Editors Ramblings

Another month not getting out on the bike due to various reasons, yet again one of them being the weather as I write this it is horizontal snow coming past my window!

But hurrah Neil Jewell has been out and has submitted a great article on his day out with MCN and Rapid Training. Chris's Three Amigos Tour also continues – thanks guys.

Your memories of the summer? I know it is a long time since then but a review of something you did or used or just a photo or little story or even a winter tale. Please do not be shy any contribution is welcomed.

Remember we have our Facebook page – please join and contribute on it - Only for club members – any weird names or business names let us know so we can allow you to join the page. https://www.facebook.com/groups/362204533842150/

Email me on biker5chef@yahoo.co.uk or 07590596380 for WhatsApp sending pictures or texts or phone!

The Highlander

South Cheshire Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter March 2020

1994 to 2019

A Word from the Chair

The time has come for me to step down as chair at our AGM this month, I have not been able to give as much to this role as is required so it is time for a new chair to take the reins of this fantastic group. It has been an honour to be chair in the twenty fifth anniversary year and see the committee have a fresh look to it which has been great to see with the new ideas they have brought with them.

I shall continue on the committee (if elected!) and publish the newsletter for the next year but I hope we can get a replacement editor in twelve months' time as I only have so many ideas to put into the newsletter myself. If we can get a regular supply of articles one a month etc then that makes the life of being Ed so much easier!

Chris Steel has arranged with J&S to run three promotional events leading up to the Spring Advanced Riding course. They are: -

10 till 4.0 Sunday February 23rd - DONE

10 till 4.0 Sunday March 8th

10 till 4.0 Sunday March 22nd.

All members are welcome to attend and help with the recruitment drive. Members don't have to attend all day but any time they have available, even a couple of hours, will be appreciated.



Happy riding everybody, stay safe - Gordon

Please contact me with any queries you may have 07590596380

Presidents Page

This Month has been short and quiet, so very little to report, I arranged a course promotion event at J&S on Sunday 23rd February, to everyone that turned up to assist many thanks it was appreciated, unfortunately the day started with continuous rain, followed by gusting wind and very low temperatures. To this end there was little interest being shown, we had a couple of prospects, one was already booked on our Spring Course, he was trying to interest his wife in joining the course, so we will have to see, due to the poor weather conditions we called it a day at 2.30, I had not been feeling well all day, so was glad to get home and get into a warm bath.

I went to the Doctors following the J&S event, and was told I had shingles, if you have had shingles, you know how I am feeling, if not then get yourself vaccinated, it is very painful, apparently when you have chickenpox as a child the virus remains in the nerve near the spine and when you are older reactivates, in the form of a very sore and painful rash, and it can be anywhere on the body, mine is back and chest, so not visible to the public,

On a more positive note I am pleased to announce that Phil Buckley has applied for the position of Assistant Chief Observer, this appointment will be approved by the committee at the April meeting, I would like thank Phil for his commitment and to welcome him to the team.

That is all from me for this month, short and sweet, so until next month, safe riding.

Chris Steel

President

Inform News – available on IAM Roadsmart website news

RoadSmart is starting a regular groups gallery featuring the best pictures from events and gatherings from around the country – email to roadsmart@iam.org.uk

No new smart motorways until they are 'guaranteed safe' says IAM RoadSmart

IAM RoadSmart has welcomed reports that the Government intends to halt all smart motorway building – stating they must be guaranteed safe before any further public money is invested in them.

Too tired to ride?

https://www.iamroadsmart.com/media-and-policy/news-and-insights/blog-post-details/too-tired-to-ride/2020/02/18/too-tired-to-ride-tips-from-iam-roadsmart

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell

In my persistent quest to become the best rider I can be, I seek training wherever I can get it. So when I spotted an advert in Motorcycle News (MCN) a few months back I thought I'd send in my details and I thought nothing else of it. The advert was to spend a day at MCN with Rapid Training for a Rider Clinic Feature article.

Who are Rapid Training? Rapid Training, established in 1997 are, in their own words,

> *Revolutionising the world of advanced motorcycle training. All the coaches are Police Class 1 Riders and they are the go-to training company for professional riders including the KTM team and the majority of the UK's Motorcycle Press.*

Read all about them at www.rapidtraining.co.uk/about

I have been out with Rapid Training before, once in May 2018 down in Aylesbury which I found enlightening. Here's an extract of the feedback from the day…

> ***General Comments***
>
> *On his initial ride Neil put together a pacey, assertive ride that was fast and effective. Neil covered ground quickly, slower moving traffic was overtaken decisively although there was room to 'soften' the overtakes. Neil has an imposing bike with a loud exhaust and left people in no doubt that they had been overtaken!*
>
> ***Areas for Improvement***
>
> *Neil already has plenty of pace in his ride and delivers his ride accurately and consistently. The main area that I feel Neil could develop his riding style is to make his delivery more subtle. At present his ride is self-assured and confident, no bad thing, but at times it can border on being 'bullish'. Take care that overtakes are accomplished smoothly rather than just pushed through. At present the ride feels a little speed dominated and if Neil can build in a little more space and composure, I believe the overall result will be a quieter, more efficient riding style.*

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell



The Second time on 25th Jan 2020 was for a cornering masterclass near York.

