

Escaping to France

# SOUTH CHESHIRE ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS June/July Newsletter 2024

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*The newsletter is a bimonthly publication. The next one will be issued in September 2024*



## News and Diary Dates

**Keep abreast of upcoming activities and dates by regularly checking the Facebook page of the South Cheshire Advanced Motorcyclists Group.**

### Committee meetings

18 July at Warmingham Village Hall, CW11 3QL at 7.30pm. All members are welcome to attend and observe or, if you wish, to join the committee. The post of Vice Chair is still vacant. Nominations please.

### Associate training

All group training sessions start at Costa, Jack Mills Way, Shavington, Crewe CW2 5UZ at 9am.

### Social Rides every:

**Sunday 9.00am** Co-ordinated by Dave Coomber (01270569439)  
Meet at Shavington Costa, Jack Mills Way at 9am.

**Tuesday 9.30am** Coffee and Ride, meeting at Costa, Jack Mills Way, Shavington, Crewe. Co-ordinated by Howard ([howard.payne163@gmail.com](mailto:howard.payne163@gmail.com)). Come for coffee and a chat even if you are not riding.

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### Forthcoming Social Events

**Socials:** Social second Monday in the month meetings will restart in October. Keep a lookout for an announcement nearer the time.

**Breaking news** – Friday 21 February 2025: Steve Parrish, former bike racer, commentator and raconteur will be coming to entertain us. 19.00h, Sandbach Rugby Club.

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**Look smart!** Embroidered SCAM leisure wear.

<https://customsportskit.co.uk/other-clubs/south-cheshire-advanced-motorcyclists/>

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**For Committee contacts** and newsletter back-numbers see:

<https://www.southcheshiream.org.uk>

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## Lighter metal

As I absent-mindedly wandered into the dog groomers for a haircut, I thought it was time to get my act together. A few hours reverse parking practice at Grand Junction did the trick and with renewed vigour I set about the newsletter preparation. At this time of year, SCAM members are venturing all over the UK and mainland Europe on various quests for enjoyment that only two-wheels can generate. Some of the stories are recounted in this newsletter and I am sure there will be more to come for later issues.

Adventures inevitably befall bikers venturing into mainland Europe. Bizarre experiences on a trip to the Schwarzwald included being trapped in an underground car park, an outbreak of GPS conflicts, the last man stranded at an autoroute peage, a narrowly averted battle with Lotus drivers competing for hotel parking and interminable UK Border Farce delays at the Chunnel. If plied with beer, I will happily fill in the detail.



Saturday 8 June was Dave's day, an amazing bikers' celebration of Dave Myers' - a life well lived and shared. Police estimated 45,000 bikes, organisers estimated around 25,000 converging on Barrow to pay tribute. The whole UK population seemed to be involved in an outpouring of good feeling and respect. I stood on a motorway bridge with Dave Lewis and a goodly crowd cheering groups of madly waving bikers as they headed northwards. Trucks and cars also joined in the selfless, noisy celebration. That day bikers were the kings of the road and we could all feel proud of the fellowship.

*Editor*



## **Chairman's Report**

The IAM price hikes are hitting us hard, with the rider course now clocking in at £215. This could be affecting the number of associates revving through our ranks. Or, it might be the relentless poor weather, soaring cost of living, insurance premiums (do not even mention insurance to our Group President), and the sky-high price of tyres that are making people think twice about booking advanced rider courses. It is a nationwide trend, and we are not alone in this struggle.

The IAM has put out a call for groups to volunteer for Rider Development Sessions. These will be 4-hour sessions with an observer, completely free of charge. Reading between the lines, this might nudge participants to book a course down the road. These sessions are initially on a 3-month trial period, and the select few groups chosen to deliver them will need to report back to headquarters. We are throwing our helmets into the ring and volunteering to be part of this trial. Stay tuned for updates.

The skittles evening was a roaring success, despite a hiccup with the food orders and, to be honest, a rather disappointing turnout. Big thanks to Chris "Bomber" Steel for his stellar job on the scoreboard and to all the sticker-uppers for their hard work.

We want to rev up the social side of our group, so if you have any event ideas, please send them to Howard, our Social Secretary.

*Neil Jewell*

## **Message from the President**

Despite the Newsletter being bi-monthly, it soon comes round. I am sat here thinking what have I got to say, what have I done since my last ramblings? Apart from having done some Observing on the Spring course, not a lot.

I was preparing for my holiday to Spain with Ian Cunningham and John Brady at the end of June, concerned about the late arrival of my new bike. Having been told it would be mid-April, that became definitely the end of May. With seven days before my holiday, the new bike arrived. I had to run it in over a weekend and had it serviced the day before departure. This being my thirteenth GS and



being a 1300, do I have any fears of the number thirteen, no it is just a number. I had trouble getting insurance, and having spoken to the dealer so have a lot of others. I finished my message on returning from my holiday and the new bike is great. I may write an article later when I have a few more miles on the clock.

That is all from me, so until the next edition, safe riding.

*Chris Steel*

### **Message from the Membership Secretary**

As a group affiliated with IAM, our members must also be IAM RoadSmart members. If your IAM membership lapses, your group membership goes down with it. This means no more eligibility for group events like rideouts. Group membership fees of £12.50 are due on January 1st each year. We send a few reminders, but if dues are not paid by around March/April we assume you don't want to continue, and those members will be removed. Expired IAM RoadSmart members will also be dropped from group membership. While I'm on my high horse, a reminder: observer jackets should only be worn during observed sessions with an associate or while riding to and from these sessions. Those are the Rules.

