



Newsletter May 2017



On Sunday June 4th CWAM is holding its **Open Day** when we open our doors to the World, encourage others to join us in safe, progressive riding and discover all the social benefits CWAM has to offer. As usual the event is at Shilton Village Hall where, noses will be twitching and taste buds tingling in anticipation as the aroma of sizzling bacon sarnies hangs on the sun-kissed breeze. The hall will be bubbling with activity as eager, would-be-CWAMs are briefed and debriefed whilst the car park will be buzzing with satisfied riders. Everyone is welcome to drop in for a cuppa and to lend their support to this important event.

There is no substitute for personal recommendation so please encourage your motorcycling friends and family to book a slot with



one of our crack team of highly talented and friendly observers via membership secretary Mark Ford at information@cwam.org.uk or on **07765 663514**. Don't forget to tell them that until June 30th, IAM RoadSmart are offering a 10% discount on the usual £149 cost of an Advanced Rider Course and CWAM is still offering a generous 50% discount to riders 30 years old and under. Look out for more details nearer the time on our [Facebook](#) page.

April Club Night

Club Nights continue to be very popular and Ryan opened proceedings to a full house. With quite a bit of enthusiastic handshaking, Ian Collard presented Sagar Depalar with his test pass certificate.



Whilst there is undoubtedly much to celebrate, just enough restraint to enable the photographer to take at least one picture where the quickness of the hand doesn't defeat the lens is something to aim for in future.

Jim Sampson treated us to a session of 'What should happen next' using a series of his own videos shot on local roads. He invited us to use our powers of observation and general roadcraft to make suggestions on what the rider should do next, as his deft assistant Ryan paused the action at crucial moments. This successful format resulted in some informed audience participation and a few collective ahhs, ooohs and intakes of breath at appropriate moments.

After the break Andrew Freeman from the [Moto Gymkhana Association](#) gave us a lively and well illustrated introduction to Moto Gym. In the most basic terms, it is the art of negotiating a compact and intricate course in the minimum amount of time. It is promoted as the most fun you can have on a motorbike. With quite a few videos illustrating superb biking skills verging on circus trickery, Andrew stressed that bikes are generally more



capable than their riders. It's all about accurate control, bursts of speed, ruthless braking and a good memory for learning the course. As with all things, success only comes with practise and by good fortune Andrew runs coaching sessions within easy reach at Donnington. There's a short example here https://youtu.be/c5erdy08i_s - where, just to add a degree of difficulty, it was run on a wet surface. Next time you do a U turn or negotiate a tight corner, just think how much better and with how much more confidence you could be with some Moto Gym experience under your belt.



Another good Club Night, thanks to all concerned. Next month (May 17th) the main speaker is Sean Hayes from [Circuit Based Training](#).

Super Sausage Rideout

Roger Barratt writes - Despite the poor weather forecast the sun shone on sixteen of us as we made our way across country to the Super Sausage Cafe on the A5 south of Towcester. The roads were blissfully free of traffic and rewarded us with some great scenery and plenty of dry (if slightly bumpy) tarmac.

The Sausage was voted Britain's Best Cafe in 2016 and although busy it certainly didn't disappoint and we were soon fed and tea'd up for a return leg, back up round the



north east of Towcester to gradually bring us back on the popular Welsh Road home. Maps of the route are available on the news page [here](#).

Congratulations to

Darryl Flecher

who gained his **Masters with Distinction**

and to

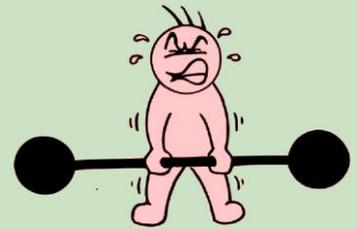
Steve Broomfield and Chris Allen

who recently passed their advanced tests.

