

Editor's Bits – Morton

Took some time off from Treaditorial duties recently, to have a look at Norway – not on a bike, alas; maybe next time. There are some great biking roads up the west coast, and probably elsewhere in Norway. I remember Henry Cole's "World's Greatest Motorcycle Rides" (on the Travel Channel) covering Scandinavia. He enjoyed himself (of course: what a job!), though some of the endless pine forests – probably in Finland – apparently depressed him at times. I enjoy Henry's programmes on the whole, though some of his views jar, eg: "If you see someone driving a red BMW you can be sure they're a thoroughly nasty person." However, you have to admire his spirit – a world speed record at Bonneville Salt Flats on a classic British bike, and starting up Gladstone Motorcycles. The Gladstone No. 1 is an interesting device: a nickel-plated frame designed by Metisse, with a blue-printed T140 750cc Triumph engine, and "copious amounts of handmade brass and copper pipework and bracketry".



The intention was to build just nine of the Gladstone No.1, with delivery starting in April 2014. Each bike would take six months to build, with exquisite detail in, eg, the billet-milled headlight. I don't know whether any were sold, though at a planned price of £23K you'd think there would have been enough "discerning hooligans" (the target market) to take at least the initial batch. Does anyone know more? I hope they do/did well, as Henry apparently put £100K of his own into the business, but I'm reminded of the old question "How do you make a small

fortune in the motor industry? – Start with a big one!".

Anyway, back briefly to our Norwegian trip. Saw lots of bikes, mostly BMWs, of course – RTs, GSs and an immaculate K1200LT. A group turned up just as we were leaving the Arctic Cathedral in Tromsø - a stunning building:



but not really a cathedral: they seem to like giving churches that title at random. This group had "been everywhere, man":



The countries named on the bike are Iran, Hungary, Turkey, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Germany, Portugal, Kyrgyzstan, **Wales**, Albania, Russia, Andorra, Croatia, Gibraltar, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Serbia, Great Britain, Bosnia Hercegovina, Lithuania, Romania, Luxembourg, Uzbekistan, Malta and Lichtenstein.

Finally, couldn't resist including a pic of a bike none of us is likely to want to try:



a sort-of 3-wheeler used in times past on the Flaam railway line.

Welcome – Simon

I'd like to welcome two new members to the Club this month. The first is Dave Sealey who lives in Bradley Stoke and rides a VFR800, the second is David (Tiggie) Friend who lives in Whitchurch and rides a Bandit 650. We hope to see you out and about with us at a Club event or on a ride very soon.

Legal Questions

1. Did I stirrup some trouble?

I had an altercation with some horse riders while I was out on my Yamaha R1, which is fitted with aftermarket exhaust cans that are not approved for road use.

I was coming up to my favourite bit of country road, which is downhill, and because of the layout of the road I could see for about two miles ahead. As I was coming up to my favourite stretch of bends I blipped past a Ford people-carrier and accelerated away. I still had a completely clear line of sight for about half a mile and then I could see two horse riders ahead of me, riding two abreast.

I slowed as I approached the horses, but as I passed them I down-changed and my bike started banging on the overrun. The horse on the inside of the two went

mental, rearing up and bucking. The horse on the outside joined in and one of the horses backed into me, knocking me off my bike. At this point I was stationary with both feet on the ground. I had not killed the engine, but it was just ticking over.

The riders eventually got the horses back under control, but by this point a small army of people had gathered around, including the passengers in the Ford people-carrier whose reactions seemed to vary between wanting to shout at me and wanting to kill me. The driver of the Ford Galaxy said that "the guy went past me like a bat out of hell". The horse riders were mother and daughter, the daughter being about 15 years old.

Eventually a police officer showed up in a Land Rover, and the result was that I have been written up for "careless and inconsiderate driving". Luckily he did not notice the "not for road use" mark stamped on my exhausts.

My insurers are not prepared to go after the horse riders' insurers for my damaged bike. As no one was hurt, no one is suing me. My no-claims bonus is stuffed and my renewal premium has gone up from £788 to nearly £2000. Is there anything that I can do?

