

Riders' Chronicles



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Much More



Sept / Oct 2007

**The Newsletter of Northumbria
Advanced Motorcyclists**



Ducati Desmo 600



Royal Enfield Combination



Panther 100 1953



A.J.S 7R



Ariel Square Four



Scott Flying Squirrel

JIMMY GUTHRIE MEMORIAL RUN, DENHOLM

Chairman's Ramblings

We are now well through the biking season and NAM continues to expand its membership with a steady stream of new Associates throughout the year.



I trust that the new Associates are enjoying what NAM has to offer and they have made a commitment to find the time to do the Observed rides in preparation for the IAM Advanced Test. Without doubt they will find it to be a very satisfying experience that transforms their riding into a safer, more relaxed and enjoyable experience.

Putting my other hat on now, it is becoming harder and harder each month to find enough interesting articles to fill the Newsletter and once again I am appealing to you to consider submitting something to share with us all. You don't have to be a literary genius. Put your story down on paper, (or E-mail) and I will quite happily edit it for you.

Nothing will be printed unless you are completely happy with the end results. So get your thinking caps on. It may be your views on your own bike, or a biking holiday or event you have attended, or even comments on previous articles, I don't mind as I welcome new contributors with a different slant on things.

One of my thoughts is the creation of specialised sections in the Newsletter, such as perhaps, '**Harley Corner**'provided I can get regular contributions from the Harley crowd then I would be quite happy to include this, or any other specialised section for that matter. Give it a little thought and let me know.

As usual this year the mid summer meetings were dedicated to evening rideouts, the first being rather a disaster due to heavy rain, but the second one, on 10th July, was a fish & chip run to Hexham over a meandering route through Northumberland.

It was well supported with about 40 bikes taking part, much to the surprise of the little fish & chip shop which did not know what had hit it. (Photographs on inner rear cover)

The Training Group (Messrs. Taylor, Richardson and Spencer) are now well into a programme of preparing four Observers for their Senior Observer Test, with two already through it with flying colours.

They have introduced 'role play' into the training programme which is proving to be very popular and a good means of creating realistic scenarios.

When this programme is completed, they intend carrying out further training for existing Observers to ensure that we are offering the highest standards of training to our Associates.

Can I urge all Associates undergoing training at the moment to set yourself a target for taking your test. You still have at least a couple of months left this year before the winter sets in and you should be aiming to get through it before the year is out.

Safe riding. Ray

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

J R Appleby	E A Scott	E S Turnbull
K Grundy	J W Daniell	A Rochester
J J Dees	J M Johnson	J Turnbull
A Newsome	P Jarvis	R W Nutbeam
A Robson		

CONGRATULATIONS ON PASSING THE IAM TEST – Well Done

Jim Fiddler	Observed by	Ray Charlton
Neil Hamilton	“	Ray Charlton
Andrew Docchar	“	David Walton
Alan Thompson	“	Nick Maddison
Paul Murley	“	A Richardson/GSpencer
Michael Wilson	“	Richard Salisbury/Colin Priest
Martin Williams	“	Ray Charlton/Peter Morgan
James Rolt	“	Pete Davies

Congratulations to Ron Patrick, Dave Crampton, Alan Richardson and Clive Taylor on passing the Senior Observer Test

WANTED - ASSISTANT TREASURER

**To shadow the present Treasurer
until the AGM and then take
on the role when he stands down.**

**Someone with a financial or
numerical background would be ideal.**

**Please contact the Chairman
or Secretary if you can help!**

Committee

Honorary Group President: **Jack Lormor**

Chairman: **Ray Charlton**

Vice Chairman: **Simon Lupton** *Secretary:* **Simon Hadden**

Treasurer: **Jim Stephenson**

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

Membership Secretary: **Carole Kibble**

Assistant Secretary: **Michael Sutherland**

Website Co-ordinator: **Glenn Knowles**

Rideout Co-ordinator: **Ron Patrick**

Merchandising: **Louise Bennett**

Newsletter Editor: **Ray Charlton**

Team Leaders

Northumberland: **Malcolm Lonsdale**

Tyneside: **Alan Richardson**

Newcastle & West: **Gary Law**

Website

www.nam-online.org

Telephone: +44 (7951) 035038

Durham Advanced Motorcyclists

Durham Advanced Motorcyclists meetings are on the last Tuesday of the month at The THINFORD INN, starting at 7.30pm.

The Thinford inn is located on the junction of the A167 and A688.

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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@tesco.net

IN THIS ISSUE

The front and inner front covers are a reminder of how bikes were years ago, with Simon Hadden's immaculate 1947 B31 and a selection of oldies from the Jimmy Guthrie Memorial Run that took place at Denholm, near Hawick, on Sunday, 17th June.

An article on the run and the background to Jimmy Guthrie can be found on page 10.

Jane and Dave Anderson give us an interesting account into their circumnavigation of Scotland as a prelude to their African mercy trip later this year. (See page 7)

Mick Ingledew has done it again having completed another awesome marathon on his Harley. This certainly dispels the myths that Harleys are simply for polishing and cruising. He and his pals can certainly put most bikers to shame when it comes to piling the miles on. His story can be found on page 17.

Circumnavigation of Scotland

by Jane Anderson

For many years I have had an interest in the medical care of those living and surviving in underdeveloped, poverty-engulfed countries. Since marrying David in November '05 we have made plans to try to make some small difference together, a footprint to leave, one could say. Drops in very large oceans, we know. However I am a great advocate of small things making a big difference as they have many times in my own life.

An engineer and nurse, seemed like a pretty good combo, and so we decided to offer our skills to work overseas later this year.



We're off to Botswana, Africa, to work with those affected and infected with HIV/AIDS.

In a bid to raise money for our trip and donate funds to the hospice, we set a motorcycle challenge. ***Around the coastline of Scotland; 1300 miles in thirty-six hours.***

For some of you NAM veterans, I recognise this is a fairly mediocre kind of challenge but for me this felt like 'the long way round'. My face was pressed against the gradient of Kilimanjaro!

The furthest I had ever ridden a motorcycle in one day was a return trip to Goathland, 200 miles, so with 470 facing us on our first day, and having not been on a motorcycle for six weeks, it looked pretty daunting. My total motorcycle mileage for the whole of last year was 530!

Embracing our fears.....well kind of....

David and I set off on our challenge at 5 am on Friday morning, 25th May. Our first stop... south of Berwick!... the loo, what can I say, I'm an ole' lady. So 13 miles conquered....only 1300 to go....