Clutch matters

My Tracer is an admirable machine with two exceptions, neither of which I was warned about by either the biking press or 'informed' CWAMs, not that I bear a grudge. Firstly, it has only to see a puddle to become caked in a thick layer of gunk which invades cavities that a practising dentist would be hard pressed to find and, to add insult to injury, it encrusts the back of my trouser legs. Truly, it makes a pig look amateurish when it comes to producing muck. Having fitted an extenda fender to alleviate the hammering the radiator grill was taking and a larger rear hugger, I am hoping this irritating problem, if not solved, will be minimised. Of course, it hasn't rained since so who knows? Probably best to keep the pressure washer on standby.

Secondly, being a puny, sand-kicked-in-my-face weakling, I find the clutch incredibly heavy, so much so that, after some months of riding, my left bicep (such as it is) and shoulder feel as if they've endured a particularly strenuous session with Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition. I've adjusted the cable so that the lever has minimum travel before it engages and doesn't require a hand the size of a silverback gorilla's to reach it. I've moved the handlebars in an attempt to find the most comfortable position. Another option I've been toying with is clutchless gear changing. Looking on the web, the message is, as usual, mixed. Views range from *you'll wreck your gearbox and why do manufacturers give you a clutch if not to use it*, to, *I've done it on all my bikes for the last 50 years, it's smoother and faster*. I know should only be attempted when changing up and not in 1st or 2nd gear but after giving it a whirl I'm not totally convinced. Any advice on easing the aching arms of a muscularly challenged rider would be most welcome.



If you're thinking of getting a Tracer, don't let me put you off, it's a fantastic bike, tremendous fun to ride, beautifully balanced with a fine engine and great value; it's this narrow shouldered runt of a rider with an aversion to valeting that's deficient.

Rugby Bikefest

As their website lyrically states, 'Rugby town centre will echo to the sound of motorbikes and music on Sunday 21 May as the 'Rugby Bikefest' roars into town. The festival organised by Rugby First and Rugby Borough Council, in conjunction with local motorcycling groups, businesses and St. Andrew's Church, will take place between 10.00am and 4pm, and is sure to have you firing on all cylinders!' Not only are CWAM supplying six outriders to assist with the massride-in, we will have our gazebo set up in the middle of things, with



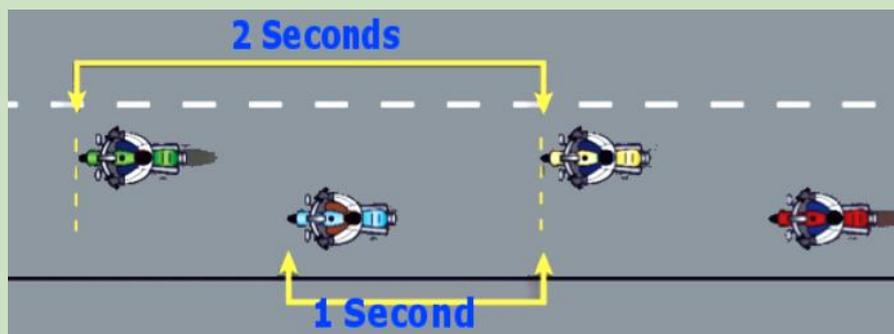
our crack team of recruiters urging the uninitiated to embrace safer, progressive biking and join us. All members are welcome to pop along, give a cheery wave and lend their support. Details [here](#).

The Art of Social Riding

Enjoyable and safe riding in a group calls for slightly different techniques and the first Sunday in April saw a good turn out for CWAM's session on the *Art of Social Riding*. Over a cuppa, Social Ride Coordinator Trevor Smith led the discussion covering the dos and don'ts and riding etiquette. A pleasant rideout in the morning sun saw us performing staggered riding and attempting best practise. Unfortunately too many of us were concentrating on the group riding aspect at the expense of our roadcraft much to the chagrin of tailman Andy Spenser. A useful learning point; never become too focused on any one aspect of riding. The subsequent debrief saw most people contributing and the general opinion was that we had enjoyed a successful and valuable morning. I've summarised the outcomes below and for simplification have split the responsibilities into those of the leader and riders.

