

Riders' Chronicles



In This Issue

New Committee

Bike Care

Crossword

Rideout Query

New World

Xmas raffle

Funnies

Rider's Tips

Agony Aunts

Safer Motoring

Group Auction

Turkey Trip

**Xmas Dinner
Photographs**

Much More



Feb - April 2007

**The Newsletter of Northumbria
Advanced Motorcyclists**

New Committee 2006 / 07



Jack Lormor
Honorary Group President



Ray Charlton
Chairman & Newsletter Editor



Simon Lupton
Vice Chairman
& Training Group



Simon Hadden
Secretary



Jim Stephenson
Treasurer



Kevin Wellden
Training Officer



Clive Taylor
Training Group



Richard Salisbury
Membership Secretary



Glenn Knowles
Website Editor



Michael Sutherland
Assistant Secretary



Ron Patrick
Rideout Co-ordinator



Louise Bennett
Merchandising



Malcolm Lonsdale
Team Leader
Northumberland



Alan Richardson
Team Leader Tyneside



Gary Law
Team Leader
Newcastle & West

Chairman's Ramblings

MY first task this issue is to correct something I missed out in the last issue. In the rush to get the newsletter to the printers, having held it back to include the results of the A.G.M., I forgot to thank Helen Gardner for the excellent work she has done on the committee during her term in office. Helen was an extremely active member, who did a lot of work for the Group and will be greatly missed for her contribution and outspoken views.



As promised, I intend to introduce some new initiatives and as a prelude to this, have instigated an additional 'informal committee meeting' on the lines of a brainstorming session, the outcome being several new ideas that are now being considered.

The first of which, a change in the format of the monthly meetings has already been introduced, whereby we welcome first time visitors at the door and they are given an introductory talk by the Training Officer. When the meeting starts, they are welcomed by name and introduced to the members present. This is followed by the presentation of any Test Pass Certificates and then any announcements that need to be made.

The Guest Speaker will then be invited to start his talk and this is then followed by the monthly raffle. Volunteers are required to sell raffle tickets for about half an hour prior to meetings, on a rota basis, so, if interested either contact myself or the Secretary, Simon Hadden.

Other initiatives to follow include the preparation of talks / presentations to be held in reserve in the event of a booked speaker being unable to attend. This should ensure that there will be something of interest at all meetings.

I am looking at the possibility of introducing additional, perhaps smaller and more informal ride-outs, which should help to spread the numbers attending. Ironically, the matter of ride-outs is the subject of an article in this issue, submitted by Clive Taylor and is also under review by the Training Group. Obviously I need to consult the Ride-out Co-ordinator and the Committee.

I have suggested offering the opportunity, during 2007, for two Members at a time to come out with me where I will give a demonstration using radios and commentary, to explain in depth, observation, planning and cornering. This will be done on a first come first served basis, so if interested, please let me know. This could well be supplemented by Simon Hadden and Clive Taylor, depending on demand, who also have quality radio systems and can give the same demonstrations. Again I need to talk this over with the Committee.

I think you will also see the Training Group being more pro-active during 2007, introducing ongoing training for existing Observers and the involvement of Senior Observers in their decisions.

An Auction Night will be introduced as a means of disposing of any bike clothing / accessories etc; with money raised split between Group funds and the Air Ambulance.(See announcement in this issue)

Finally, I welcome any ideas or suggestions from you, if they are considered feasible, then you may be invited to a Committee Meeting to discuss it further.

Meanwhile....happy biking.

Ray

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

N.D.Hamilton	W. Cook	Bruce Black
A. Docker	C. Rowland	

CONGRATULATIONS ON PASSING THE IAM TEST – Well Done

Keith Bruce	Observed by	Geoff Spencer
Anni Smith	“	Ray Charlton
Nigel Stephens	“	?
Ben Tucker	“	Ron Patrick
Jonathon Mellors	“	Geoff Spencer
Richard M. Penna	“	?
April King	“	John Fagan
Kevin Jordan	“	?

? Unable to ascertain who the Observer has been.

Special Congratulations to **Debbie Polworth** on passing her Senior Observers Test and is now the only Lady Senior Observer in the North-East – Well Done!

Please let me know when you have passed to appear on this page



IAN BELL (MOTORCYCLES) LTD
62 Rothesay Terrace
Bedlington
Northumberland
NE22 5PT
Tel: 01670 822311



Blandford Sq. Newcastle
(Bottom end of Westgate Rd)
0191 2612097
www.hein-gericke.co.uk

The New 2007 seasons range for top to toe quality rider's gear is now in. Just pop in to collect the new catalogue but you'll not be able to resist spending more time in store to find out more!

Committee

Honorary Group President: **Jack Lormor**

Chairman: **Ray Charlton**

Vice Chairman: **Simon Lupton**

Secretary: **Simon Hadden**

Treasurer: **Jim Stephenson**

Training Officer: **Kevin Wellden**

Training Group: **Simon Lupton, Clive Taylor**

Membership Secretary: **Richard Salisbury**

Assistant Secretary: **Michael Sutherland**

Promotion & Events: **Vacant**

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: 07956 618965

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.

- o0o -

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

Front Cover Picture shows Carole and Alan Kibble in Istanbul, at the start of their marathon Turkish Trip, part one of their tale starts on page 24.

Inside covers contain photographs of your new Committee and also Members at the 2006 Christmas Dinner.

There are a wide ranging number of articles submitted by our regular contributors and includes an interview with new Member, Anni Smith.

You will notice that this issue cover 3 months instead of the usual two; this is to get the issues within the normal quarters of the year instead of overlapping at the start and finish of the year. To compensate, the next issue will be coming out mid April and thereafter back to every two months.

Hope you enjoy it.

Ray

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.

Winter warmer (Curry night) - 24th February 2007

We are having a group curry night on Saturday 24th Feb 2007.