We arrived at Aberdour, across the Forth Road Bridge by 8.40 am and followed the coast of Fife up to St. Andrews. Our next aim was crossing the Tay Bridge and on to Inverness. Bite-size chunks were a great way to handle the road ahead, and I would suggest that's a pretty good metaphor through most of life! As we got further north, I was amazed by the open beauty of the landscape. Wick at 9 pm and a cappuccino at Tesco saw us right for the last leg of the day.....we rolled into John O' Groats at 9.45 pm The sky was volatile and fast moving, the evening light had a pink hue.....it was silent.....I was on top of the world!

As David photographed evidence of our day's achievement, I quietly thanked God, for our safe arrival, that I could still walk and for this wild beauty of Sutherland.

We arrived at an *interesting*...little B & B at 10 pm a hot bath and bed! Even the dulcet tones of our hosts' snoring seemed acceptable.

How fabulous the simple things in life are after seventeen hours straddling a 600cc engine!

Heading off at 7am on Saturday, we motorcycled along single, uninhabited roads.

There were rough-legged buzzards flying overhead, deer roaming on the hills and we watched wild otters playing on the shore with rainbows as backdrops. We were the intruders here! David set a steady pace and I felt his riding skill and patient encouragement really pulling me on.

We arrived at Fort William...in style! At 7pm, dismounting in a rather ungainly fashion, unknowingly at the wrong destination, we managed to gate crash a five star, black tie Ceilidh, voluminous coat clad and armed with our undies in bin liners!! But hey, at least those attending the party saw, even if only briefly, how the other half live! Life in the real lane, I wouldn't swap it for the world. We were quickly ushered on to the right little hotel, 500 yards down the road.

Our final day: travelling down the west coast we passed through Oban, Troon and across Dumfries and Galloway, arriving at Gretna at 9pm. Our welcome committee was an unsuspecting, elderly lady delivering her evening post.

Like a trooper, she stepped into the brink and indulged us a brief photo shoot. It could have been the world paparazzi, WE DID IT.



For me, it was a personal achievement that only a few years ago, all who knew me would have termed as a miracle. Affirmation that digging deep is the way to realise our potential and true-selves.

For us, our next challenge will be bigger, so look out world.

And best of all, our efforts with the support of friends will enhance the lives of others in small yet critical dimensions.....and that I would say.....is a job well done!!

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare....

It is because we do not dare that they are difficult.

Seneca

Rideouts 2007

Date	Leader	Destination
30 th September	Michael Sutherland	North Yorks Moors
28 th October	Nick Maddison	TBA
<p>All Ride-Outs meet 10.00 am prompt at the Travelodge Car Park, Seaton Burn.</p> <p>Other dates will be published as they come in.</p>		
<p>Don't forget that, on most Sundays, many Members meet at 10.00 am at Seaton Burn for their own impromptu runs.</p>		

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: There is a **Leader** at the front of every NAM rideout who will be identified at the pre-ride briefing. He is permanently at the front of group and is identified by either a hi-vis H belt or hi-vis jacket. At no time will any rider overtake the Leader

At the rear: There is a **Back Marker** at the rear of every NAM rideout who will also be identified at the pre-ride brief and will also wear either a hi-vis H belt or hi-vis jacket and will remain at rear of group at all times. At no time will any rider drop behind the Back Marker.

At junctions and roundabouts:

Each time the ride reaches a junction or roundabout, 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 roundabout, 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: this 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 the 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.

Jimmy Guthrie Memorial Run

By Ray Charlton

Many of the biking events that take place throughout the year commemorate someone or something. Often we are blissfully unaware of how they originated.

One very local annual event that is usually well attended is the Jimmy Guthrie Memorial Run held at Denholm, a few miles east of Hawick.

This years event took place on Sunday, 17th June and attracted dozens of classic and vintage motorcycles.

The event commemorates a famous son of the town of Hawick, Jimmy Guthrie and whilst having heard of his name and its links with motorcycle racing, I must confess that I knew little more of the man, other than there being a particular point on the Isle of Man TT circuit named after him.

However, my curiosity now tempted, I decided to delve a little deeper into the name and came up with a wealth of information about the man, who certainly led a full and active life until his untimely death on 8th August 1937 whilst racing at the Hohenstein-Ernstthal or Sachsenring course

For a modest-sized town, Hawick has produced more than its fair share of sporting stars: sailor Sir Chay Blyth, Scotland rugby star Jim Renwick and the motorcycling hero Steve Hislop are all from the Borders town. But in terms of UK and international success, no one can compete with the achievements of 1930s motorcycling star Jimmy Guthrie. His story is remarkable.



Andrew James "Jimmy" Guthrie

Andrew James "Jimmy" Guthrie - was born on 23 May 1897 in Hawick, in the Scottish Borders.

After a period as an apprentice engineer, Jimmy Guthrie joined the local regiment, the 4th (The Border) Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB).

The 4th Battalion KOSB were part of the 52nd (Lowland) Division and while moving from Scotland to Gallipoli were involved in the Quintinshill rail crash near Gretna with the 7th Battalion Royal Scots which resulted in the death of 210 officers and men from the 52nd Division.

While serving with the 4th Battalion KOSB, Jimmy Guthrie saw service at Gallipoli and in Palestine. The 52nd (Lowland Division) also served in France in 1918 during the Second Battles of the Somme and Arras. During this time on the Western Front in France, Jimmy Guthrie served as motor-cycle dispatch rider.

Hawick & District MCC

After war service and returning to his native Hawick, Jimmy Guthrie and his brother Archie joined the local Hawick Motor-Cycle Club. After participating in many local hill-climb and grass-

track races the Hawick MCC nominated Guthrie to race at the Isle of Man TT races for the 1923 season. Although, Jimmy Guthrie did not return to the Isle of Man TT Races until 1927, he competed at the Scottish Speed Championships at St Andrews and won the 1926 and 1927 championships

Biography

During the 1937 Isle of Man TT Races he won the Junior TT but retired on lap 5 of the 1937 Senior TT race at *The Cutting* on the A18 Mountain Road section of the course. After his death while competing in the 1937 German Grand Prix, a memorial was erected to him in 1939. Paid for by public subscription the memorial was built at the place where he retired in his last Isle of Man TT Race and *The Cutting* has been called Guthrie's Memorial (Ordnance Survey Map SC 435 935 GB Grid) ever since. The inscription on the memorial reads as follows:-

James Guthrie 1897-1937

Erected to the memory of Jimmy Guthrie, of Hawick, a brilliant Motor Cycle Rider, famous on the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy Course from his wonderful riding and great sportsmanship. He won the race six times, beat many world records and was the first in numerous foreign races. He died while upholding the honour of his country in the German Grand Prix, August 1937."