Unfortunately, that session was cut short because one of our group ended up in a ditch. Seems like he caught a cat's eye on a greasy road and lost the front. He was wearing the right kit and after a trip to York Hospital was diagnosed with sprained ankle and a broken indicator and lightly scuffed plastics. The *What 3 Words* app directed the ambulance right to us. If you have a smart phone you should download and learn to use that app.
I had totally forgotten about that I was on the list for MCN volunteers so I was very pleased when I received an email from them saying that my name has come up and can I get to MCN headquarters in Peterborough on Monday 10th Feb. a very quick check of the work diary and my reply was, "Totally. Absolutely. YES!" I booked the day off work and started to get excited.

I was to meet at the Peterborough office at 09:15 all ready for a 6-hour day of riding. We (there would be two of us trainees) would each have a ride in front of the Rapid Training coach and be interviewed for the paper and also at some point meet up with the photographer for some action shots. Not bad I thought as a standard day out can be up to £250 and this was for free.

I left home at 06:00 on a cold wet day, forgot to but the bins out, returned then left again at 06:10. Serious rain had been forecast for the afternoon, but I'd worry about that then. At least the 2.5-hour ride there gave me time to put some practice in and try out my battery powered heated socks.

Watch the ride there, here… https://youtu.be/eZBxk0iJj9g (6mins)

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell

I was thinking about the route, the A50 was dispatched with ease, the usual snarl-ups on the roundabouts were sliced through. The usual snarl up around Nottingham was sliced through and I decided to keep to the bigger roads rather than via Melton Mowbray on the most excellent A6006 and even more excellent B676 so filtered through Nottingham and over to Grantham then down the A1. The A1 was at a standstill so I filtered for a solid 20 minutes that's great for sharpening observation and slow control. If you like filtering as much as I do have a look here https://youtu.be/hnXTIbu03Lk (18mins)

I eventually arrived at MCN and was treated to a coffee and we met the reporter and the Rapid Training Coach and discussed the day ahead. We were asked about riding history and what we hoped to achieve from the day. I mentioned that I may have done some advanced training before and that I'd like to see if there is anything I can improve on but mostly I was keen to really polish my ride. I was after that utopia of quiet efficiency.



Left to right. The other chap, the reporter, the photographer, the coach.

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell



It hadn't started raining yet, so a loose plan was to ride around and find some nice roads, we'd take turns being followed by the coach, with the reporter tagging on behind. We'd stop for lunch somewhere and meet up with the photographer and also do the interview for the article, then after lunch look for a suitable place to shoot photographs that would illustrate what we found during the ride. Get the photos done before the rain comes. That didn't happen.

We drew straws to see who would go first and I was happy to go second so being third man in the group of 4, I could suss out the others and relax into the day. We had a good ride around some nice places. Mostly in the Stamford area, so some big A road and some tiny B roads. This gave us all lots of opportunity to do our best while being assessed by a coach with a very critical and keen eye.

They aren't called Rapid Training for nothing and some good "progress" was had by all. After around 30 minutes I was called to the front of the line. The coach and us two trainees had radios and were being directed where to go but there was no coaching while riding. So, with my turn at the front and with all the previous feedback and training and comments in the back of my mind I set off to ride the perfect ride.

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell



Now we all know that doesn't exist, but I wasn't going to make fault finding easy on the coach. All of the advanced riding techniques were utilised including a few that the IAM disapprove of. I was feeling pretty good about myself; I was being safe, swift, progressive, responsible, smooth, decisive and professional. I got out of position once, for about 10 seconds when planning an over-take out of a right-hander. Like I said, there's no such thing as the perfect ride.

We stopped for the feedback and yes, he picked me up on being out of position for a few seconds but was very complimentary about everything else. I believe he even used the phrase, "best he's ever seen" but I don't like to mention that.