If you think you will be affected by the above, please contact me to check.

*Neil Jewell*

## **Social Scene**

A kind invitation from Group secretary, Congleton and Macclesfield Advanced Drivers and Riders

**ETC, ABS, PCS, LDA. Baffled by the symbols and acronyms on your dashboard?** Come and hear what they all mean from an expert. Kindly hosted by Burns Garage. Wednesday 19 June 18.30; Car technology Burns Garage, Canal Road, Congleton. If attending and to help with catering, please let John Twigg know at [chairman@congletoniam.org.uk](mailto:chairman@congletoniam.org.uk)



## Social Second Mondays

As many of our members are rightfully spending the summer months swanning around the UK and the continent, looking after grandchildren, or spoiling their partners with exotic holidays, the second Monday in the month socials will not restart until October. Details will be announced at a future date.

On Friday 21 February 2025: Steve Parrish is coming to entertain us. Steve, born in 1953, is a former motorcycle and truck racer. He won numerous titles and moved on to manage the UK Yamaha motorcycle race team from 1987-1991. He started commentating in 1985, initially on motorcycle racing and later to include touring cars and the Red Bull air race series. This not-to-be-missed event will commence at 19.00h, Sandbach Rugby Club. Further information to follow.

## Features

### Solid white lines - the definitive position!

There is much folklore about solid white lines, when they can be crossed, and what the law is in relation to them. Here is the definitive position courtesy of Chris Dunn, Barrister.

#### **The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002**

(1) A road marking for conveying the requirements specified in paragraph (2) and the warning specified in paragraph (7) shall be of the size, colour and type shown in diagram 1013.1, 1013.3 or 1013.4.

The requirements conveyed by a road marking mentioned in paragraph (1) shall be that subject to paragraphs (3) and (5), no vehicle shall stop on any length of road along which the marking has been placed at any point between the ends of the marking; and

subject to paragraph (6), every vehicle proceeding on any length of road along which the marking has been so placed that, as viewed in the direction of travel



of the vehicle, **a continuous line is on the left of a broken line or of another continuous line, shall be so driven as to keep the first-mentioned continuous line on the right hand or off side of the vehicle.**

Nothing in paragraph (2)(b) shall be taken to prohibit a vehicle from being driven across, or so as to straddle, the continuous line referred to in that paragraph, if it is safe to do so and if necessary to do so:

- to enable the vehicle to enter, from the side of the road on which it is proceeding, land or premises adjacent to the length of road on which the line is placed, or another road joining that road;
- in order to pass a stationary vehicle;
- owing to circumstances outside the control of the driver;
- in order to avoid an accident;
- in order to pass a road maintenance vehicle which is in use, is moving at a speed not exceeding 10 mph, and is displaying to the rear the sign shown in diagram 610 or 7403;
- in order to pass a pedal cycle moving at a speed not exceeding 10 mph;
- in order to pass a horse that is being ridden or led at a speed not exceeding 10 mph; or
- for the purposes of complying with any direction of a constable in uniform or a traffic officer in uniform or a traffic warden.

The warning conveyed by a road marking mentioned in paragraph (1) shall be that no vehicle while travelling next to a broken line placed on the left of a continuous line, as viewed in the direction of travel of the vehicle, **should cross or straddle the first- mentioned line unless it is seen by the driver of the vehicle to be safe to do so.**

It is therefore a requirement that the rider must keep his moving vehicle in a position on a road governed by a double white line system so that at all times



the offside of the vehicle is on the nearside of the white lines while both white lines are continuous or where the nearside white line is continuous and the offside line is broken.

### **The Highway Code provides - Rule 129**

Double white lines where the line nearest you is solid. This means you MUST NOT cross or straddle it unless it is safe and you need to enter adjoining premises or a side road. You may cross the line, if necessary, provided the road is clear, to pass a stationary vehicle, or overtake a pedal cycle, horse or road maintenance vehicle, if they are travelling at 10 mph (16 km/h) or less.

The key word is “cross”. Nowhere in the legislation does it say “no vehicle or part of a vehicle must cross the white line”. The source legislation merely states that you must keep the continuous line on the right hand or off side of the vehicle. A Court would undoubtedly define part of your vehicle going over the line (panniers, wing mirror etc) as crossing the white line. So don't do it unless one of the exceptions in paragraph 6(a)-(h) above apply and it is safe and necessary to do so - otherwise you commit an offence.

The other issue that often arises relates to the definition of a stationary vehicle. Again, the law is settled in this regard. In Pinner v Everett (1977) 64 Cr App R 160 Lord Upjohn said (in respect of whether P was a "person driving or attempting to drive" at the time he was required to provide a roadside breath test) "It is not necessary that the vehicle should be in motion. A person is obviously driving although he may be in an almost interminable traffic block or waiting at a level crossing or at traffic lights or if he merely fills up with petrol; nor can it make any difference if in a traffic block he switches the engine off to prevent it overheating or to save petrol."

A stationary vehicle is not a vehicle actively queuing in traffic. If you cross or straddle a solid white line to overtake these vehicles that might be stopped but are not stationary for the purposes of the legislation, the driver or rider commits a road traffic offence. (Offence Code: RT88760 which carries a fine of £100 and three penalty points).





