



TREADS

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The January 2018 Newsletter of AAMC

Editor's Bits – Morton

Kicked off my 2018 riding recently with a chug round Cheddar on the Deauville, glad of the wind protection and dressed like the King of Sparta, Menelaus (many layers - Boom, Boom!). Saw only one other biker, with whom nods were exchanged. I'll test the hand-guards I've fitted to the Stripe as wind-deflectors when it's just a bit warmer.

I came across an article about Paul Denning recently – he runs Crescent Racing, now running the Yamaha WSB team. He believes in “serious fun” on a bike, judging by the article - wonder what club he'd fit into! He knows and enjoys the Zig Zag hill (which scares me but which Austin made look easy), and said a friend of his came off on the way down once, and explained it by saying he'd zigged when he should have zagged.

Jimmy DeVille, he of the make-an-Enfield-twin-by-bolting-two-singles-together project (*Treads October 2015*), has a new series on Quest (Thursdays, 9pm). Stop me if you've heard this one, but the aim is to buy a classic car, do it up, sell it on at a profit ...

In the first episode Jimmy's *Goblin Works Garage* buys a rust-free South African Mk II Escort Sport for £8K, and on the test run his sidekick stuffs it into a boulder (£900 for parts) – and laughs! It does get better once it gets on to bikes, although “Norton's kind of like the British Harley Davidson - they're kind of the same, but in a completely different way” wasn't encouraging. However, Stuart Garner's

request “Using the Dominator platform, make the best British ‘caff’ racer there's ever been” was more promising, and came out OK:



I assume you won't *have* to wear a made-to-measure Saville Row suit to ride it.

Well, well, the programme that follows GWG is ... “Salvage Hunters: Classic Cars”, in which they buy a classic car, do it up, ...

I subscribe to the digital edition of [Adventure Bike Rider](#) - great value, as it provides access to the entire archive [*but other bike mags and deals are available!*] - and I liked Bryn Davies's introduction to Issue 43, which he has agreed to my including, further down in this *Treads*.

CURRY NIGHT -

Saturday 10th February 2018

The first social of the year is to take place at Taj Brasserie, 41 High Street, Winterbourne, BRISTOL BS36 1JG

There are no set menus so we will order on the night but I will need to know names as there is a maximum number of 25 – booking early will avoid disappointment!

So if you fancy a night out with good Indian food and convivial company let me know names by Friday 2nd February.

Contact Helen with names or other queries on:

Look forward to seeing you there!
Thanks,
Helen

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. Is side saddle really illegal?

I recently passed my test and have a Honda Superdream 250. I was on my way home when I saw my mate had broken down on her moped after running out of petrol.

I told her to hop on the back as there was a petrol station up the road. She duly did but instead of straddling the seat she thought it would be funny to ride side saddle and shout "I'm a lady don't you know." We chuckled when the blue lights lit me up.

The police officer was a friendly chap but gave us a stern talking to about my friend, 'the lady' riding side saddle. I didn't want to get nicked (my mum would go mental!) so I was super polite. However, so long as there's a seat for two, is it really illegal?

Answer

I now have images of a scene from Black Beauty, albeit that your trusty steed is a Superdream!

While I have no doubt your friend is a 'lady' the policeman was correct and riding side saddle is illegal by virtue of s.23 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The law basically states it's an offence to carry a

passenger "otherwise than sitting astride the motor cycle and on a proper seat securely fixed to the motor cycle behind the rider's seat".

If you hadn't encountered a friendly copper you as the rider could have got done. The punishment would be three penalty points and a fine of up to £1000.
Andrew Prendergast, Motorcycle Monthly
May 2017

2. The law and the back protector

There is no legal obligation to wear any form of back protection, but as back protection is becoming so much more affordable, and just about every motorcycle jacket you can buy has a back protector pocket, it will only be a matter of time before the 'failure' to wear a back protector will be raised as a contributory factor against a motorcyclist. So, just what is the rider's duty to protect his own spine?

