

# *Riders' Chronicles*



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**May / June 2008**

**The Newsletter of Northumbria  
Advanced Motorcyclists**



## TEAM RIDEOUT 2ND MARCH 2008



## Chairman's Ramblings

I was recently surprised to see a remark from a new Associate on the NAM Google E-mail that NAM is not a friendly club and is made up of 'cliques.'



It was for this very reason that at the end of 2006 we introduced a welcome desk at each monthly meeting to greet first time visitors.

They would be identified to me and I would make a personal point of introducing myself to them and then introducing each one individually to the Members at the start of every meeting.

Whilst people will be people and will always gather in groups of their friends, or others they feel comfortable with, it may appear to others that they are being 'cliquish.'

However, I am sure that is not the case and it must be understood that with a membership of around 270 it is impossible for everyone to know everyone and perhaps if new visitors make an attempt to join in I feel sure they will be quickly accepted.

I have contacted the Associate who posted the original E-mail and assured him that the points he has raised have been noted and hopefully should prevent a recurrence in future.

On the plus side, following my conversation with this Associate, he has now agreed to form part of the welcoming group at each meeting, so hopefully it may result in first time visitors not being missed and to let them see that we really are a friendly crowd.

As many of you know, I have 'dual nationality,' holding riding qualifications for both I.A.M and RoSPA.

In the case of the latter, to ensure riding standards are being maintained, RoSPA carry out a re-test every three years. This means a 90 minute riding test on a challenging and varying route, and having to do a short presentation on a given subject to maintain my BTEC Diploma qualification.

My re-test took place early in March, (on this occasion around the Northallerton area) and fortunately I was blessed with good weather, albeit quite cold.

The thought of facing any form of test can be daunting, but it is good to know that your riding performance is being measured on a regular basis and if nothing else, keeps you focussed and on your toes as you cannot afford to become complacent and allow standards to slip.

Fortunately I was awarded another Gold standard and successfully retained my Diploma, which is extremely satisfying to say the least.

I mention this because NAM is now offering the opportunity for existing Members to have their riding re-assessed by a Senior Observer for exactly the same reasons as RoSPA, so grab the opportunity and book a re-assessment through either your Team Leader or the Training Team.

Enjoy your riding and stay safe.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

R A Stubbs	D G Twamley	L M Harding
M Leitch	N Emmonds	Iain Murray
B Assadian	J H Barker	C Ducker
M Suttcliffe	S McKenzie	

## CONGRATULATIONS ON PASSING THE IAM TEST – Well Done

Andrew Robson	Observed by	Alan Thompson
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## NAM MERCHANDISE

**Contact : Louise Bennett for all items of merchandise  
(On sale at all monthly meetings )**

Equipment Badges	Self adhesive - attach to fairing	£1.00
Woolly Hats	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Caps	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
T Shirts	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Polo Shirt (Black or White)	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Sweatshirt	With NAM Emblem	£20.00
Fleeces	With NAM Emblem	£25.00
Tank Pads	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Key Fobs	With NAM Emblem	£1.00
Sew-on cloth badge	With NAM Emblem	£3.00
Lanyard	With NAM Emblem	£3.00

## Suggested future events



**Ron Patrick**  
**Rideout Co-ordinator**

Ron Patrick has suggested that we have an evening whereby Members bring along their 'second' bike as quite a few projects are underway to restore bikes from bygone days.

He also has floated the idea of perhaps having an 'autojumble' on the same evening.

This would give you the opportunity to sell or dispose of old riding kit you no longer wear or perhaps the odd accessory or spare part that is now surplus to requirements.

You could have two options, one where you donate the item to the club and whatever it raises goes into club funds, or, put your own price on it and then donate say 10% of whatever it raises, again for club funds.

Get into your lofts and cupboards and sort out what you no longer need.

## Committee

Honorary Group President: **Jack Lormor**

Chairman: **Ray Charlton**

*Vice Chairman:* **Clive Taylor**      *Secretary:* **Michael Sutherland**

*Treasurer:* **Louise Bennett**

*Training Group:* **Clive Taylor, Alan Richardson, Geoff Spencer**

*Membership Secretary:* **Carole Kibble**

Promotions & Events: **David Walton**

*Website Co-ordinator:* **Glenn Knowles**

*Ride out Co-ordinator:* **Ron Patrick**

*Merchandising:* **Louise Bennett**

*Newsletter Editor:* **Ray Charlton**

### ***Team Leaders***

*Northumberland:* **Nick Maddison**

*Tyne & Wear* **Alan Richardson**

### **Website**

**[www.nam-online.org](http://www.nam-online.org)**

**Telephone: 07956 618965**

## Durham Advanced Motorcyclists

Durham Advanced Motorcyclists meetings are on the last Tuesday of the month at the Bowburn Hall

**The NAM Email group can be found at:**

<http://www.groups.google.com/group/nam-bikes>

Join it there!

By joining the NAM email group, you'll receive club news as it happens.

You can also send emails to the group, which are automatically forwarded to all the members of the email group - handy for getting technical help in a hurry!

If you have any problems, send an email to:

**Hadden101@btinternet.com**

or

**raycharlton@sky.com**

## Ride-Outs 2008

When	Who	What & Where
May	Mike Sutherland	Annual Scottish weekend at the Pitlochry Hydro Hotel.
18 May	Dave Glennie	Rideout to Borders
15 June	Simon Hadden	Ice-cream gorge
20 July	Kenny McDonald	Rideout to Lothian borders
17 August	Allan Ramsay	Rideout to Lakes
21 September	Allan Thompson	Rideout to Lakes
19 October	TBA	TBA

**All Ride-Outs meet 10.00am prompt at the Travel Lodge Car Park, Seaton Burn.**  
**Other dates will be published as they come in, but don't forget, most Sundays many Members meet at 10.00am at Seaton Burn for their own impromptu runs.**



## Team Ride Out March 2008

By Alan Richardson

Trying to organise a Team get together is like trying to round up spilt mercury.

