservatively estimate to be back on the bike January at the earliest, but perhaps will leave it until a bit later - will be taking things very carefully in the meantime and look forward to meeting up with the club in the new year.

You see what happens when you go shopping with the wife – a warning to us all! Great to hear you have not disappeared altogether! Hope to see you out and about in 2014.

AAMC on Facebook

Some recent photos posted on Facebook – not sure what the ice cream is all about though.



Final Club Ride of 2013

– Simon

Despite the earlier warning of heavy rain, it was sunny when we met at Severn View. I arrived pretty early to get petrol and was surprised to find a few members already there, some of whom had left home in the rain. By the time we were ready to move off, we had 10 people on 9 bikes in the group, and we headed across the old Severn Bridge in a very strong and gusty side-wind. It can be very exciting being blown all across your lane!

I wanted to stick to fairly main roads as there were a lot of wet leaves around, so we made our way up the Wye Valley to Monmouth, then on up towards Hereford before forking left. Apart from a very short shower at the bottom of the Golden Valley and subsequent wet roads, the

weather stayed dry and sunny all the way to Hay-on-Wye, where we had good luck in finding enough parking spaces outside the Granary Café.

I like the Granary as there is always a good selection of hot food, snacks and several different soups. Enough choice to cover every requirement.

From Hay we rode west past the Honey Café, then turned south-west in Talgarth down past Llangorse Lake. We were lucky not to meet any vehicles on that ancient narrow bridge at Llangynidr, as it can be rather awkward there when car drivers fail to understand that bikes don't have a reverse gear!

I was worried that the weather would be bad over the top of the

mountain towards Beaufort, but it stayed sunny and dry, and in fact we just had a few odd spots going back into Chepstow.

We finished back at Severn View shortly after 2:15pm, when most of us went in for a cup of tea. A shortish ride, but boy weren't we lucky with the weather.

As a point of note, this was the first ride Jaimie has completed since his heart operation, which is good news in that he can now manage that distance. Well done Jaimie. Finally, thanks very much to Nigel for going back-marker for me. I hope everyone enjoyed the ride. See you in the spring.

Pyrenees Motorbike Holidays

This is a follow-on from the *Lae De Haut* newsletter in October Treads.

Below is a you-tube clip of a exciting route just a few miles away from our Mountain Accommodation and you will see the great views on almost traffic free roads

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeE-EApNvBU>

Another of our suggested routes, Famous Tour De France Col Aubisque – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7q18nG4F30>

Col Portalet – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haD23IDONk0>

Now you can see why most of our clients are bikers and below is our

web site, come and join us.

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Regards John & Margaret Johnson

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A free DVD with over 1000 photos, let us have your address and we will send you one plus other local info.

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

AAMC Cornwall 2014

Friday 20th to Monday 23rd June inclusive.



2014 will see a return to our old stamping ground of Kernow, the Royal Duchy, or Cornwall for a long weekend.

We intend to meet at Bridgwater Services on the morning of Friday 20th before setting out South West for two days of fun and frolics, returning for the afternoon of Monday 23rd.

We will find a comfortable B&B that has en-suite rooms, off street parking and reasonable prices. We will also give suggestions for routes and lunch stops on each day and group meal bookings for the evenings of 21st and 22nd for those attending, to join in or not as they wish.

All we need for now are numbers of those interested. Once we have that information we will begin the process of confirming locations, costs, times etc. We are looking at around 16 people as a maximum, although we may consider an additional hotel if demand requires.

Looking at 2013 prices, a rough estimate for a suitable room and breakfast is:

- Double/Twin room per night from £70.
- Single room per night from £40.

If you think this trip is for you then please show your interest by FRIDAY 29th NOVEMBER 2013 LATEST.

When you contact us we WILL need to know:

- Your name, address and email. (We will ONLY contact you by email).
- As above for the person who will be with you (if applicable).
- Room type out of a choice of Double, Twin, Single.
- If you are a singleton indicate whether you will share a Twin room. (You should sort that arrangement out before contacting us).
- Any dietary requirements. (Vegetarian etc).

This trip has proven to be VERY popular in previous years and can fill up quickly.

S'all for now. Hope to hear from you very soon.

Stu and Sue.

BIKE HUD

– Stu

Fancy a head's up for a new way to see machine data. Literally called BIKE HUD this new device fits into any full face helmet, so Dave Vout, co-founder and MD of Bike Systems tells me. There are developments underway for some flip front helmets also, so keep an eye out for those. The unit has been subjected to some impact tests which have shown that the unit and its fittings are robust. It is important to tell you that Bike HUD is designed and built in Britain. The web link is <http://www.bike-hud.com/>

I had a short presentation by Dave recently and then a chance to ride his test bike with the HUD running. The unit that provides the data fits on a slim arm that in turn fits into the far side of the helmet opening. That places a small screen just alongside your eye-line. Plug the headset in and onto the screen is displayed whatever data you decide is adequate or necessary. Speed, gear, engine revs, ambient temp, indicator warning and so on. Dave tells me it can also link to your music and route directions.



I rode the bike for 30 minutes in steady traffic on the A39 near Bath with the unit fitted to the left side of the helmet opening. After a few minutes I stopped looking for the unit and allowed my peripheral vision to detect the information. I found I could see over the screen to scan ahead and also have an unobstructed view of the left controls and mirror. Being very light it does not affect the helmet and the visor can be fully closed or open as required.