A further memorial was created on the Hohenstein-Ernstthal or Sachsenring course in 1949 at the site of the fatal accident and is called the "**Guthrie Stone.**"

Isle of Man TT Race Career

The 1923 Isle of Man TT was the first race on the Snaefell mountain course for Jimmy Guthrie competing in the Junior Race that produced a first-time win for the famous Stanley Woods. It was an inauspicious beginning for Jimmy Guthrie starting the 1923 Junior Race at number 38 riding a Matchless motor-cycle and retiring at Kirk Michael on lap 1 with valve problems.

A return to the Isle of Man TT after an absence of 4 years, the 1927 Isle of Man TT races held contrasting fortunes for Jimmy Guthrie. Starting the 1927 Junior TT Race with number 36 riding a New Hudson motor-cycle, Jimmy Guthrie retired on lap 5 at Ballacraine with a broken petrol-pipe. This was followed by a fine second place, 8 minutes and 17 seconds behind the winner Alec Bennett riding for the works Norton team in the 1927 Senior TT Race. Again riding a New Hudson motor-cycle at number 18, despite being delayed at the TT Grandstand on lap 2 to tighten a loose foot-rest, Jimmy Guthrie finished the race in 4 hours, and 4 minutes at an average race speed of 66.02 mph.

After lying in 6th place, Jimmy Guthrie in the 1928 Junior TT Race was 2½ minutes behind the leader Alec Bennett. During a refueling stop at the TT Grandstand on lap 3, as Jimmy Guthrie prepared to pull out, the engine backfired and set a fire to a petrol overspill and caused the Norton motor-cycle to catch fire which led to a retirement from the 1928 Junior TT Race. During the 1928 Senior TT Race, Jimmy Guthrie retired at Kirk Michael on lap 1 with an engine problem and the race was won by Charlie Dodson riding a Sunbeam at an average race speed of 62.98mph. For the 1929 Isle of Man TT Races, Jimmy Guthrie was a non-starter for the Junior and Senior Races after suffering injuries from a crash at Greeba Bridge during practice.

Despite a retirement at Crosby on lap 6 of the 1930 Junior TT Races for Jimmy Guthrie, this followed by winning his first TT Race, the 1930 Lightweight Race riding an AJS motor-cycle at an average race speed of 64.71 mph. The 1930 Senior TT Race was another retirement for Jimmy Guthrie on lap 2 at the Creg-ny-Baa with an engine mis-fire.

Norton Team 1931-1937

After his first Isle of Man TT win, for the 1931 season Jimmy Guthrie joined the works Norton team run by the engineer Joe Craig. In the 1931 Junior and Senior TT Races, Jimmy Guthrie finished in 2nd place to Tim Hunt in both races that completed the first Junior/Senior double win for the factory Norton team.

Despite hitting and killing a sheep during practice at Glen Duff Jimmy Guthrie went on to compete in the 1932 Isle of Man TT Races. On lap 4 of the 1932 Junior TT Race, Jimmy Guthrie retires at the TT Grandstand after slipping off at Governor's Bridge. The 1932 Senior TT Race produced another 2nd place for Jimmy Guthrie and Stanley Woods went on to win the race at an average speed of 78.47 mph and completing his first Junior/Senior double win.

After hitting the bank at Hillberry on lap 1 of the 1933 Junior TT Race, Jimmy Guthrie lost valuable time. After recovering from this delay, Jimmy Guthrie got up to 2nd place, then he slid-off on melting tar at the Quarterbridge on lap 4 and finished in 3rd place behind winner Stanley Woods and Tim Hunt. The 1933 Senior TT Race produced another Junior/Senior double win for Stanley Woods and a 1-2-3-4 win for the works Norton team with Jimmy Guthrie finishing in 4th place from team-mates, Tim Hunt and Jimmy Simpson

After Tim Hunt had retired from racing after a crash at the 1933 Swedish Grand Prix, it was Irishman Stanley Woods who became the *de facto* Norton team leader. However, after a dispute over prize-money, Stanley Woods left to join Moto Guzzi, effectively promoting Jimmy Guthrie to the vacant team leader position. For the 1934 racing season Jimmy Guthrie won the 500cc 1934 North West 200 at an average race speed of 80.37 mph from Ernie Nott riding for Rudge and Crasher White riding for Norton. The 1934 Isle of Man TT Races also produced a Junior/Senior double win for Jimmy Guthrie, winning the 1934 Junior TT at an average race speed of 79.16 mph and the Senior TT Race at an average speed of 78.01 mph. In both races the 2nd place finisher was Jimmy Simpson riding in his last TT Race meeting before retiring from racing.

The 1935 racing season started for Jimmy Guthrie with another win in the 500cc 1935 North West 200 at an average race speed of 76.53 mph from team-mate S.Darbishire and H G Tyrell Smith in 3rd place riding for AJS motor-cycles. The 1935 Isle of Man TT Races was used by Associated Talking Pictures for the backdrop for the motion picture *No Limit* starring George Formby. The 1935 Junior TT Race provided a Junior TT double win for Jimmy Guthrie at an average race speed of 79.14 mph and Norton with a 1-2-3 race win with Walter Rusk and "Crasher" White filling 2nd and 3rd places.

1935 Senior Isle of Man TT Race

The 1935 Senior TT Race was postponed to the next day due to poor weather. Despite the delay, the race produced one of the most dramatic TT races. The race was led away by Jimmy Guthrie at number 1 while Stanley Woods starting at number 30 had a 15 minute wait. By the last lap of the 1935 Senior TT Race, Jimmy Guthrie had built-up a lead of 26 seconds. As the Moto Guzzi pit-attendants made preparations for Stanley Woods to refuel on the last-lap, the Norton pit-crew signalled to Guthrie to ease the pace on the last lap. Stanley Woods riding for Moto Guzzi went straight through the TT Grandstand area without stopping on the last lap and set a new overall lap record of 26 minutes and 10 seconds at an average speed of 86.53 mph. Despite the Norton team telephoning the signal-station at Ramsey on the last lap to indicate to

Jimmy Guthrie to speed-up the pace, Stanley Woods won the 1935 Senior TT Race by 4 seconds from Jimmy Guthrie in 3 hours, 7 minutes and 10 seconds at an average speed of 84.68 mph. After the race Jimmy Guthrie said;- "I went as quick as I could but Stanley went quicker. I am sorry but I did the best I could."

Final Result 1935 Senior TT (500cc)

Saturday 22nd June 1935 - 7 laps (264.11 miles) Mountain Course.