Details are... **Place:** Ponteland Tandori
 Time: 7.00pm for 7:30 meal

The meal will be taken in the function suite which we will have to ourselves for the evening

This is a buffet style meal with:- Starters • 4-5 Different curries • Rice • Breads • Sweet & Coffee. The cost will be £17.00 per head.

If you're interested in coming along, please contact Malcolm Lonsdale to help us gauge the numbers involved.

New Member Interview – Anni Smith

It was under a year since Anni passed her D.S.A Motorcycle Test when she decided to join N.A.M and here she is just a matter of months later, having successfully passed her I.A.M Advanced Test.

Here is her story :

What attracted YOU to biking?

Through an existing Member of NAM.

Where did you do you CBT/DAS?

Newcastle Rider Training, under the watchful eye of Neil Wolfendon.

When did you pass your test?

In October 2005.

What bike did you then decide on?

After a lot of searching and research I eventually settled for a BMW F650GS.

WHAT MADE YOU SETTLE FOR THIS MODEL?

Initially I looked around for a 250cc but couldn't find the right combination of position, weight, ride etc: The 650 was suitable for restriction, to comply with the conditions of my licence and I thought I would get good backup from Mill BMW where I bought it.

Are you happy with it?

Yes but I will try something quite different at some stage to get a better comparison

What made you decide to take up Advanced Riding?

It was a natural progression to improve my technique, safety and knowledge base

How have you found NAM?

Very helpful and open to women that are new to the sport, - some of the travel lectures are useful too.

Did you have any problems when undergoing Observed Runs?

Not really, the breaks and debrief help to keep things informal and sort out issues that arose.





Could you feel your confidence and riding improving?

Definitely – I'm surprised I have progressed so much since I only passed the ordinary test last year - and did appreciate the opportunity for tuition included in the membership cost.

How did you find the IAM Test?

Well it's not about perfection, which had initially been one of my concerns – it was a case just doing the right thing at the right time.

How do you class your riding now compared to earlier?

Safer and more proficient all round - which means you actually enjoy biking much more

Would you recommend it?

I already have, but it seems to be more attractive to 'newbies' than more

experienced women riders.

What next?

Thailand in March with other Members, followed by the Isle of Man TT in May and much more riding to consolidate my new riding skills.

- o0o -

Snippets – 52 Years On

An Englishman caught speeding during a holiday in Philadelphia, U.S.A in July 1954, has just paid his fine!!! He had promised the Officer he would pay it when he returned to his hotel, but forgot.

Now 84 and a resident in a nursing home, he found the speeding ticket in an old coat pocket. He apparently said that "Englishmen always pay their debts and my conscience is now clear".

The US police said they will frame the letter and the £5.00 note as an example to everyone that honesty is the best policy, "even if it is a little late".

Care and Maintenance

by Sid Corke

I realise this may be teaching my Granny to suck eggs but some of this may be interesting to someone within the group.

Cleaning and polishing is to me, not only essential but an important and satisfying part of owning a motorcycle.

Indeed, Saturday afternoon in the sunshine with the radio quietly playing in the background, whilst bulling up, is most pleasant and relaxing.

I start with a good wash with a bucket and sponge with warm soapy water, checking the sponge for any foreign bodies before I touch the tank to prevent scratches.

Whilst the bike is still wet, I squirt neat washing up liquid at the engine and any other fiddly areas, and work it in with a good soft long haired brush, and then rinse the bike down with a hosepipe.

The wheels and swinging arm are next to get the treatment with a cloth soaked in white spirit to remove chain lube and brake dust, then go over these areas with the soapy sponge to clean thoroughly, again hose the bike down.

After half an hour or so (and a cup of tea) I remove the seat and clean underneath with a cloth and Pledge, this area is so often ignored and can let the rest of the bike down badly.

At this point I check the condition of the battery terminals; I spray mine with chain wax which keeps them looking fresh and clean.

The chain gets the treatment with a cloth and white spirit there is also a rubber slide pad on top of the swinging arm which gets a vicious mix of grit and chain lube that acts as an abrasive to the chain.

By this time the bike is usually dry and the polishing can begin I use expensive polish for the tank and body panels (Würth at 5 pound for 250 ml but well worth it). For the cockpit and seat I just use Pledge. The alloy footpegs are buffed up with Solvol Autosol and the stainless steel can (silencer) is polished with Brasso.

The brake hoses are polished with the cloth with Pledge applied and at the same time checked for damage. The metal ends of the brake hoses I literally "paint" with a small piece of sponge soaked in WD40.