Literally after 5 minutes I felt completely at home with this new device and it certainly did not impede my view or riding style at all. I could recognise the

Bike HUD Continued...

forward speed and that for me was very effective. The result is that a rider can see, for instance, a developing situation ahead, and see speed reducing exactly as it happens. Slowing into a lower speed limit was so much easier than having to glance down at the speedo. The information for the gear number and temperature was useful but I found the indicator warning particularly efficient. As I cancelled an indicator I inadvertently pressed the switch too far and applied the opposite signal. I was instantly aware and able to cancel the signal after just on flash.

All too soon the trial came to a close and left me wondering how this product will develop in the future. In my view it has terrific appeal to riders for

the safety issues provided by the instant information. Track day riders should be particularly interested as information can include speed and revs and even gear change warning.

In my view it would be worth all riders having a closer look at this system of providing information directly



to the rider, rather than having to look for it. Would you find this safer than from the bike dashboard?

I am hoping to be able to carry out a longer term test in early 2014, so watch out for further news.

Bike HUD will be on the Bike Systems' stand at Motorcycle Live, NEC Birmingham from 23rd November – 1st December" so anyone interested in seeing Bike HUD for themselves/attending the show is welcome to drop by for a demo.

Motorcycling

– Stu, Motorcycle Training Manager DFS, RoADAR National Senior Motorcycle Examiner

Most vehicles that we share road-space with have areas of limited vision from within that vehicle creating 'no see zones' (NSZ). We need to learn where they may be in order to apply tactics to reduce the risk to us.

The average view from all rear facing mirrors will have restrictions. If you are riding into an area that the reflected view does not reach, you will not be visible to the driver. Because of our vulnerability, we should avoid such areas. Always the best option.

On dual carriageways and motorways plan your next steps as you would any overtaking manoeuvre. The build up – the execution – the conclusion.

The build up is in recognising you are catching a slower vehicle in

your lane. As you approach see if there are passengers or a large load obstructing the drivers view to the rear. The possible solution is to allow more time to react and space to manoeuvre.

For the execution the usual safety measures should always be applied before changing speed and direction. The speed increase should be made before entering the NSZ, restrictions permitted, in order to pass through it as swiftly as possible. The driver may forget about you if you stay alongside the vehicle in the NSZ for too long.

If the speed increase is not great and / or the vehicle is a lorry then consider leaving a lane gap between your vehicle and the slower one. Your plan needs to account for following faster

traffic and not hold anyone up or put yourself at greater risk from impatient motorists.

If passing safely is not viable then consider waiting in a following position until a better opportunity arises. Remember that there will be a NSZ to the vehicles rear, so the following position may need to be further back than normal.

By now you should have the general idea. During the process, don't forget to see and be seen. Use a headlight flash when appropriate or highlight your presence in other ways. The conclusion to a good plan is that you have avoided the risks and are enjoying a great ride.

The key is to never take a chance when making the best of an opportunity.

Letters

It looks like View from the Saddle, October has pushed a button or two...

Hi Simon

An enjoyable read as always. I concur completely with your 'gripe' over traffic lights – in fact Mrs C reckons someone somewhere is getting a kick back from Lux!!! What I cannot understand, and drives me bonkers is when you have a perfectly good roundabout and some idiot then puts traffic lights on it!!!!

Still grumpy
Dave

Hi Dave,

Thanks very much for your letter. It's good to know someone actually reads my rubbish...!

It appears to me the decision to proliferate the use of traffic lights is purely a political one – they seem to think if they delay the traffic for long enough then people will switch to public transport. Unfortunately that won't happen until the public transport we have is both good and cheap. It's a mile away from both those things at present, and I see no possibility of improvement without a sea-change in attitude from government in regards to funding it. A huge political issue. Actually, the end result of delaying traffic is to increase frustration thereby increasing road rage, not to mention increasing air pollution from all the stationary vehicles. But they just won't accept it is a wrong philosophy as it fits so nicely with their

political ideals.

Cloud cuckoo land.

Best wishes to Mrs. C.
Simon.

Sir,

I must disagree most strongly with the article on traffic lights [Treads, October 2013]. There are not nearly enough.

Several years ago when working in the centre of Bristol and commuting to Keynsham, a distance of 6 miles, I had to negotiate up to 24 sets of lights,

depending on the number of road works - that meant a set every 1/4 mile. There are far fewer now and I put this down to the Government's traffic light cull policy in an attempt to stop the spread of happiness amongst road users.

Yours
Major Roadahead.

Maybe the owner of the bike below could sort out a few traffic lights on the way past.

And on a different note....

Hi Friends – All of you who were worried about me recently.

My road rage is finally cured.



Dear Treads,

I just wanted to highlight a small and seemingly forgotten hero from my childhood in an effort to see it's return to our bike-stop cafes around the West-country, The Tunnok's Caramel Wafer Biscuit.



Seriously – how many of you are now thinking, "I haven't had one of those for years!" A new feature for treads perhaps – Biker Biscuit of the Month? Can anyone top the Tunnok's? Or maybe I should get out on the bike more.

Seriously – I think you have waaaay too much time on your hands.

Something to say? Please don't be shy. E-mail editor@aamc.co.uk And send some photos in too!