Riders

- Arrive at the departure point with a full tank of petrol and in good time for the briefing.
- Associates and slower riders should take positions immediately behind the leader so the pace can be adjusted to suit them.
- If associates wish to treat the ride as a check ride they should identify themselves during the Leader's briefing and they will be allocated an observer if one is available.
- Faster riders should take positions towards the rear of the pack where they will possibly have a more stimulating ride.
- It is important to know which bikes are ahead and behind you so any 'foreign' bikers from outside the group don't mislead or confuse you.
- At slower speeds where 'positioning for view' is unnecessary, close up and adopt a compact, staggered formation. As well as looking professional, this prevents the group being split in disparate groups by other road users.
- When in staggered formation, the rider immediately behind the leader should always adopt the inside position. This enables the rest of the group to maintain a constant position. Except at walking pace speeds, maintain a two second gap between you and the rider directly in front and a one second gap between you and the staggered rider in front. See diagram below.



- As the pace builds outside restrictive speed limits you will want to switch from the staggered formation to a position for a view ahead. The 2 second rule still applies and is quite sufficient. Longer gaps are excessive, stretching the line too far and possibly tempting other traffic to split the group.

For reference the table shows the distance required for 1 and 2 second gaps. By lucky coincidence your mph speed is the same as the 2 second distance. So easy.

Speed	1 second gap	2 second gap
30	15 yards	30 yards
40	20 yards	40 yards
50	25 yards	50 yards
60	30 yards	60 yards
70	35 yards	70 yards

- If a larger gap is generated between you and the bike in front try to catch up but do not take undue risks or ride dangerously.
- In wet/adverse conditions riders will adjust the gap accordingly.
- At junctions or queues of traffic all bikes should close the gap and stop two abreast without blocking the view of the person beside you. The bike you pull up next to must always be allowed to move off first.
- Do not feel pressured, plan your own overtakes, assess the manoeuvre and do not blindly follow the person in front.
- Make sure there is sufficient space to slot into after your overtake and maintain your speed to give riders behind space to complete their own overtakes.
- Do not overtake within the group. It is a non-productive exercise; we are not in competition with each other.
- If we turn off at a junction, roundabout or similar, and you cannot see the rider behind you, wait near the junction in a SAFE and VISIBLE position until he/she comes into view and can be seen to be taking the correct route. Failure to do this results in lost riders.
- If you wish to leave the group early please make sure that the tail-person or leader knows your intention.

Leaders

- Ensure you are familiar with the route.
- Introduce yourself, the tail-person and give a brief description of route, stop offs, fuelling points and finishing point. Inform the group about possible hazards
- Ensure all points detailed in the *CWAM Briefing Notes* are articulated during the briefing.
- Approaching speed restrictions, reduce your speed early and over a longer distance to enable those behind to close up. Similarly, increase speed gradually as you exit speed limits to avoid creating gaps.
- Pay attention to slower riders behind and adjust your speed to suit their abilities so they ride within their comfort zone.

Welcome to new members

Caroline Ash, Andy Killick & Andy Johnson

who recently joined us.

Other biking events

- Two weeks of motorcycling thrills and probably spills begins on May 27 at IoM TT. The 2017 promo clip is [here](#).

- If you fancy a trip to the coast; and who doesn't want to spend most of Bank Holiday Monday inhaling the noxious exhausts of frustrated traffic-jammed motorists on the A21; details of Britain's biggest free-to-attend motorcycle festival in Hastings are [here](#). (May 1st)



- Slightly closer to home The Motorcycle News Festival is at the East of England Arena just east of Peterborough on May 13/14. Details [here](#).