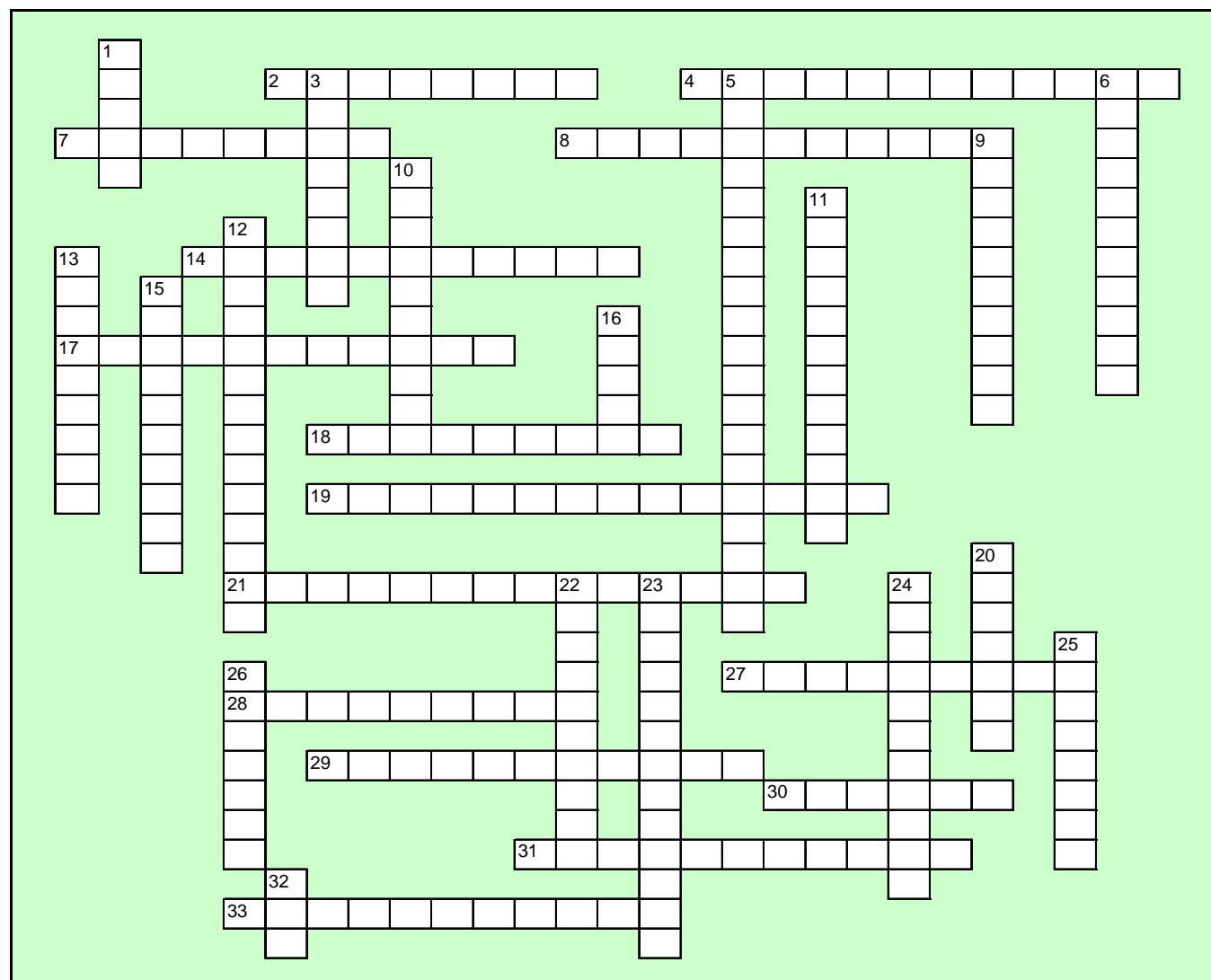
Another cloth is soaked in Scotoil and the chain is lubed by gripping the cloth around the chain and turning the rear wheel.

The clutch cable gets squirt of oil as does the gear linkages. Tyre pressures and engine oil and coolant checks complete the loving care.

Sid Corke



Crossword No 4 (Answers on Page 14)



Across

- 2 WSB's 'Nitro' (4)(4)
- 4 Belgian MX Champ (6)(6)
- 7 Suzuki's Falcon
- 8 Digit Warmers (6)(5)
- 14 Continent Crosser (3)(8)
- 17 Celebrities Mountain Apparel
- 18 Indian Kiwi (4)(5)
- 19 Euan's Companion (7)(7)
- 21 'Tankslapper' Suppressant (8)(6)
- 27 British Behemoth (6)(1)(1)(1)
- 28 Austrian Aristocracy (5)(4)
- 29 Mister '7' (5)(6)
- 30 Dominating 50's Classic
- 31 McQueen Flick (2)(3)(6)
- 33 Fuel Mixer

Down

- 1 Italian Headgear
- 3 Sabbath Broadsheet
- 5 Lo, Fast Street Machine (anag) (3)(4)(2)(3)(1)(1)(5)
- 6 Aussie Worldbeater (4)(7)
- 9 Showa's Bridge
- 10 Honda Security
- 11 Tuning Fork Cruiser (8)(4)
- 12 46 (9)(5)
- 13 Triumph's Dirtbike
- 15 600 Racing
- 16 Rejuvenated British Feline
- 20 Aerodynamic Shroud
- 22 Linked To Transmit (5)(5)
- 23 Italian MotoGP Star (5)(8)
- 24 BSB Champion Commentator (5)(6)
- 25 Watsonian Speciality
- 26 Portuguese Circuit
- 32 Hinkley Rodent (1)(1)(1)

Is it time to move on ? by Clive Taylor

Having been an ardent member of NAM since its inception I must say that I have always enjoyed the end of month rides organized by the club. This year however I have found it more difficult to become motivated. Why is this, I ask.

Well I am beginning to wonder if rides involving two or even three groups of 15 or so bikes are appropriate and safe any more. Many people consider riding in a large group a pretty daunting & dangerous affair and I'm bound to say I largely agree. Fixating on the rider in front, riding faster than is comfortable, dodgy overtakes and riding too close to the person in front. All these points are mentioned during the ride briefing but they still occur every time without fail.

Further more it seems to me pretty intimidating for some car drivers to be overtaken by hoards of bikes, one after the other even when carried out safely.

I'm also of the opinion that other drivers just don't like seeing loads of bikes making progress in a large group. Witness Mr. Audi on the last ride as we traveled towards Stanhope.

There was no way he was going to allow a bunch of bikes to impede his progress. So he chose to force his way along the group in a fairly big car on a narrow road in a fashion that could only be described as aggressive.

A long convoy of bikes quite close together does not give a car driver much of a gap to head for if he wants to overtake us. All he sees is a column of bikes a mile long and he is stuck at the back fuming with little opportunity to overtake safely

Whilst in no way scientific, I took a straw poll of a few other ride regulars and there does seem to be a fairly significant proportion that holds a similar view.