Answer

Not a lot really. Careless and inconsiderate driving is the correct charge to bring based on these facts. You will almost certainly be getting three points, because on your own evidence you changed down a gear near horses, on a bike with aftermarket pipes. It was foreseeable, though unfortunate, that the bike started popping and banging on the overrun. What you did directly caused the horses to lose control.

You also said that the horse rider should not be on the road if they cannot control their horses, but the truth is they did control their horses and the horses' reaction is pretty typical. The riders' reaction was competent and you have no action in law against the horse riders. The Highway Code is really clear: you need to

take special care when overtaking and do not scare the horses by noise or sudden movement.

What is perhaps unfair about this outcome for you is that you were trying to pass carefully but you made the wrong decision to change down. That one down-change is going to cost you three points and a bumped-up insurance premium.

The Highway Code also says that horses tend to ride in double file when there is a young and inexperienced horse or rider on the inside. This is exactly what the Highway Code says and you are deemed to know the Highway Code, even if you have not looked at it since you passed your test.

Andrew Dalton, RiDE Magazine [July 2016](#)

2. Don't let the Red Mist get you

One of the fairly common accident scenarios I get is when riders overtake drivers who do something peculiar when the rider is alongside.

Before I became a lawyer I shared the biker folk-wisdom that if a driver was doing something odd it was best to get past, but experience has taught me this is a bad plan. A better plan is to keep that driver at a safe distance in front of you.

The erratic driving is likely to be caused by incompetence or tinkering about with the radio/sat-nav/phone or any number of other gadgets. You coming up alongside and distracting them from the very important business of resetting their iPhone is likely to result in a potentially disastrous over-correction by the driver. With you alongside.

The law is clear enough. A driver being overtaken owes a duty of care to the vehicle overtaking. This means they need to maintain a steady and predictable course. The key point is the driver need do nothing to make your overtake safer. So, for example, a driver does not need to slow if you are heading into a bollard because you have mistimed your overtake.

The law is set out in a little-known case called *Smith v Cribben* from 1999

and the logic of the Court of Appeal was clear. A driver being overtaken is the passive party who does not know what the overtaker is going to do, so all he needs to do is maintain a steady course. There are the odd situations where cars deliberately speed up while a rider is trying to overtake, which is not likely to be a problem for a powerful bike.

However, make the car a BMW M5 and the bike an A1-compliant machine and things can get ugly. There have been such cases where the motorcyclist has been badly injured, and one particular case where the red mist descended on the bike rider and the driver of a Subaru Impreza WRX.

These two protagonists played cat and mouse on the road until, inevitably, the biker was seriously injured. The Court was not overwhelmed with sympathy for these two grown men and found the Subaru driver more culpable than the motorcyclist, but not by much. The Court recognised the car driver would be safer in his steel box but was utterly unimpressed by the rider deciding to make good his overtake attempt.

The rational thing for the rider to have done was let the Scooby crash on his own. The rule is simple. Had the police seen these two men they would both have been up for dangerous driving or racing on the highway – two of the most serious road traffic offences short of killing or seriously injuring a person. So, if you can't make an overtake because someone is not going to let you, just hang back.

If things get road-ragey the most dangerous place for you to be is alongside a car/van/truck. Just avoid being in the same place as an angry driver. Whatever the rights and wrongs, the biker will always lose that tussle so swallow your pride rather than hospital food.

Andrew Dalton, Bike Magazine, [April 2016](#)

Ride Report – The Flying Kites in Wales Tour – Paul B

On a damp but warm Sunday morning (12 June) an intrepid group of AAMC riders met at the Aust Services on the M48. Andy gave the ride brief and Mark and Helen volunteered to be the back marker; with Helen effectively in charge of the ride it was bound to go well.