Last years outing was a 'last minute job' so this year I looked at the calendar and tried to get one in early, before most associates/members put their bikes back on the road after the winter lay off (sad people).

Planning the route started in early February, I looked at the first date available to me. Sadly, I was let down by selecting a 'poor' calendar.

The date I settled on was to be Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> of March . . . unfortunately it also happened to be Mother's Day! However, I was not to discover this until the day before the recce and at that point I was already committed to the date and the route.

Dave Crampton and I carried out the recce, on what turned out to be a rather good day. Plenty of sunshine and some cracking views on our way from Tebay to Appleby.

We managed to get caught out by the new dual carriageway at the end of the A66, (that's what the recce's for!), other than that we completed the run without problem.

Having got the route sorted it was time to circulate the details and see what the response was likely to be. For those that did take the time to reply, I'm grateful. With the route was the Start time and start location, not to be confused with Seaton Burn . . .

All that remained was to see how the day would turn out, a nice biking day would be a bonus. As it turned out the day was a little 'blustery' and riding was definitely 'interesting'.

Having arrived shortly after Dave, I arrived at 09:45, we waited until 09:55 before the next rider, Dave Walton, turned up and then they were like buses . . . they all seemed to arrive at once. (well another three did!).

Geoff Spencer was keen to tell me he had to be careful as he had only 350 miles left in the tank of his 'new' GS Adventurer . . .

Ray Charlton was set for photographs so left early to find his 'spot' for taking pictures. It was around 10:10 before the five intrepid riders set off.

We managed to get as far as Stamfordham road before we had our first bit of excitement, turning right heading for the military road we got close to the 'dodgy' bend (on the test route) and were inspecting the underside of a Rover that was parked between the trees on it's passenger door. We didn't need to stop, the 'boys in blue' were already in attendance.

The journey down the military road towards Harlow hill was definitely 'interesting', and probably the only place that the wind was a bit of a problem . . .



**Alan Richardson**  
**Training Team / Team**  
**Leader Tyne & Wear**

Through Hexham, Whitfield and on to Alston, keenly looking for the next set of 'twisties'. From the top as we started our descent into Alston I noticed a guy standing at the side of the road with a camera, (looked for the car and uniform) then realised that it was Ray taking our photos. Having entered the first of the bends I thought about giving him a wave . . . then thought better of it.

I had the image of a rider (me) entering a bend, waving at the camera, on the cover of the next mag for all to see. In the end I gave him my best smile and carried on down to Alston then up the next set of 'twisties' to breakfast at Hartside.

After breakfast our intrepid six turned into an intrepid three. Some of the excuses were good . . . I was out all day yesterday . . . I told my wife I was popping out for a paper . . . I've got too much work to do . . . whatever the excuse's it was nice to see them and have a 'gas' over a cuppa.



The rest of the route was pretty much as it had been on the recce, we managed to avoid the predicted snow and rain.

The predicted weather must have forced a lot of 'power rangers' to leave their suits in the wardrobe and their steeds in the garage.

As we ended up back at Hartside for a final 'pit-stop' the car park was bare of bikes.

Cars littered the parking area and the only bikes at this time were the three lonely bikes above.

I enjoyed the day, but then just being on 'the bike' makes my day, it's always nice to be out with riders who ride to the standard and Mother's day was no exception. To those who missed out .

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## Newsletter Contributions Wanted

I know that I am nagging at you all again, but I am very much aware that the Newsletter is made up virtually every month by the same contributors and it needs new blood to keep it interesting.

As previous appeals have failed, I intend introducing a 'press gang' approach to the subject and will be targeting Members at random to submit an article for the newsletter. (John Magee being the first! – see his contribution on Page 16)

It may be that you have been on an interesting trip or holiday, perhaps found that demands from the family are restricting your biking or even a review of the bike you ride. It doesn't matter what the subject or content is and I am quite happy to edit it or even help you with it. **SO WATCH OUT, RAY IS ABOUT.**



## THE DROP-OFF SYSTEM:

- **YOUR** riding is **YOUR** responsibility.
- The purpose of the ride is an enjoyable and safe ride out, **not a race**.

At the front of every NAM Ride-out there is a **Leader** who will be identified at the pre-ride briefing. He is permanently at the front of group and is identified by either a hi-viz H belt or hi-viz jacket.

At the rear of every ride-out there is a **Back Marker** who will also be identified at the pre-ride brief and will also wear either a hi-viz H belt or jacket and will remain at rear of group at all times.

**At no time will any rider overtake the Leader or drop behind the Back Marker.**

Each time the ride reaches a junction or round-a-bout, the rider at No 2 position, behind the **Leader**, will stop and mark the junction for the rest of the group.

When the **Back Marker** arrives, that rider will then re-join the group ahead of the **Back Marker**.

At the next junction or round-a-bout, the next rider in No. 2 position behind the **Leader** will drop off and mark that junction, rejoining the group in front of the **Back Marker**.

**This procedure will be repeated at each new junction.**

**OVERTAKING** is permitted between the **Back Marker and Leader**, but **ONLY IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**. When overtaking other vehicles, take care not to merely follow bike in front.

If traffic conditions slow progress, do not worry as the drop-off system works and ensures that no-one is left behind.

Riding in a group presents additional hazards, so ride to the system, and remember, **Safety first**.

