

RIDERS

... magazine of the KAMG



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Tarron Mackenzie and Tommy Bridewell at Paddock Bend in BSB final meeting of 2021. Picture by Paul Aspinall



Big, shiny and crude – nothing changes (see page 13)



Peterborough cathedral – why? (See page 28)



Nick Farley, Editor

The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are solely the views and opinions of the people who write the articles, and those views and opinions should never be taken as, nor be presumed to be, the official view of, nor views supported by, either IAM RoadSmart or the KAMG.

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Everything is done to ensure the correctness and accuracy of the editorial content of the magazine, but neither the editor nor the KAMG accepts liability for information errors, omissions or typesetting errors.

Riders is the place for every single member, or associate member, of KAMG to say what he/she thinks about anything and everything connected with riding and driving and the KAMG. Every article submitted will be published (provided it is legal) and no opinions or views will be changed or cut out. The magazine is apolitical, but criticism or praise of politicians of any political colour is welcome if the criticism, or praise, is about the politician's actions or views on road safety, roads or some other aspect of transport.

Please submit articles for publication, or letters to the editor, to the email address of the editor (see page 30). Please send pictures for publication as separate file attachments to an email if possible, rather than embedding them in the email content, and ensure that the pictures are of the highest resolution possible. Please do not send information or pictures via Facebook.

MAGAZINE DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY JOHN GARDINER

EDITORIAL

e.scooters

You may not believe this, but it's true: there is a bloke employed by Transport for London (TfL) whose job title is 'Head of Insights and Development'. I know, I know... Just imagine getting up in the morning and going to work to spend a whole day being responsible for insights. And as he is the *Head* of insightfulness, I presume there is a whole team of junior people under him who are aspiring to be as insightful as he is. I wonder what it all costs? How do meaningless jobs like this get created, and what kind of brain-challenged person applies for them? Who conducts the job interview and what questions do they ask? The only certain thing is that we are paying for this stupidity and it's a waste of money.

This bloke, whose name is Stuart Reid, and another flake called Mary Williams, who is the CEO of the charity Brake (Google it), appeared on a BBC Radio 4 programme with Neil Greig from the IAM, to discuss the Vision Zero thing (that means achieving zero road deaths in this country by 2050), and I did feel sorry for Neil Greig being locked in a studio with these two.* But the question I ask of the insightful Mr Reid is – how much bloody insight do you need in order to see that allowing e.scooters on any roads, anywhere, let alone on the roads of London, is lunacy? Yet that is exactly what TfL has done, on the grounds that it is “a key part of the city's sustainable future and pandemic recovery.” What a lot of tosh.

If Mr Reid can crank up his highly developed and very senior insight to work at maximum thrust, he will be able to see – as all the rest of us ordinary types can see in a split second – that allowing thousands of untrained, untested people to career around London on electric scooters is not going to help his Zero deaths cause, and then, having seen it, could he please pass that insight on to the rest of TfL. (I don't think SMART motorways are going to help the Vision Zero cause either.)

At the moment only specially licensed and insured scooters from hire companies are allowed to be used legally, but anybody who has walked around London knows that there are already plenty of private scooters being used illegally. Halfords advertise them on TV and sell hundreds; where do the 'authorities' think those are being used? The Department for Transport says that 484 people were injured in e.scooter accidents last year, over 100 were seriously injured. Two people died in e.scooter accidents in London in July this year. A Chief Superintendent in the Met's Roads and Transport Policing Command has said that they are “absolute death traps”, and the Met apparently took 800 off the streets last year.

Politicians are notoriously bad at making decisions, instead they prefer to take the 'extended trial', the 'Royal Commission' or the 'Public Inquiry' routes to delaying a decision or passing it on to someone else; and that's exactly what they have done with e.scooters. There are now 40 towns and cities operating e.scooter trials, when anyone with a bit of novice-grade insight could tell them, without a trial, that they are dangerous and that before people ride on the roads they need to have passed a test; they need to be insured; and they need to be visible and identifiable.

We can't un-invent e.scooters and they will certainly become very popular, what's more my insight tells me that e.skateboards and e.unicycles are on their way from New York too. This is a big issue, which needs new legislation and it needs it now. I wonder if Mr Reid has noticed?

* You can listen to the Radio 4 programme here: www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000yknw - but I don't recommend it.

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

This is the last report for 2021 and I would be lying if I said that I won't be glad to see the back of this year; it has been a difficult last few months dealing with KAMG issues that I had never dreamed of.

It was a slow start to the year with Covid still among us, and it left us unsure of how far to push our riding boundaries. I was hoping for a swift kick up the rear to get this year going with all our wonderful events and fixtures, but alas we still have some red tape to deal with. The trips, ride-outs and training rides that we have managed to complete, have been refreshing and remind us of what it is all about – riding our bikes safely.

I have made the decision to step down from chair at the AGM in March after taking over from Ian Burchell mid-term this year. I appeal to the whole membership to step up to the plate and offer some help to running KAMG.

(See page 6) If you are happy with how things have been run in the past, then it's time to speak out and say so. If you want big changes, then be prepared to action them. The KAMG committee have given, and always will give, support to any member who wishes to give up time to be actively involved in helping to run the group.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for the amazing time I have had as chairperson and hope that I have done justice to my predecessors, for whom I have the greatest respect, and I wish you all happy, safe riding and all the very best for the future.

Finally, I shall be working with IAM RoadSmart at 'Motorcycle Live 2021' at the NEC in Birmingham in December, so please come and say 'Hi' if you attend, it is always good to see a familiar face.

Tina Underwood



FOR THE RIDE

- . New and used bike sales in store and online delivery available
- . Demonstrators available
- . Motorcycle servicing
- . Motorcycle MOT testing station
- . Motorcycle parts and accessories
- . Motorcycle clothing

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YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!



I quite often hear the comment, "what does the committee do?" or more worryingly, "it's a clique, no-one can get a look in". Well, actually nothing could be further from the truth and rather than being an insular group we are constantly looking for good people to get involved and become the Group's leaders.

It is perhaps not always obvious but there are constantly a number of events being organised and run by the committee ranging from booking speakers for group nights to organising machine control days, IDCAMS, ride-outs, joint events with the IAM, or with the Kent Fire and Rescue Service, plus social holiday trips, and this is all in addition to the huge amount of training activity, which never stops and has to be organised and administered (see page 24). However, the last couple of years have been tough and many of our planned events have had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, many of you have stepped up to help out, and have got involved and tried to do something for the benefit of us all. That's what makes KAMG such a great group.

The IAM and KAMG guidelines dictate that all office holders should stand for re-election every three years: however, the KAMG committee members choose to stand for re-election every year in order to try and encourage others to come forward and take over. Next year, after a number of years in the roles of Chair and Secretary, Tina Underwood and I will both be standing down and not seeking re-election as we both believe it's time to bring some fresh thinking into the committee.

Therefore, we are looking for candidates to become Chair and Group Secretary for the year commencing April 2022, and we hope to attract volunteers to shadow us for the next few months in preparation for taking over the roles in April. Then, after the formal handover, both Tina and I will be on hand, if required, to give any help and advice to the new incumbents. Please consider too, some of the other roles on the committee if you feel you could make a contribution. Give either me or Tina a call if you want to have a chat about any of the roles and we'll be happy to meet for a coffee and answer any questions you might have and outline what the time requirements of the roles entail.

Under the Group Guidelines of the IAM the three roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are required to be filled, and all three officers automatically become trustees of the KAMG registered charity.

Chair

The Chair is obviously an important role and heads the committee to ensure that the Group is run in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Charities Commission and the IAM RoadSmart Rules for groups. The Chair is in overall control of all the activities of the Group and is responsible for maintaining contact with other IAM Groups and

attending IAM meetings as and when required.

The Chair provides support for all committee members, group members and associates and advises on strategy and standards. More importantly the Chair is the visible head of the Group. The Chair also liaises with outside groups such as KFRS, Kent Police, Brands Hatch etc., to promote the Group and to secure its position at events run in conjunction with them.

Ultimately, the Chair has overall responsibility for the smooth running and development of the Group and for ensuring its growth and continued success.

Secretary

The Secretary provides the administrative link between the Group and IAM RoadSmart and the general public. He/she keeps all the official records for the Group and is responsible for organising and conducting the AGM. The secretary is there to support the Chair and committee members where required and to provide advice on issues of governance and IAM group guidelines.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is required to maintain the accounting records of the Group, which are prepared on a calendar year basis with a monthly summary submitted to the committee. Membership fees make up the majority of the income and are mainly received during March and April each year after the subscription renewals are sent out. New member subscriptions are received at various times direct from the IAM. The Treasurer is responsible for payment of all the expenses incurred on behalf of the Group throughout the year.

We need new faces to take on some of the work of running the KAMG, so please consider whether you could help.

Joe Mair
KAMG Group Secretary

TEST PASSES

Since the last edition

A warm welcome to the Group's new members and existing ones



Gary Hallett receiving his Advanced Rider qualification from Roger Lancaster



Matthew Pounds receiving his Masters qualification from his mentor Steve Riches



Niels Reynolds receiving his Advanced Rider FIRST qualification from Ian Walker



Jeffrey Colpus receiving his Advanced Rider qualification from Tina Underwood

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

April 30th, May 1st, May 2nd, KAMG Rutland Water tour.

Peterborough Training Weekend 7th and 8th May

May 28th Vianden tour – this trip is fully booked for 2022, but it will run in 2023. Book now!

October 1st and 2nd, Peterborough Training Weekend

October 15th and 16th, two-day KAMG 'Ride to the East' tour of East Anglia

There will also be new dates for Machine Control Days and IDCAMS to be announced – check on Tracker

To book for these events please go to Tracker or contact the organiser who will be shown on Tracker.