In addition, bearing in mind that solid white lines are there to prevent overtaking, usually because of the extremely hazardous nature of the road conditions, it may be that a more serious offence is committed (careless driving or dangerous driving) which could result in a greater penalty up to and including imprisonment for dangerous driving.

*Neil Jewell*

### **A real-time study of motorcycle crashes in the USA**

In August 2011, The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) and its member companies partnered with the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute to launch the world's first, large-scale, naturalistic motorcycle riding study, the MSF100 Motorcyclists Naturalistic Study. The researchers recruited 100 riders from age 21 to 79 in California, Arizona, Florida and Virginia.

During the 4-year study, data was collected from instruments installed on motorcycles owned by study participants as the bikes were ridden in normal day-to-day use. Sensors and video cameras recorded motorcycle operator inputs such as steering, acceleration, braking and lean, as well as recording motions of the motorcycle, current riding conditions and the actions of surrounding traffic. It was designed to track comprehensive, realtime routine riding that would likely include near crash, pre-crash, and actual crash data that had previously been unavailable. The motorcycle instrumentation was designed to be as inconspicuous as possible, so that participant-riders would forget their rides were being monitored.

The study collected over 366,000 mi (589,019 km) of riding data from 100 participants to investigate safe riding and crashes. The study identified factors that increased and decreased risk for riders based on observed crashes and near-crashes.

The dataset includes 30 crashes and 122 near-crashes, with a total of 152 events:

- The most common crash type is a ground impact at low speed, which is a unique dataset not found in traditional crash studies.



- Single vehicle conflicts often involve negotiating a curve, accounting for over half of all cases.
- Multi-vehicle crashes are most commonly rear-end collisions and sideswipes.
- Factors that significantly increase the risk of crashes and near-crashes include uncontrolled intersections, aggressive riding, and lack of knowledge or skill/inattention.
- Factors that decrease the risk include riding in urban areas and having a rear seat passenger.
- Instructional implications include emphasizing the importance of appropriate speed in curves, vigilance at intersections, and manoeuvring to avoid objects.
- Riding on gravel or dirt roads and on uphill or downhill grades increases the risk of crashes and near-crashes.

To find out more: [MSF 100 Motorcyclists Naturalistic Study - Motorcycle Safety Foundation \(msf-usa.org\)](https://www.msf-usa.org)

*Andy Gralton*

## **Take it or leave it?**

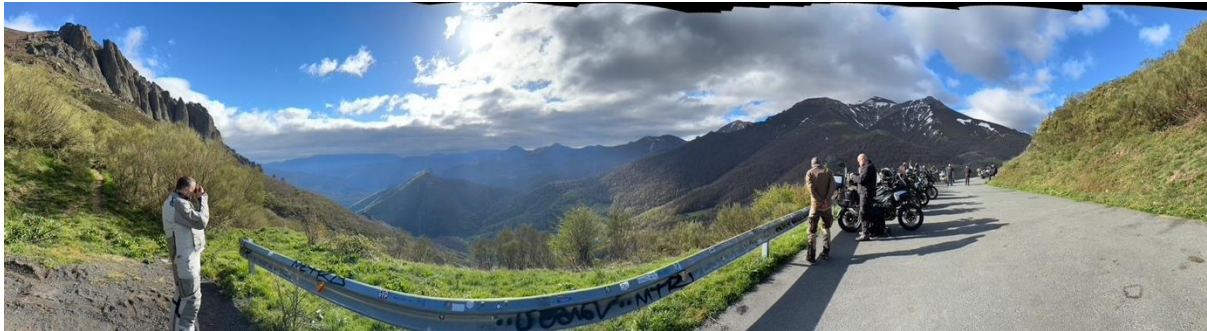
### **Andy reviews his gigantic kit pile after touring in Spain.**

In April 2025 I was fortunate enough to return to Spain and “The Pico’s Playtime” tour with Bruce Smart and Simon Weir (aka Chicken Strips Motorcycle tours). While the route was 80-85% the same as last years, the experience was once again an unforgettable adventure. A new bunch of lads, a new bike and quite a few different stops for coffee and dining locations, all of which made it a unique experience while familiar at the same time.

However, I have decided to focus on a more specific element of my trip i.e. what I take, how I take it and what I would do differently on my next trip.



There is a phrase, I think it is from three men in a boat, which is good to remember when packing - only take that which you can't do without, not what one could do with.



With that principle in mind, I decided I would break my kit down into 4 groups and reassess my needs.

### **Group one:**

Bike Tools and kit.

I am afraid I still take more than I need. Indeed, for myself the only thing that would have been of use is the tool kit, not to repair the bike but to reposition one of my camera mounts.

Essential:

Tyre repair Kit. I use the mushroom type; used three times, all with success

Tyre inflator: I have recently upgraded my kit to include a battery powered one. It also acts as an emergency battery bank.

Battery Starter pack. Nice bit of kit, a little big, but I have used it once to start my Goldwing after draining the battery while learning how to connect CarPlay and other toys. It worked a treat.

Basic Tool kit: I bought the Oxford Motorcycle tool kit; it only needed the addition of some Torx allen keys and a few cable ties to complete my requirements.

Less essential:

Items transported but never, to date, use include:



- Small bottle of engine oil, brake fluid, copper grease and lithium grease.
- A ratchet strap to be used for towing a bike
- Bag of fuses, both min and standard size,
- A collection of disposable gloves

**Group two:**

First Aid Kit:

Because of my profession, I take some kit that I would not suggest others necessarily take. Nevertheless, I have shared the following to encourage others to learn more about incident response.