Is it time therefore to consider much smaller groups of maybe 4 or 6 riders ? Do we need to change the structure of the monthly rides or is the camaraderie of a large group part of the attraction.

How about considering one destination but half a dozen different start points to split things up. Or how about several destinations. Maybe more than one Sunday so there are fewer people out at the same time. Is this even practical? It's bad enough organizing the rides for a year as it is, never mind this complication.

The main purpose of our existence is to promote & encourage safe & advanced riding and train our associates accordingly. The social side of our club should be very much a second string activity – shouldn't it ?

Comment: Clive has a very valid point and the subject can open up several cans of worms. It's not only other road users that may be affected by a large group.....what about the new associate who comes along for the first time. It can be just as intimidating for him or her and may well be putting unnecessary pressure on them as they become 'absorbed and lost' within a large group. They may feel obliged to push themselves beyond their skill level. Whilst we have rules in place to deal with new Associates under such situations, unfortunately he/she can become 'lost' in the crowd and the rules go out of the window. I personally feel that one ride out a month is not enough and introducing additional runs may well take the pressure off and keep the numbers down to acceptable levels.

As Clive is now part of the Training Team I feel sure he will take whatever steps necessary to rectify this situation. Ed

A Whole New World...

By Louise Bennett

Sitting at the computer watching Ebay..... Just a few minutes to go and a nice looking bike is about to be sold. It seems too cheap to be true..... Maybe I'll not bother, the seller has a rating of zero..... but on the other hand he lives in Newcastle..... should I, shouldn't I?

Too late the auction has ended, and I cannot believe the price. Damn! I wish I had had a go for it! The best I can do is to contact the seller and ask if I can have second refusal (if the buyer fails to go through with the deal).

The next day at work my answer phone is flashing. Someone called Graham wanting to know if I am still interested in the Bandit.

Call me suspicious, but by now I'm thinking there has to be a button off.

The phone rings before I have a chance to get the details from the answering machine. "Hi, this is Graham..."

Today I am playing shopkeeper all day, so cannot get along to see the bike until after work. He offers to bring the bike over to the shop. It turns out he lives in Forest Hall.

At this point I am becoming even more suspicious! (Not because he lives in Forest Hall.)

Half an hour later the bike is standing outside the shop. It looks even better than it did in his Ebay pictures. (A lesson to be learned there.) It is in the Suzuki blues and white colour scheme.



Okay, I want it. But I am still suspicious. The bike is immaculate. Totally standard, one year old, 2500 miles on the clock. All the paperwork is there everything seems to be in order. So why is it only £2800? I tell Graham I need to 'think about it'. He has no problem with this.

A couple of hours later, and after a conversation with Clive Taylor, I have made a decision. I call Graham and say I'll have it, but subject to an HPI check. After all, there could be outstanding finance on a relatively new

machine.

At home, I log on to Ebay and enter the details, pay £6.99 and get the HPI. The bike is clean. So, there is no going back now.

Off to the building society to get the deposit, then over to Forest Hall. I was obviously not the only one to have emailed for second chance. Someone else had also been on the phone – but they live in Doncaster, so, no contest!

I ask if he will give me a pillion test ride. No problem. We spend the next fifteen minutes-or-so with me on the back. We stop in Annitsford fuel station and swap seats! This is very brave of him! It was nearly dark by the time he dropped me off home, and we had done about fifty miles.

By now I am fully convinced this is not a con.

Next day I go straight to the bank and get out the balance. Then call my insurance and pay the extra fee.

Later, Graham picks me up from the house and go to his. The deal is complete. I am the proud owner of a lovely one year old Suzuki Bandit 1200S.

The heavens open on the way home and bike and I get soaked. Pity, because it doesn't look like it has ever seen the rain before.

Later when the rain eased I went for a run. I realise that it is a little taller with only one-up! I cannot believe what I have been missing the past few years... I can see everything! This bike has a 'view'.

It also has a proper seat and decent bars and a useful screen that deflects the air really rather well.

I wish I hadn't just bought a luggage rack for the 'Blade. I should have got it for this instead.

So - just don't tell me it's an age thing!

Louise.

Answers to Crossword on Page 11

<u>Across</u>		<u>Down</u>	
2	Nori Haga	1	Nolan
4	Stefan Everts	3	Observer
7	Hayabusa	5	The Isle Of Man TT Races
8	Heated Grips	6	Troy Bayliss
14	Pan European	9	Suspension
17	Alpinestars	10	Smartwater
18	Burt Munro	11	Midnight Star
19	Charlie Boorman	12	Valentino Rossi
21	Steering Damper	13	Scrambler
27	Rocket III	15	Supersport
28	Super Duke	16	Tiger
29	Barry Sheene	20	Fairing
30	Norton	22	Drive Chain
31	On Any Sunday	23	Marco Melandri
33	Carburettor	24	James Witham
		25	Sidecars
		26	Estoril
		32	R.A.T.

Christmas Dinner Raffle 2006

The amount raised has not been finalised and will be published later. Listed below are the winners and the Companies who generously donated some outstanding prizes this year.