On all KAMG trips, participants must book and pay for their own accommodation and ferries.

BIG Z GETS DRESSED

Kawasaki

Martin Brown gets some fantastic plastic and sees the end (he hopes) of mechanical woes

Big Z is back on course. You will recall that in the last episode, my ZRX 1100 restoration was limping from disaster to catastrophe, mostly due to my impatience and over enthusiastic use of power tools. I am pleased to report that this instalment contains no such mishaps and no injuries either to the bike or to me. The replacement head that I had to buy (grr), is now on. The new exhaust is on. The front wheel with its new correct size discs and refurbished brake calipers – all on. The engine runs nicely, although it does really need a good run to sort it out properly. The new exhaust sounds nice and rorty, but not too loud to be offensive. Things are looking up.

The really good news though, is that my paint is back. 'Pauls One Off Customs', in West Kingsdown next to Brands Hatch (www.paulsoneoffcustoms.co.uk), knocked it out of the park again. Newly painted tank, side panels, tail fairing and headlight cowl are all resplendent in their new livery. We kept the original colour scheme of Kawasaki green with purple and pearl white and a gold stripe. The difference

now is that I got Paul to add some extra sparkle to all the colours. As he definitely doesn't do vinyl stickers, the original stripes on the tank (purple, white and gold) that were vinyl, are now all done in paint. The photos do not do it justice. You will have to wait to see the finished bike in the flesh on a sunny day to get the full effect.

Now back to the mechanicals. As you can see the new head is on. This was fairly straightforward being a direct swap. There was a small amount of adjustment to do with the valve shims, but they were (luckily) mostly fine adjustments. The head bolts were another worry: these are the big long bolts that go all the way through the head to secure it in place, and they are designed by the factory to 'stretch' when they are torqued down. In theory you are supposed to replace these, however at £11 each I decided to re-use them. No problem, they all torqued down fine. Phew!

The next trauma was getting the carbs back in. The space is really tight. Liberal use of a hairdryer to soften the rubbers plus some silicone spray eventually sorted it. While they were

out, I did give them a good clean and replaced the gaskets with a rebuild kit that I bought that is supposedly ethanol resistant. Time will tell.

The exhaust was pretty simple as well, with no fitting issues at all. I only had one delay, when I couldn't find one of the mounting rubbers. I spent ages looking for it and I was just about to



The new head, the calipers and the new exhaust are all ON!



Not a vinyl sticker in sight

order a new one when I found it hiding in a box of brake bits! I'm not sure how it got in there, but this is this sort of thing that can (and will) cost you time and money. You need to be meticulous about labelling and storing parts when taking bikes apart because as well as the cost of replacing parts that you know you already have but can't find, you will also waste hours looking for them. I once emptied out my entire shed and swept up everywhere looking for parts that I knew I had – snap rings that retain the rear wheel adjuster in place – and I just couldn't find them. So, I ordered new ones, and after the new ones arrived and had been fitted, I found the old ones in a wrongly labelled box. Hours of my life that I will never get back. Still, at least my shed was tidy for a day or two.

As you can see from the photos, the new front discs and refurbished calipers are on, as is my aftermarket rear Brembo caliper. The next job was to get those hosed up and bled. The front brakes are six pot Tokicos, which seem to have a bit of a reputation. Some people replace them, but as they were fitted not only to this bike but also to the Suzuki GSX1250, amongst others, they can't be that bad, can they? First get my supply of copper washers out. I always anneal these before use as it softens them enough to allow them to make a proper seal. Annealing is not 100% necessary, but it's easy, so why not? Simply hold the washers in a pair of pliers, heat until cherry red then immediately dunk in water, but DON'T heat them until they melt... err, moving swiftly on.

The hoses are on, all bolts torqued up to the recommended numbers (except the ones attached to the calipers – see next bit), so let's start bleeding. First top up the master cylinder with fresh fluid. Next, with the caliper end of one of the hoses just dangling, gently squeeze the brake lever, just sort of jiggle it, and little air bubbles will appear. Keep topping up the master cylinder, because you don't want it to run dry, and after a few minutes you should see the fluid start to drip out of the end of the hose. This one can now be nipped up. Repeat for number two, and then you can start to fill the calipers. I use a vacuum pump which makes things a lot easier. You can pump the brake lever to push fluid

into the caliper or tie the lever up to the bars and simply suck it through via vacuum power. Keep topping up until done. To be honest the Tokico brakes were a bit of a faff and took quite a bit of time to get right. The Brembo at the back however was as simple as can be and literally took about five minutes. There are loads of videos on YouTube showing this process on all sorts of different bikes with different calipers so why not have a go? Just don't get brake fluid on your paint. Talking of which...

We are now at the be-extra-super-careful stage. Scratching the new paint is NOT allowed. Dripping brake fluid on to it is NOT allowed either. So, slowly and very gingerly, at a time when I am not tired or stressed, I creep up on the first part to go on... the front mudguard. The pictures show the metal brackets that the mudguard bolts attach to, and, as you can see, they were a bit nasty. They had to come off in order to paint the mudguard anyway, so I took the opportunity to clean them up and repaint them too. Now they have to be riveted back to the guard. Carefully does it. For some reason the metal plates have four mounting holes although the mudguard itself only has two. I riveted the two existing points and it seemed sound enough, but just to be extra sure I drilled out the other two holes and riveted them as well. As you can see, it fitted nicely.

While I was fiddling with the rivets, I was 'multi-tasking' by cleaning and repainting the clips that hold the brake hose and speedo cable, and which are held in place by the mudguard bolts. The original design allows for the very thick old fashioned brake hose plus a large rubber grommet that fits snugly into the

clip. However, my new high pressure, braided hose is much thinner, so the clip profile is too big. Time to break out some heat. It was a simple enough task to heat the clips up and bend them into a smaller diameter to fit the new hoses. I then cleaned them up and painted them. Once dry the mudguard was offered up and mounted, and with the new hoses and freshly painted clips it looks very nice.

Finally, for this episode, I decided to fit the tail section. Being super careful, I offered up the freshly painted plastic and very gently 'stretched' it over the various brackets that have to be overcome, before gently bolting it in place. I then added the rubber grommets for the passenger grab rails and fitted them. Plenty of silicone spray and a bit of heat always helps here. The grab rails are held in by two bolts both of which go in from the inside. Top tip: don't put the tool box in first. You only have to take it out again to access the grab rail bolts. Now the tool box can go in including its tool bag, tools and the rubber strap that holds everything in place. Nicely done sir. Nearly there.

Until next time...

Carry On.



before and after cleaning ...



... painted and riveted



PAKISTAN TO WEST BROMWICH VIA MAIDSTONE AND, OF COURSE, EBAY

Dave Willson waxes lyrical and philosophical in pursuit of long tall leathers

Round

*Like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel
Never ending or beginning on an ever spinning reel
Like a snowball down a mountain, or a carnival balloon
Like a carousel that's turning running rings around the moon
Like a clock whose hands are sweeping past the minutes of its face
And the world is like an apple whirling silently in space
Like the circles that you find in the windmills of your mind! **

Have you ever thought the universe has a plan for you and no matter how much you try and swim against the tide you'll always end up where the universe wants you to be? As someone once said about a man in a boat, "He knows not where he's going the ocean will decide, it's not the destination but the glory of the ride." Well, about a year ago I was bitten by the track day bug, and although my Spyke two-piece leathers, which I bought on the Bay of Es for just £25, have given good service (*See Riders May 2021. Ed.*), I thought it was high time I invested in a new one-piece leather race suit. I knew this wouldn't be easy as, being tall and slim, I always struggle with off-the-peg motorcycle clothing. At school I was a skinny runt, and when that J S Lowry bloke started painting those ridiculous matchstick men and matchstick cats and dogs I was bullied mercilessly. Back then they called it character building; nowadays I'd probably be off to the school counsellor for some therapy. It could have been worse though: I've got a friend, who is younger than me, called Gordon, and we all remember that song 'Gordon is a moron, don't we? It's not that my mum wasn't feeding me, it's just that I was growing so fast she couldn't shove food down me quickly enough. I eventually stopped growing when I reached 6'3", at the age of fifteen. The intervening 40 odd years have been kind to me and although I'm no longer a bean pole it can still make buying motorbike clothing quite difficult sometimes.

Like any quest for bike kit my first port of call was our old favourite, J&S Accessories in Maidstone. The young female shop assistant was very helpful, knowledgeable and patient as I tried on every suit in the shop. (Neither her age or sex has any bearing on the story, I guess I'm just being old and sexist, and I expect the 'woke' police's ears have pricked up.) Anyway, the young female East European shop assistant was very helpful, but to no avail. I don't know if you've ever tried on brand new one-piece leathers, but picture that film that I know you've all seen, of someone trying to get out of a straitjacket. (*Search 'Houdini straitjacket' on YouTube. Ed.*) Now picture that same film in reverse and imagine it being set in a changing cubicle about the size of a phone box

* *The Windmills of Your Mind* published by EMI U CATALOG INC



(for younger readers, a phone box is a cubicle about 2.5m high and 800mm square that contains a massive telephone about the size of a bus) and you've got some idea of the scenario. As I predicted, nothing fitted well. If the arms and legs were long enough the body was so baggy and non-aerodynamic that my fuel consumption would have been down to about 10mpg, and if I wanted to ride into a headwind I'd have had to tack. Conversely, if I wanted the body of the garment to fit snugly then it looked like I was wearing a T shirt and plus fours. So, I bade J&S farewell and decided it was time to fire up the internet. Having Googled 'one-piece leather suits' and having ignored all the adverts for gimp suits, gimp masks, etc., I found a large number of ads that directed me to, what they call in Yorkshire, eBaygum. (Now I'm being regionalist as well as sexist and everything else.)