How to approach an incident		
<b>D</b>	<b>ANGER</b>	Is it safe to approach, park your Bike in a safe spot, stop traffic hitting you and the casualty
<b>R</b>	<b>ESPONSIVENESS</b>	Are they: alert, only to voice, to pain, or unresponsive.
<b>S</b>	<b>END FOR HELP</b>	Call 999: the ambulance call handler will talk you through this, (know how to put your phone on loud speaker)
<b>C</b>	<b>ATASTROPHIC HAEMORAGE</b>	Is the casualty losing bright red blood fast (pressure washer vs hose pipe)
<b>A</b>	<b>IRWAY</b>	Is the airway open, (chin lift or jaw thrust depending on if you have someone with you)
<b>B</b>	<b>BREATHING</b>	Are they taking 2 breaths within 10 seconds? Place your cheek over their nose and mouth looking down towards their chest looking for movement and feeling of breath. Less than 2 breaths, you need to start CPR and decide if you are going to give breaths.
<b>C</b>	<b>IRCULATION</b>	If less than 2 breaths a minute start CPR 100-120 compressions a minute, if doing breaths 30 compressions to 2 breaths



Each section of **DRSCABC** in more detail:

**DANGER:** both for you stopping to help and that of the casualty. Sometimes it is better to stand and get someone else to stop and warn approaching traffic rather than go to your mate and you both get wiped out by a van coming around the corner.

**RESPONSIVENESS:** its useful to repeat this assessment during the event to identify changes (initially the adrenaline released can mask serious injuries). Just because Andy is alert when you first go to him does not necessarily mean that will always be the case. To assess and reassess responses use AVPU (below):

A: Alert: conscious, talking etc

V: Voice: responds to your voice or sounds around them

P: Pain: I would suggest you use the placement for non-First aiders, i.e., the person responds to you placing your hand on them (i.e. hand on shoulder, can you hear me).

U: Unresponsive: the person isn't responding to anything. Try to repeat this assessment every 10-15 mins

**SEND FOR HELP:** Call 999 or ask someone to do so. Once you are through to the control centre the team will be able to talk you through all of this, so don't worry (they will be cautious about asking you do too much).

**CATASTROPHIC BLEEDING:** this is where the casualty has suffered an injury which has resulted in a ruptured major artery. This type of bleeding can result in death very quickly. The best analogy I can think of is the pressure washer, imagine a hose pipe with the tap left on, that's the venous system and artery bleed would be like a pressure washer or if you pinched the hose to increase the pressure. If an artery is ruptured it's going to kill quicker than them not being able to breath. Simple examples would be if the casualty has part of their limb ripped off or they have a compound fracture.

Action: apply pressure for as long as you can, ideally 10 to 20 mins. Again, the ambulance caller will help you through it.



**AIRWAY:** Assess airway. If the casualty is crying or talking the air way is fine. If you can't tell or you can hear "snoring" type noises then it's about establishing an open airway. The tongue is a large and heavy muscle which when relaxed can block the entry to the windpipe. It is suggested that in a lot of mass casualty events, simply establishing an airway (recovery position) would save many lives. However, at this point is where the Ambulance caller will ask you to step aside, so the following is for you to determine if you feel comfortable to do or not. Ideally, if you are not alone you can place the casualty on their back and remove their helmet, check for removable cheek pads and use the technique taught on the biker down course, or see YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMH3S\\_HVvN0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMH3S_HVvN0)

Once on their back, helmet off, you have two options, jaw lift or chin lift:

**JAW LIFT:** if there is concern re a spinal injury and there are two people use this technique. It requires one person to lift the jaw up (and therefore the tongue) which creates an airway without moving the neck. Although as soon as the lift is stopped the jaw returns and the airway is going to block again and you require another person to do all the other elements.

**CHIN LIFT:** Place your hand under the chin and lift the head up to a point that the person would be if they were sniffing for a smell; it opens the airway but not so high it squeezes the airway closed. Once in position it is a relative stable position and should stay open.

**BREATHING:** Look listen and feel. Place your cheek over the persons mouth and nose with your eyes looking towards the chest. For an adult you would be looking for 2 breaths within 10 seconds. You should be able to feel their breath on your cheek and see their chest moving (even with fractured ribs, movement would still occur). If you see less than 2 breaths in 10 seconds you must choose whether to give them breaths or not. Obviously for family and children I am sure you would but if it was a stranger, you must consider the risk, which can be reduced by some the kit I carry (see below). If you are to going to give breaths, cover the mouth and nose (child) or mouth and seal the nose (pinch shut) and give a sigh type breath (slow constant) rather than a fast puff.



**CIRCULATION:** Don't bother to look for a pulse, it has been shown to waste time. The assumption is if breathing is less than 2 in 10 seconds you start CPR. Remove clothing from middle of chest and middle of sternum (flat chest bone) start chest compressions, 100-120 per minute (30 compressions to 2 breaths if you are doing them). Carry on until either the person starts to respond or the Emergency crew arrive. If you're doing it correctly, after about 10 mins you should be looking for someone to take over if available:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMH3S\\_HVvNO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMH3S_HVvNO)

### My first Aid kit:



Most first aid kit you can buy from Halfords etc are a starter but made to a price and tend to have lots of cheap items, bandages, plasters etc. They are better than nothing but I tend only to use them for the bag. Here is my kit but I've started with the items I would encourage everyone to get (all of which

are available via Amazon etc.)