Prize No.	Description	Donated By	Ticket No.	Name
1	BSB Hospitality for 2	Scott Leathers	1228	Ken Matthewson
2	Track Day at Croft	M & S Motorcycles	1506	Shariam ****
3	Caterham 7 Experience, Croft	Croft Promosport Ltd	0474	Louise Bennett
4	1 x 4 Ball Golf -Ryton GC	Reg Vardy (Jaguar)	1111	Tony Sainter
5	Porsche Experience	Porsche Newcastle, Silverlink	1831	Simon Hadden
6	£60 Voucher	Ian Bell Motorcycles	1524	Dave Thornton
7	£50 Voucher	Fergusons,Blyth	0771	Clive Taylor
8	£25 Voucher	Mally's, Westgate Hill	1856	Pauline Flaherty
9	£25 Voucher	Mally's, Westgate Hill	0392	Paul
10	£20 Voucher	Border Bikes, Berwick	0545	Frank Allan
11	1 x 4 Ball Golf -Ryton GC	Reg Vardy (Jaguar)	0063	Don Fraser
12	Optimate Battery Charger	Newsham Motorcycles	1531	Clive Taylor
13	Rucksack	Custom Lids, Westgate Hill	0883	Kevin Wellden
14	Security Lock/Chain	Morpeth Motorcycles	0494	Graham Smith
15	Motorcycle Gloves	Hein Gericke	1852	Gary Stephenson
16	Motorcycle Gloves	Kawasaki Newcastle	1109	Robison
17	BMW Polo Shirt	Mill Garages	1175	Barry Reay
18	Mercedes Fleece Jacket	Ryecroft Garages	0884	Kevin Wellden
19	Motocross Jacket	BikeSport	1880	John Woodley
20	Motocross Trouser	BikeSport	1018	Kenny McDonald
21	Bike Video Tapes	Demon Bikes	0186	Les Hodgson
22	Mini Watch	Evans Hallshaw	1942	Ali Fawcett
23	Zippered Jumper	Boundary Mills	1638	Louise & Kev
24	Double Duvet Set	Boundary Mills	0764	A. Tomb
25	NADAL Collectors Figurine	Boundary Mills	1173	Barry Reay
26	Xmas Fleece Blanket	Boundary Mills	0744	Nill Davison
27	Set of Chinese Bowls	Boundary Mills	0641	D. Cook
28	Door Draught Excluder	Boundary Mills	0462	Ray Charlton
29	Pair of Blue Towels	Boundary Mills	0039	John Johnston
30	Picture - Child on Bike	Boundary Mills	0267	John Fagan
31	Shirt/Tie Set	Boundary Mills	1587	Debbie Polwarth
32	Simpsons Slippers & Golf Umbrella	Boundary Mills	1227	Ken Matthewson
33	Lady's Silk Scarf & Ingot Pendant	Boundary Mills	1585	Brenda Wellden
34	Meal from Two Persons	Salt & Pepper Café, Westgate Hill	1569	Louise Bennett
35	Meal for Two Persons	Paula, Hill Café, Westgate Hill.	0817	Malcolm Wilbraham
36	Pasta or Pizza Meal for two	Moulin Rouge Pizza, 24 Morton Rd, Ponteland	0400	Brett
37	Bottle of Whisky	Stuart Fawcett	1210	John Marshall

Numerous other minor prizes donated have been retained for the Monthly Raffles and will be listed later.

**** Alternative Non Biking prize accepted....Track Day to be auctioned at March meeting.

Funnies

To help you forget your everyday problems and read how others put their thoughts into words...These are genuine clips from council complaint letters.

- My bush is really overgrown round the front and my back passage has fungus growing in it.
- He's got this huge tool that vibrates the whole house and I just can't take it anymore.
- It's the dog's mess that I find hard to swallow.
- I want some repairs done to my cooker as it has backfired and burnt my knob off
- I wish to complain that my father hurt his ankle very badly when he put his foot in the hole in his back passage.
- And their 18 year old son is continually banging his balls against my fence.
- I wish to report that tiles are missing from the outside toilet roof. I think it was bad wind the other night that blew them off.
- My lavatory seat is cracked, where do I stand?
- Will you please send someone to mend the garden path. My wife tripped and fell on it yesterday and now she is pregnant.
- Request permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen.
- 50% of the walls are damp, 50% have crumbling plaster and 50% are plain filthy.
- I am still having problems with smoke in my new drawers
- The toilet is blocked and we cannot bath the children until it is cleared.
- Will you please send a man to look at my water, it is a funny colour and not fit to drink.
- I want to complain about the farmer across the road; every morning at 6am his cock wakes me up and its now getting too much for me.
- The man next door has a large erection in the back garden, which is unsightly and dangerous.
- Our kitchen floor is damp. We have two children and would like a third so please send someone round to do something about it.
- I am a single woman living in a downstairs flat and would you please do something about the noise made by the man on top of me every night.
- Please send a man with the right tool to finish the job and satisfy my wife.
- I have had the clerk of works down on the floor six times but I still have no satisfaction

Tips for New Riders by Ray Charlton

I have written many times on the System of Motorcycle Control but feel that it is such a wide ranging subject, there is always the opportunity to look at parts of it from a different angle that may provide a better understanding of its meaning.



Without a shadow of doubt, the first element, **INFORMATION**, is by far the most important section of the system as any failure to take in available information, will have a knock on effect on the other four elements.

Information is essential to allow you to create a plan to negotiate or deal with any hazard that may arise.

To obtain information, we need to use all of our senses of sight, sound and smell and be able to react to anything we identify in the process.

Your eyes are the main source of information and you need to develop the technique of looking as far ahead as possible, identifying any changes in direction of the road, traffic build ups, approaching traffic, junctions, traffic lights, round-a-bouts, traffic ahead, road signs, flashing indicators, cyclists, horses and riders, etc;etc; The list can be almost endless.

As well as distant observation, you should also be scanning mid distance and short distance, paying particular attention to the actions of any traffic you may be following, road surfaces, road markings, potholes, spillages etc: Again, the list goes on and on.

Peripheral or cross views can also give you essential information, such as seeing another vehicle approaching from the side to a crossroad or junction you are approaching can have an effect on your planning. Do you speed up to reach the hazard first, or slow down so that you do not arrive at the same point together?

Such a decision can play a major part in keeping you safe, even if it is something as simple as varying your position on the road to provide a safety margin between yourself and the other vehicle.

Equally important is rear observation. Modern motorcycle mirrors, particularly on big tourers are excellent and provide information about what is happening behind you.