A large number of eBay ads were for suits from Pakistan that are made to measure, and apparently are made using

top quality leather and top quality armour with top quality stitching. All are made to your own colour and design too, and all for about £200. Well, this seemed too good to be true, and, incidentally, Bennett's, the bike insurers, thought so too: they bought a set of these leathers and sent them off to be tested, thinking, I suppose, that they would fail. They, Bennetts, made a *YouTube* video of their findings if you're interested, but I think they were hoist by their own petard because the leathers did very well in the tests. (In case you're wondering, and I don't suppose you are, a petard is a small bomb, and the phrase was used by Shakespeare in Hamlet and it means a bomb maker who blows himself up with his own bomb.)

I digress. Back to Bennett's. Bennetts sent the suit off to the people that test these things to see whether it conformed to all the EU safety requirements, and I assume that Bennetts imagined that when the suit got to within about 100 yards of said testers it would dissolve into a messy heap of paper-thin leather, cheap thread and armour made of marshmallow. What in fact happened was that the suit passed about 80% of the tests. The leather was found to be 1.2mm thick and of good quality moo cow. The seams were double stitched and it had YKK zips, meaning that it flew through the abrasion tests. The shoulder,



I told the editor that this picture of me was to give context to the story. The reality is my ego got the better of me.

knee and elbow armour was of good quality and passed all the tests. The suit only fell down on the hip armour, which is easily replaced, and the back armour, which is not a problem either, as most people wearing leather suits will also wear a back protector. I actually took the back armour out of my old suit to make room for a more substantial back protector. (*See May 2021 Riders. Ed.*) The suit that I eventually bought, which, in the end, was not from Pakistan, doesn't even have back armour, yet it does have all the relevant EU labels. I guess it's one of those anomalies – it doesn't need to have back armour in order to



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Here's a few reasons to use RSC from our customers:

"Incredible results, don't think I've ever seen my bike as clean after he was finished. Great attention to detail and Dom put so much effort in to get the best results, will be recommending to every biker I know and won't use anyone else now!" **George**



"Fantastic service. Would highly recommend. Dom took the challenge of cleaning our Harleys after a very wet trip back from Scotland. They came up a treat!" **Sarah L**



conform to the regulations, but if it does have back armour fitted then that armour has to be tested and reach a certain standard. The other test the EU does is to see if any of the chemicals that are used to dye the leather are harmful to the skin. I grew up in a home with an asbestos garage roof, lead water pipes, and polystyrene ceiling tiles so I have to say I'm not particularly bothered by this test. (It is definitely worth reading the interesting Bennetts' test data, which you can find by Googling 'Bennetts Pakistani leathers test'. Ed.)

So, if we're not nit-picking, it would appear that these suits from Pakistan are as good as anything with an EU label, and that begs the question: why don't the manufacturers get them tested? Well, it all comes down to taxes. Death and taxes, the only two certainties in life. As soon as you import a garment with all the correct certification you have to pay huge duties. This is obviously something that other makers do and they pass that cost on to the likes of you and me. There are two schools of thought here: on the one hand if you buy one of these suits you're getting a bargain, yet on the other hand by avoiding paying the taxes it makes it harder for British companies like Lewis Leathers, for example, to compete. In the end I decided not to buy one, and the thing that actually put me off was the made-to-measure bit. When you place your order, you have to fill in a chart with about 20 measurements and the suit is made accordingly, and they operate a 'no returns' policy – that's the size you asked for, if it doesn't fit, well that's hard cheese. And this I suppose is fair enough.

Years ago I was measured up at Mike Willis (RIP) Leathers in East London for a pair of jeans and there's a lot more to it than throwing a tape measure around your waist. For example, the distance between my crotch and navel is quite short and this isn't even a measurement the Pakistani makers ask for. So, once again, I walked away empty handed. I had a feeling that buying leathers was harder than the labours of Hercules.

My odyssey now moves 500 miles across the Bay of Biscay to the land of flamenco, paella, and bullfighting. (Does that still go on?) Maximo Moto is the Spanish equivalent of J&S Accessories. They have 14 stores in Spain and a few years ago they opened a store here in the UK. Now, if you're going to open your one and only flagship store



in this country, clearly there's only one town in which to do so. Yep, you've guessed it, West Bromwich! Perhaps the rent is cheap. Anyway, if you're in the market for kit, check out Maximo Moto. They seem to have one of those sales like DFS furniture shops – you know, sale must end soon, except it's been 'ending soon' for the last 30 years. Everything in Maximo Moto's UK store seems to be permanently 50% off. They'll also cover the cost of postage on any returned item, and where leathers are concerned that would probably be about 20 quid.

An interesting thing – well you may not think so, but I guess if you're still reading these incoherent ramblings then it's of some interest to you – we're used to seeing certain brand names in the UK, and where leathers are concerned that would be Alpinestars, RST and the like, and it's easy to think that these are the big hitters the world over, but actually that's not the case. In America, for example, the bestselling leathers are made by Contour, R S Taichi, and Arlen Ness. The reason, dear reader, that I'm telling you this is that most of the brands sold by Maximo Moto will be unknown to us, yet that doesn't mean they're no good. I was tempted by several of their leather suits, but again thought I'd struggle with sizing and I couldn't really be bothered with all that returning malarkey. So, I went back to the interweb for inspiration, and while trawling through many forums I came across a throwaway comment that Berik leathers are made for the American market and as such are made to fit tall Yanks, and not short Italians. What a revelation. And guess what – a search for Berik leathers revealed that J&S Accessories used to stock them, but don't anymore, and all their clearance stock is being heavily discounted on eBay. Well, stone me: my search began at J&S and eventually ended at J&S, where I bought a Berik Titanium one-piece suit. I'm well happy with the suit, and you'll be thrilled to know that I'll be reviewing it at a later date. Sometimes in life it's best just to listen to the universe: 'Round like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel'... until next time.



Berik leathers being 'tested'

THE PIONEER RUN

Just imagine actually owning a fully working motorbike that is well over 100 years old, and then imagine riding that brakeless, gearless antique for 50 miles on crowded modern roads in modern traffic and you have just imagined the 'Pioneer Run'. The Pioneer Run is the motorbike equivalent of the London to Brighton veteran car run. It started in 1930 and is exclusively for machines that were manufactured *before 1915*. That means that every single one of the 200 or more bikes in this year's run was at least 106 years old, some were over 120 years old! It's one thing to chirrup in amazement at antique furniture having been in use for that long, but for primitive Edwardian and Victorian motorbikes to have been ridden for that long is, you must admit, pretty impressive. Of course, I'm not suggesting that any of them is now ridden on a daily London commute, but the fact that they can be ridden at all, let alone ridden



Top: A 1913 750cc 'Rudge Multi', the Bonneville of its day, with direct drive through a sort of CVT infinitely variable gear (hence 'Multi'). No rear brake and only a feeble bicycle-type stirrup front brake. Note the rubber tube taking acetylene gas to the rear light.

Centre: This is a beautiful and very advanced 1913 696cc V twin AJS. It has a gearbox, chain drive, a proper internal-expanding drum brake at the back and a kick starter. Most of its competitors had no gears and direct drive by belt coupled with pedal start and very crude bicycle brakes.

Left: Another beautiful and very advanced bike – a 1914 500cc Sunbeam. Like the AJS it has a proper gearbox, a kickstart and a fully enclosed chain final drive, although it has a very crude back brake. Note too the tube taking gas to the rearlight.



for nearly 50 miles from Tattenham Corner to Brighton, is a thing of wonder to me. So I went to watch.

Usually, the run takes place in March, but because of all the Covid shenanigans it took place on October 3rd this year, and it didn't go to Brighton either, instead it went to Shoreham airport, which, incidentally, now rejoices in the ludicrously inflated name of 'Brighton City Airport'. In previous years the run has always finished on Madeira Drive on the seafront at Brighton, but it was becoming increasingly difficult to marshal an event that sometimes had over 300 participants careering virtually brakeless through Brighton. I imagine too, that it was also becoming pretty difficult for the riders to negotiate the constant stopping and starting that riding through a 21st century town entails. These old bikes are not very good at stopping, and when they do eventually manage to stop many of them are not very good at starting off again – it's not just a case of prodding them into gear and letting the clutch out. Indeed, many don't have a clutch to let out, they are direct drive and require a pedal-assisted start or even, *in extremis*, a run and bump start. When these bikes were in their pomp, Edward VII was on the throne, and traffic lights, zebra crossings and other such obstacles to making progress didn't exist, so the

Top: Not all the bikes are shiny restorations! This is a 500cc 1909 ROC. Note the huge space behind the engine which could have been filled with a gearbox – that would have been a good idea. Note too the enormous agricultural 'heel and toe' brake pedal and, of course, the walking stick propped casually against the bike.

Centre: This is a 1911 247cc Belgian FN. The bike is very old but the rider was only 18. At a time when virtually everything was belt driven this bike had a posh shaft drive, yet it only had a very crude stirrup brake at the back and no front brake.

Right: This is an interesting bike: it's a 1912 465cc Phelon & Moore, which many KAMG members will know better as a 'Panther'. Panthers were known for using their massive long stroke engines as a stressed frame part, and even as long ago as 1912 they were doing this as can be seen in this example. This picture also clearly shows an example of a stirrup brake on the front wheel.