Riders who are not part of the group are a significant hazard. Stay safe.

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Change of E-mail address

**Would contributors please note that the E-mail address of the Newsletter Editor is now:**

**[raycharlton@sky.com](mailto:raycharlton@sky.com)**

**Please use this address for newsletter contributions or for contacting the Chairman.**

## How to get yourself a bike sat-nav for much less than a Tom Tom Rider! (AKA 'The cheap way round') by Louise Bennett



Glenn Knowles is well known for his ability with computers and stuff technical.

He rides his FJR with a Tom Tom One and a plastic bag. So it must be okay – right?

Being a bit cynical, and slightly skint I was racking my brains over the idea of setting up a cheap sat-nav system that you could use on any bike. I popped into Halfords to investigate the possibility of buying a Tom Tom One. I came out with a Garmin.

Be warned – the same gadget in Maplins was £50 cheaper... went back to Halfords...

Maplins also sell a cigarette lighter socket and wiring with inline fuse for about £5. I attached this to the battery on my bike and left the socket under the seat. To this I can attach any 12 volt accessory, but on this occasion I put the Garmin to it.

Despite being told by assistants both in Maplins and Halfords (spit) that it was impossible to get a 'voice-out' facility on this model, when I plugged in a headset from a rider-pillion set to the 3.5mm jack point it gave me the ability to both hear the device and to answer my phone via a touch of the sat-nav screen!

The only thing I lacked in order to get going on the open road was a means of pinning the Garmin to the bike. I tried the suction plate that was for windscreen mounting and pulled – hard. It was stuck fast. Right, that was just about it. All that I needed was a small, clear plastic bag (in my pocket) in case of rain.

I would probably recommend a bag tie or something similar as extra security in case your system decides to unstick itself, but the various wires stop it going far anyway!

Scrooge. - Next month – how to brew your own fuel...

### Bikes would still go free through central London

London mayor Ken Livingstone does view motorcycles as an effective means of cutting congestion in the city and would continue to exempt bikes from the congestion charge if he is elected to a third term, a spokeswoman in his campaign office says.

"Motorcycles are a more fuel-efficient means of transport and as a consequence they will not be charged for driving in the congestion charging zone," said spokeswoman Victoria Collins.

"They provide a cost-effective means of travel, and do not cause the levels of congestion that cars do."

The mayor is also investigating ways to increase the number of motorcycle parking bays, Collins says. "In many areas, particularly in central London, there simply is not enough space for motorcycles to park."

## Club Events 2008

<b>May</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Scottish Event	Pitlochry,
15 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
18 <sup>th</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
<b>June</b>		
10 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
15 <sup>th</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
19 <sup>th</sup>	Slow Riding Skills – All Comers Welcome	Heighly Gate, 6 - 6.30 pm
<b>July</b>		
8 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
20 <sup>th</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
<b>August</b>		
12 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
17 <sup>th</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
<b>September</b>		
9 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
21 <sup>st</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
<b>October</b>		
14 <sup>th</sup>	Club Night	Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm
19 <sup>th</sup>	Group Ride Out	Seaton Burn, 10.00 am
<b>November</b>		

### In the news

The family of a motorcyclist who died after skidding on a patch of diesel on a country road was awarded £110,000 in compensation in one of the first claims of its kind in Britain.

There was no way of finding out who was responsible for the spillage, but payment was awarded by the Motor Insurers' Bureau.

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A 19 year old who issued a challenge to boy racers via the internet site YouTube was fined £140 and given six penalty points on his licence after he was convicted of driving without due care and attention.

He used the website to invite drivers to hit the highest speeds they could on a 30 mph road in Cheltenham, and footage of him driving above the speed limit was posted.

## Mad March Hares Run 2008

by Clive Taylor

Well, this was supposed to be Ron Patrick's opening ride of the year. As in previous years he had produced a route and was raring to go when he suddenly realised that his daughter, Janet, was getting married to Simon Lupton the previous day.

He surmised, quite correctly as it turned out that he may not be in quite such good condition on the Sunday morning so sensibly arranged a swap with Dave Thornton. So, with a pretty miserable forecast hanging around our necks it was gratifying that a sizable troupe turned up for the start.

Dave had produced a very informative route card listing all the hazards (in red) and as we split into a couple of groups I found myself back marker for the second group led by the steely eyed Mike Sutherland. Stanhope Dales Centre was the first port of call via the A68 and Carterway Heads.



If Ron had turned out his head would certainly have been aching following the arrival of the wayward John McGee and his chum on their Harleys. The din rattles your fillings.



There was some discussion about a dodgy "T" junction approaching Middleton. With our sensible hats on it was decided to dispatch yours truly to the junction early and wave riders through this unsighted corner. Very impressive to see so many riders.

Up and over the tops to Brough and a petrol stop at Kirkby Stephen had us heading over very narrow roads to Natesby and Muker for a lunch stop.

What a strange and picturesque little village Muker is. But well served with car park, toilets and a tea shop.

So crowded did the tea shop become that the club's world cake expert, Simon Hadden had to make do with a well traveled and wayward looking iced cup cake made by my wife. Although somewhat disheveled to look at, the taste was fine and pronounced acceptable by the expert. It became quite cold at Muker and a bit of a relief to get back on the road to Hawes. Not many bikers today at the café in Hawes but the pretty and narrow streets looked fine in the watery afternoon sun.

We enjoyed a stop at Buckden for coffee and as I chug inexorably towards old age and the perils it brings with it, I was delighted to note that once again the Public Convenience hove into view as I cruised smoothly to a halt.

With the roads becoming better, the pace increased on the run back through Leyburn to the finish at Richmond.