A few pairs of latex type gloves

A silver foil blanket (to lay on the ground and wrap round the casualty).

Airway: I would recommend the keyring mouth protectors (sheet of plastic with a breathable square to cover the mouth - protects against vomits, body fluid). I take a face mask with an in-built filter and which can be attached to an ambu bag if needed (which I also take).



I take some sharp full-size scissors (to cut off clothing, dressings)

I take a trauma dressing (sometimes called an Israel Dressing) which is a pre-made dressing where some application of pressure is required. It has within it hooks to allow you to apply pressure as you tighten it; the pad also has blood clotting features.



I take a selection of meds (mainly paracetamol and Ibuprofen, but also stomach, hay fever etc), some burns gel, hot and cold packs, a selection of bandages and plasters, incl. blister) and a tourniquet.

I use a bag within a bag approach so If you need a blister plaster or a couple of paracetamols you are not having to get the trauma bandages etc out.

### **Group three: Clothing and toiletries**

Again, I keep this in bags within bags and have two sub sections one for an overnight ferry and one for trip.

I keep two small bottles of shampoo and shower gel (previous hotel toiletries) and my tooth brush, toothpaste, and deodorant in an overnight bag. My larger set has my bigger bottles, shaving kit and clothes washing liquid.

Main clothing includes, in addition to my riding gear, a second set of base layers, a pair of jeans, shorts, 4 days (including what I wear) worth of T-Shirts, socks and undies, a pair of shoes/trainers, a hat and spare ear plugs.

I tend to wash my kit every two days, it generally dries overnight.

### **Group four: Technology**

I wish I could keep this to the minimum (my Smart phone has much of the capability). However, I take the following:

Smartphone, Helmet Intercom, Sat Nav, Battery Pack (in addition to those within the jump start, and tyre inflator), EU to UK multi plug and USB port.

A collection of cables to enable these items to be charged overnight simultaneously.

Then the Cameras: Insta 360, GoPro 11, Go Pro 8, Battery charger and batteries for each of the above.







A selection of Camera mounts, poles etc, SD Cards, Portable SD Hard drive, MacBook Air.

Finally, the necessary paperwork: passport, insurances, travel, bike, breakdown recovery and my bank card.

Everything is systematically packed using the bag within a bag approach.



I use dry bags, with a large one for each theme and then each subsection into its own smaller bag

Finally applying limits to my packing: I always ensure that 80% of my kit fits in my panniers, as I like the top box to contain an empty rucksack, my security (X3 litelock) and my

ferry bag. This way, if the unexpected occurs, I can use the rucksack and create an empty top box.

All that remains is for me to reduce the technology down to my minimum.

To quote Mr Chicken Strips himself:

"A passport, credit card, phone and bike keys are all you really need."

That is not a level I feel comfortable with yet but I have not travelled as much as Bruce.

*Andy Galton*

## **The joy of insurance renewal**

### **"1066" AND ALL THAT!**

After 30 years employed in the world of insurance as an automotive engineer assessor, I was not surprised by the email which arrived lunch time Friday 19th April.

April 13<sup>th</sup> was renewal day for the Guzzi so a month before I received the



invitation to renew from my insurer, a well know company closely related to “1066,” I go on the comparison websites where I spend an hour answering the same questions many times. If only we could auto fill these forms!

Anyway, said 1066 price had gone up by more than I was happy with.

At this point I should point out that when I bought the Guzzi I also got a dolly so I could turn it in the garage. Well, the inevitable happened, the wheels on the dolly do not lock and I dropped the bike!

One very unhappy Howard.

I reported said claim to 1066 with the price of the parts. I then decided to withdraw the claim. Of course, it now shows as a fault claim because, in their words, they had done some work on my claim so it stays on my record even though they have not paid anything out. Lesson learned, never act in haste.

After much negotiation we arrived at an amicable price. I also asked them to reopen the claim which was fine with them and I received a cash in lieu settlement which did make me feel better. I was a partial winner because 1066 had paid out all for the sake of just reporting a claim. What sort of business is so short sighted?

Come Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> I received an email stating that my policy had been cancelled due the fact that “I had not replaced my motorbike!”

On close inspection this wasn't a spam! I checked the phone was fully charged and gave 1066 a call. This is the point when you know what you will be doing for the rest of the day, except that this took until the following Monday afternoon.

After 20 minutes of being told the obvious “that my call is important” and still not having spoken to a human being, I got Audrey's phone and set that one waiting to be answered and sure enough 30 minutes later I spoke to a human. You must feel sorry for them, it must be awful doing their job.

After a long time explaining, I got them to realise that they had messed up big time. Now this is the point I realised that common sense has no place in the world of computer systems The programmers may be very clever but not



necessarily the holders of common sense and being able to think out of the box. [Editor: I think the problem may really lie with those who write the specifications then keep changing their minds].

Just reinstate my policy and I shall go away happy! Oh no, the system can't do that. It will have to be a new policy. I'll put you through to that department. Another 20 minutes and I get to speak to a human again. We went through everything once more. The computer cannot give you a new policy. Yes, you guessed it another department another 20mins wait. Still no joy so I asked to speak to the people above the poor souls left to do all their dirty work for them. I think at this time I was losing the will to live especially when I was informed that these very superior beings do not speak to the customers. Don't forget this is all 1066's fault not mine and they are totally unable to rectify a simple paperwork error.