Above: Not all the riders were old men – this is Verity Lacey who was riding a 1914 175cc Calthorpe.

keen motorcyclist of that time was quite often able to avoid stopping at all.

If the bikes were old, many of the Pioneer's riders were not in the first flush of youth either, although not one of them was as old as the bike he rode. Even so many of the riders were in their ninth decade and at least one was in his *tenth* decade; and the reason I know this is because the event is unique, and gloriously non-PC, in that all entrants have to give their age, which is published in the programme. This is because there is an age-linked award called the 'Dutch Horsepower Team Award' – don't ask me what it's got to do with either the Dutch or horsepower – which goes to the team of three riders that has the greatest total age of machine and riders. I think this year it was won by the Sunbeam 'A' team, which had a combined rider and bike age of 589 years.

The following little vignette sums up the day: one rider, on arriving in the paddock at Shoreham, sat on his bike near to where I was standing and he didn't dismount. A marshal, keen to help, asked why he was not getting off, and he replied "I am waiting for someone to bring me my stick." It was, you see, a gentle day! Although, riding a brakeless, direct-drive 750cc single is obviously not for the fainthearted or the gentle.

So, if you want to see some fantastic old bikes, eat bacon butties and lemon drizzle cake while drinking coffee in the shadow of a beautiful art deco building, make sure that you go to the Pioneer Run next year. I will make sure that the date, when known, is published in this magazine. And, apart from the butties and cake, it's all FREE!

NF

SHOREHAM AIRPORT

Shoreham airport, now pretentiously renamed 'Brighton City Airport', provided the perfect backdrop for the Pioneer Run. The terminal building is a very handsome art deco structure that was completed in 1935, and it is, therefore, exactly in keeping with the 1930s origin of the Pioneer Run. This 'modern' building seems to have been built on the tide of optimism for the exciting new commercial air age that was beginning to gather strength back then, and it is a much more handsome terminal than Gatwick's original squat Beehive terminal, which was built one year later. For whatever reason, Shoreham didn't succeed as a commercial passenger hub, but it does have the distinction of definitely being the oldest airport in the UK – having first opened in 1911 – and almost certainly being the oldest airport in the world. Today it is still a general aviation airport and it is a destination for one of KAMG's Sunday leisure and training rides. It's worth a trip.



Shoreham's art-deco terminal building built in 1935



2022 CALENDAR

WITH COMPLIMENTS FROM THE KAMG
TO ALL ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



Calendar 2022 UK

January	February	March	April	May	June
1 Sa <small>New Year's Day</small>	1 Tu	1 Tu	1 Fr	1 Su	1 We
2 Su	2 We	2 We	2 Sa	2 Mo <small>Early May Bank Hol.</small>	2 Th <small>Spring Bank Hol.</small>
3 Mo <small>Substitute day</small> 1	3 Th	3 Th	3 Su	3 Tu	3 Fr <small>Platinum Jubilee</small>
4 Tu	4 Fr	4 Fr	4 Mo 14	4 We	4 Sa
5 We	5 Sa	5 Sa	5 Tu	5 Th	5 Su
6 Th	6 Su	6 Su	6 We	6 Fr	6 Mo 23
7 Fr	7 Mo 6	7 Mo 10	7 Th	7 Sa	7 Tu
8 Sa	8 Tu	8 Tu	8 Fr	8 Su	8 We
9 Su	9 We	9 We	9 Sa	9 Mo 19	9 Th
10 Mo 2	10 Th	10 Th	10 Su	10 Tu	10 Fr
11 Tu	11 Fr	11 Fr	11 Mo 15	11 We	11 Sa
12 We	12 Sa	12 Sa	12 Tu	12 Th	12 Su
13 Th	13 Su	13 Su	13 We	13 Fr	13 Mo 24
14 Fr	14 Mo 7	14 Mo 11	14 Th	14 Sa	14 Tu
15 Sa	15 Tu	15 Tu	15 Fr <small>Good Friday</small>	15 Su	15 We
16 Su	16 We	16 We	16 Sa	16 Mo 20	16 Th
17 Mo 3	17 Th	17 Th	17 Su	17 Tu	17 Fr
18 Tu	18 Fr	18 Fr	18 Mo <small>Easter Monday</small> 16	18 We	18 Sa
19 We	19 Sa	19 Sa	19 Tu	19 Th	19 Su
20 Th	20 Su	20 Su	20 We	20 Fr	20 Mo 25
21 Fr	21 Mo 8	21 Mo 12	21 Th	21 Sa	21 Tu
22 Sa	22 Tu	22 Tu	22 Fr	22 Su	22 We
23 Su	23 We	23 We	23 Sa	23 Mo 21	23 Th
24 Mo 4	24 Th	24 Th	24 Su	24 Tu	24 Fr
25 Tu	25 Fr	25 Fr	25 Mo 17	25 We	25 Sa
26 We	26 Sa	26 Sa	26 Tu	26 Th	26 Su
27 Th	27 Su	27 Su	27 We	27 Fr	27 Mo 26
28 Fr	28 Mo 9	28 Mo 13	28 Th	28 Sa	28 Tu
29 Sa		29 Tu	29 Fr	29 Su	29 We
30 Su		30 We	30 Sa	30 Mo	30 Th
31 Mo 5		31 Th		31 Tu	



JANUARY

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
31					1 <small>New Year's Day</small>	2
	3 <small>Bank Holiday</small>	4	5	6	7	8
		9	10 <small>Committee Meeting</small>	11	12	13
		14	15	16	17	18
		19	20	21	22	23
		24	25	26	27 <small>Group Night</small>	28
		29	30	31		

ZÜNDAPP
bewährt als Motorrad u. Flugzeugmotor
ZÜNDAPP-WERKE G.M.B.H. NÜRNBERG

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

FEBRUARY 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

MARCH 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4



2022

FEBRUARY 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

7 Committee Meeting
 14 Committee Meeting
 21 Group Night
 28 Group Run
 11 MCN Motorbike Show @ EXCEL London
 12 MCN Motorbike Show @ EXCEL London
 13 MCN Motorbike Show @ EXCEL London



MARCH

JANUARY 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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29	30	31	1	2	3	4

MARCH 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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29	30	31	1	2	3	4



APRIL 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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JUNE 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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29	30					

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
30	31					1 Group Run KAMG Tour to Rutland
2 Early Bank Holiday KAMG Tour to Rutland	3 TSC meeting	4	5	6	7 Peterborough Training Weekend	8 Peterborough Training Weekend
9 Committee Meeting	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Group Night	27	28 Vianden Tour Begins	29 Group Run

MAY



2202

APRIL



2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3 Group Run
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Committee Meeting	12	13	14	15 Good Friday	16	17 Easter Sunday
18 Easter Monday	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Group Night	29	30 KAMG Tour to Rutland	

Das beste Motorrad 1929

Ausstellung
MOTOSAGOCHE
KÖNIG & BIELSER, BERN
Beundenfeldstrasse 21

MAY 2022

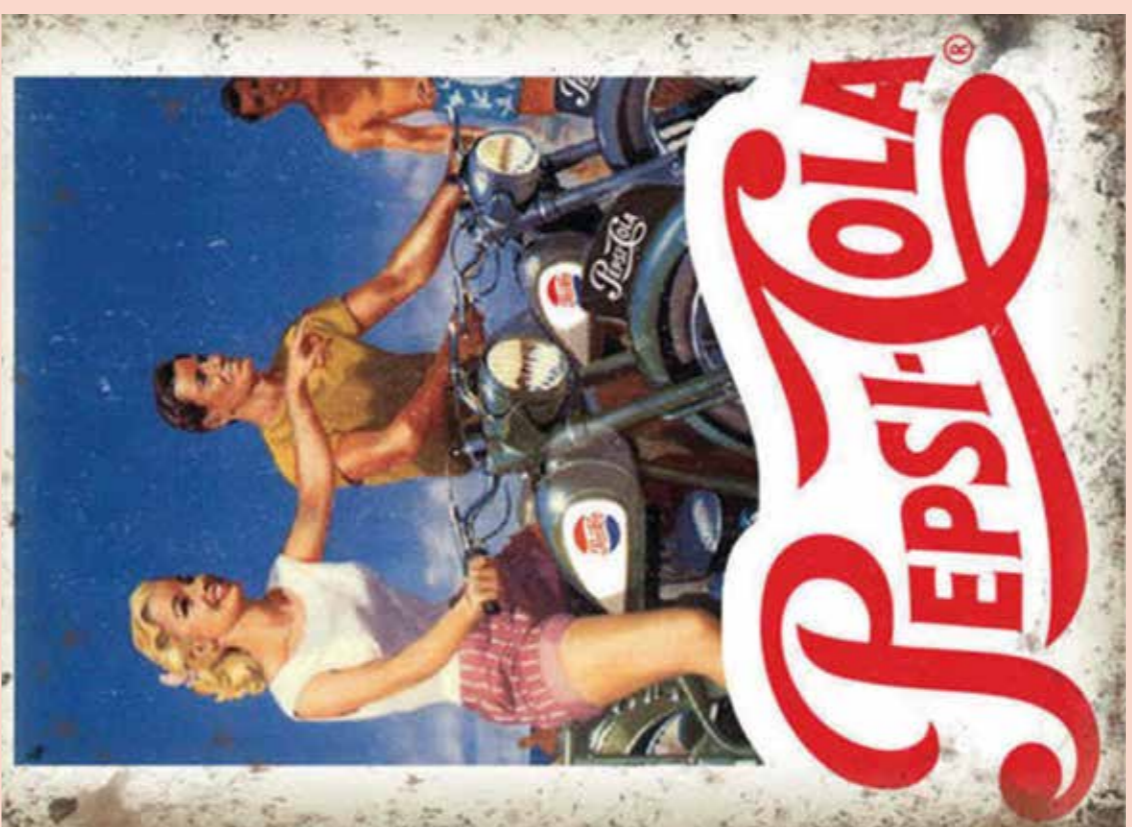
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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MARCH 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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29	30	31				