Because there is no determinative law on the point lawyers will look to similar scenarios and the obvious comparator is a cyclist not wearing a helmet. Like a back protector a cycle helmet is not compulsory but the considered opinion of experts is that the use of one can do no harm but can be very protective. The difficulty this allegation has in contributory negligence is that the defendant would have to prove first of all that a failure to wear a back protector was negligent. As there is no evidence that the majority of motorcyclists wear one it would be a difficult burden to get over, unless and until the Highway Code recommends the use of a back protector. Secondly, a 'failure' to wear a back protector must be shown to have been causative of the harm. The Courts have danced around this point and judges, being clever people, have managed to sidestep the issue rather than be forced to make new law. Blame for the motorcyclist would really only apply in spinal injuries for an area which would be covered by the back protector. I, as a matter of choice,

always wear a solid back protector but I have dealt with paraplegia cases where the riders have had very high quality back protection on. A back protector can and really does help by spreading the load of force which can hit your back in a high energy impact. However, a back protector is not magic. It can decrease your odds of a spinal injury but offers no guarantees. Moreover there is a self-evident risk with back protectors. In a crash the energy has to go somewhere and with a robust back protector the energy, in the wrong circumstances, can evidence itself in the neck and upper spine or lower spine. Surprisingly I have seen more riders killed or very seriously injured by impacts to the chest, but chest protectors are less common.

Bio-mechanically, if you can spread the force of an impact your chances of not being seriously injured are significantly improved but spinal protectors are not without downsides. If you are unlucky enough to suffer a serious spinal injury you probably would regret not wearing a back protector but for the 'failure' to wear a back protector to become a real legal issue the circumstances would have to be very particular. As a matter of law, a back protector is an optional extra and in much the same way as a car with air bags is probably a good idea, it isn't compulsory nor do legal consequences follow.

[Bike](#), March 2017

View from the Saddle *-Andy*

Personally, I have always found identifying a subject for VftS to be a challenge, but recent observations during a number of rides in 2017 have identified a relevant subject which I believe is necessary to highlight: overtaking.

Motorcycle Roadcraft tells us that the most hazardous situation we encounter as riders on the road is when we are overtaking. This is something which we all do regularly and we even seek out

opportunities to do. But do we always do it to the best of our ability and with the maximum regard for our own and others' safety margins at all times?

Overtaking is a real skill, developed through the mature and considered application of Observation and Anticipation, combined with good machine control and honed through experience. This is particularly so when riding a motorcycle.

Always consider that on a given section of road, if it is possible for you to achieve a speed of x mph, that an oncoming road user may also be approaching at an equal or greater speed and therefore the closing speed between you, or any potential impact speed in an overtaking situation, will be the cumulative speed of your combined approach and any impact probably unsurvivable for a motorcyclist. A sound and positive mental attitude, Consideration, Observation and Anticipation are therefore imperative and vital to our safety.

Overtaking across central solid white lines or finishing an overtake by crossing a solid white line: as well as being illegal, the white lines (remember- the more paint, the greater the danger) are present due to there being a serious hazard on that section of road. We should not overtake on them and if we finish an overtake and cross them then we might question ourselves whether we had failed to observe and anticipate correctly.

You might also ask yourself when you are riding in a group, when you consider an overtake, do you always make full observations for yourself, or do you just follow the rider in front to keep up or make better progress?

Overtaking into blind corners or approaching the brow of a hill, you would think, was not something that anyone

would willingly undertake and yet it does happen. The thought process involved in anyone doing so is beyond me. You may however consider that when approaching any hazard, you might also look for an alternative strategy to identify an escape route in the event of an emergency.

An overtake, by definition, always has at least one witness to the action that we undertake (no pun intended). If anything goes wrong, the witness will provide evidence and if we have been negligent then there will most likely be catastrophic consequences for the rider as well as serious consequences for the Club, if on a Club ride.

This is all well known and common sense advice, but when we don a helmet and twist that throttle, do we always consider our own survival? Or do we just consider the thrill? Please take a moment to consider this and consider it in your riding future....it may save a great deal of grief for you and others ...and possibly your life!

Wanted – Ride Leaders for 2018

- Helen

So Christmas and the New Year celebrations are a distant memory and in a seamless fashion our thoughts can turn to the new Season's ride calendar.

If you can lead a ride this year can I ask, plead, beg you to get in touch and give me a date or dates and a start time and general direction/location of where the ride might go – this could be day rides or evening rides during the summer.

If I could have replies as soon as possible it would be appreciated as the calendar needs to be published soon.

For those of you who have done this before I would love to hear from you for

this year and for those who haven't led a ride at all, now is your chance.

Look forward to hearing from you soon!

(_____)
Thanks very much.

Social cycle – Tony W

Yes you did read correctly - a cycle trip in a motorcycle club!



No worries about speed limits (we're not that fit!), no marking at junctions and no heavy motorcycling gear, just the freedom of the open cycle track. The enthusiastic (or less so in some cases) eight met at the Bird in Hand pub at Saltford.

Although the weather forecast had said no rain we were blessed with the usual UK precipitation, though it brightened up later with sun glimpses and didn't mar our enjoyment of the ride.