The final instruction I was given was to contact 4th Dimension as they handle the claims and it would be their mistake not 1066's.

Another phone call but this was answered straight away. Things were looking up, wrong! The person at the other said my bike was a total loss and was on the miafta register as such and nothing could be done until Monday as it was by this time 5.30pm.

As I was going to Spain on the bike the next Wednesday, urgent action was required. Emails were sent to both companies' CEOs and I insured the bike all over again with 1066 to keep things all under one roof. Funny how 1066's staff could not insure me but I could on MCN's comparison site although it did cost approx. £100 more.

The emails to the CEOs did the trick and Saturday morning I received a call from 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension apologising for the young man who I had been speaking to on Friday evening as he was new to the job.

It was made clear to me that the bike was never a T/L and was not on any register as being a T/L. The letter to 1066 clearly stated "cash in lieu" and he promised to sort everything out which he did and I received a call from one of the people



who do not speak to customers! 1066 apologised for the shambles, repaid for the policy they incorrectly cancelled, paid the difference between the two policies and some compensation. Being a sceptic, no doubt said compensation will be added to next year's premium.

Satisfaction came when their feedback email arrived for completion.

*Howard Payne*

## Rideouts

### Pie Quest

Richard (Downes) announced he was planning a tour of the high passes in the Lakes. My diary was strangely empty for two days. A rideout was born and a hotel booked. Meanwhile, clouds were gathering for a record deluge. I headed for the RV in pouring rain wishing I had put waterproofs over my alleged waterproof riding kit.

Plan A was switched to Plan B after a quick chat. Fortified by Starbucks, the intrepid duo headed north, dodging spray and unlit ghost vehicles. The sky lightened from dark grey to light grey. We had decided that a foray to Sportsbikeshop in Preston was in order to examine the latest in all-weather gear. I wrung my gloves out before entering the emporium only to be disappointed by the limited stock. At least we had a few minutes to dry out before heading for better weather in Longridge and the Trough of Bowland.

The Forest of Bowland never fails to impress. Conditions were perfect for riding, traffic was light. A dressing of cloud greeted us on the tops before descending to Caton and continuing to Wray for lunch. Light rain accompanied us to Kirkby Lonsdale then Sedbergh and Kendal. The high ground was hidden in cloud so all thoughts of high passes were shelved.

Tea and cream scones in Keswick were our reward for survival and persistence against all odds.



The mission morphed into an evaluation of wet weather equipment and a quest for the ultimate pie. The former and latter were discussed over a quart in the Coledale Inn at Braithwaite near Keswick. Home-made steak pie was ordered with some trepidation but it delivered in a big

way thus ensuring the trip, so far, could be hailed a great success.

It rained over night with marginal improvement in visibility the next morning. The outlook was unpromising. We headed for Penrith until turning right at Troutbeck for Patterdale. The rain held off as we cruised the valleys in clear air.

Ahead, a forbidding blackness was suddenly replaced by the revelation of Kirkstone pass (1489ft) in all its glory, a beautiful silver ribbon winding to the col. A glimpse of blue sky completed the picture as we swept upwards on perfect



tarmac. Such moments make unforgettable rides. We soaked up the ambiance by the Inn before turning right to descend “the struggle” towards Ambleside.

The delightful Lythe Valley route from Windermere was virtually traffic free and we rewarded our good feeling with coffee and cake at Levens Hall. Then, by the A6 to Carnforth to join



the M6 for an easy commute home. Not what we had planned but nevertheless a fulfilling rideout and a good test of rider, kit and bikes in sub optimal conditions.

## **PICOS and other Things**

When our ever-alert editor knew I was going on my annual bike adventure he requested an article.

My mind wandered back to childhood when a holiday review usually comprised a dreaded slide show on a Sunday evening, a fate worse than going to school.

Anyway, back to the subject. We were going from the end of April to the beginning of May. The ferry and the first two nights and last night hotels were booked. As for the rest we normally like to be free spirits and go where we fancy, either follow the weather, or if it is bad just find a hotel and hide from the rain. This suits us as we don't have to flog on for hours in pouring rain to get to the next pre booked residence. We have never had to sleep in a bandstand yet, although we did get very close to it once on a Bank holiday weekend in Germany. We did in the end find a "Holiday Inn" which had opened that morning but it was a bit pricey so we just had room only and McDonalds for breakfast!

Anyway, back to 2024 and it was to Spain. So that's warm weather, or is it? This is when yours truly messed up. I had taken the winter linings from my jacket and trousers and left my winter gloves at home - although I did have my old over gloves which prevent the gloves getting soaked in heavy rain and keeps the wind out. That was a win at least. I had applied my usual packing rule (Andy please note): get everything out that you want to take and leave 75% at home! Perhaps a little more thinking would have been a good idea and why the heck I took some shorts just goes to show that I was far too optimistic. After all it was April and it was northern Spain. Plus, there was a clue in the name of the destination "PICOS MOUNTAINS." We were never below 1000 metres above sea level so it was going to be cold. Thank heavens I had plenty of windproof kit.

It rained a bit and one day we left a large pool of water at a hotel reception as we negotiated the price! Overall, everywhere was very reasonably priced



including wine.

What was it like? The roads were excellent. Even though it occasionally reached minus four degrees on the top of the mountains, the road surfaces were great with no ice to worry about. It was also quiet as we were a bit early in the season so that was a win. The scenery was fantastic and the people friendly.