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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29	30					



MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
				1	2	3 Group Run
				8	9	10
			7	15	16	17
			14	22	23	24
			21	28	29	30
			30	31		Group Run
4	5 TSC meeting	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
			Group Night			

JULY



2022



JUNE

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
		1	2 Spring Bank Holiday	3 Queen's Platinum Jubilee	4 Vanden Tour Finish	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Committee Meeting						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	Group Night		



MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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29	30	31				

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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28	29	30				

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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		11	12	13	14	15
		17	18	19	20	21
		23	24	25	26	27
		29	30			



SEPTEMBER 2022



AUGUST 2022



MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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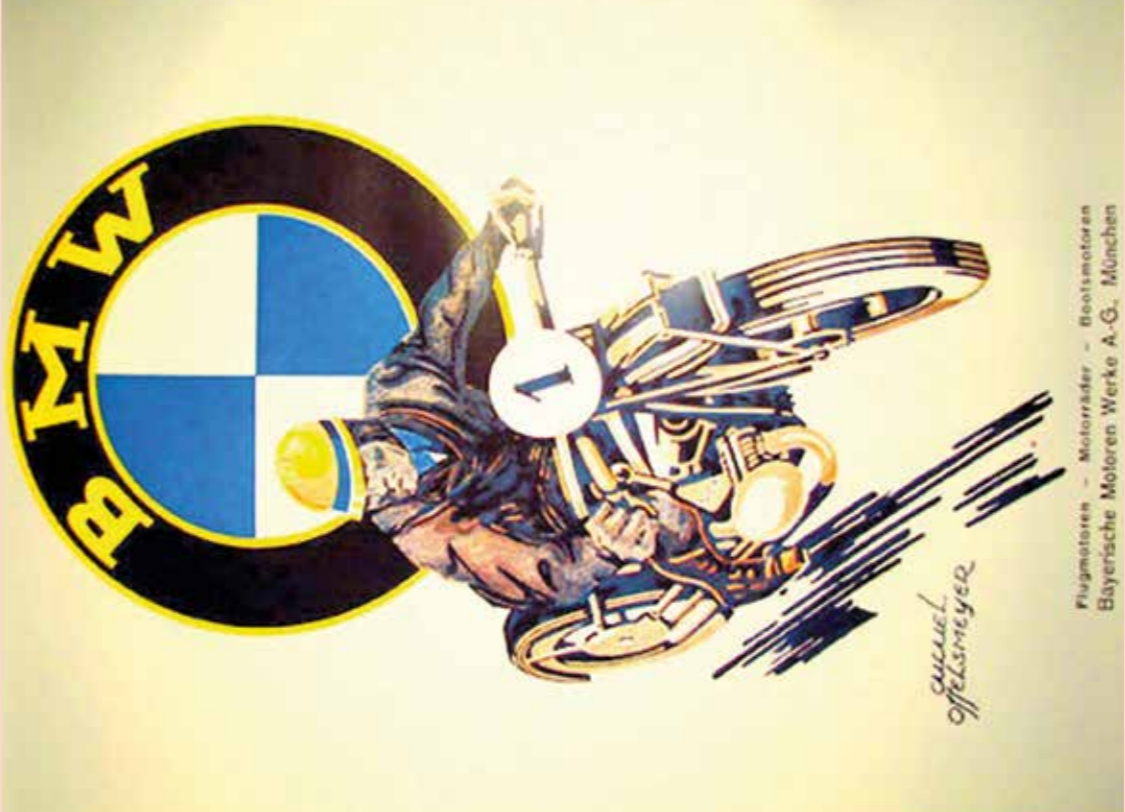
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



OCTOBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2 Group Run
3 Committee Meeting	4 TSC meeting	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 KAMG Tour of Norfolk and Suffolk	16 KAMG Tour of Norfolk and Suffolk
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			27 Group Night	28	29	30 Group Run
31						



DECEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

OCTOBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	8 Autumn Observer meeting	9	10	11 Remembrance Day	12	13 Remembrance Sunday
14 Committee Meeting	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Group Night	25	26	27 Group Run
	29	30				

NOVEMBER

2202



2022



SEPTEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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29	30					

NOVEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



für höchste Ansprüche
ZUNDA PP

NOVEMBER 2022

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

JANUARY 2023

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

July	August	September	October	November	December
1 Fr	1 Mo 31	1 Th	1 Sa	1 Tu	1 Th
2 Sa	2 Tu	2 Fr	2 Su	2 We	2 Fr
3 Su	3 We	3 Sa	3 Mo 40	3 Th	3 Sa
4 Mo 27	4 Th	4 Su	4 Tu	4 Fr	4 Su
5 Tu	5 Fr	5 Mo 36	5 We	5 Sa	5 Mo 49
6 We	6 Sa	6 Tu	6 Th	6 Su	6 Tu
7 Th	7 Su	7 We	7 Fr	7 Mo 45	7 We
8 Fr	8 Mo 32	8 Th	8 Sa	8 Tu	8 Th
9 Sa	9 Tu	9 Fr	9 Su	9 We	9 Fr
10 Su	10 We	10 Sa	10 Mo 41	10 Th	10 Sa
11 Mo 28	11 Th	11 Su	11 Tu	11 Fr	11 Su
12 Tu	12 Fr	12 Mo 37	12 We	12 Sa	12 Mo 50
13 We	13 Sa	13 Tu	13 Th	13 Su	13 Tu
14 Th	14 Su	14 We	14 Fr	14 Mo 46	14 We
15 Fr	15 Mo 33	15 Th	15 Sa	15 Tu	15 Th
16 Sa	16 Tu	16 Fr	16 Su	16 We	16 Fr
17 Su	17 We	17 Sa	17 Mo 42	17 Th	17 Sa
18 Mo 29	18 Th	18 Su	18 Tu	18 Fr	18 Su
19 Tu	19 Fr	19 Mo 38	19 We	19 Sa	19 Mo 51
20 We	20 Sa	20 Tu	20 Th	20 Su	20 Tu
21 Th	21 Su	21 We	21 Fr	21 Mo 47	21 We
22 Fr	22 Mo 34	22 Th	22 Sa	22 Tu	22 Th
23 Sa	23 Tu	23 Fr	23 Su	23 We	23 Fr
24 Su	24 We	24 Sa	24 Mo 43	24 Th	24 Sa
25 Mo 30	25 Th	25 Su	25 Tu	25 Fr	25 Su Christmas Day
26 Tu	26 Fr	26 Mo 39	26 We	26 Sa	26 Mo Boxing Day 52
27 We	27 Sa	27 Tu	27 Th	27 Su	27 Tu Substitute day
28 Th	28 Su	28 We	28 Fr	28 Mo 48	28 We
29 Fr	29 Mo August Bank Hol.	29 Th	29 Sa	29 Tu	29 Th
30 Sa	30 Tu	30 Fr	30 Su	30 We	30 Fr
31 Su	31 We		31 Mo		31 Sa

DECEMBER 2022

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
						2
						3
						4
						5
						6
						7
						8
						9
						10
						11
						12 Committee Christmas Meal
						13
						14
						15
						16
						17
						18
						19
						20
						21
						22
						23
						24
						25 Christmas Day
						26 Boxing Day
						27 Holiday
						28
						29
						30
						31 New Year's Eve

DECEMBER 2022



FOOD, FOOD, MORE FOOD, AND OCCASIONALLY SOME MOTORCYCLING

Sue Billings pillions to Oban and back

Although the Scottish weather is unpredictable, I was hoping that as this latest adventure to Oban was in August, we would get a week of warm-ish, sunny-ish, dry days to enjoy the merry companionship of the 17 KAMG riders and pillions taking in the awesome scenery. Well, on the whole, the weather wasn't awful, but we did have sunshine one moment and torrential rain the next, as illustrated by the photos from outside the Artisan Café in Tyndrum, which were taken within five minutes of each other. A lesson learnt by some – never leave bike kit draped over a motorcycle in Scotland, it will probably get wet.

Fourteen merry men and women started their adventure with a quick hello and briefing from our party leader, Steve Riches, at the damp, scenic location of Thurrock Services, before setting off on the 250 mile journey to our first overnight stop near Leeds. Dermot Horan joined us at the OK Diner later that morning and Simon and Moira Ranner were to join us in Falkirk on day three. The initial stage was uneventful, and our route was via the M25, M11 and A1 to Peterborough before the obligatory stop for breakfast at the OK Diner. Over a late breakfast the main topic of conversation was not the riding or the roads, but the colour of the new RT owned by David Howard, a colour that his wife Erika describes as National Trust shed green. Our journey continued to Matlock and then past Chatsworth and over the Snake Pass on to Glossop and Holmfirth (no sign of anyone looking like Compo or his friends), before a stop at Squires Café, then the hotel for the night.

Up and onwards the next morning to Marsham, using the excellent drop off marker system and the tail-end rider arrangement. The high standard of riding meant that we kept together as a group while we navigated the roads to our welcome mid-morning hot drinks and cakes, which were consumed in the rain in the cobbled village square that was hosting a market and a wedding. We spent most of our time sheltering under sunshades to keep out of the rain, and it was at this point that we had our first glimpse of Steve's tartan flat cap, which was to make many appearances on the trip.

Sun ...