Rank	Rider	Team	Speed	Time
1	Stanley Woods	Moto Guzzi	84.68 mph	3.07.10.0
2	Jimmy Guthrie	Norton	84.65	3:07.14.0
3	Walter Rusk	Norton	83.53	3:09.45.0

TT victories

Year	Race & Capacity	Motorcycle	Average Speed
1930	Lightweight 250cc	AJS	64.71 mph
1934	Junior 350cc	Norton	79.16 mph
1934	Senior 500cc	Norton	78.16 mph
1935	Junior 350cc	Norton	79.14 mph
1936	Senior 500cc	Norton	85.08 mph
1937	Junior 500cc	Norton	84.43 mph

Following on from the dramatic win by Stanley Woods in the 1935 Senior TT Race, the 1936 Junior TT Race proved to be highly controversial marred by disqualification and protest. After

leading for five laps, Jimmy Guthrie was forced to stop between Hillberry and Signpost Corner to replace the drive chain.

Although continuing in 2nd place the lead passed to Norton team-mate Freddie Frith. At Parliament Square in Ramsey on lap 6, Jimmy Guthrie was 'black-flagged' for receiving outside assistance and disqualified. However, Guthrie denied the charge and continued the race to finish in fifth place which was won by Freddie Frith to record his first Isle of Man TT win at an average race speed of 80.14 mph. The Norton race team protested the disqualification and Jimmy Guthrie was posted in 5th place in the final race classification and was awarded 2nd place prize money. The 1936 Senior TT Race was won by Jimmy Guthrie by 18 seconds from Stanley Woods riding now for Velocette and provided revenge for the dramatic defeat by Stanley Woods the previous year.

The 1937 Isle of Man TT Races continued the "*Norton Habi*" for Jimmy Guthrie winning the 1937 Junior TT Race at an average race speed of 84.43 mph from fellow Norton team-mates Freddie Frith and Crasher White in 2nd and 3rd places. The 1937 Senior TT Race was won by Freddie Frith at an average speed of 88.21 mph riding for Norton after winning the 1936 Junior TT Race. On lap 5 of the 1937 Senior TT Race, Jimmy Guthrie retired on the Mountain Section of the course just below the 'The Cutting.'

TT career summary

Finishing Position	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	DNF
Number of times	6	5	1	1	1	10



A remarkable career that has stood the test of time and all the more remarkable when you consider the limitations of suspension, brakes and tyres during that era. It also highlights the advances in motorcycle technology and performance as almost any modern road bike could far exceed the speeds and times achieved by these racers so many years ago. The current record now stands at 130 mph and it poses the question, 'What will it be in another 50 years time?'

Are YOU a 'leftie'?

by Alan Richardson

I'm not on about your political persuasion, your religious beliefs, or which hand you favour . . . I'm on about which foot you use when you bring your bike to a halt.

DAS training teaches the rider to always stop in the Safety Position - that is with the left foot down and the right foot on the rear brake.

Trainees at the Hendon Police school were taught the 'Hendon Shuffle', (I don't know whether they are still taught the procedure), which involves swapping feet, a right foot down, left foot up, change gear, left foot down, right foot up to cover brake to get out of gear at a standstill and the same procedure to get back into gear. The theory is that you are always covering a brake all the time you are stationary. It's something many experienced riders dispense with, myself among them.

The DSA's own 'Motorcycle Riding, The Essential Skills' says, "As the machine stops put your left foot on the ground to support the weight. When the machine has stopped, keep the front brake applied, release the rear brake and support the motorcycle with your right foot. With the clutch lever still pulled in, use your left foot to move the gear lever selector to neutral, release the clutch lever, place both feet on the ground".

A few experienced riders favour stopping with the right foot down and the left foot ready to change gear. Which is correct?

Well there are advantages and disadvantages of each:

Left Leg Down (Advantages)

- ❑ *Allows you to use the rear brake to show a brake light, improving visibility to traffic behind.*
- ❑ *Hill starts are much easier using the back brake.*
- ❑ *Allows the use of the rear brake for improved stability and slow speed control, for instance when coming to a standstill or filtering at walking pace where you might have to stop suddenly, or descending a steep hill.*
- ❑ *Holding the bike on the rear brake possibly reduces the risk of losing control if you are hit at low speed from behind.*

Left Leg Down (Disadvantages)

- ❑ *You have to do the 'Hendon Shuffle' to get out of gear and back in to gear - rather tedious and often unnecessary.*
- ❑ *If you have filtered to the front of a queue (temporary traffic lights), where you may need to move off smartly, doing the 'shuffle' could be potentially dangerous.*

Right Leg Down (Advantages)

- ❑ *You can get in and out of gear easily.*
- ❑ *You can gently hold the front brake for the visibility effect of the brake light.*

Right Leg Down (Disadvantages)

- ❑ *You can't use the back brake so have to rely on the front brake only when coming to a halt, reducing stability and control when the bike is least stable.*
- ❑ *Hill starts are much more difficult using the front brake.*
- ❑ *Unless you are holding the front brake, a gentle tap from behind will send the bike shooting out from underneath you as you WILL put your foot down to recover balance.*

So which is correct?

Well, I guess both are, under the right circumstances . . .

Why do we put our foot down in the first place? It's to keep the bike from falling over, so a quick look at the ground ahead before we stop may dictate which foot we put down. Keeping the bike from falling over and possibly ending up on top of us is the first priority. Whatever happens after that is of secondary importance.

A road with a large camber will make us inclined to put our right foot down, as it's closer. (I know a few riders who are vertically challenged and look to get the easiest toe down!).

Stopping on a road with a poor surface, (stones or oil or diesel), you look to put down whichever foot can be placed on a good area.

On a particularly windy day, where 'gusting' may be a problem, especially with a passenger or full luggage, I would consider putting both feet down.

So my answer is, put down whichever foot, (or feet), seems sensible under the circumstances . . .

My question to you is, 'Which foot do you put down?'

- o0o -

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

End to End Gold & Saddlesore 2000

by Mick Ingledew

After last year's Saddle Sore 1500, taking in the Millau Viaduct, in France, Dave Badcock came up with our next challenge for 2007, the End to End Gold, combined with the Saddlesore 2000. In the end, 4 riders were able to attempt the challenge: Dave Badcock, Greg Holmes, Bev Muizelaar and myself.