It is a short ride from Santander, you do not have to track half way across Europe. Once you are off the ferry you are on great roads. Shall we be going again? Too damn right we shall?

*Howard*

## **Return to the IOM 2024**

### **SCAM five go to the IOM.**

Last year I went to the IOM as part of TEAPOTONE's Patreon club. I did a summary about it in a previous newsletter. This time I decided to take a more proactive approach and proposed a group outing to the IOM via our SCAM Newsletter. I invited expressions of interest and got 3-4 responses.

The plan was that we would leave Friday morning from Liverpool returning Sunday mid-afternoon. We would be staying at the Sefton Hotel (central location and secure parking). Route options would include:

1. Douglas to The Sound Café, to Peel and Checking.
2. Lap of the TT course
3. A lap of the island
4. Whatever you fancy.

On the 12th April we all met up at the Cheshire Services and headed off to the ferry. A couple of SCAM members had to pull out (one due to a holiday with the wife) and another who became ill shortly beforehand.



The Journey to the ferry terminal was more eventful than strictly necessary as the satnav sent us initially the wrong way and then wanted to take us via one-way streets (the wrong way). If only I had realised that the new ferry port wasn't yet and it was still by the Liver building!

Getting on the ferry was a little more exciting than usual as I toppled my new bike manoeuvring it around and getting caught out by one of the "humps" on the deck. I guess my slow manoeuvring needs to be improved.

Fortunately, nothing other than my pride was hurt. What followed was a typical crossing with a combination of smooth and less smooth crossing but at least the Ferry didn't live up to the nickname "Vomit Comet".

I was last off the ferry as I had had my little moment behind and got separated from the group. However, a quick WhatsApp share location soon brought me back into the fold.



We set off to The Sound Café; if you ever get to the IOM I would heartily recommend it, especially the mega sausage sandwich.

Afterwards, we headed across to the west side of the Isle going over the hills, which initially were mist covered but cleared after about 10 mins. We passed through the outskirts of Peel and headed back to Douglas towards the Hotel and our base for the next couple of days.

We checked into the Sefton and were lucky with the parking, managing to get all 6 bikes in the last 2 spaces and headed to our rooms. The evening reports are limited to saying that what goes on tour stays on tour.





After breakfast we had a couple of challenges ahead of us, firstly there was a section of the course closed between Laurel bank and the Cronky-Y-Voddy in preparation for the TT. The diversion was both shortish and odd (though at housing estate and a farms entrance), but at least we didn't have to do it at 200mph and we were soon back on the course before Selby Bridge.



The ride to Ramsey was pleasant and it was clear and sunny to fool us into the belief the fog had lifted, so we headed off the up by Ramsey Hairpin and up onto the mountain. Unfortunately passed the Water Works the low cloud/fog was present and as well as being unpleasant none of us would trouble the current sector record.



We regrouped at the Creg N Bar and headed into Douglas to start the island tour. We had the pleasure of ice cream in Peel, a great road up the coast to the northern light house. Before heading back to Ramsey for some coffee. Afterwards, some of us went around the west coast to Douglas, seeing a few old highlights, the Laxey Wheel, Laxey Beach and back for our evening out. Apart from Neil's magnetic



personality, when it comes to beer, nothing will be said.

The next and final day started cloudless and we rode the mountain mile in both directions before paying our tributes to Joey's statue. Coming off the mountain via A14 we once again found ourselves having coffee in Ramsey.

A final blast over the mountain and we headed off for the afternoon ferry back to Liverpool.

My reflections on the trip were that we all got to meet a new group of riders. The effort in trying to arrange the event was minimal. Finally, I wondered where we might go next. Here are some suggestions:

Option 1: 3 nights (Thurs-Sun) D-Day Beach tour

Option 2: 4/5 nights 5 countries in 4 days (England, France, Belgium, Luxembourg & Germany)

Both options come from [SimonWeir.co.uk](http://SimonWeir.co.uk) (a-z of best biking roads fame)

Let me know which, if any, you'd prefer or alternatively a suggestion for something else to do next year.

*Andy Gralton*

## **Lessons from a Black Forest Tour**

**The Learners:** Ant, Dave, Ed and Richard. **The bikes:** BMW 1250 GS (X3) Triumph Tiger 900 (X1)

### **Lesson 1:**

**There are routes less travelled to Folkestone, with little or no increase in mileage.**

From Costa: A500 - M1 - A14 - M11 - M25 - M20. (A tidy first stop - take the A426 from J20 off the M1 to Rugby Services, and slip briefly onto the M6 then seamlessly to A14).



## Lesson 2:

### **Premier Inn (UK) could learn from Ibis (France)**

It's probable that the **Premier Inn at Folkestone** has priced its services according to its location. The end of England, at its shortest crossing point, is where people rest before pushing through the tunnel onto the continent. Levels of service and conditions at the hotel were the minimum the market will bear.

Coming back, we stopped at [Ibis in Bethune](#), close to Calais. Bright young people made us welcome and fed us with fresh food in a cheerful and well-appointed stopover hotel. The contrast between either side of the channel couldn't have been starker.

## Lesson 3

### **Riding beneath a storm cloud that's moving in the same direction as you will find you, your wardrobe and possibly your bike, wanting.**

We left Calais under a cloud. We continued to ride beneath it for around 6 hours. The deluge was massive. We learned that Gortex has its limits; you can't see through dark vizors in 100% humidity; and, continental torrents can make a bike choke and cough black smoke.