After some initial mechanical problems with Al's bike the group followed a pretty flat tour around Bath taking in the Bristol/Bath cycle track, Kennet and Avon canal and the incredible Greenway Two Tunnels (one being nearly one mile long). We managed to avoid most roads and had an enjoyable, pretty-much traffic-free, 20 miles including the obligatory cake stop at the Angelfish Restaurant overlooking the canal at Brassknocker Basin, just by the Dundas Aqueduct.

After a good dose of scenery and exercise we returned to the Bird in Hand for an enjoyable, if rather slow-to-arrive, pub lunch where we were joined by Carezza and Johnny.

Maybe rides without engines (Dave did have his electric motor, though swore blind he didn't use it much) will become a more common feature in the club?

Tony W

That nagging voice asking me 'what if...?'

A few months ago I found myself sitting in an all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet in Fresno, California. I'd just ridden through Yosemite National Park and was making my way down south to Los Angeles to catch my flight home when the hunger pangs struck. Fresno seemed like the best chance I'd have to fuel up before blasting to the City of Angels, so I pulled into the first agreeable looking establishment and set up camp at a table closest to the spare ribs.

While I was ordering a drink off the waitress I was approached by a guy who had been drawn over by the sound of my English accent. We got chatting, and he called over his mate who also happened to be British. Realising that I was eating alone, they invited me to join them at their table, and when they discovered that I had nowhere to stay that evening they insisted that I went back to their place for a few beers where there'd also be a sofa bed with my name on it.

Who was I to refuse an offer of alcohol and free lodging? So, I quickly agreed and followed them through the city to their neighbourhood. As we got deeper and deeper into their neck of the woods, there was a noticeably 'bad' feeling about the place, and I started to wonder to myself

'what if these guys are serial killers?' I'd either watched too many TV shows, or listened to concerned friends too often and paranoia had started to sink in. I was a guy riding alone on a bike worth £20,000 – an easy target, right?

On arrival, they allowed me to park my bike out of sight in their back garden, and cracked me open a cold beer. Nerves were starting to settle, but there was still that nagging voice in the back of my head asking me 'what if...?' So, I decided to text my girl friend telling her the address I was staying at, and if I didn't call her by 7am the next day to phone the Fresno Police and send them to my rescue.

My scepticism of the kindness of strangers proved unfounded, and my hosts let me use their shower, drink their beer and watch a new episode of *Game of Thrones* before setting me up for a comfortable night on their sofa bed. In the morning, they awoke at 6am with me and made me coffee, sending me off to catch my flight with a smile on my face.

Now, what's the point in this story? We hear so many tales of how there are bad people out in this world, and I have no doubt that it puts many riders off chasing their dream and exploring different countries. The reality is, however, that there are far more nice people out there, so broaden your mind, throw your leg over the saddle, and go and meet them! But before you do that, enjoy the current issue of *Adventure Bike Rider*. – Bryn

Eddy's Approach to Racing

- Workshops and Doctors

She runs again! Here we are, body and bike pretty well fixed for Castle Combe on 8th & 9th July. Repairs to top fairing and rear cone, battery tray and front fairing support bracket, exhaust hanger and exhaust. Overhaul to front calipers.



Replacements to clutch lever, master cylinder, fuel tank, radiator hose, footpegs and rear brake billets, rear sub frame, lower steering yoke and rear suspension link rod needle bearing. The last was a lucky discovery. The job was coming along nicely and for some reason I grabbed the new rear sub frame and gave it a lift, only to find significant movement in the suspension linkage. This turned out to be the needle roller in the suspension link rod. Dropping the rod was easy enough, removing the bearing was not. The solution was an old 'China' trick, Edd China that is to say. 2 half-inch drive sockets, one as the press and the other a receiver linked by a threaded bar. All you need to do is pass the rod through the bearing, keep tightening the nuts on the bar and the bearing will be forced out. Well, it will be once you have stripped the threads of one bar, the nut on another, drenched it in WD40 and finally deployed a blow torch!



The bearing was in terrible state, corroded with rust, one needle missing and the collar like a ploughed field. Phil Atkinson, a multiple championship winner, came to grief at Donington a week before my incident, owing to suspension failure, so hopefully I will be spared that.

Sticking with suspension, with handlebars at 12 o'clock, the front wheel pointed to about 4 minutes to the hour. Having dropped the forks and inspected them I could see nothing amiss. A phone call to Mark Hammond (MH Racing, remember the name) suggested that I should reassemble it all, put the front wheel between my knees align the handlebars with the wheel and re-torque. This seemed to do the trick, however as the bike work proceeded I was still not happy, so on Mark's suggestion I replaced the bottom yoke and job done!