Back on the motorcycles for more miles to get to our lunch stop, followed by another afternoon stop at the Abbey Bridge Coffee House where we first witnessed the prowess of Colin Underwood as he took pictures of Jedburgh Abbey flying his new toy, a very lively drone. Jedburgh Abbey is a ruined Augustinian abbey and one of the four great abbeys established in the Scottish Borders in the 1100s. It took more than 70 years to complete the building, only for it to suffer damage during the conflict between Scotland and England in the Middle Ages. It now survives as a ruin, and it has a visitor centre displaying some of the artefacts discovered during the excavation of the site. I'm sure Colin will happily show his drone footage if you want to find out more.

Another short ride to complete the 218 miles for the day and our second night's stop at a Premier Inn.

The next morning, day three, it was grey and overcast as we climbed on to the motorcycles and headed towards Oban via a stop at the Falkirk Wheel, where, guess what, it rained! Here we met up with Simon and Moira, whom we found loitering in the car park. We sat inside consuming hot drinks and cakes – you can already see a pattern being established here – looking out through the rain splattered windows as the boat lift rotated and moved a canal boat from the Forth and Clyde Canal to the Union Canal. The design of the Falkirk wheel is claimed to have been inspired by a Celtic double headed spear, a vast propeller of a Clydebank-built ship, the ribcage of a whale and the spine of a fish! All I can say is the engineering is magnificent, and as it stands over 35 metres tall (the equivalent of eight double decker buses stacked on top of each other) you can appreciate it even when keeping dry inside the café. We were now a band of 12 motorcycles and 17 people, so we attracted some attention as we pulled

... and rain



The tartan cap

away on our journey to our next lunch stop and afternoon tea venue, the Artisan Café, where you can see from the earlier images, it rained!

After wiping off the rain from wet seats and, for some, swapping over to dry gloves, we followed the A85 to our next fueling station, The Green Welly Shop. The shop at Tyndrum has become a landmark since it was first started as a family business in 1965, when it was a six-bedroom house, a post office, a shop, petrol pumps and a coal business. Over the years buildings have been demolished and new ones built to cope with the number of customers and to provide new amenities. Then, in the 1980s, The Green Welly Shop, that sold wellies and Barbour jackets, was opened at the location and, as this is what the business became known as, the family took the plunge and rebranded the entire business as The Green Welly Shop. They demolished the original house, rebuilt the filling station and expanded the outdoor store. We were to revisit it for several refueling sessions (as well as ice creams) during the trip. Steve and Tina know the owners, Fiona and Edward Robertson, as Fiona is an active member of the local IAM group and coaches on the IAM skills days.

If you have never been to Oban, I recommend a visit. Famed as the gateway to the Western Isles, it is a small resort town on the Firth of Lorne on the West coast of Scotland. It is promoted as the seafood capital of Scotland, and from our experiences of eating in several of



The Falkirk Wheel from inside the café



The Falkirk Wheel outside the café

the fish restaurants in the town, it lives up to that billing. If you want to find out more, take-a-look at it through two live webcams: one from the lighthouse pier and the other from the north pier <https://www.oban.org.uk/webcams/>.

Having stayed in the resort on the 2019 Steve Riches' Oban adventure, we knew how picturesque the town would be, and that first evening we sat outside The Pokey Hat eating their delicious homemade ice cream in the hot sunshine and talked about the roads we had ridden and those yet to come. Some lived up to the adventurer spirit – Paul Jessop, Ian Broughton, Martin Brown, Andrew Barnes, Erika and David Howard walked up the steep incline to McCaig's Tower. This tower is a prominent folly on Battery Hill, overlooking the centre of Oban. John Stuart McCaig commissioned the construction of the tower in 1897 and based the design on the Colosseum in Rome, but at his death in 1902, only the outer walls had been built and that is how it has remained.

We were to stay in Oban for three nights and our first trip on day four was to Marks and Spencer so that everyone could buy a picnic lunch for the visit to Glen Etive later that day. Other supermarkets were available, but the lure of M&S was too great and there was at least one comment about knowing you had joined the right trip when you got to shop for lunch at M&S rather than the Aldi and Lidl next door. You get some very strange looks when you are walking around a supermarket in your crash helmet speaking on the intercom to your rider seated on the motorcycle in the car park asking if they want a chicken club or prawn sandwich, and would they like a blueberry muffin for dessert!

Anyway, after shopping for lunch we rode to view Castle Stalker via some stunning scenery, where we stopped for coffee and for some a late breakfast. During the stop Colin provided another flying demonstration with his drone, as it was not raining. Castle Stalker was built around 1320 as a small, fortified building by the MacDougalls, and has a chequered history, including passing into the hands of the Campbells of Airds as payment of a drunken wager. Since 1965 it has been privately owned and has been rebuilt and restored so that it is fully habitable. It is possibly best known from the final scene of the film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, when it appears as Castle Aaaaarrrrgghhh.

The road to Glen Etive was as meandering and bumpy as I remember it from 2019. This area was a location used for the filming of James Bond's *Skyfall*, and also for *Braveheart* and *Harry Potter*. Along the roadside runs



Castle Stalker

the river Etive and there were several groups of people wild camping. Not to be outdone, the intrepid Tina Underwood went wild swimming, when the river opened up into a large expanse of water. The rest of us looked on in admiration and kept warm eating our picnics and trying to look enigmatic like Dermot.

The main event of day five was a visit to Rannoch Station via some very picturesque roads or, as Erika describes them, 'swooshy' roads. Once again everyone enjoyed a brisk pace on the roads, and the marker system kept us all heading in the right direction to our destination at Rannoch Station. This remote station is part of the West Highland Line that travels from Glasgow to Mallaig. The station opened in 1894 and today there are four passenger trains north and four trains south each day, one of which starts and returns to London. The Rannoch Moor Visitor Centre is situated on one of the platforms and there is also the Rannoch Station Tearoom, where Steve had pre-booked our visit, and where the wonderfully helpful staff had reserved the waiting room for us and had glorious homemade food ready for our arrival so that we could shelter... from the rain!

Tina swims wildly



By now, on this trip, I had already travelled by road and by air – formation flying over some sharply inclined humpback bridges when no part of me was in contact with the bike – and today we travelled by sea. We took the ferry from Dunoon Hunters Quay across the Clyde to Gourrock McInroy's Point Ferry terminal. As the day's tail-end marker, we were glad to be at the back of the group. As we rode on to the ferry, we were all directed on to a space on the right, wedged in beside a coach. We all felt nicely tucked away and protected from the elements, until the waves started coming over the front of the boat; Tina and several others got soaked in salty water. To compensate for getting wet, we visited Nardini's in Largs for drinks and huge ice creams, and this is where we said a fond farewell to Simon and Moira, who were leaving us to visit relations, while we continued on our journey south to Dumfries. Homeward bound now.

On the morning of day seven Steve took us to an insalubrious layby for a coffee and for yet another bacon roll from a mobile vendor. Then the two Colins (Underwood and Billings) rocked the portable toilet that was in the layby and that Ian Broughton was trying to use – a basic schoolboy error on Ian's part. It was a day of simple pleasures. Leaving the lovely layby, we were in Yorkshire now and went cross country from Kirby Stephen to Wensleydale. The riding was energetic, and the riders had to contend with some high cross winds over the Dales, which meant that everyone really appreciated our stop for hot drinks and cakes at the visitor centre in the famous Wensleydale creamery in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

That evening, as we were by now back in England and COVID restrictions had been relaxed, we got the chance

to enjoy sitting together at one large table for our farewell meal of the trip. While there was a fair amount of banter, everyone took the opportunity to thank Steve and Debbie Riches for hosting such a great adventure. There were still some unanswered questions though:

- How does Andrew Barnes always look as if he has just stepped out of a Motolegends clothing catalogue?
- Does David Howard have "Mary Poppins panniers" as Erika always wears stunning, uncreased dresses and skirts in the evenings with amazing shoes?
- Does Martin Brown really have the right legs for a kilt?
- How did Ian Broughton's motorcycle trousers and jacket still do up at the end of the trip bearing in mind how much he ate?
- Is Dawn Shearsmith telepathic as she always knew when someone needed a sweet, wet wipe, new buff, hand sanitiser?
- How does Debbie Riches put up with Steve?

As for the rest of us, there are lots of unanswered questions, but what we did on the trip will stay on the trip. Anyway, the last day was a blur of roads as we rode the 230 miles to get back to the Dartford Crossing and wave goodbye to everyone.

We had 12 motorcycles altogether – three BMW RTs, three GSs, one Gold Wing, one BMW K, a Triumph Tiger, a Kawasaki Z1000SX, one Kawasaki Versys and a Yamaha FJR – and none of them missed a beat. We had excellent company, wonderful roads and scenery, first-rate riding, lots of fun and lots of appetising food!

Check Forthcoming Events on page 7 for details of KAMG sponsored trips already planned for next year.

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A BIG ENGINE WITH A SEAT ATTACHED . . .

. . . takes John Gore by surprise when he rides an R18



I recently treated myself to a new BMW R1250RT for my 60th birthday. After contacting several dealerships – some of whom were helpful and some of whom weren't, and some of whom didn't answer the phone and others who didn't call back – I decided to look outside the area and I made a call to Chandler's BMW Motorrad in Brighton. The phone was answered double quick by Martyn Rance, and when I said I was looking at the new RT, Martyn said, "OK, any particular colour?"

"No, not really" I replied, "but I do like 'sports blue'"

"Good," he said "I have one on the way from Germany, could be here within two weeks."

Over the next three days I must have sent many emails and made many phone calls asking whether it's got this or whether it's got that, I even phoned and asked what tyres were on it. And each time Martyn or Ben Prout would be very polite, very helpful, and answer my question.