Feet are really useful

Feet are really useful but being made up of a complex network of bones, ligaments, thin skin and blood vessels; they need to be protected from crushing, impact and being liquidised into a bloody pulp if they are scraped along the road at high speed. A large number of crashes involving motorcycles result in injuries below the knee which can be exacerbated by wearing inappropriate soft footwear or boots that have been torn off during the acrobatics that so often follow an accident. The Highway Code simply recommends 'strong boots' for motorcyclists but it makes better sense to wear purpose built motorcycling boots. Apart from being comfortable to walk in, they should have ankle protection, resist crushing and stay on in a high energy impact. Andrew Dalton from White Dalton Solicitors says that not wearing 'strong boots' could be viewed as contributory negligence, leaving you vulnerable to having any damages reduced. It is common for courts to reduce payments by 10% for unbuckled helmets; there is no reason why similar action shouldn't be pursued for inappropriate footwear. I know I'm preaching to the converted because I have never seen a CWAM in flip flops but with Summer approaching, a quick pop down to the shops is not an excuse to dress unsuitably no matter how tempting because it is sure to be the one trip you will live to regret. Feet are really useful, take care of them. *(Thanks to BIKE magazine for providing much of the information)*



Fantasy League



Despite major eye surgery and giving a fair imitation of Nelson, every one of Barratt's Bees Knees team is expected to do their duty. Having their sights firmly set on victory has certainly taken the wind out of the sails of the other teams. I have been too busy to make team changes during the last fortnight which is my excuse for lagging behind but Daffern's Gringossteer has answered the editor's taunts by sneakily catching Mark Ford's Wheely Tyred team half asleep and slipping into second place. Further down the field, Scooter Boyz Vince Price would be well advised to spend some of the £2,200,000 he has tucked under his mattress.

As usual the latest news from IAM RoadSmart is [here](#) but sadly no news on 'Fellow Membership' yet. On the brighter side, the official line on *designing roads to save motorcyclists lives* is [here](#). It's a bit of a wish list but it sets a base line. The party line on a load of other topics (from speed limits to smart motorways, from speed cameras to intelligent speed adaptation) can be found on their policy & research page [here](#).

CWAM Events in May

Sun	May 7	Social Ride Out	McDonald's, Arlington Business Park, Tile Hill Lane. CV4 9BJ (off A45 Canley) Times tba	Associates & Full Members	Ludlow - Return visit to the picturesque Shropshire town with its historical castle, market, and more often than not, motorcyclists.	John Chivers
Sun	May 14	CWAM Club Sunday	Jaguar Sports & Social Club Fenton Road CV5 9DR Starts 09:00	Associates & Members	Not just for Check Rides but a chance for all CWAMs to get together, socialise and go for an informal ride out.	Ian Collard
Wed	May 17	Club Social Night	Jaguar Sports & Social Club Fenton Road CV5 9DR Open 19:30 start 20:00	Everybody & guests	Our main speaker tonight is Sean Hayes from Circuit Based Training	Ryan Howat
Thurs	May 18	Committee Meeting	Shilton Village Hall, Wood Lane, CV7 9JZ	Committee members	Start 20:00	Roger Barratt
Sun	May 21	Police Instructor Assessment	Sessions must be pre booked. Meeting place tba to attendees.	Fully Booked	This is an on-road session with Jim Sampson. Book through Paul Lewis .	Paul Lewis
Sun	May 21	Rugby Bike Fest	Town Centre Rugby 10:00 - 16:00	ALL	CWAM will be supporting the Rugby Bike Fest and manning the CWAM stand, encouraging and recruiting new members. (see item above)	Roger Barratt
Thurs	May 25	Observer Training	Shilton Village Hall, Wood Lane, CV7 9JZ Starts 19:30	Trainee Observers & mentors	Roadcraft Examination	Ian Collard
Sun	May 28	CWAM Club Sunday	Jaguar Sports & Social Club Fenton Road CV5 9DR Starts 09:00	Associates & Members	Not just for Check Rides but a chance for all CWAMs to get together, socialise and go for an informal ride out.	Ian Collard

For all future events check out the [Diary page](#).

If anyone has news to share, tips to pass on, pictures for the gallery or items for sale please mail me (webadmin@cwam.org.uk).



Your website - your news - your contributions!