3.00 am, Saturday June 2nd 2007, we were ready for the off from Washington Services North. With the four bikes parked together, all kitted up, and many well wishers congregating, we decided to fuel up and document our first fill up at 02.36. My odometer read 19,298 miles. We thought a speedy departure sensible, not wanting to be responsible for crowd control so early in the morning. Leaving to the sound of the cheering throng, this was it - the start of our latest venture. Soon we encountered the first of many weather issues, patchy thick fog, as Dave led the way, Greg bringing up the rear; Bev and myself interchanging between them to our first stop in the Chesterfield area at 04.38, some 140 miles later. Rather than detail each of the 20 or so fuel stops, this was to form the logistics throughout.

Similar to other, against the clock, epoch journeys we've taken part in, it's essential to fuel up and be away without dilly dallying, keeping those motors burning. As we entered the Midlands, the weather deteriorated with every mile, to a fog 'whiteout' through Devon and Cornwall. Added to this interruption our flow throughout the Cornish peninsula was worsened by a series of major roadworks on the A30, between Okehampton and Bodmin, coupled with heavy traffic following the spring break further hampered our progress. We fuelled up at Launceston at 09.05 before our final attack on Land's End. The final few miles through quaint hamlets was marred by the fret lurking at every turn. We entered the car park at Land's End in thoroughly miserable conditions. We couldn't even see the sea only metres away. As well as VAT fuel receipts obtained at each fuel stop, it is also advisable to get a till receipt from a shop at each significant leg of the journey. Land's End in this case, is the starting point for the End to End Gold to John O' Groats. All the while we were totting up the miles for the SS2000, 497 so far at 10.37. Various witness forms have to be completed. Dave and Greg asked a couple of German bikers to do the honours, Bev and I asked the folks in the Information Centre.

With just under an hour break off we set merrily for the next leg to Maidstone in Kent, a turning point for the SS2000. As mentioned earlier, the traffic and roadworks impeded our progress even further. We chose to filter for 8 and 10 mile sections. The other vehicle drivers were largely sympathetic and allowed our passage by moving their vehicles to left or right. The A30 isn't best equipped with petrol stations and on one occasion Dave took us via the lovely sleepy village of Lifton with the CVOs running on vapour. Some of the villagers came out to wish us well. This was one of two places where we got hand written receipts, Wick the other.

Travelling along the A303 towards Andover, Dave and I both realised 2 of the pack weren't following. Pulling in at the first lay-by to await their arrival. A few minutes later, Greg into the lay-by to give us the sad news of Bev's bad luck, a puncture - his rear tyre. Bev was left waiting for vehicle recovery. Dave kept in contact throughout. Poor Bev was stuck in a remote lay-by miles from anywhere until assistance arrived at 22.30, waiting since the 15.30 mark.



A seven hour wait - soul destroying. Our next fuel stop was Andover where we'd have a 10 min break, parking the bikes conveniently just off the forecourt. Adjacent was the car wash/vacuum area where a young lady was performing on her A6 Audi. As I was checking my helmet and its contents she asked what we were up to, so we explained offering her some fudge purchased from Land's End. To cut a long story short, her father regularly travels on GNER services between York and Kings

Cross and I know him well. How railway gossip became intertwined I can't remember but yet again what a small world we live in. A mere 110 miles on we arrive at our next important point, Maidstone in Kent and it's 17:30, which was another receipt/witness stop and a turning point for Saddlesore 2000, at 839 miles.

Skipping the next 236 miles steered us over the A66 between Scotch Corner and the M/A74, where we stopped on the outskirts of Carlisle. There are long stretches of 40 mph zones at present due to the ongoing upgrading of this busy arterial route connecting east to west, during which time the rain continued to fall. Strange as it may seem, our tyres were steaming when we stopped. I hadn't ever noticed this before. The A66 provided the thrills of twists and turns in the dark, all the while keeping a lookout for our furry friends scuttling across the road in front of Dave. It was quite funny watching a bunny rabbit in the distance, dazzled, doing what can only be described as making its mind up, how to react to the situation. Badgers were our main concern. Sometimes I thought "there's a Zebra". No, it was Dave stretching both arms wide, cruise control on, the luminous strips on his jacket, giving the effect of a Zebra, in a hurry.

So it's 1,198 miles into the journey as we cross the border into Scotland, around 01.00, nearly 24hrs of riding later. My round, 3 lattes in Hamilton, Lanarkshire, where important decisions were made. With a receipt timed at 02.23, and a Travelodge adjacent, Dave checked on available rooms for 3 men in leathers; you can imagine the look on the face of the receptionist. Deal done a tenner each, we'd have a couple of hour's kip. Basically to continue would mean we'd arrive JO'G too early - say 5-6ish and 'The' shop closed. As on the previous legs of the journey, we require VAT receipts for authentication purposes. Anyway, we bedded down, a leg out of the bed, for Greg and Dave, with me on the floor, we soon dropped off into a deep sleep only to be woken up to the sound of Layla over in the corner of the room. Dazed and Confused (*Plant and Page et al*) we stirred like 'Diddle Diddle Dumpling' . .

One sock on and one sock off . . . Got correctly dressed ready for our journey north. Our fuel receipt leaving Hamilton read 04.48, indicating possibly a ninety minute kip, worth every penny of the tenner. A few miles along the M9 we observed a dead deer lying in the outside lane. The penny dropped, should we have continued our journey earlier, with headlights as our only guide, we might have become entwined with this unfortunate creature. Somewhere along the ride the formation was Dave, Greg and me as the 'tail gunner', an ideal position for me to look and learn. I would watch Dave and Greg perform seamless overtaking manoeuvres, whereas I would drop behind, waiting for a suitable overtaking opportunity. As they say 'three's a crowd' and during an overtake safety is always paramount. As morning was breaking we were roaring through Scotland at its best, through the Highlands, skirting the A9 and the Grampian Mountains. From Perth and beyond, through Pitlochry to Blair Atholl we start climbing towards the Pass of Drumochter, passing Dalwhinnie (*the highest distillery on mainland Scotland*), before descending towards Kingussie.

Many places the Chapter have passed over and through during our annual visits to Scotland, Ullapool and Inverness to name but two. Dropping towards Inverness we view the Monadhliath Mountains to the left and the Cairngorms to the right, with the Black Isle our focus ahead where we'd cross the Moray Firth towards Easter Ross. Personally I find these roads some of the best in Europe, well maintained for riders to enjoy and of note – sensibly placed manhole covers. The view as you approach the bridges passing over the Cromarty and Dornoch Firths are breathtaking, albeit the elements were against us, continual rain lashing down. Again I was playing catch up with the other two, falling many miles behind; they'd parked up waiting for me to arrive. Somewhere just South of Wick, a young girl scantily dressed and she said "marooned in Wick overnight and I'm making my way back to Scrabster".