The articles in MCN follow a pattern, they are a 2-page spread and have a definite before and after feel. We decided that my before situation would be about being too complacent with what's going on. Being so used to hazards that they're no longer deemed a hazard. It was a great piece of feedback and one that we can all take on board. I certainly have. It's best explained with the safety bubble analogy. Imagine your safety bubble is a balloon.

A Day Out with MCN and Rapid Training by Neil Jewell

You blow a balloon up and it's all big and shiny and you keep it safe. You work on keeping it safe because if anything nasty and pointy comes too close it could spell disaster. Now imagine that balloon of safety hasn't been touched by anything, ever. It will start to deflate, get smaller, less care is being taken, not through recklessness but through complacency. Nothing has ever happened to my balloon so I can stop worrying about it, right? The balloon becomes smaller, and still nothing happens. That's got to be good right?

Wrong. The hazards are still as big as they have always been, the pointy balloon-bursting befuddled drivers are still as dangerous as they have always been. So give them the respect that you once did and protect your balloon. Put some more air in it. Remember to keep it as far away from bad things as you can.

Here's the full video of my ride out https://youtu.be/FcJoyntngjk

New Associates This Month: -



David Lewis

Andrew Dovey

Neil Stewart

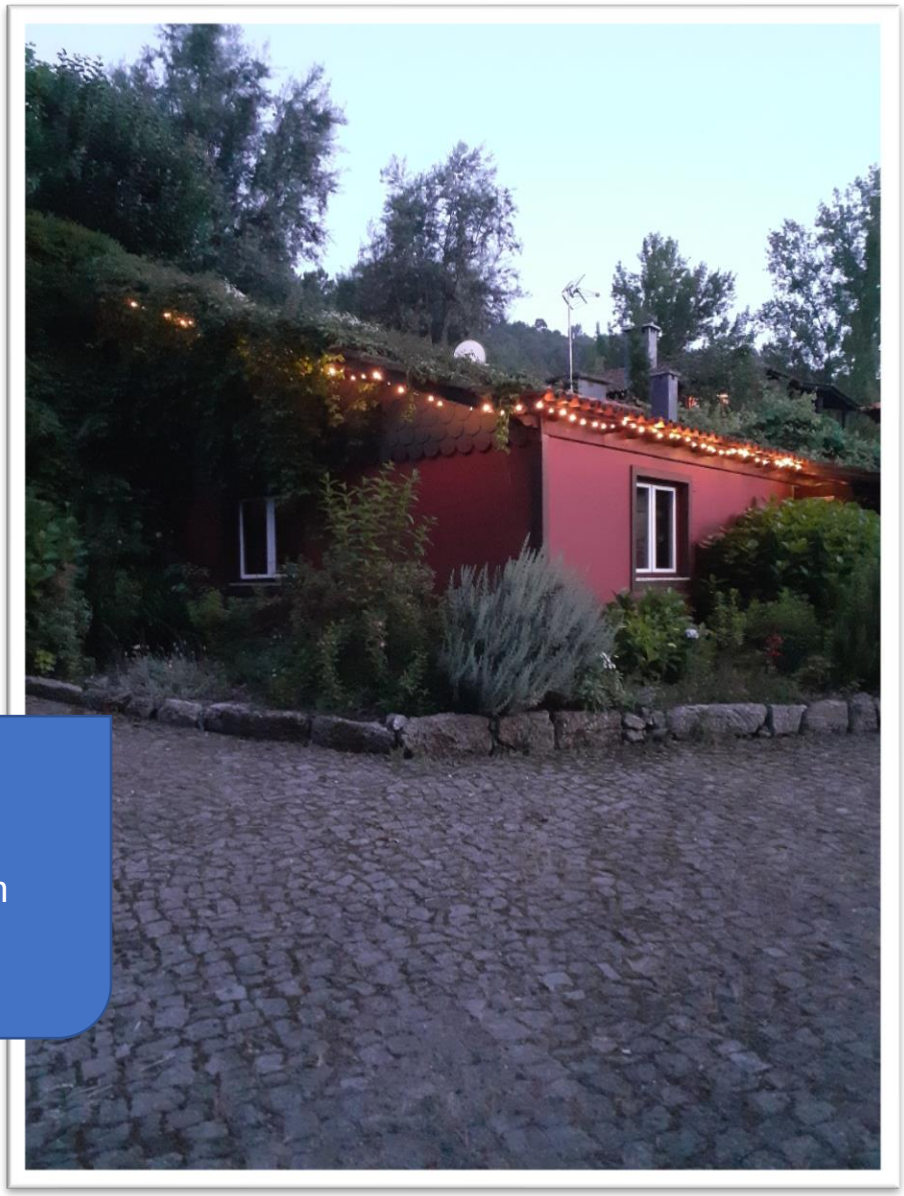
Tim Holloway

Lee Williams

Five Amigo's Go to Spain – by Chris Steel Part Two

Tuesday 25th June, having had a comfortable night's sleep we met in the restaurant and had a leisurely breakfast, studying the map and working out a scenic route to Amarante, which would be our base camp for the next three nights, other residents having breakfast seemed bemused at these foreign people eating breakfast while engrossed in studying maps, well mad dogs and Englishmen as they say.