What soon became apparent on the new 2021 RT, when I got it, was that the TFT screen (Thin-Film-Transistor screen) needed a software update due to connectivity issues it was having with the mobile phone, which it needs for the sat-nav to work in map mode. So, after a month, and after BMW had rolled out the update, I booked the bike into Chandler's for this update work to be carried out. My wife and I booked a hotel in Brighton so that we could ride down, leave the bike with Chandler's, have a night out and collect the bike the next day before continuing our journey to Cambridge. However, by around one o'clock on collection day I hadn't heard from Chandler's and I decided to call for an update on my update, and I was told that my bike was in the workshop and I'd get a call later. "Later" turned into closing time and I was told that the bike wasn't ready and I was asked if I could collect it "tomorrow?". So, we stayed another night in the hotel and had another night out, and at 11am the next day I arrived at Chandler's where, due to a breakdown in communication, I found that my bike was *still* in the same place that I had left it two days before, and it had not been worked on or been in the workshop. As you can imagine, I was a bit miffed. The service manager, Matt Littlewood, listened to me, apologised for their failings and looked at a way forward to give me the least inconvenience possible. I left it to Matt to sort out and rode the bike to Cambridge.

Later I received a call from Matt who said that they would collect the bike from my house and deliver it back, and they would also drop off a loan bike for me to use in the meantime. This I felt was customer service at its best. You could say, "So they should," but I was OK with that. The following day the big van from Brighton arrived; the rear doors opened; the ramp was lowered and a monster BMW 'R18 First Edition' appeared; 900cc per pot! The chrome cylinder head covers nearly touched both sides of the van, and the diameter of the exhaust pipes emerging from the

cylinders reminded me of the Blackwall Tunnel; they were huge. I just stared at its size. On the outside I was this cool and calm-looking and very nonchalant 60-year-old man, but underneath I was this little 20-year-old jumping up and down. I couldn't wait to get my backside on this rocket.

When the dust cleared and my blood pressure returned to near normal, I put on helmet, gloves and boots and headed towards this huge machine. "I'm just going around the village love," I shouted to my wife as I stood next to the monster that, oddly, was so much lower than any other bike I have ever ridden. I cocked my leg over the seat, found the ignition button, pulled the clutch in, pressed the start button and she just roared into life. I had to steady myself as the boxer engine pushed from side to side; even a slight rev and the torque wanted to lay the bike down. I sat there thinking this is just a very big engine with a seat bolted on to it. I selected first and it was the smoothest first gear selection I have ever experienced. The quick shifter on my R1250RT is clunky from neutral to first, but on the R18 I had to look at the digital display to check I was actually in first gear. As I sat there on this *enormous-engine-with-a-seat-attached*, it reminded me of the first Apollo space



shuttles – all fuel and engine with a tiny people-capsule attached. Finally, the clutch was slipped, the wheels turned and soon second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth gears were reached as I cruised on to the A2 and then the M2. My smile was as wide as the Medway. I stopped at Mickey's Diner for a coffee, and when I got my phone out to take some pictures, I noticed a missed call and a text from my wife asking: "Are you OK? You said you were only going around the village, that was two hours ago." But, as BMW say, "Enjoy the ride."

I'm no petrolhead and although I have been riding bikes for many years, I know very little about them, but I do know what I like to ride and I enjoy every mile. The best



part of my working day is the commute to work and back, and this big bike behaved very well at slow speeds even while negotiating a bit of safe filtering in London. I had the monster for several days and I liked it, but would I actually own an R18? Well, no, not really. I like fully faired bikes; however, if a lottery win arrived, one would certainly find a place in my garage.

Eventually the monster was collected and my 2021 RT was returned fully updated, and to top it all I received a cheque from Chandler's to cover our two-day hotel stay. What service! So, thank you Martyn, Matt and Ben at Chandler's BMW for putting everything right and making a sad experience into an excellent one.





MotoRoadTriP

 Southern Scotland <i>14th to 21st May 2022</i> An eight day adventure to Southern Scotland and Northern England. This tour is suitable for all who are able to ride 1600 miles, solo or with pillion.	 Skye <i>11th to 18th June 2022</i> An eight day Adventure to Scotland, Western Ross and Skye. This tour is suitable for experienced couples. A 2500 mile tour.	 North Coast 500 <i>2nd to 10th July 2022</i> A nine day adventure of the iconic NC500 including Loch Ness, Cairngorms, Applecross and Glen Coe. This is a 2000 mile tour with every night in a different hotel, suitable for experienced riders.	North Yorkshire <i>21st to 24th July 2022</i> A four day adventure around Yorkshire. A ride to Yorkshire via Snake Pass, a day around the Dales, a day around the Moors and a ride back. This is a 3 night in one hotel 850 mile tour.	Wales <i>5th to 9th Sept 2022</i> A five day, mid week adventure around the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia. The tour is in two hotels and 1000 miles.
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I will be running other trips during the year, please see the web site for further details and availability

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KAMG TRAINING ACTIVITY

Up to the end of October there were a total of 458 observed rides conducted on the 203 days since 'lockdown' ended on April 12th. In addition to that there were five IDCAMs and two Machine Control Days, plus a two-day training weekend to Peterborough. (See page 28) That is an impressive amount of activity, all of which has to be organised and administered and actually carried out by someone – well, actually by quite a lot of 'someones'. Read Joe Mair's piece on page 6 if you would like to be involved.
NF

There have been 458 observed rides from end of lockdown on 12th April 2021 to 31st October	
Observed Ride Analysis 2021 YTD	
% of all Observed Rides	
Associate Observed Rides 73.80%	
TOTAL Rides	338
Associates with ONE ride	150
Associates with TWO rides	58
Associates with THREE Rides	21
Associates with FOUR or MORE rides	4
Green Badge Observed Rides 14.41%	
(AYSGB, Fellows, Masters)	
TOTAL Rides	66
Green Badge riders with ONE ride	15
Green Badge riders with TWO rides	8
Green Badge riders with THREE or MORE rides	11
Observer and Trainee Observer Observed Rides 11.79%	
TOTAL Rides	54
ONE ride	21
TWO Rides	6
THREE or MORE rides	9



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WHERE'S MY GS?

Geoff Curtis goes off-road unintentionally

This year's Gold Cup race meeting at Oliver's Mount in Scarborough was cancelled – not due to Covid, but because of the state of some dilapidated buildings, apparently. So I turned my originally planned, race-based, mini-tour into a scenic jaunt around the North York Moors and the Yorkshire Dales National Parks. All was going well and I was enjoying myself, particularly when I happened upon The Cellar Bar, which was holding an open mic night near my accommodation in Scarborough. I'll return for the racing next year.

In going on from Scarborough to the dales I was acting as the pathfinder for a route that was suggested by a friend, and that we plan to use when we return next year. Apart from some lovely sweeping bends and dramatic scenery, this route involved much single track with a couple of one-in-four ascents, a one-in-three descent, four fords, three of which were dry, and a couple of sections of unpaved road across Forestry Commission land. One of these sections lasted for about a mile, the other about twice that, and they consisted of hard-packed mud and stones, plus of course, a few miles of the obligatory grass up the middle. This was definitely not sports bike territory. Fortunately, nothing came the other way, and I've fed my 'thoughts' on the route back to my friend.

I use Booking.com a lot and I found a nice quiet country house for a couple of nights that was not too far from the Dales and was perfect for my round trip the following day. I always check first on *Google Maps* that places actually exist and what their exact location is, and using 'street view', I saw that my chosen house had a gravel drive. I thought no more about it as it had only a gentle slope and was a consistent even surface, and I decided that it would present no difficulty – smooth operation of controls and steady



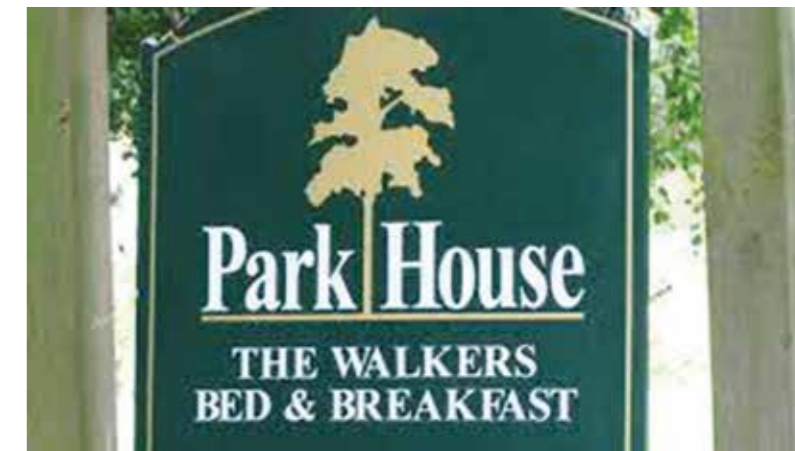
The road to Park House

progress would suffice. However, (weren't you just expecting that?) postcodes cover quite an area and one farmhouse can look much like another, and when I reached what I thought was my destination, there was no sign of the B&B name that I expected. I knocked on the door and was given directions to the correct farmhouse by the very patient owner, who had been asked the same question many times before. Remounting, I headed back along his level drive before turning right to go further up the hill as directed, and this was where the route became too rural for me and my Ninja. The access road was single track, and steep and rough for much of it, with deep ruts, gravel and larger stones. However, with only a couple of twitchy moments I remained upright and was welcomed warmly at the correct farmhouse. It's just off the Coast-to-Coast path and I'm sure that the walkers' boots are far better suited to the tracks around here than my Pilot Road 4 GTs.