We were adorned in our gear and looked at her all rosy cheeked at home with 'her' climate up here in Caithness. She bid us farewell and carried on. As you leave Wick the road forks to John O'Groats and Thurso. One day I'd like to take the A9 to its end then follow the Pentland Firth across to John O'Groats. However we continued along the well beaten path directly to our next stop. A flow of cyclists puffing and panting their way, along with hikers, compasses at the ready, each with their own goal to achieve, as were we: the End to End Goal, in conjunction with Saddlesore 2000 targets.

Our target was met, arriving 10.13 (*till receipt*), hopefully qualifying for E2E Gold, but 1-2 hours behind schedule (*a legacy from Cornwall still haunting us*) on Saddlesore 2000. I bought a 'coaster' for my till receipt. Coasters' are my collectable items for future trips. Greg and Dave went for caps, carefully chosen to compliment their complications. A coach arrived with a mixture of nationalities zipping up, hoods pulled forward, backs to the wind as they looked across to their pending Orkney ferry, just passing Duncansby Head, in a stomach turning swell. A couple from Arizona kindly witnessed my form embellishing their next part of their journey to the Orkneys. Jon Ince and Nige were updated throughout.

Our progress was scanned on the Chapter web site for all to see. So now, as for myself, fudge from Land's End, a coaster from John O' Groats, wet gloves and a tender posterior we set off to continue towards the next turnaround point, Tebay, for the Saddlesore 2000.

I had asked Dave to stop at the Drumochter Summit, the highest point of the BR Railway network. The A9 and the route of the "Highland Chieftain" run parallel in close pursuit, north of Perth. My idea was to have the three Harleys' lined up with the Plaque in the backdrop. The Highland mist and rain dispelled this idea, and we carried on. Nature and the other 'hand' necessitated a pee stop not far south, shaken not stirred adding a little more mist. Towards Aviemore, after a fuel stop at Wick, where the garage attendant couldn't predict the weather after 16 years and as he said "*if it's not raining it's going to*".

Our fingers squelched into the gloves, fingers already shrivelled, 62, Grampian Road, Grants Service station Aviemore, bikes pointing towards Cairngorm, petrol pumps at the ready. We did stop for our first proper hot meal on the approaches where we met other bikers. I remember saying to Greg, "its not raining", we'd ridden for how long not realising it hadn't been raining, but, it was going to rain again – just around the corner before we reached Newtonmore. Following the same route south and 268 miles later we arrived at Tebay, the final turning point of the SS2000. On the way we experienced some nervous encounters with our 4-wheeled friends. For example, a Landrover towing a caravan topping 80 mph, scraping the central reservation when overtaking. Also, two white French vans, one towing a horse box overtaking the Landrover, and to top it all a clapped out Peugeot 106, without dials (*I peered in*) overtaking everyone. Our 80 mph cruise control CVOs continually conflicted with their progress for mile after mile.

At Tebay we asked two bikers, bound for the Isle of Man TT, to witness our progress. Dave took this opportunity to phone ahead to inform Nige and the steadily increasing welcoming committee, who were congregating again at Washington Services North, that our expected arrival 21.30. Over the din of the crowds Nige was able to confirm his "back passage was clear" and that cleared the air! Connecting through to the A66 en route to Scotch Corner, with many horses tethered, caravans parked at every opportunity, the Appleby Horse Fair at some stage in the offing. I saw some kids playing in the wet grass and wondered how they dry their wet clothes. Do those kids suffer from the sniffles? However, one thing was sure, they were rosy cheeked and having fun - a lesson in freedom from those not impeded by city enclosure. Somewhere between Brough and Bowes we met the most inclement weather so far, passing a multiple pile-up with people in attendance and blue flashing lights on their way. On some roads we were nearly aquaplaning in the torrents falling upon us, taking those bends watching Greg rear tyre spewing out a spray of many metres diameter as his Dunlops gripped the tarmac.

Dropping down towards Scotch Corner to rejoin the A1M we traversed the endless miles of road works we'd travelled over only hours before in the opposite direction. Our End Goal was in focus. Dave had estimated a 21.30 arrival at Washington Services North arrival, and so our progress slowed down to the 70's, bearing in mind we had till 02.36 to achieve our ultimate goal, so time was on *Hour Glides!* Riding tail again, my throttle was threatening to pull away, to overtake Greg and Dave ahead, I just wanted to get back to start the whole journey again, on my bike, The Street Glide, totally in tune with my wants and needs, and at this countdown phase nearing the end how well we'd looked after each other.

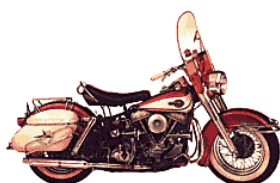
RPM at 3K = 80 mph for the best part of the 2000+ miles so far achieved and we could do the same again! Now we're approaching our final destination and above the rhythm of the engines I could hear cheering in the distance, bringing a tear to my eye. I was feeling all emotional, the adrenaline boosting my nervous disposition.

With only a mile to go, Dave pulled us together, to ride the last stretch side by side by side, bringing smiles to Greg and me, as we spotted Nige and the photographers, flash cameras blinding our final few metres into Washington Services, where we were directed to a cordoned-off area marking the end of our epic journey, with hours to spare within the 48 allocated.

We arrived 21.25, well actually 21.15, but our final fuel receipt at 21.25 is what will be documented, then back to the gathering. My final odo reading was 21,383.

This was a truly memorable journey with my two mates Dave and Greg, not forgetting Bev who left a third of the way into the journey thanks to a puncture. Over the past three years, this core of riders have enjoyed the thrills of long distance riding. Year 1 was a mere Lands End to John O' Groats. Year 2 saw us reach the Millau Viaduct, where we began the Iron Butt Award theme, at Bun Burner and Saddle sore level. This year we'd achieved End to End Gold and Saddle sore 2000 UK.

Next year an even bigger challenge - *NorTariba*. *Ride safe everyone* Mick Ingledew



Tips for new riders

By Ray Charlton

Sitting the advanced test can have different effects on different riders. To some it is simply just another ride out and to others it is quite a daunting experience that leaves them in dread of the big day.



In real terms **it is** little more than another ride out and with the right approach should not be an ordeal of any shape or form.

First of all the Examiners are just as keen to see you pass as you are yourself and approach the test with an open mind. They are well aware that many riders suffer 'test nerves' and will always do their utmost to put your mind at rest by engaging in casual, informal chat on first meeting you to help relax you prior to starting the test.

However, you yourself can make the event much less demanding with a little prior thought and preparation.

From the very outset of your training, get into the habit of asking questions of your Senior Observer at the end of your assessment for explanations of the points he raises with you.