However, no matter how good your mirrors are, they should always be supplemented by shoulder or head checks to cover the blind spots that your mirrors will inevitably not cover.

Perfect the technique of scanning what is around you, by distant, mid-range, short range, peripheral and rear observation, by doing so you will greatly reduce the risks you face.

Following this scan, if you take on board the information that is available you can then quickly assess, prioritise and plan the way you will deal with any hazard.

Use this information to choose the best position for you on the road to provide you with a safe passage, with the best available view and stability to keep you safe.

Changing position on the road is a reflection of your recognition of a possible danger and placing you in the safest position to deal with the hazard identified and by doing so you are 'giving' information to other road users.

Good observation will help you decide on which lane is most appropriate to you, or which road direction is yours, which vehicle is about to change lanes and so on.

Get into the habit of thinking you are riding in an imaginary safety cage and that you need a safe margin of space all around reducing the risks of contact with other vehicles.

Remember that the faster your speed, the bigger the safety cage needs to be and also ride within the range of your vision. Obviously if your view is obscured, reduce speed.

On approaching bends, look across the junction to get the best possible assessment of what lies ahead. A simple thing such as seeing the roof of a car over a hedge is useful in giving you the knowledge that you will meet this car at a given point. This immediately poses the question, "What effect could this car have on me?" "Do I need to take any evasive actions?"

As a matter of interest, if you think about it, the more of the side of the approaching vehicle you can see, the more acute the bend is. Similarly, if your view is predominately of the windscreen and front of the car then it is a more gentle bend.

Look out for hedges, tree lines, telegraph posts as they all provide clues as to which way the road is going and assist you judgement in planning how you will negotiate it.

If you can only see sky beyond an approaching the brow or blind crest then perhaps there is a steep hill just over it which requires a reduction in speed and possible gear.

Remember also that much information can be gleaned from roadside signs and markings and that more paint usually means more danger. I am thinking here of double white lines, hatched areas, **SLOW** markings, chevrons etc: They are all there for a reason, so heed them and respond accordingly.

Be very much aware of worn white lines in the middle of the road on a bend, it could mean oncoming traffic on your side of the road as they take the 'racing line.'

All of these points should be considered when assessing the severity of bends, allowing you to plan how to deal with it by being in the correct position of the road, travelling at the correct speed, in the right gear and still be in a position to stop within the range of your vision if necessary.

As I mentioned earlier the list of where and how you can draw information from is almost endless but is there for the taking if you focus your concentration on the task.

Moving on to your other senses, the obvious ones for **SOUND** are warnings on the horns, emergency vehicle sirens/klaxons etc:

SMELL could include the bikers peril, diesel spillages, which are usually found on roundabouts, service stations, transport depots, warehouses that receive large articulated vehicles and quite often country roads from poorly maintained farm tractors.

In a similar vein, the smell of horse manure, coupled with a fresh pile of steaming droppings usually means you can expect a horse and rider around the next bend.

Apply a bit of thought to your observation and realise just **how much INFORMATION** is available for you.

NAM MERCHANDISE

Contact : Louise Bennett for all items of merchandise

Equipment Badges	Self adhesive - attach to fairing	£1.00
Hats		£10.00
T Shirts	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Polo Shirt	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

Why men don't write to Agony Aunts by Ron Patrick

Dear Abby,

I've never written to you before, but I really need your advice on what could be a crucial decision.

I've suspected for some time now that my wife has been cheating on me.

The usual signs ... phone rings, but if I answer, the caller hangs up.
My wife has been going out with the girls a lot recently although when I ask their names she always says, "Just some friends from work, you don't know them."

I always stay awake to look out for her taxi coming home, but she always walks down the drive. Although I can hear a car driving off, as if she has got out of the car round the corner.

Why? Maybe she wasn't in a taxi?

I once picked her mobile phone up just to see what time it was. She went berserk and screamed that I should never touch her phone again and why was I checking up on her. Anyway, I have never approached the subject with my wife.

I think deep down I just didn't want to know the truth but last night she went out again and I decided to really check on her.

I decided I was going to park my 2006 Yamaha R1 motorcycle next to the garage and then hide behind it so I could get a good view of the whole street when she came home. It was at that moment, crouching behind my Yamaha R1, that I noticed that the valve covers on my engine seemed to be leaking a little oil.

Is this something I can fix myself or should I take it back to the dealer?

Safer Motoring by Clive Taylor

Since the New Year there have been a couple of news items suggesting that the driving (riding) test should be made more difficult to pass.

Since most learners are under 24 years and most accidents involve this age group the Driving Standards Agency have been charged with looking in to this possibility, it seems.

Now some folks know that I am not a great fan of this august body and its silly chief executive but surely here is an opportunity to make some worthwhile changes to the whole system rather than just the test.

Making the test more tricky to pass is ok I suppose as far as it goes but there are many people who either happen to be good at passing tests generally or can use established techniques to pass the test. Is this what we really want? I don't think so.



Surely much more rigorous training is what is needed to reduce death and injury on our roads. It is patently absurd to allow a driver to leave a test centre having just passed and ride home via the M25.

It is also madness to allow that same person to drive in the dark that night without ever having driven at night before. But this is what Her Majesty's Government considers acceptable preparation for driving today.

No, what is needed is a structured approach to training. Perhaps similar to the procedures used to train aircraft pilots (so I understand).

How about breaking all the elements of driving down into sections and requiring the learner to undertake a minimum number of hours practice on each element?

For example, something like this:

Basic maneuvering skills like slow, controlled driving, reversing, parking, without using reversing sensors. Correct use of gears and other controls. Say 4 hours.

Hazard perception, maybe a running commentary over a fixed period of time.

Cornering. 2 hours

City driving, 8 hours (because most accidents happen here).