Simon & I couldn't face the drag up the A1 to Morpeth so decided to take the scenic route back through Winston and Staindrop and over the moors through Stanhope and Edmondbyers, and as far as I am aware the drop off system worked fine with no one getting lost.

With grateful thanks to Dave Thornton and his side kick, the steely eyed Mike Sutherland (he of the 1000 yard stare). I am sure that we all look forward to the time when Ron can join us for the next spin out.



## MAD March Hares Run – another point of view

by Sid Corke

The first ride-out of 2008 took place on 16 March, and, for a cold damp spring morning the turnout was amazing, I think it overwhelmed Dave Thornton to see such numbers

There were some new faces, some old faces with new bikes and some with new bike clothing, one in particular stood out with his bright yellow leather jacket, (try saying that with a mouth full of polo) was so new you could smell the leather at ten paces. Ray Charlton unkindly commented that he looked like a Netto bag!

Those of you with years of biking experience will know that if anything is going to happen it will when you are out with a new bike or new kit.

Because of the large turnout we were split into two large groups and I as ever joined the first group,



Off we went and the first stop at Stanhope came and went much too quickly, however the road from Stanhope over the top to Middleton in Teesdale is always lovely in any weather only the brisk wind spoilt the show and at times was head on.

In one way it was a blessing as it soon gave me early warning of the smell of diesel, and quickly confirmed quite a large patch on the exit from a right hand bend.

to my riding plan was needed. Sitting the bike up and straight lining it; thank goodness I managed to negotiate it without a problem, but where did it come from? We were in the middle of nowhere for heavens sake, not on a roundabout with the obligatory petrol station on it.

Carrying on with the satisfaction of knowing I had identified it and survived, but, what about the others? What about the following second group?

I indicated and pulled in, waving the rest passed and I stopped Nick, our tail ender, to advise him that I was going back to warn the second group about the diesel. He agreed to wait for me to catch up at Kirkby Stephen.

I spun around and made haste back knowing that Michael had Geraldine as pillion, as did Jack with Anne and the thought of anything happening to these two popular and pretty members was just not imaginable. **(the girls, not the men!)**



I got back to the bend just in time to flag them down and warn them of the diesel.

The thought crossed my mind that I may be over-reacting, but at the time it felt the right thing to do. As arranged I caught up with my own group at Kirkby Stephen

The road above Nateby is very narrow and twisty and is well populated with sheep, because of this the pace reduced to about to 25mph in places. It was just as well as a sheep ran straight across the road in front of yellow jacket; I was following two bikes behind and my heart jumped! Had Dave Henderson bought a new front tyre instead of that jacket, I am sure with the extra thickness of the new tread he would have hit it, it was that close.

The little café Dave had organized for the lunch stop was overwhelmed due to the numbers, so Neil Hamilton, Glen Knowles and myself, carried on to the next village and into the village pub, where we had terrific fare.



The chef must be a scooter enthusiast as his Yorkshire puds were clearly modeled on the size of scooter wheels filled with Cumberland sausage and onion gravy – delicious. We re-joined the main party who were back on the road, or at least most of them were.

Dave Henderson had been forced to take evasive action to avoid a couple of weekend warriors coming towards him completely on the wrong side of the road on a bend, resulting in him to run off the road onto the grass embankment to avoid them.

As ever in these circumstances we all rallied round checking first that Dave was not injured and ascertaining that the bike had sustained superficial damage. We repaired his bike by using a rear foot peg to replace the snapped off front peg while others picked up the debris



I have to say Dave showed great calmness, displayed no bitterness, temper or language and it was remarkable that out of the 30 odd bikes in our group on those moors he got the sheep and the hooligans, it was just not his day.

This incident took the edge off the day and inevitably my hands were oily as were a few others.

Looking for something to wipe them on, John Magee offered some 'wet ones' and we all stood around cleaning our hands, until someone remarked. "I love the smell of these baby wipes"

"Baby wipes! Who carries baby wipes on a motorbike?" I quipped. This broke the ice again as everyone erupted into laughter, even Dave Henderson, who I didn't think would laugh ever again having been through so much that day..

We carried on and broke up at Richmond, all cheerful and smiles it had been a great day even for Dave Henderson who showed us all what he is made of.

## Great North Air Ambulance Service



NAM has been supporting the GNAAS for several years now and has raised considerable amounts for this very worthy charity, completely dependent on local contributions, the GNAAS receives no Government support or subsidies.

During 2007 Northumbria Advanced Motorcyclists raised the magnificent sum of £1200 for our nominated Charity, the Great North Air Ambulance Service.

This was achieved through a very successfully auction organised by Louise Bennett and topped up from one or two other events, such as raffles and an individual donation of £100 from Member, Sid Wright.

Chairman Ray Charlton presented Mandy Drake of the GNAAS with the cheque at a recent meeting.

## Some More EVENTS For your diary 2008

Sunday, 11th May 2008

Peebles Classic Motorcycle Show & Autojumble,  
Drill Hall Peebles.  
(Lothian & Broders Classic Motorcycle Club)

Sunday, 8th June 2008

Scottish Classic Motorcycle Show 2008  
Rowallon Activity Centre, Meikle, Mosside, Fenwick, Ayresshire.KA3 6AY

Sunday, 15th June 2008

Bob McIntyre Memorial Classic Road Races.  
East Fortune Raceway, East Lothian.

Sunday, 15th June 2008

The 47th Annual Jimmy Guthrie Memorial Run  
The Green, Denholm, Near Hawick.