I was not looking forward to the descent the following morning for my circular day trip and I brooded on the matter, considering my options: should I leave my bike at the bottom of the hill upon return and walk with my luggage the half mile up the worst of it or cancel taking the bike out altogether and have a gentle walk instead? Come the morning I grasped the nettle, loaded up with nearly empty panniers to take most of the impact should the unfortunate happen, gritted my teeth and set off. I found the descent easier. Perhaps that's due to physics or maybe practice. The day's ride was very enjoyable, but eventually came the decision about going up the track when I got back. I thought, 'Sod it, go for it' and did just that, and picking a slightly better path through all the rough stuff I had no little 'moments' at all. Given all this practice, the final descent the following morning with full luggage presented no problem.

I had a chat with the landlady about the access road and she said that I wasn't the first biker to visit, but

she didn't say what the others were riding nor if any of them had dropped their machines. I politely suggested that there should be a warning on the website for motorcyclists to avoid the place unless they are adventurous and ready for a challenge; riding there is not for the faint-hearted. The following questions should be asked: how much damage will be done if I drop my bike, and, if travelling alone, can I pick up my heavy touring bike? For the record, the place is Park House at Ingleby Arncliffe.



There's a clue here, it begins with 'w'



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TWO ASSOCIATES RIDE TO PETERBOROUGH

Louise Thompson and Paul Chambers watched and were watched, and sometimes they waited

The Peterborough training event is open to everyone – associates, green badge holders, observers, masters candidates – anyone who wishes to polish up his or her riding skills. The large group is sub-divided into small units of three, each unit comprising one observer and two 'observees', and we both found that it was a great training method because you get to be both observed and to observe the observer and the other rider in your little group, and you also hear the feedback provided to each other.

Paul

The weekend started really well with a check-in to make sure that we had everyone who had signed up. This was followed by safety checks on riders and machines, and finally with the rider briefings about what to do, what not to do, and other important information.

We set off with me as the observed rider and the other Paul (Aspinall) as the observer, with Louise as third man following behind observer Paul. I missed a turn early in the ride, tried a U-turn in the road to get back to the others, missed my footing on gravel and dropped the machine on the right side. Great assistance from other vehicle drivers at the scene helped return my bike to an upright position, albeit with a bent rear brake pedal. I went back to the turning I had missed, rejoined the other two and with observer Paul's help straightened the brake pedal, and we continued on our way.

Both Louise and I had mirror issues on this run: mine was not set for observed riding while Louise had a wandering nearside mirror that was determined to give her a selfie. Both of these problems were again sorted with Paul's help, and fortunately, the rest of my observed ride was generally uneventful. After a short break with feedback from Paul on my riding, it was my turn to take up position as third man while Louise was observed.

This is where you might eat on a Peterborough run...

Louise

This was my first group ride, and although I had been a KAMG member for some time, I hadn't realised that as an associate you can join most of the events by logging on to Tracker. I should have asked the question earlier. I was a bit nervous about the ride to be honest, but both Pauls in my team were really friendly and funny, so I relaxed. I had already learnt a lot from following the Pauls and thinking about any questions I had regarding position, gears, speed and so forth. You do have to bear in mind that sometimes the observer will have to take a different position in order to watch what his observed rider is doing and, as third man, you do not necessarily need to follow his 'observing' positioning.

Off we go, and not that far up the road my mirror did the selfie thing, which is great if stationary and you want to see how you look – cool biker – but not so great if you are trying to see your observer and discover whether or not you should be turning at any point on the road. I was forced to find a safe

location to stop and fix the problem, and after discussion we realised that it was my hand shield that was causing the mirror to vibrate and undo itself. We took the hand shield off and Paul C stored it in his top box.

One of the many things I am trying to improve is getting up to the national speed limit on country roads, and gradually I became more confident in my positioning, and finally, towards the end of my observed ride, hey presto 60 mph, and it didn't feel too fast. Then, having reached 60, up popped a 40mph sign. Drat. Apparently, observer Paul cheered when he heard the oomph from my engine as I finally got up the courage to get past 50mph. I think you can guess what my feedback would have been – yes, of course you can: it would have been add more sparkle and get up to that limit, especially as the riding conditions were mostly good.

Our lunch stop was the Platform One Café at Clare Castle Country Park – great food and decent tea – and then it was all change. Not only did we

swap places, with me again in third man position, but we also changed to a new observer, Roger Lancaster. This changing of observers is valuable because although some feedback will be the same, each observer picks up something different about your riding and is able to offer different help, aiding you in your quest to be a better and safer rider.

Paul

My second observed ride was OK after a short stop to discuss and review limit points and my P1, P2, P3 positioning on bends. Then we stopped for ice-cream and feedback at the Twenty Pence Garden Centre, and after that it was time for Louise's second observed ride, which was the final one before we reached the overnight hotel stop. This is when



... and this is what you might learn about the Twenty Pence Garden Centre

everything started to happen: Louise's Indian Scout (which she calls Yoe), started to develop a strange fault. First of all, it wouldn't start, which confused Louise as she had charged it overnight and it was full in the morning, plus we had already done around 120 miles that day. So, out came my jump-starter pack and, although reluctant, Yoe did eventually start. Further down the road it became apparent that there was still a problem as it was like watching a bucking bronco from my viewpoint, and Louise said it was like riding one too. We stopped in a safe location to discuss options, and at this point the bike's clocks looked like fairy lights with every warning light being illuminated.

Observation was suspended because of the machine issues and, after another jump start, we set off, albeit going more slowly and on a modified route. We were joined by our Safety Officer, Nicola, and this was really helpful as we were not able to ride to national speed limits and it meant that we were able to protect each other. By



... this is what you might eat...

about 6.30 there were only 21 miles to the hotel, and although Yoe was still misbehaving it was rideable, so we decided to continue to the hotel. Then, disaster! With only three miles to go before we reached our destination, we were on the slip road approaching a dual carriageway when the bike cut out completely and refused to restart, even with the jump pack. There was nothing further we could do, other than to call the recovery service for assistance.

Louise tried to get through to the AA, which is her recovery service, and she was in a queue for 30 minutes being told by recorded message that she was a priority, but no one actually spoke to her. I suggested trying my recovery company and my call was answered in two rings, and we had assistance within 15 minutes of the call. Steve Riches and Colin Underwood came to relieve Roger and Nicola, and they brought water supplies too. Another rider, not a KAMG member, also stopped to see what was going on and to check that we were all OK. The bike was recovered in the back of a van, and we were on our way again... or not: I had left my hazard lights on and managed to drain my battery. Arghh! A jump start later and we really were off. Hurray.

Louise and I finally arrived at the hotel to a round of applause from everyone

else. They had organised a late meal for us and the hotel (Premier Inn) had been really accommodating and had kept staff on to cook our food fresh, which was really appreciated. Great food and a couple of drinks later and it was time to call it a day. We slept like logs.

Louise

On Sunday morning there was another change of observer, this time to John Gardiner. John and Paul were happy to wait for the AA to come and change the battery on my bike, and if it turned out to be a worse mechanical fault, John would make sure that I got home as a pillion. I hadn't expected that, and combined with all the support I received from the all observers, from Paul Aspinall and Nicola the day before and the warm welcome at the hotel from our fellow members the night before, it showed what a great community KAMG is.

The AA came this time and we didn't need a new battery after all; it turned out that the problem was actually a loose earth strap. Another check to add to my POWDERS before ride-outs. Then, after a complicated reset of the battery, we were ready to go – the last to leave.

I was first up for the observed ride, and after I allowed myself to trust Yoe – now no longer bucking – my ride proceeded without any further



complications. I did see a local biker swoop around a bend at 60mph and I asked myself why I couldn't do that, which prompted me to ask John one or two questions about cornering that I wasn't clear about, and he told what he thought I wasn't doing and it gave me something to practice when I was next in my third man role. All was well, and I bet you are thinking that nothing else could go wrong...

Paul

Well, off we go, and this time it was my bike that started playing up and wouldn't accelerate properly or rev above 5000rpm; it felt like it had 'lost' a cylinder. (Actually, after getting it home and investigating, it turned out to be a 'lost' coil.) We found somewhere safe to stop and discuss things with John, and we agreed to make our way directly to the final meeting spot.

On the way we managed to join the main group who were using the marker system at a roundabout on the A10. John and I had space

at the roundabout to get out, but Louise was a few bikes behind. And she said that all of a sudden she was trying to determine which observer was John – all the observers have OBSERVER tags on their backs – the one that she should be following. However, we watched the rest of the group disappear into the distance as I could only manage 50mph, and then Louise's bike started to tell her that she was nearly out of petrol, although she at first thought that it couldn't be right, as she hadn't done enough miles. Safety Officer Nicola was behind Louise, and when Louise saw a petrol station she beeped and popped in to fill up, followed by Nicola. It seems that the reset of the computer after the battery fiasco had reset the

mileage, so it was just as well that she stopped to fill up.

Conclusion

Please don't be put off by this catalogue of incidents as overall we both had a very enjoyable weekend away. It was great organisation; the routes were lovely with a nice mixture of roads; the weather held, and we received great feedback from being observed and we also learnt from following the observed rider. We both recommend this weekend training jaunt. Thank you to all involved.

(Footnote from Paul: he says that Louise is already looking out on next year's calendar to book again. Be warned, he says, in case you don't want to be teamed up with her!)

Note: There will be two Peterborough Training Weekends next year: one on 7th and 8th of May, and the other on the 1st and 2nd of October. If you want to ride on either of these please contact the Chief Observer or register on Tracker.

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