Andy Smith	Ride Leader	BMW S1000R
Chris Kearns		Triumph 1050 ST
Nick Archer		Triumph Explorer
Bryn Mitchell		BMW R1200RT
Paul Batcheler		BMW K1300S
Alan Barnstable	(a rare guest appearance)	Triumph Explorer
Mark & Helen Chamberlain		BMW R1200GS

In a drizzly start we made our way across the old Severn Bridge and turned off towards Chepstow making our way to the Usk road, which was still a bit damp under the trees. I noticed that my mirrors were very full of CK's lovely Triumph and soon he was safely past me and making excellent progress to boot. I also noted that the big Triumph didn't seem to have any brake lights and was going around the corners remarkably well. NA also passed me a little later on and his Triumph seemingly had a similar problem with its brake lights. AS lead our group to the first coffee stop at Talybont-on-Usk along some very twisty and narrow roads with stunning scenery all the way. At the coffee stop CK informed me that I was probably in too high a gear through the twisties and the acceleration sense we had discussed on a Thursday evening lesson was the way forward; "2nd gear, all the way" CK informed me. The light went on (in my head) and I was eager to get back out and try this for myself. After a toasted teacake that was apparently baked on a manhole cover (yup it was pretty huge) and a coffee; we headed up the A470, where we then crossed the river at Erwood and up to Builth Wells, heading across the B4567 before turning right on the A481 and heading towards Llandrindod Wells on

some more fantastic sweeping roads, the traffic was light and the weather had improved greatly. CK passed me again with two fingers up, reminiscent of Barry Sheene, I think he was indicating that I should use 2nd gear!!



We stopped at the Café and fuel station at Crossgates for a top-up of petrol and comestibles, where my next lesson was 'never park your bike facing downhill on its side stand' (every day is a school day for me it seems). After moving my bike and enjoying a snack in the café, we said our goodbyes to AB who had to be back before sundown.

The remainder of the group headed out north on the A483 to Newtown before turning left on the A489 and returning on the A470 to Llangurig towards the Red Kite feeding and rehabilitation centre at Gigrin Farm, Rhayader in Powys LD6 5BL. Again the route chosen by our ride leader was excellent and Helen was still imperiously managing to keep us all together. I had noticed throughout the day that our most senior member BM had some excellent techniques for 'gaining a view' from seemingly any position behind a vehicle. He is not averse to expertly putting his machine into the nearside gutter with his boxer engine hanging over the curb and leaning out to get that all

important 'permission to pass'. I did try to follow him a few times, but he is that rapid and makes his mind up so quickly that I had to admit to being second best on a few occasions. We arrived at the Red Kite Centre for feeding time, and paid our cash and made our way to the hides to watch the already circling Kites. They increased markedly in number with a couple of hundred birds of prey awaiting the farmer's tractor for their feast. We were not disappointed as the spectacle of their swooping flight was only bettered during the day by BM's overtaking prowess.

From here we made our way back towards the Severn Bridge, stopping at the Honey Café with its spectacular views. By this time the sun was shining and all too soon the ride was over as we said our goodbyes just before making our way back over into England. We all agreed that the route was excellent and have to thank Andy for his exemplary route and riding skills.

View from the Saddle - Andy

With many of the world's automotive manufacturers developing autonomous vehicles, what does this mean for us as motorcyclists?

Will autonomous driving mean that in theory the roads will be a safer place for us as the multitude of electronic systems detect us and therefore protect us from the machines that are otherwise driven by drivers distracted by other everyday matters? Or will it mean that there are vehicles on the road travelling from point of departure to destination containing only passengers who no longer consider themselves in control of a vehicle, but prefer to trust in the technology to safely pilot them from A to B? There was a recent case of a "driver" and technology enthusiast who was killed when his Tesla

failed to avoid a collision. He was reportedly doing high speed whilst undertaking other activity in the car whilst utilising the vehicle's autopilot system. The manufacturer has responded to the incident by reiterating that the systems on the vehicle are there for driver assistance and that the driver retains the responsibility for safety of the vehicle. Investigations continue.