Sunday, 7th September 2008

Bikes at Belsay,  
Belsay Hall, Northumberland.  
[www.sunderlandclassicvehicles.org.uk/Calendar.htm](http://www.sunderlandclassicvehicles.org.uk/Calendar.htm)



## Tips for new riders

by Ray Charlton

Roundabouts are now a major feature on our roads and can prove to be a minefield for bikers should they not be aware of the dangers they impose.

Following some basic rules, they can be no more dangerous than any other feature forming parts of our highway system.

So, what is a roundabout? It is a feature designed to slow down and safely control the flow of traffic at a junction or series of junctions, subject to certain rules.

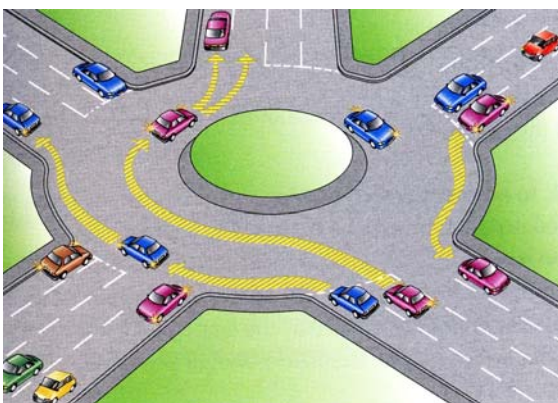
A roundabout can be placed at a single junction with another road or multiple junctions and in some cases of multiple, offset junctions you may find more than one mini roundabout controlling the flow

They come in two forms, a conventional (or large) roundabout or a mini roundabout, marked on their approach by the following signs.

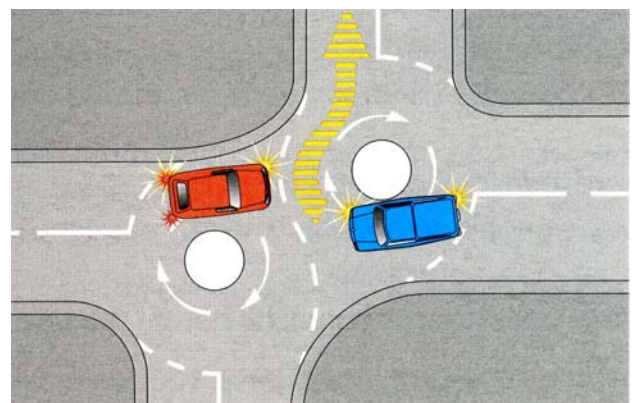


In most cases, the first basic rule is, **TO GIVE WAY TO TRAFFIC ON YOUR RIGHT** but in some situations traffic coming in from your right may be controlled by a Give Way sign or at junctions that have peak traffic problems, may be controlled by traffic lights, very often operating on a part-time basis only at the peak times.

This rule equally applies where there are multiple mini roundabouts and the give way to traffic on your right on the entry to each roundabout.



**Conventional multi junction  
Roundabout**



**Multiple Mini Roundabout System**

***Acknowledgement to the Highway Code for illustrations.***

Whilst a conventional roundabout can be quite a large, structure, mini roundabouts may only consist of a painted circle on the road. It is a traffic sign and needs to be observed by



proceeding around it in the direction indicated by the road markings and not ride over it.

The exception to this rule is where a long vehicle, such as an articulated vehicle, would find it impossible to follow the indicated direction and are allowed to drive over it.

As advanced riders, we apply the five phases of the system of advanced riding when facing roundabouts, exactly as we do when facing any other hazard or danger and breaking this down to these points we would consider the following:

**INFORMATION** - Identify hazards. Scan front, sides and rear and use rear observation before changing speed or direction.

Decide early on exit and lane to use. Identify road surface hazards and be ready to adjust riding plan if situation changes. **CONSIDER WHETHER A SIGNAL IS APPROPRIATE.**

Keep alert for early view of traffic both on and approaching roundabout and **BE PREPARED TO STOP BUT LOOK FOR YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO GO.**

**POSITION** – Your approach position will depend on which exit you intend to take, the number of approach lanes and the lane markings.

Your route through the roundabout will depend on the presence of other traffic and on the road surface. The best route is generally the shortest route between entry and exit. Before changing position consider rear observation. (Both left and right.)

**SPEED** – Lose speed smoothly, using either deceleration or brakes. Select appropriate gear as you slow down, or block change to the required gear just before the end of braking.

Your approach speed will be determined by your view of the roundabout and the traffic using it.

**PLAN TO STOP, BUT LOOK TO GO.**

**GEAR** – Select the gear to proceed onto the roundabout. This will depend on your speed, traffic conditions and your machine's characteristics.

**ACCELERATION** – Choose an appropriate gap in the traffic and accelerate safely onto and through the roundabout without causing disruption to traffic already using it.

**ENTERING AND ON THE ROUNDABOUT** – Consider a lifesaver prior to entry and exit from the roundabout.

When on the roundabout, deal with any new hazards by using the appropriate phases of the system.

Consider rear observation to both sides on exit from the roundabout.

## **POINTS TO CONSIDER**

- Watch for pedestrians at approach and exit roads
- Traffic crossing in front of you, especially those intending to leave at next exit.

- Traffic straddling lanes or positioned incorrectly.
- Other motorcycles
- Cyslists and horse riders who may tend to remain in left lane and may wish to leave at different exits.
- Long vehicles, (Artics and trailers) who may not be in normal lane.
- Exit signals – where appropriate.
- Headchecks – where considered necessary.
- Diesel spillages.
- Debris on road.
- Worn road surface, and other traffic.

## **FINALLY**

All roundabouts can be extremely dangerous if rules are not followed and you are not vigilant.

Motorcycles are particularly vulnerable when banked over, so unless you are 100% confident about the road surface and available grip, keep the machine as upright and as smooth as possible.