Continue this practice throughout your normal observed runs, again asking for an explanation of why things are done slightly different to what you perhaps previously believed. For example, varying our position on approaches to bends offers us the opportunity for improved observation and a safer position to negotiate the bend and being able to take much earlier evasive action should the situation change.

You will soon learn that every sequence of the **System of Motorcycle Control** has been designed to place you in the safest position on the road, offering you much improved observation and the opportunity to make progress safely without fuss in a calm and controlled manner and also deal with any emergency that may arise.

A common mistake made by many Associates is not supplementing their practical instruction with theoretical knowledge.

On returning home after completing each observed run, make a habit of reading the relevant chapters in Roadcraft covering the exercise you have just completed with your Observer.

You will soon realise that Roadcraft makes much more sense if used in conjunction with practical instruction and adds to your knowledge and understanding. Should there still be points you don't fully understand, contact your Observer for an explanation.

Putting these points into practice will soon give you a good understanding of what is required and you will soon find your riding more enjoyable and satisfying.

The same rule applies to the Highway Code. I bet there is not one of you out there who has looked at the Highway Code in depth since preparing for your normal Driving Test. Read it a section at a time and you will soon realise just how much you have forgotten or have found new rules that apply now that were not there when you last read it.

The next important step is to practice your new skills between observed runs; there is no point in only riding to the advanced style whilst under the watchful eye of your Observer. It is a technique that needs to be practised until it becomes second nature.

When the test day arrives, there are several things you need to attend to prior to your test and can be summarised as follows: -

- Ensure your bike is clean, oil and water levels are correct and you have sufficient fuel for the duration of the test.
- Check your tyres to make sure they are legal (Minimum legal tread is 1 mm) and at the correct pressures and have no splits or cuts or foreign bodies in them.
- Ensure all lights and electrics are working correctly and nothing is 'hanging off' i.e. number plate, loose or missing bolts etc.
- Ideally wear the correct protective clothing and ideally some form hi-vis 'H' belt and that your visor is clean.

Arrive at the test starting point early to give you the opportunity to carry out any final checks on the bike and find a suitable parking place. Most tests start in public car parks, which in themselves can be potentially dangerous places so find a parking bay well away from the exit of the car park, ideally allowing immediate access to one of the exit roadways.

This is a simple tip, but it can be of great help to you as it allows you to move off having a much improved general view of the car park and its activity. Quite often motorists do not stick to the exit roadways, but cut diagonally across vacant car bays, without much thought for others and can pose a hazard to you. Being positioned well away from the exit allows you the opportunity for much better observation, to ensure you have a good look all around you before moving off.

The other benefit is that it allows you a little more time to settle down as you move off rather than perhaps doing a right turn immediately on leaving the parking bay and then in a matter of a few feet having to make a left turn to exit the car park. A little point but one that can put you on the right foot from the outset.

The test itself should pose little problems for you having been well prepared to face it by your Observer /Senior Observer.

Common faults are not making progress, (and I don't mean high speed) by failing to **maintain** the speed limits where it is safe to do so. As the bulk of the test is in an urban environment with constantly varying speed limits it is essential that you are aware of what the speed limit is at all times.

Don't be afraid to use any 'No Car Lanes' if there is a benefit to be gained from it. Ensure your head checks are clear and purposeful and remember if there is a greater risk of danger in front of you that is where you should be looking.

If there is an opportunity to overtake safely then do it, but make sure the decision is correct. Don't overtake at junctions, farm entrances or lay-bys and don't become the 'meat in the sandwich'. Return to the safety of your own side of the road smoothly and safely without upsetting other motorists.

On open country roads, make best use of your observation and position yourself correctly to negotiate any bends at a safe and controlled speed in the correct gear.

These are just a few simple points that can make a difference on your big day.

An Alternative Weekend

by Clive Taylor

Is anyone old enough to remember the RAC National Rally years ago? It was a navigational event all over England. Well these days it is called the National Road Rally and I've enjoyed taking part several times over the years.

This year I happened to see a request on the Internet from the organisers for people to man some new checkpoints in the far north of England. They were looking for folks for Morpeth and Alston Controls amongst others.

This would be fun thought I and Simon Hadden was enthusiastic as well. Furthermore, Carole & Alan Kibble fancied doing the Alston Control and soon roped in Ann Bowen from RoSPA.



Anyway the whole thing fell flat on its face. A couple of weeks before the event was to take place we were contacted and told the event was cancelled for lack of entries.

Only 500 had entered rather than the usual 1000 or so and the thing could not be financed.

Glum and irritated we decided to use the same weekend and the same folks and enjoy some time in Scotland.

Simon had been bleating on for ages that we should visit Loch Katrine and take a ride on a

genuine Victorian steam launch up the Loch.

This was an opportunity too good to miss so we arranged rooms at the Suie Lodge hotel in Glen Dochart for the Saturday night and planned a scenic route north.

We were somewhat taken aback to encounter rain as we journeyed to Otterburn to meet Ann and more than a little annoyed to note that it was still falling at Hawick as we rendezvoused with Carole & Alan.

Simon had selected the café in Peebles where a snack was to be taken but was remiss enough not to have observed that the local fair day coincided with our visit.

With the town centre closed even to your God and the Supreme Being we were forced to park in a side street and walk (squelch) our way to the café.

It was however a revelation as plenty of tea and bacon & egg rolls (with black pudding) were proffered and consumed heartily. The bread rolls were particularly well thought of.

The weather was testing our clothing to the limit and we still had the crappy bit of East Glasgow to negotiate before the rather more interesting Campsie Fells. Loch Katrine is set in glorious scenery somewhat spoiled by observing it through a wall of rain.

The steam ship SS Sir Walter Scott awaited our soggy group and as it slid silently away from its moorings a hint of drier weather welcomed us further along the Loch. The ship is fascinating. Built in 1902 and still running on its original, triple-expansion, coal-fired, steam engine we felt

carried gently back in time to a more civilized age where speed was a less necessary ingredient in life.

Late in the afternoon we set off for the 40 or so miles to our hotel near Crianlarich. Fortunately the proprietors had plenty of experience of wet bikers so, unfazed, they led us to our rooms.

Apart from the ride on the ship, the highlight was an evening just chatting with good friends over a pleasant meal and a glass or two of wine. A good night's sleep and hearty breakfast set us up for the anticipated dry ride south with the intention of finding a more novel route.

Sadly Simon, who is renowned for his ability to navigate huge distances without either sat nav or map consultation had abandoned his role of pathfinder and shuffled to the back of the group leaving me to guide the way.