## Lesson 4

### **Luxembourg is worth a visit**

The finest roads in Europe, linking cobbled villages and overlooked by castles on crags, thread an unblemished path through beachen green deciduous forests. Some of the best riding of the tour can be found in Luxembourg.

There's a nice hotel in [Vianden, Luxemburg](#) with underground parking, offset slightly by a prickly and ungracious proprietor. He's still there on our third visit - his grumpy indifference is a feature now - almost a fondness.

## Lesson 5

### **The legendary B500 leads to places worth visiting**

The B500 is reverentially referred to by bikers, and rightly so. A free-flowing



route with precisely engineered hairpins takes you through the protected forest. It can bring out the best of you as a rider.

It also takes you to places worthwhile. [Triberg](#) is such a place. Beneath the highest waterfall in Germany, it's the home of the cuckoo clock.

Most clocks are made in the region and depict tales from the forest. Pick one, pay up and they'll ship it.

## Lesson 6

### Point to point vs loop to loop

Making headway across the continent, from one town/country to the next, is the essence of touring. The point-to-point model has progress at its core. It's usually brisk and the focus is on the ride. We crossed into Germany, toward our Black Forest destination.

Once holed up in [Herrenberg](#), for a 3 day stay, we were able to ride loops. Less distance, as planned, and more opportunity to see the country. Each evening, we returned to 'cheffy nosh' served by attentive professionals offering U.S. telly greetings and cold beer.

The rigour of point to point heightens the appreciation of the richness of loop to loop. Before reverting to a progressive route home. They're perfectly complementary.

We chose a route home through the Champagne region of France, with a stopover at [Chalon de Champagne](#) then on to Bethune, and the [Ibis Hotel](#), as previously mentioned.



An early dart from Bethune for home. We were at the departure point in Calais within the hour and spent longer than that in a 'Brexit Benefit Queue' - one of the more tangible...

Le Shuttle jolted us onto the rugged Folkestone roads and we were away north, back as we came.

## Lesson 7

**You can do it yourself but spread the load and you'll get added value...**

### [Ride With Us Motorcycle Tours](#)

We let the good people of Ride With Us do the heavy lifting: 4 star hotels (secure parking) and fine dining. The routes we (Richard, in fact) refined and embellished. We booked the two budget stopovers at either end of the trip.

It was our third trip using RideWithUs. Easy to deal with, honest brokers. Recommended.

*Ed Liptrot*

## **The Dynamic Duo go to Spain, part six**

Having returned to the hotel and unpacked it was time to go for a wander



around Hondarribia. The town is split into two parts, old and new. Our hotel was in the new town, so we strolled up to the old town with its history and distinctive character and checked out the hotel where we had stayed the last time we were there. Returning to the new town, we ordered a drink and watched the world go by. People watching is a great pastime which I never get bored of. We chatted about the day's events, had another stroll along the sea front and found a nice-looking restaurant for our evening meal.



We had been informed that the Tour de France was passing by the next day and thought we would go and see some of the action.

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

We woke up to torrential rain. Having made breakfast last two hours, and the rain was still coming down we decided that a two kilometre walk to watch the Tour de France with no wet weather kit was not a good idea. Eventually, the rain stopped and we set off on our travels around Hondarribia. To save a three-kilometre walk, we caught a ferry across the harbour, which is both scenic and enjoyable. As soon as we started to walk along the sea front, the rain started again. We dived into a cafe and had a coffee until the rain stopped. We continued our stroll along the front and then decided to have a pizza lunch. A top tip to anyone when ordering a pizza is ask how large it is first. When ours arrived it was massive, even one between the two of us would have been a challenge. Eventually, Ian capitulated but I managed to eat it all. I felt like Monsieur Creosote and the rest of the day was spent just taking in the views and groaning about the size of the pizza. Evening meal was left until late and then we only had a small meal. This being our last night in Spain we had a final stroll around the town and reflected on the holiday overall. The weather had been good mostly, some rain, but not enough to mar the holiday.



Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

We had a leisurely breakfast as we did not have to be at the ferry until about 4.30pm and we were only about a hundred miles from Santander. Bags were packed and bikes retrieved from the underground car park. We rode back to the hotel, loaded the panniers, and bid farewell to Hondarribia. The route back to Santander is by main road and motorways, plenty of time for a coffee stop. On nearing Santander, we left the main road and picked up the scenic coast



road which offers a multitude of restaurant opportunities. Having found a suitable restaurant we had a very long lunch and then headed for the ferry. Having checked into the ferry port, you just must hang around until they decide to load you. On the outward journey you have the excitement of the holiday ahead, going back, you just want to get home,

Upon arrival in Plymouth, we were delayed getting off the ferry due to a coach not letting its suspension fully raise and bottomed out on the slope of the ramp. It was raining heavily. Getting out of Plymouth ferry port was slow; there were only four passport booths, you have to take your helmet off and then negotiate your way out of Plymouth at rush hour, with traffic lights every five hundred yards, always on red. To say the journey home was the longest and wettest six hours of my life is an understatement, but was the holiday worth it, you bet it was. My thanks to Ian for organising and leading the trip and for his company. We will we do it again, watch this space.

*Chris Steel.*

*Many thanks to this month's excellent contributors. Please keep writing about your adventures and misadventures! Editor*