Motorway driving, 4 hours

Night driving, 4 hours

A session on a skid pan

Country road driving, 8 hours.

Checking oil, water and tyres, 1 hour

The student might also maintain a log of each lesson and

the instructor should only sign off an element when the minimum number of hours are completed and he is satisfied that the student is competent at that element.

The log can then be presented to the driving examiner for review prior to taking the test.

Surely something like this would at least ensure that all aspects of driving can be practiced to a common standard.



I really can't see why such a system should be that difficult to organize. Sure, it is likely to cost more but worth the price, I feel.

Post Script.

Has anyone taken the computerized Hazard Perception Test recently ? I understand that there is a lot of disquiet surrounding this test especially if the "hazard" is picked up too soon. Is this true ? Does anyone know anything about this issue?

Comment: There has been a lot of criticism of the HPT as Clive has already highlighted. It is generally felt that most Advanced Drivers / Riders would fail the test as they would spot the hazard far too early and react sooner than the test likes.

This would be judged as a 'fail' by the computer program that runs it. There are several Web Sites about the HPT, but try looking at: -

<http://www.theorytestadvice.co.uk/TheTests/AboutHP/abouthp.html>

There is also a DVD available to buy and you will be quite shocked if you take the mock test as it bears little resemblance to the real world as known to Advanced riders.

Ray

- o0o -

Fraud Gangs Lure Drivers into Crashes

Drivers should be on their guard against organised criminals who deliberately cause crashes in a relatively new form of fraud.

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) said that it had become aware of a spate of 'accidents' in Yorkshire, especially between Leeds and Bradford, where gangs disconnect brake lights on their cars and 'slam on the brakes at roundabouts'

When the innocent driver goes into the back of the car, he or she is usually assumed to be the one at fault. The gang will attempt to claim from the victim's insurer. One way to reduce the risk of being caught in this way is to maintain a safe distance from the car ahead.

The ABI points out that all kinds of insurance fraud is costing the policyholders and adds about 5% to the premiums.

More Funnies courtesy of Jim Knowlton

Subject: Stars in their eyes

A young man walks onto the stage of Stars in their Eyes, on crutches, with a plaster cast from his feet to his hips.

Matthew Kelly Introduces him as Simon. **"It's very brave of you to come out here," says Matthew. "Please tell the audience what happened?"**

"Well" replies Simon "about a year ago, I was driving with my uncle when we had a really bad accident. Unfortunately my uncle was killed outright but I survived. I was trapped in the car for six hours before I was eventually cut free."

'The doctors had me in surgery for 12 hours but they couldn't save my legs.'

"That's terrible. But I see you have legs now. Are they artificial?" asks Matthew.

"No Matthew, while I was in hospital the doctors informed me that my uncle had in fact died, but that his legs were fine and with all the advances in medical science, they could graft the bottom half of his body onto mine. As you can see the operation was successful. I have been having physiotherapy for six months and hope to be walking fully again by the end of the year".

A huge round of applause erupts from the audience.

Kelly responds with: **"That's an unbelievable story. So tonight, who are you going to be?"**

"Tonight, Matthew, I am going to be Simon and Half-uncle".

- o0o -

One for the Jock's !!!!!

Two Scots, Archie and Jock, are sitting in the pub discussing Jock's forthcoming wedding.....

"Ach, it's all going grand," says Jock. "I've got everything organised already: the flowers, the church, the cars, the reception, the rings, the minister, even ma stag night..."

Archie nods approvingly. **"Heavens, I've even bought a kilt to be married in!"** continues Jock. **"A kilt?"** exclaims Archie, **"That's braw, you'll look pure smart in that!"**

"And what's the tartan?" Archie then enquires.

"Och," says Jock, **"I'd imagine she'll be in white..."**

NAM 2007 Auction!

In order to raise funds for NAM and our chosen charity, we are holding an auction at our May 2007 meeting.

Sort out all of that unwanted or out-grown kit or any unwanted Christmas presents.

If you have anything you would like to donate then please let Louise know. (We can bring the truck to your house to collect any large items or quantities of smaller pieces!)

If an item is donated, then 100% of the winning bid will be kept as club funds/G.N.A.A. If you have other items that you wish to sell, please, let us sell it for you on commission.

Sellers will be charged only 15% of the price achieved; the rest of the money is yours.

We hope to beg a few surprise lots as well as items donated by several shops on 'The Hill'.

Above all, we want to make it a fun event and hope that you will all support it.

NAM buyers will be charged a commission of 10%, any non-members will be charged 15%, or cough up the membership fee on the night!

In order to catalogue all of the lots, and organise a decent viewing period, it is important that we get the items in before the end of March.

We will consider anything – so don't worry if it is not fully bike related.

Call Louise on 07951 035038 or 0191 2843946.

- o0o -

Observers Please Note – Meeting Dates

- New Observers meeting on Sunday 4th March 2007. 09.30 at Etal Lane Police Station. Anyone fancying the job is invited to attend.
- Observers training meeting on Sunday 11th March 2007. 09.30 at Etal Lane Police Station.
- Note that New observers can attend the observers meeting and visa versa.
- Female Training Days with Durham Constabulary on 18th April, 23rd May, 27th June & 12th September 2007 Details from Alison Bonnar at Aykley Heads Police Station.

Regards

Clive (Training Group)

TURKEY [with all the trimmings]

(An attempt to circumnavigate Turkey in 16 days in summer 2006
by Carole & Alan Kibble riding hired BMW R1200GS bikes) See Map of Turkey.