Follow the rules, be vigilant and stay safe.

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## Letter received from Dave Henderson

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the riding group I was with on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March for their support and concerns to my being o.k. after my “mishap” Without the assistance of those that helped me to get the Ducati ride-able again I would have had a long wait for the R.A.C. to come and pick myself and the bike up.

The cup of tea and Kit-Kat were most appreciated too. I suppose I was lucky that day as I had a couple of near misses prior to coming off. My first near miss was when a sheep decided to test my reactions by running across the road and scaring the wits out of me. The second was when I had to pull close to the nearside when a car was coming in the opposite direction so we could pass each other.

Unfortunately this put the bike onto a part of a long stretch of road that had been repaired. When I come to move off repair to the centre of the road where the tarmac repair joined the original road the front tyre caught in the join and as a result I was nearly thrown off. Then came the “biggie”. Although I had the misfortune to come off the bike I had the good fortune to be unhurt so that speaks volumes to having and wearing the right kit.

You could say that I had three lucky escapes that day. Thanks to everyone again..  
David Henderson

## Members and their bikes

by John Magee

Hi, i am John Magee and yes, I bought a Harley and one of the first of many jokes I had to face about them was from Michael Sutherland who said, "When you go to collect the bike ensure you also get the squirrel"

Being rather curious I asked what he meant, "To collect all the nuts that will fall off when riding"



Thankfully nothing has fallen off yet (not sure which nuts he was on about though. Did he mean the bike?)

I returned to bikes after a break of over 35 years and just before retiring, my mate Micky, who has Gold Wing, invited me out with him on occasions, and that did it, the seed was sown

I took early retirement two years ago and bought a Virago 535 to see if biking was really what I wanted to do and I can say that I really enjoyed the experience

However, after a year with this machine my wife said we should look for a bigger bike. so that we can both go touring on it **(That's what I call a Wife! – Ed)**

Scouring the bike dealers, I looked at every touring bike available from Honda, Suzuki Yamaha and

Kawasaki, but trying to get a test ride was like drawing teeth from the traders

We then went to the Scottish Motorcycle Show at Edinburgh early in 2007 and the first bike that really caught our eye was a Harley. We both sat on it, and 'She who must be obeyed' said, "Right that is it that is the one we are going to buy." **(Dominating as well eh! – Ed)**

By the look on the dealers eye he must have thought it was his birthday but he soon twigged on that being Geordies we would be buying locally

He suggested we visited 'Just Harleys' in Newcastle to arrange for some demonstrations on different models.

This I duly did on our return to Tyneside and was pleasantly surprised to learn that I could try as many bikes and as I wanted to with the option of a full day on each one with nothing to pay.

After a couple of test rides decided on the Heritage Soft-tail and promptly placed an order for one, despite being advised that due to the colour chosen by you know who, delivery would take at least 10 weeks.

As the 10 weeks passed, I began to panic and wondered whether it would be on time as I had a pre-booked trip to France arranged, accompanied by Michael Sutherland and others and departure date was fast approaching.

My concerns were needless as it duly arrived and it didn't take long to get the first thousand miles on to ensure it had its first service prior to our jaunt.

I have to say that we thoroughly enjoy going out on the bike and being retired any fine day will do which is why it now has covered 8500 miles in 10 months,

In no way am I a fine weather rider as I still use the machine during the winter as long as it is dry (ish) and providing it gets a good wash each time, has not done it any harm.

At Christmas I was treated to a pair of heated grips, so can now enjoy warm hands as well. **(Big tough biker eh! – Ed)**



One of the best bits of advice I was given by another Harley rider was to purchase a leaf blower, (I can hear Michael making up some joke about this as I speak) but honestly, power wash the bike and then use the blower part of the blower and it removes all water from the bike lights/cables/brakes etc and leaves no water marks, "brilliant bit of kit"

In the excitement of telling you about my bike, I forgot to mention that joining NAM was the icing on the cake and gave me the opportunity to meet many new friends with a similar passion to myself.

I subsequently passed my advanced test on the Harley, which has made my riding more enjoyable and positive.

So I suppose if I can pass the test on the beast so can you!



## Observers Get Together 2008

by Clive Taylor

For some years now Kevin Wellden has organized a pre-season meeting of the observers.

The Training group thought this was well worth while continuing so with the help of Dave Stone and Northumbria Fire & Rescue Service, who provided a room at Morpeth Fire Station, we got organized.

Ten observers turned up which is about a third of the active group. Debbie Polwarth gave us a presentation about different learning styles and preferences which can effect how an observer may approach getting the message across to associates.

The group found this quite enlightening. There are three main categories that people fall in to and it was interesting that by far the majority fell in to the same group, Visual.

This suggests that those people learn mainly by observing things like demonstrations, maps, pictures, diagrams etc.



We followed this up with a quiz run by Geoff Spencer based on the Highway Code and Roadcraft. It was gratifying that everyone pretty well got all the questions correct.

What was more important was that this activity gave rise to much discussion and debate about riding technique to an advanced standard.

A general discussion period followed which assisted in clarifying some of the points that the Examiner (Stu Fawcett) expects to see.

One or two important points were brought up. These included the fact that all active observers will have the benefit of an assessment ride with a senior observer during the year. This is primarily to try and standardize the level of training of associates and is in fact a requirement of the I.A.M. (every three years).

The arrangements for this have now been drawn up so observers can expect a call sometime from their appointed senior observer.

The dates for the cornering clinics incorporating Bikesafe have now been published by Northumbria Police and we would hope (even expect) that observers would assist in providing a short observed ride on the day to any attendees requesting one.