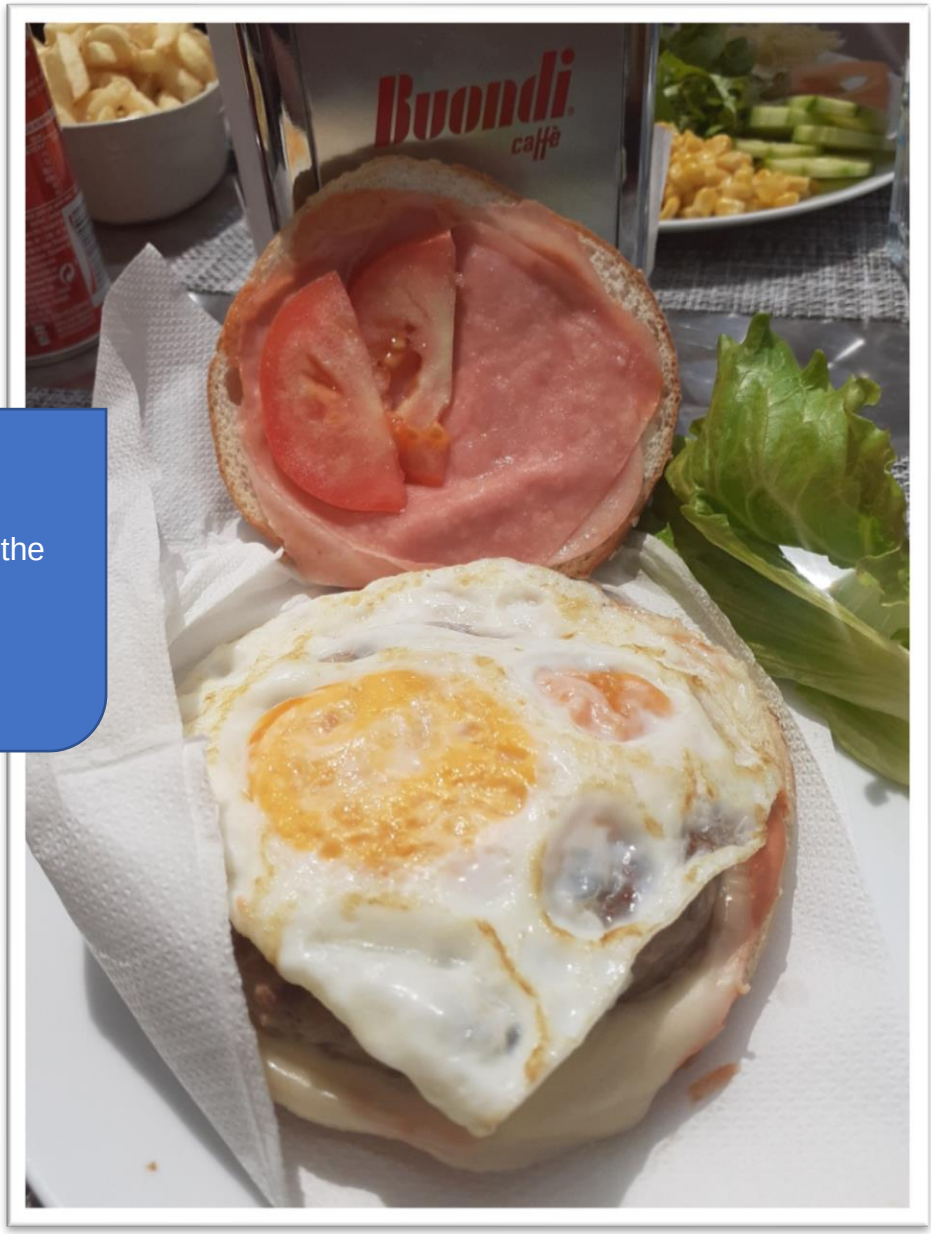
Route sorted, pay the bill and load up the bikes, then there is the usual programming of the sat nav, and the sat nav not recognising the information you are putting in, eventually we set of into the Vallodolid rush hour traffic, eventually having managed to annoy a few drivers we find ourselves in the open country side with the city just a fading sight in the rear view mirror, the route took us through scenic countryside and villages where time has stood still for decades, we stopped in a village for coffee and the locals stare at you as if you have come from another planet, they are however friendly just bemused, the great thing about stopping in the middle of nowhere the coffee is less than a euro each, eat your heart out Costa.