We started confidently and enjoyed a pleasant if wet first 30 miles or so. The wheels then came off the cart as I missed a significant junction and we ended up at Stirling on the M9. This was not the intended route and with hunger pangs stirring decided to make for the café at the Falkirk Wheel.

Splashing along in heavy rain I managed to miss that as well so a group conference demanded that we stop at the hotel at the junction of the A68 and the A697 and with the rain still thundering down we enjoyed a rather splendid lunch whilst steaming gently in the warm pub.

We said our goodbyes to our chums who headed south on the A68 whilst Simon & I were irritated by dry weather greeting us at Coldstream for the last 40 miles toward home.

Having been traumatised by the rally cancellation in the first place the alternative option was, well, frankly very wet. In fact it was probably the wettest two days of riding I have endured for many a year.

The company made it however and it just proves that if you've got a bike and some good friends you can stick two fingers up to the weather or anything else for that matter.

June Rideout: Weather to Ride.

by Dave Walton



This was the first rideout I had organised. Although it started badly, with my leaving the organisation a bit late, and finishing on the A686, which is a river that runs down the hill from Hartside in Cumbria to the A69 – a wider river running to Newcastle – I needn't have worried. The bit in between went fine.

I was concerned about distances people would want to ride, routes, stops, fuel, toilets etc. But in fact I realise now people just want to get on their bike and ride. (With one exception, that is - of

which, more in a moment.)

These things do need some consideration though, and it is usual for a couple of bikes to do a reconnaissance ride in advance to check the basics. I had in mind that Ron Patrick often does these with the organiser, but didn't have in mind that he might be on holiday. Without a plan B, no sign of a let up in the weather and the last Sunday of the



month rapidly approaching, I set off in torrential rain the week before round a route I'd been thinking about to the Lake District – in the car! (Like I say – it was raining. Torrentially!)

I needed assistance by way of a second group leader and a couple of tail-enders. Again, although I'd left it late, I needn't have worried. A quick email to the discussion group and I had some instant volunteers. Thanks go to Louise Bennett, Nick Maddison and Alan Richardson.

I committed my route to writing and sent it round my helpers. Alan, who offered to lead the second group, suggested that rather than starting the ride on the A1 and A69, people might prefer skirting the city on the minor roads.

When we gathered on Sunday morning and I suggested to Alan, a couple of miles only on the A1, and no A69. Alan assured me, "Dave, it's **your** rideout. **You** decide. **You** go where **you** want to go.""But," he added, less reassuringly, "I'm not going on the A1 with my group!"



After a bit of discussion on the subject I came to a decision. Alan was a trouble-maker and should be banned from the group. I resolved to let his tyres down at the first opportunity. (He even turned up with his own tail-end, leaving me with a spare! I also remembered he had not wanted to go to the Lake District in the first place, because it was June – probably picturing heavy traffic on a balmy summer's day!)

As for the ride itself, we set off for the Lake District in two groups of a dozen or so – an excellent turnout considering the rain there had been, and

that threatened, not to mention the fact that the Moto GP was at Donington that day. We headed up Stamfordham Road, past Whittle Dene reservoirs and through the remote hamlet of Newton, which we left via a mile or so long single track road. A **very** single track road as it happens! In fact if a bike had been coming the other way, let alone a car, I'm not sure it would have got past. **But at least it wasn't the A69!**

From there, onto the Styford roundabout, across the Tyne and up the A68, past Edmunbyers onto the moors. Great roads and scenery, and ... the rain held off. Only a couple of inconsiderate sheep came anywhere near spoiling the fun!



At Durham Dales Visitors' Centre in Stanhope we met up with the second group for a cuppa. From there, to Middleton-in-Teesdale and a quick fuel stop at Kirkby Stephen. By this stage our group had parted company with three riders. One had to help his partner with a domestic removal, while Ray Charlton had stopped to take some photographs of the bikes, and Sid Corke had apparently stopped and waved everyone past. My own theory is they all anticipated what the

weather was going to do and headed off to their firesides! Alan's group lost a rider or two for the same reason, we guessed.

Rain duly arrived – in a couple of short but heavy bursts as we headed back onto the moors. By the time we reached Kendal, at one o'clock for lunch, we had been soaked but had just about dried out again. We met up with Alan's group, had some grub and were soon back in the saddle bound for Windermere and the awe-inspiring Kirkstone Pass. This is beautiful at any time of the year, but under a moody, leaden sky with a pool or two of sunlight in the valleys below, it looked at its dramatic best.

We pulled over at the top, but decided the riding was so good we'd press on down the valley. When we all looked ready I eyed the line of professional advanced riders in my mirror admiringly, and decided to practice stalling a couple of times! I think only seven of the eight noticed, though.

The fantastic flight down the valley to Patterdale below however, didn't quite live up to the thrill anticipated, on account of a broken-down car and caravan on its way up with a pile-up of traffic waiting to pass. Plus, some more of those sheep with no consideration of the Highway Code – two of which, rather alarmingly, hurled themselves in suicidal leaps over a stone wall on the top of a precipice. (I'm sure they knew what they were doing.)



Alan was right though, (but it won't save his tyres) the traffic along the length of Ullswater was quite heavy, and if it hadn't been for the scenery – that we were able to enjoy at a more leisurely pace – it could have become a bit of a drudge.

But in no time we were at the next scheduled stop – the Rheged Visitors' Centre at Penrith. A stretch, a drink and a fill-up were planned, but while a couple of us got fuel, the general consensus was to push on to Hartside. We hadn't seen the other group for some time, so this sounded fine by me, and just enforced my view that once you get going, people just want to ride.



Then it started to rain! Hartside was a welcome refuge. A mug of tea, a chat and, best of all – **free** end-of-the-day pasties – with an option on spares to take home! Manna from a soggy heaven!

Then it started to **really** rain! Big, wet, heavy, bouncing rain! Get-into-everywhere rain! Another flight down the valley was curbed. A few more guys decided to take shortcuts home while a sodden quartet floated down the River A69 to our scheduled finishing spot at Brocksbushes coffee and farm shop – bang-on the scheduled 5.30pm estimated arrival time. Louise, Nick, Eric and I decided not to hang around, though the rain had eased. (We'll pick-our-own strawberries another day!)

I got home to Newcastle still dripping, only to find it had been dry all day! Alan's party got back safely, too. Alan's only complaint at the end was that he wasn't provided with snorkel and flippers. Ron, I think we might have to swap the day-glow arm bands for some inflatable water-wings for the next rideout, too! - Maybe try Hein Gericke?)



Fish & Chip Run 10th July 2007

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@tesco.net

Deadline for contributions to next newsletter

Friday, 28th September 2007

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



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