The intension was to finish the meeting with a spin up the coast. The weather, however, did nothing to encourage this activity as rain drifted in and out all morning.

Even Dave Stone on his spanking new Fire Service BMW seemed more keen on a spot of lunch back home!

A worthwhile and productive morning then with one or two new faces welcomed to the observer group.

## Scottish Motorcycle Show

by Ray Charlton

The first major bike show of the year took place on 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at the Ingleston Show Ground, Edinburgh.

The weather forecast was not very good with heavy rain predicted for most of the day, however, the journey there was a mix of overcast sky and sunny periods.

We just managed to get into the show and had just entered the first exhibition hall when the heavens opened with almost monsoon conditions.

The Scottish Bike Show is a popular event attracting visitors from many corners of the country, but compared with the NEC Motorcycle Show it is comparatively small and I am at a loss as to why the entrance fee should be comparable with the NEC at £15.00. Add to this £3.00 for parking a car and a visit can be a costly event for a small family.

My first impression was that they had created more space between the exhibitors as the aisles seemed to be very wide, but I soon realised that this was probably down to the fact that there were less exhibitors than previous years.



This was confirmed by the fact that the two upper balconies were not in use, having on previous years been occupied by some of the smaller exhibitors offering a wide range of accessories.



The usual array of new bikes was on display and the two that were receiving the most attention were the new KTM RC8 and the latest Honda Fireblade.

Both bikes look stunning, but the choice of all white as a colour (Ironically for both!) did nothing for me as I felt the blandness of the colour did nothing for the excellent style and design of both machines.

The I.A.M. was represented by the Edinburgh Group who were using the I.A.M. caravan as a display stand.

On speaking to them they advised me that they had received a lot of enquiries from the Northumberland and Durham area and suggested that we help man the stand for the 2009 Show.

There was an abundance of the usual riding kit stands and plenty of opportunity to browse around the latest accessories and tool stands.

I managed to restrain myself this year and limited my purchases to a metal polishing kit and a stainless steel radiator guard that I successfully negotiated at about £5.00 cheaper than normal.

To be honest I did not see many bargains and most of the prices were the same on every stand.(Cartel !!!!!)

My two companions were not quite as frugal as myself, buying a set of leathers, screen, hugger and stainless radiator guard.



Because of the weather, there did not appear to be much activity going on at the outdoor events with visitors being content to remain in the dry and heated halls.

At least they had plenty of long legged girls on show to hold their attention.

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## Book Review

By Tony Forster

Reviewing **“Under Asian Skies”** by Sam Manicom.

This is the follow up to Sam’s first diary of his travels “Into Africa”, which was a very good read, mainly because he did what most of us would like to do; wrap in the job and go traveling. In that book, you got a distinct flavour of how he learned to cope with life on the road and how he muddled through in some difficult and life threatening situations, learning to overcome problems himself, rather than relying on back up teams and “fixers” .

The only disappointing thing was that the story was about ten years old.

“Under Asian Skies” is a continuation of his journey, through Australia, working illegally, to top up his travel fund and then through Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey etc. On the journey he meets and describes various folk that he travels with, including a German girl who he falls for and completes part of the journey with. It’s obvious that there’s an awful lot of German’s overlanding out there, judging by the numbers he bumps into (not literally) and travels with.

While the book is a good read, it was a bit dry compared to the immediacy of the first one and the final disappointment (well, what did I expect?) is that, it too, is out of date by about eight years, although he does put a postscript at the end, in an attempt to bring you up to date with what has happened in the more interesting countries since he travelled through them.

The book is well written though and I would suggest that you get someone to buy it from the website [www.sam-manicom.com](http://www.sam-manicom.com) (or start with “Into Africa”) for your birthday/Christmas/Anniversary, rather than the totally manufactured “Long Way Down” corporate junket book that two people bought me for Christmas. Both copies remain unread.

**“Into Africa” five stars; “Under Asian Skies” four stars; “Long Way Down” ebay.**



## Letter from the GNAAS

The following letter has been received acknowledging the recent presentation of a cheque for £1200, raised by Northumbria Advanced Motorcyclists



### Great North Air Ambulance Service

Northumberland Wing, The Imperial Centre, Grange Road, Darlington, Co Durham. DL1 5NQ Tel: 01325 487 263 Fax: 01325 489 819  
Registered Charity No. 1092204 Registered Company No. 4436859 [www.greatnorthairambulance.co.uk](http://www.greatnorthairambulance.co.uk)



21 February 2008

Dear Mr Charleton

The Great North Air Ambulance Service would like to thank you for choosing to support our charity. Your donation of £1,200.00 is a most generous amount to receive and is very much appreciated.

The Great North Air Ambulance Service operates three aircraft, based at Durham Tees Valley Airport, Carlisle in Cumbria, and Northumberland.

The fundamental aims of the Charity are:

- To provide an air ambulance service across the region.
- To provide and maintain aircraft and other associated equipment.
- To provide education and training for medical professionals in emergency and pre-hospital care.

The Charities ability to deliver its objects is entirely dependant on sufficient income, which in our case comes entirely from our own income generation activities and public donations. We receive no support from either the Government or National Lottery meaning we are neither subject nor beholden to any other agency. Consequently, this guarded independence ensures that so long as the public supports the Charity, the service it provides will always be available.

This is why a donation such as yours is absolutely vital to enable us to keep this life saving service in operation.

Again thank you.

Yours sincerely

*p.p. J. Parkinson.*

Mandy Drake  
Fundraiser



I last put down in writing my potted biking history sometime last year (no doubt the editor can provide reprints for a suitable fee), however I glossed over one of the most fun elements, by just mentioning that I briefly owned a Yamaha TY175 twin shock trials bike, while a mate, Dave, had a TY125. You have to bear in mind that this was the early 80's and we really didn't have a clue (we thought the TRF was some kind of freight organisation from the badges on the back of artics).