There must surely be a place for the development of safety systems in future vehicles and our developing electronic technologies are demonstrating great potential in many aspects, given the intelligent use of them by the thinking operator. However there must be an equal development in the mentality and attitude of the human interface and that is the part which cannot be developed without the intention and determination of the individual concerned. Many will take the easy option and will continue to permit the autonomous systems to take control. That will be where the greatest challenge may lie, in making the systems so idiot-proof that they are fail-safe, but that may well take away the whole involvement and pleasure, for many, of driving.

Of greater concern, or interest maybe, are the developments in autonomous motorcycling. Considering the much more fundamental interaction between rider and machine, is this not a dichotomy? Manufacturers are now developing robots to ride in order to develop safety systems for motorcycles. Considering that only a few years ago, there were adverse reactions to the introduction of systems like ABS on motorcycles and now we have legislation in place that all new machines must be so fitted, where might we be in a few years' time? Will that mean that bikes will develop even more power, accessible by us, but controlled by the electronic systems? Will we still be riding bikes when the bikes may be in control? Isn't that why we ride, because we like the control? But

on the other hand, we also prefer always to complete the journey and avoid pain.

The future is out there, but what will it hold for us?

Rob's Ride to Sammy Miller's

Sunday 3rd July and my turn to lead a ride. Chosen destination for the ride – Sammy Miller's Motorcycle Museum, New Milton, Hants. I had last visited Sammy's last year with my local RoADAR group and it seemed like a good destination for an AAMC ride.

The start point for this ride was the Little Chef (now a Burger King) outside Chippenham, where I was met by Bryn, Paul and Gary.

Thankfully the weather turned out to be fine and sunny, quite contrary to the forecast a few days before, so with me not really enjoying riding in the wet, I was somewhat relieved.

Around 10:20 we departed, first picking up the Chippenham ring road before heading up Derry Hill towards Devizes. My planned route from here was to ride partly down Caen Hill before turning off down an unclassified road to pick up the Devizes to Salisbury road. Unfortunately due to a navigation error I turn off too late and we enjoyed a slight detour around Seend and the outskirts of Melksham. We did eventually pick up the Salisbury road and headed off down through Salisbury plain on the A360, which is quite a nice road, a few nice straights and equally few nice twists. The main obstacle to progress though happened to be the Lycra brigade, who seemed to be out in force that day.

After about an hour we arrived in Salisbury where we stopped off at Starbucks on the A36 for a coffee break.

A further blast along the A36 brought us to Langford where we turned off the main drag and onto the New Forest B and unclassified roads.

Whereas before, the Lycra Brigade and Sunday drivers had proved worthy overtaking opponents, now we had to contend with wild ponies



and the odd cow on the road, as well as bone-shaking cattle grids. The roads through the New Forest had recently been upgraded to 40 mph and although somewhat off the beaten track for Paul, I for one really enjoyed the view and traffic being so light meant you could (for once) take your eyes off the road (an adventure bike however was not needed)!

On from here and under the A30 onto Bolderwood Arboretum which almost felt like being in Canada with the tall pine forest towering above us. This picturesque route brought us out onto the A35 where it was a final blast down to New Milton and Sammy Miller's for lunch.



One motorcyclist had taken the term "blast" to an extreme and managed to park their bike upside down in a hedge - perhaps in need of some training, or perhaps he just found a new way to lube ones chain!

On the return I was undecided on a route back to Salisbury, so handed over to Paul and his SatNav who took us on a dual carriage way and A-road route back to Salisbury, where we all departed. Paul and Bryn headed off home from there, while Gary headed over to Andover and I set course for Swindon. Thanks guys for keeping me company. A nice and very rare sunny day!!

Want empty roads? - Sue

My evening ride was a combination of good and could be better. A small, but perfectly formed band of heroes turned out on, what could only be described as an overcast Thursday evening. I say band, cos any less and there would only have been a couple! But no matter. The route was planned and there was some football or something on, which gave us a fighting chance for some space. The weather looked threatening and given what the start of the summer has been like, I fully expected it to rain. But it didn't!