Amarante Accomodation

Five Amigo's Go to Spain – by Chris Steel

Having sorted the next section of the route out we head off again, the sun is shining and the temp about 27 degrees, fabulous, this is what it is all about, quiet roads, sunshine and scenery, I wax on about the quiet roads and sunshine, but it just continues to be fabulous, all I can say is, just get yourselves booked on a Spanish riding holiday, we had lunch in a nice little village, the food is good and basic, they have a menu al dias, menu of the day three courses for ten euros, having had our repast, it was the final push to Amarante, we arrived in Amarante about 3.30, then the fun began, Ian had some directions which we followed, and were left looking at a wall, we thought let's ask a local, we found a man who had just put something in his van and was closing the rear doors, Ian engaged him in fluent gibberish, and showed him the address, he nodded knowledgeably and gesticulated for us to follow him, he was obviously some ex rally driver as the speed he set off at was interesting borderline insane, after about five minutes he pulled over and pointed to a road on our right, "dos kilometres" he exclaimed three times, waving and saying, mucho gracias,



Just a little snack on the way to Amarante

Five Amigo's Go to Spain – by Chris Steel

we rode up the road, after two kilometres, nothing a cross roads, tensions were starting to run high now, we spotted a group of old ladies, or was it covern, chatting over a wall, we asked for assistance, and despite they not understanding us, and we not understanding them, by a process of sign language and gesticulations, it was a case of follow the road until it goes ninety right, and ninety left, between the two ninety degree bends on the left is a drive going downhill, take that and there you are, this we did and hey presto a sign said Quinta da Pousadela. We descended the steep drive with a ninety degree left half way down and rolled into our accommodation for the next three nights, it turned out to be a working vineyard where the young couple who owned it had converted the outbuildings in to self contained accommodation units, to add additional income. Having checked in and been shown to our accommodation, it was time to unpack, take a look at our surroundings and have a drink, the evening meal was a set meal, so what you got. was what you were given. As the meal was not till seven we just chilled out and had a few drinks, we got talking to the man who owned the vineyard and it turned out he led organised off road tours from here, a thousand kilometres with less than 100 kilometres of tarmac, he offered to do us a route for each day we were there, just pop in and see him after breakfast, this was too good an offer to refuse.

We enjoyed a nice evening meal in the picturesque restaurant overlooking the vines, having been well fed and watered we retired to our hacienda, and prepared for the next day.



Our nights stop at Amarante

More next Month

Chris

Club Events

MONTHLY CLUB NITE

Last Thursday of the month at the Hawk Inn in Haslington by Crewe.
Our own version of Conversation Street, I'm sure there will be plenty of discussion and maybe some of it repeatable too! 8pm onwards all welcome.



Group Events

AGM – Thursday 19th March 2020 – The Hawk Haslington 7:45 -8pm

Sunday Ride Outs – it's 10am from Costa Coffee at the Grand Junction Retail Park - CREWE - arrive early with a full tank of fuel. Usually 150-200 miles but if you want to do a shorter one we will not take offence at you turning back early.

Wednesday Evening Ride Outs – Finished till Spring

Last Thursday of the month – Club Night – The Hawk Haslington - 8pm onwards.

Please support this as we will be looking on closing this if we do not get any takers!

Other Events of a two-wheeled nature

7-8th March – Scottish Motorcycle Show – Royal Highland Centre

8th March – MotoGP Round One – Losail – Quatar

13-15th March – WSB – Losail – Quatar

22nd March – MotoGP round Two – Burinam Thailand

27th March – The London Bike Show – ExCeL London

27-29th March – WSB – Jerez - Spain

28th March - Manchester Bike Show – Event City Manchester

29th March – Darley Moor Racing – Darley Moor Derbyshire DE6 2ET

Piston Points Trophy - Reminder

Back in the day we commissioned this from Crewe Honda so we can reward members for contributing time or effort towards social activities, newsletter articles, attending club runs etc. Points are weighted towards the newsletter so 10 points for a full article and 2 points for each photo published, 2 points for responding to an article. Attending a club run will get 1 point – so lots available throughout the year there. Arranging a social event is 10 points attending one 2 points. Dave Coomber is letting me know who is out on rides so I can count these. If anyone is out on a ride without Dave let me know the date and who was out.



That's all this month

Hope you all get out on your bikes to give us some more stories

The Highlander