As for me, I am back on 2 wheels, back on the tennis court and swinging a golf club. IAMroadSmart was at Thruxton on the Monday so I went down to say hello and put in a few laps - thanks Guys. Luckily Dr Tim C - an ex army medic - was there so we went behind the shed and I exposed my body - well we have slept together! I expected at least a moderate intake of sympathetic breath but it was more on lines of 'man up' I've seen much worse, it'll be fine - and so it will be.

Sticking with Thruxton, betwixt and between times Jon T sent me some helpful text on closed throttle cornering – quite the opposite – but a much faster way of cornering than the Roadcraft style. I was having a little go at Thruxton and finding it quite a challenge, the point being you have to go into the corner measurably quicker than I am used to, otherwise with a closed throttle you simply lose too much pace and are obliged to open the throttle again simply to maintain line and control – a long way to go there: the rhythm is quite different. Theory understood but practice a long way off.

The Importance of Proper Layers - *Motolegends*

At all times of year, it is important to wear the correct base layers under your motorcycle clothing. The benefits may seem more obvious at this time of year, but the advantages are equally important, just different, in warmer conditions.

In winter, you will want a base-layer, and if you really suffer from the cold, a thinnish mid-layer too. As all decent textile jackets have a good quality thermal liner, you should never need more than this.

A performance base-layer with long sleeves will provide a certain amount of warmth but, importantly, if you start to exert yourself, say in town or off-road, it will allow moisture, as you sweat, to wick away from the body.

This is important, and is in stark contrast to what happens if you wear a long-sleeve, cotton shirt. With a cotton shirt, the material will soak up your sweat and get damp. This has a number of consequences. You will feel wet, and when you feel wet, you feel cold. But the other issue here is that if your base layer doesn't breathe, neither does your mid-layer or your expensive, high-tech jacket.

The same logic applies to mid-layers. Again, you want warmth, but you need breathability. A woolly from M&S simply won't do the job. It might keep you warm in the garden, but like a cotton T, it will absorb moisture, and stop your motorcycle gear from working.

Many of the more technical motorcycle clothing companies, like Halvarssons and Rukka, make terrific, really warm, breathable mid-layers, but you can also go for a merino ski-top, as merino, for some reason, doesn't hold on to the moisture.

In the summer, of course, it's less about keeping warm, and more about perspiration. Last year, we had a gentleman who had been riding green lanes in his Rukka jacket. Apparently, it had been raining lightly, but when he stopped and took his jacket off he was soaking wet.

He wrote to us expressing disappointment, disgust and indignation in equal measure, complaining about the inadequate waterproof qualities of his jacket.

Luckily, he had sent us photographs of himself, showing his sweat-covered cotton T-shirt. He had, in truth, not bought the most appropriate jacket for his requirements, but the fact was that the rain had not entered his jacket. The dampness he felt had been generated from inside his jacket - because he was wearing the wrong base-layer.

If he had worn the correct performance base-layer, he would have been fine. The same logic, of course, applies to motorcycle trousers. The lesson is simple. If you want to stay warm and dry, invest a few extra quid in proper base-layers.

All too often, we see people in £1,500 worth of motorcycle clothing who render it ineffective by layering up incorrectly.

Diary of Events

New items in red

January

Friday 26th – Sunday 28th: Ogric MCC Kickstart Rally, Kemble Airfield, Cirencester GL7 6BA
Bonfire, Real Ale, Hearty winter food
Free tea and coffee all weekend, Live music (acoustic), Silly games and a ride out on the Saturday (depending on the weather). No activities or areas for kids.

February

Saturday 3rd – Sunday 4th: Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show, Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet BA4 6QN

Saturday 10th – Curry Night

Taj Brasserie 41 High St. Winterbourne.
BS36 1JG
Helen

Friday 16th – Sunday 18th: London Motorcycle Show, ExCel, London

Sunday 18th – Haynes Breakfast Ride-In

Museum café open from 9:30am. Haynes International Motor Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 7LH

Tuesday 27th - 'I dare you' ride to Weymouth

Meet at Mattia Diner, Camel Hill, Sparkford. BA22 7PH. 9:45am for 10am prompt start
Stu Bullock 07711 898178

Tuesday 27th - AGM

Simon Gough 0117 973 4120

March

Sunday 4th - First ride of the season

10:30am start.

Simon Gough 0117 973 4120

Thursday 29th - Ride to Exmoor

Meet at _____,
Bridgwater. _____ t 9:45am for a 10am
prompt start.

Stu Bullock 07711 898178

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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

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