The route initially headed north towards Stroud but instead of a direct route we headed over Minchinhampton Common (via Tetbury) and ended up in Cirencester. All planned, I assure you! From there, we took to unclassified roads across country (taking in the delights of grass in the middle of the road and a young deer, who stood and stared at us, until it thought a better idea was to trot back to woodland cover), until we reached the A40. From there it was a simple matter of finding the Bibury Road and tootling back to Chipping Sodbury.

The ride took less time than my pre-ride the day before and there was very little traffic on the road, making for smooth progress. Many thanks to my compadres for joining me and thanks to Bryn for going tail end, although I think there was only one drop off in the whole ride.

Here's to the next one! Sue.

GWAAC Ride 4 Life

The first ever GWAAC Ride 4 Life took place on Sunday 10th July, with hundreds of bikers showing their support for their local air ambulance charity.



Around 300 bikers travelled through Bristol, from Dick Lovett at Cribb's Causeway to Ashton Gate Stadium, via the Suspension Bridge. Following the rideout, Ashton Gate Stadium played host to a

festival, which included stalls, entertainment, and food. Even AAMC had a stand and recruited a new member!

Bristol band Tongue and Groove took over the first spot, and entertained riders as they arrived. The band has a personal connection with GWAAC, as guitarist John Rigby is a former pilot for the charity. They were followed by AC/DC Tribute band Hells Bells. Lead vocalist Lee Jay and rhythm guitarist Danny Trumper are both bikers, and are aware of the importance of an air ambulance in the biking community.

GWAAC Head of Fundraising and Marketing Emma Carter said: "This was the first time we have organised a rideout, and we were really pleased with the number of people that showed up to support us. Thank you so much, by taking part you have helped us raise money to keep our helicopter flying. We are going to make this event a regular part of our GWAAC event calendar, and next year it will be bigger and better. I hope you will join us again."

All the money raised will go towards keeping the helicopter flying, and ensuring the dedicated Critical Care Team are able to help more people in need. The charity receives no day to day funding from the Government or National Lottery, and so relies on events like these and support from the public to stay operational. The date and details about the 2017 Rideout will be released soon. Keep an eye on gwaac.com or [@GWAAC](https://twitter.com/GWAAC).

Old bikes don't die: they get re-(motor)cycled – Morton

Browsing round the ACEM (Association des Constructeurs Européens de Motocycles) website recently – as you do – I came across an interesting defence (my word, not theirs) of motorbikes and scooters

(AKA PTWs, or Powered Two-Wheelers) with reference to the End-of-Life Directive:

- We don't dump them illegally, in any Member State of the EU.
 - Even an old PTW is of some value and not waste. Owners maintain and store them in good condition and are proud of them.
 - As spare parts are expensive and scarce for older PTWs, the trade in PTW second hand spare parts between dealers, repair shops and private owners is well-established throughout the EU and helps limit the waste generated by PTWs.
 - PTWs are designed for easy accessibility and maintenance, allowing home repairs and service as well as the re-use of parts.
 - PTW rider groups and sport associations promote re-use of components.
 - Of End-of-Life PTWs 75% by weight is re-used through high-value recycling as spare parts, and most of the remaining 25% is recovered by waste organisations due to its residual value.
 - At worst, the total amount of shredder residues generated yearly from End-of-Life PTWs would account for only 3.3 of the total waste resulting from automotive ELVs, itself only 0.2 % of total community waste.
 - Hardly any PTWs are returned to dealers for disposal.
 - Dismantling facilities which handle 1,500-4,000 ELV cars per year typically receive fewer than 10 PTWs per year.
- Not bad, eh?

Biker Down Workshops

- *Chris Kearns*

Great news, Biker Down workshop dates for this season are detailed below: - 23rd September, 21st October, 18th November & 9th December.

Please email bikerdown@glosfire.gov.uk to reserve a place and we look forward to seeing you at SkillZONE

Nearer each workshop we will be advertising each one.