Surfing the net can be a dangerous pastime! We had already booked a tour of Morocco as our biking exotica for 2006 but when I came across a website in December 2005 advertising a tour of Mystical Eastern Turkey I could not resist the challenge. Turkey is a country that has always fascinated me ever since I lived and worked there for eight years in the Seventies....but to tour it on unfamiliar motorbikes? A minor detail was that we were both riding Honda bikes quite happily whereas this tour offered the hire of BMW enduro style machines. Time for a change of brain chip and after a couple of hours' test ride on BMW R 1200 GSs from Mill Garages we were both smiling...a lot!!

I managed to pick up a cancellation on the BMW Off Road course in South Wales and went there in April 2006. Under the brilliant tuition of Simon Pavey of Dakar fame gave the 1200 GS a real workout....a worthwhile experience in itself.

So it was that on the 3 August 2006, having flown into Istanbul the day before and packed up the bikes we crept out of the city at dawn on the hired BMW 1200s laden with luggage and with the haunting call to prayer ringing in our ears. Across the ancient Galata Bridge which spans the Golden Horn and a short while later onto the high suspension bridge which took us over the Bosphorus Strait and from Europe into Asia.



I should point out at this stage that apart from the machines and a road book including a list of pre-booked hotels we were very much on our own as no-one else had booked onto this tour so therefore no leader...we were now 'a self-guided tour' which meant I was the 'leader' and Alan was 'back-up'!! Our trepidation was only slightly lessened by the fact that at least I am fluent in Turkish.



On our first day on two wheels the road book indicated we were to cover 750 km the first 450 km of which were almost empty motorway, prefaced by a toll. This took us deep into the heart of Turkey to Anatolia, over a plateau at roughly 1000m altitude to an area known as Cappadocia. Its lunar landscapes consist of volcanic tuft that has been sculpted over millennia into fantastic shapes by water and erosion and in every hue from gleaming white to terracotta. The tuft is riddled with numerous cave dwellings and underground churches, even our hotel was hollowed from this soft tuft and provided a unique stopover.

We had arrived just before sunset which in Turkey in August is about 20.00. and realised the first advantage of having a savvy tour leader is that they know where the hotel is!!

So was developed the 'taxi' method which involved me going up to the nearest taxi (fortunately they are all bright yellow and fares are regulated by their local authority) and asking them to lead us to the hotel 'on the meter' whereupon they set off at breakneck speed and we had to follow! At the destination we paid the metered fare. Simple. Sorted. Only problem is it didn't really work in reverse as we often left at dawn slipping out of towns at first light when there wasn't much traffic in order to benefit from the cool of the day.

By 9 am the temperature would be 40 C plus which was not bad whilst riding but pretty damned hot once stopped for petrol or whatever. Petrol stations are sited every 50 km and mostly had attached amenities that were clean. Their small restaurants often had freshly cooked local/regional food very reasonably priced which offset the price of petrol which was roughly the same price as UK, very surprisingly as it always used to be much cheaper.



We had toured Cappadocia on the ground fairly extensively

before so we decided to treat ourselves to a flight in a hot-air balloon. Flights take place at dawn and last an hour or so. Views are unforgettable and it's a magical experience. Then back to the saddle and a 572 km ride up to the Black Sea coast on a panoramic road with breathtaking scenery over some of the highest passes in the Pontic Mountains. It was quite testing because the setting sun was right in our eyes and there were cows and their owners wandering about on the road. Again we arrived in the dark.



Once on the 3-lane carriageway Coastal road it was marvelous to have the deep blue of the Black Sea on our left all the way to Hopa, near to the border with Georgia. The steep hills to our right were covered with lush trees, not surprisingly this temperate region is famous for its hazel nuts, tea and tobacco. The only downside was the too oft sightings of dust clouds in the distance which heralded the onset of a 20 km roadwork's section. There is a massive road building programme in Turkey and we experienced it first hand several times seeing the constructions of motorways, huge tunnels, dams and bridges. We were often on

'washboard' surface or foot deep gravel which reduces average speed somewhat but the bikes coped with everything thrown at them.



Leaving the Black Sea coast we turned right at Hopa into a National Park. The region of the Savsat Pass is rich in the ruins of ancient Georgian cities and the landscape is alpine till we reached the high plateau of Asia ending our day's ride at remote Kars, a fortress of the Turkish Russian frontier. The roads were excellent because it is a military zone but soldiers we encountered were more interested in the bikes than our documents!

FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE TRIP

Route covered:

Istanbul to Urgup (760 km) Urgup to Fatsa (572 km) Fatsa to Rize (381 km)]Rize to Kars (333 km)

Kars to Dogubeyazit (180 km) Dogubeyazit to Mardin (608 km) **TOTAL: 2834 km**

Summary facts

Borders with Turkey traversed: Georgia, Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria

Waterways, Rivers and Seas seen:

Marmaris, Bosphorus Strait, Golden Horn, Black Sea, Rivers Coruh, Euphrates and Tigris, Lake Van (3750 sq. km and extremely caustic!)

Fluffy white Van cats have one yellow eye and one blue eye and are said to be able to swim well. Lake Van has a monster as ethereal as Nessie that does wonders for tourism.

Mountain Passes: with heights in metres

Yassibel Pass (1570 m), Kuskayasi Pass (2000 m), Kurbaglibel Pass (1800 m) Karabayir Pass (1925 m) Harchbeli Pass (1950 m) Gurguntepe Pass (1275 m) over the Pontic Mountain range, Scurucu Pass (1000 m) over Karcil Mountains, Cankurturan Pass (690 m) Shavshat Pass (1000 m) Cham Pass (2640 m) over the Lonely Pine Mountains Tendurek Pass (2644 m) on the high Asian plateau, Gonderme Pass (1600 m)

Spectacular sights:

Cappadocia: geological/ pre-dawn hot air balloon ride

Isak Pasa Palace: historical (35 km from Iranian border)

Mount Ararat (5137 m)

To be Continued



Christmas Dinner 2006

Saturday, 16th December



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
Wednesday, 28th February 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: 07956 618965



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