I bought the bike off some young lad in Cramlington, he was looking for about £375, but by the time Dave had rubbished every part of the bike, including the new chain, the guy eventually phoned me a few days later and let me have it for my speculative offer of £200.

Getting an unlicensed, untaxed trials bike, of whatever vintage, to the off road areas required a van or a trailer, and as Dave had an old Leyland Sherpa van (nowt to do with Tensing Norgay, as it struggled with even moderate hills) for his work as a double

glazing fitter, it was ideal to take us and another Tony, who was prepared to help ride the bikes, without actually contributing anything to their upkeep and maintenance, to wherever there was open land. In the eighties, people weren't so precious about where you rode and you didn't usually get a shotgun poked in your face with the immortal Farmer Giles phrase of "get orf my land".

One of the favourite places to ride was a bit of wasteland just North of Kingston Park estate, called Redhills, because the soil of the little mounds and hillocks there was red clay, presumably. It's just now being swallowed up by The Great Park housing development, a stunning John Prescott vision of the future (yes, I am kidding).

Anyway, we used to unload the bikes, fuel them up and potter around pulling frightening six inch wheelies off lumps and bumps. We probably never did more than fifteen miles an hour, but it was a hoot trying to keep your feet up and counter the natural reaction to sit down when things started to get out of shape. We knew naff all about centre of gravity, but just figured out that standing on the pegs was the way to go.

I guess we would potter about for a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon, just having a laugh and trying to overcome different obstacles. The piece de resistance was the stream...or the fast flowing river as we liked to think of it.

The stream was about eight to ten feet wide and was reached by a six foot steep drop to the river bed, which was populated with lots of algae covered stones and pebbles and then an equally steep climb out the other side into a farmer's field of wheat or barley or something.

We never rode through or damaged the crop, the thought just never crossed our mind, as we just wanted to go back and forth across the stream, so I guess we were early Eco warriors (yeah, right with dirty two stroke stinkwheels).

One time the river was more in flood than usual and instead of the gentle six inch deep gentle flow, it was more like a couple of feet deep and flowing quite fast. Being a wimp, I chickened

out, but brave Tony, without any financial stake or obligation to repairs, volunteered to try it with Dave's 125.

As soon as he dropped down the bank, we knew it wasn't going to be pretty, as the front wheel almost completely disappeared. Panicking, Tony gave the bike a load of revs, the rear spun on the slippery rocks and he fell in.

He jumped up and said "I'm all right!" to which we howled," Never mind you, what about the \$%^&ing bike!". We all had to clamber in and drag the now drowned little bike to safety. That ended the proceedings for the day, as there was no way that bike would start, without major drying out.

We only once found our way to a proper trials meet, somewhere in Durham I think (**Belmont Park – Ed**). We didn't actually enter the event, as we didn't have a clue how you went about it or whether you needed a licence.

One of the marshal's let us have a go on a couple of the little sections, which we all failed miserably and then we watched old guys (probably younger than me now) on old BSA's clearing what looked like impossible sections.

Eventually, the TY succumbed to a complete lack of maintenance and refused to start. Being to motorcycle knowledge what Dawn French is to Slimmer of the Year, I fiddled about with fag papers (pretending I knew how to set a points gap) and spark plugs to no avail and eventually sold the TY for a hundred quid or so.

The guy who bought it seemed delighted and no doubt fixed it in five minutes. Like all the bikes I've had, (with the exception of the CZ and Jawa, "oh the shame") I wish I'd never sold the TY. It was cheap, coped with ridiculous abuse and I think even I could maintain it now. A few years later, in a fit of nostalgia for my youth, I went up Westgate Hill and looked in the offroad shops at the shiny new monoshock trials models and nearly collapsed when I asked the price.

Over two and a half grand for an anorexic frame, two wheels and an engine seemed mental compared to the charms of a £200 shonker that you could have just as much fun on and didn't have to worry about dropping.

I keep looking at off road or dual purpose bikes, as I still hanker to have fun at five miles an hour, without the increasing dangers of the road, but the opportunities for riding off road seem to be disappearing.

Sadly, it seems, if you believe all the press reports and the offroad journals, that no-one can ride offroad anymore without definitive maps, bolt cutters (optional) and a sheaf of paperwork. The well funded and well organised Ramblers have won the rights to all trails and the five percent of trails that we could ride before, are all under threat of closure to motorised vehicles.

It would be nice to think that everybody has the right to practise their hobby, whether it be hunting, fishing, shooting or even, shock, horror, motorcycling and as long as you're not acting like a nutter, it shouldn't be a problem, but some folk out there seem to have no life, so spend all their time trying to spoil it for those that do. The rotten gits.

Finally, I blame John Prescott for everything, but especially for turning the Redhills of my youth into a housing estate. The git.

In the meantime, does anyone have a small capacity trailie for sale for £200?



## MAD MARCH HARES RUN 16TH MARCH 2008





# Contributions Required

This is your newsletter, articles, observations, letters and pictures are always needed. Maybe you have a question on Roadcraft or a tale to tell

Please send any contributions to:

**raycharlton@sky.com**

**Deadline for contributions to next newsletter  
Friday, 30th May 2008**

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

NAM meets on the second Tuesday of every month at the Wheatsheaf Hotel on the B6918 at Woolsington, near Newcastle Airport, at 7.00pm for 7.30pm.



**nam-online.org**  
**Tel: 07951 035038**



**Supported by Northumbria Police**



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