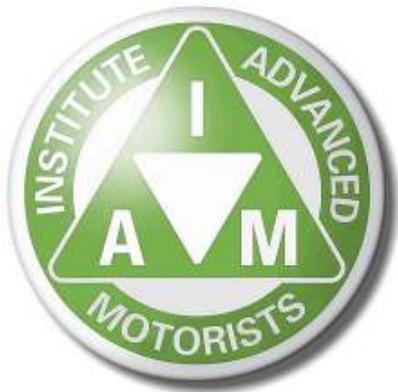


The SAM Observer



Your Committee

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No Calls After 9pm Please

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To see 'The SAM Observer' in it's full colour glory, visit the website
WEBSITE ADDRESS
<http://www.suffolk-advanced-motorcyclists.com/>

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charity – No. 1067800*

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Disclaimer

The articles published herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute of Advanced Motorists or the Suffolk Advanced Motorcyclist Group. They are the opinions of individual contributors and are published with a view that free expression promotes discussion and interests.

Chairman's Chat

Happy New Year!



I hope you had a good festive season and are looking forward to 2010.

The weather has certainly kicked off the New Year with a bite. Whether you love or hate snow it certainly presents a number of challenges. One of which was how to get to Fynn Valley for our January committee meeting. Unfortunately the weather won on this occasion and the meeting had to be cancelled and so I have nothing to report. In fact, since our last magazine in December there has been little or no activity on the motorcycle front.

Last month was of course the Christmas Party and I thought it was, once again, an excellent event. Many members voiced their approval on the night and so I am sure we will organise something similar for this year. I would like to publically thank Andy, Lisa and all the staff at Fynn Valley for looking after us so well on the night. The food and service was excellent and went a long way to making the evening a great success.

As well as the usual monthly Breakfast Run (Sunday 7th February to Sizewell) we also have a SAM exclusive evening event at Lings, Ipswich on Wednesday 10th February. This will allow those attending to view the new Honda VFR 1200. If you would like to attend please contact SAM member Sean Judge to register. You can email him on sean.judge@lings.com or telephone him at Lings on 01473 272789.

We welcome this month the former Isle of Man TT Racer Alex George and I am sure those present will be in for a very interesting evening.

Next month is the AGM (Tuesday 16th February) and so I hope to see you then.

Richard

Secretary's Scribbles



May I wish all members, full and associate a very Happy New Year.

And a very icy New Year so far too! Not a lot of chance to ride the bike, although I have noticed the odd one or two hardy riders out there in the blizzards. For me the high cost of fairing repairs means the bike is staying in the garage on charge until the bulk of the ice goes away (and hopefully most of the salt has been washed down the drains too!)

As I'm sure you will be aware, now is the time to renew your membership of SAM. I hope you agree that it represents excellent value for money. Of course every year a few members do not renew (our loss rate is far less than almost any other group I know of), but we always seem to manage to recruit new members to fill the gaps. I often wonder why some people do not renew. It may be financial hardship (times are still tough). It may be that some have fallen out of love with motorcycling (it can happen I'm told) but there may be some who don't think SAM is for them. If that might be you then please, before you slip quietly away, let me or any other committee member know what it is that you don't like. I can promise a sympathetic ear, but I can't promise to make changes, however I will do my best. Similarly if there is something you don't like about your membership of SAM, your training perhaps, maybe rideouts you've tried and not been happy with, then let me or any other committee member know as soon as possible and we'll do our best to sort things out for you. Don't suffer in silence!

If you have not already done it, please have a look at the events survey form on the SAM website. Please be honest and let us know what you like, don't like or want to see in the future. Ray Spreadbury has kindly (or maybe foolishly)

volunteered to administer the survey, so see him if you can't get an electronic copy. If you don't have your say, you may find that a future group night has become a line dancing class (now I'm going to suffer the wrath of all you line dancers!)

It's last call for anyone thinking of going to the Kells Road races in July. Dave Arbon is going and has persuaded me to try camping for the first time since a child. It's Ireland in summer so it's bound to be dry, warm and sunny. See me for application forms, which must be in by the end of the month, should you wish to go.

Well that's me for now and unless someone else is daft enough to put their name forward for election as Secretary at next month's AGM, I'll see you in February.

Martin

Test Passes

Congratulations to Slajan Todosijevic for passing his IAM Test. Slajan's observer was John Sillett.

SAM Membership Renewal

A Happy New Year to you all. SAM Membership runs each year from January to December so 2010 is now due. Please help by renewing your membership as soon as possible.

A SAM Membership Renewal Form can be found on page 19 or downloaded and printed out from the SAM website by following 'JOIN US' – 'Membership Renewal'.

<http://www.suffolk-advanced-motorcyclists.com/>

You can also find the Gift Aid Declaration form under the 'Membership Renewal' section of the website. By completing and returning your gift aid declaration form, the group can claim back the TAX portion of your membership fee, which all goes to help SAM funds.

Dates for Your Diary

Folembray 2010

The dates for ELAM's (East London Advanced Motorcyclists) track day at Folembray, France are Saturday 14th to Monday 16th August. The date on the track being Sunday 15th August. The exact price is yet to be firmed up but Chris assures me that it will not exceed £250 per person. This includes return ferry (Dover – Calais), hotel on a B & B basis (doesn't include evening meals) and the track day which includes instruction.

For those that have not been before this is a road based track day with full instruction by Elam Observers. The instruction can be ongoing during the day for those who feel the need. The afternoon sessions are generally open pit lane. This may well be divided into groups of ability.

Currently Chris Mitchell has informed me that there are 10 places left which he is holding for SAM members. It is important that if SAM members wish to go to Folembray they must contact Chris ASAP by e-mail to reserve a space. He would prefer SAM members to take the remaining places before going to other IAM groups. Chris' e-mail address is: clmitch68@googlemail.com

Keith Gilbert

Lings VFR1200 Open Evening

Lings of Ipswich are holding an open evening for SAM members for the launch of the new Honda VFR1200 on Wednesday 10th February 2010. The bike will be available for viewing at the evening which begins at 6:00pm.

Details of the new VFR can be found on Lings website at:

<http://www.lings.com/>

If you would like to attend, please contact SAM Member Sean Judge who works at Lings, giving your Name, Email and Contact number.

Sean's contact details are email: sean.judge@lings.com

Telephone: 01473 272789

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Motorcycle Dexterity & Control Days

(a.k.a. Slow Riding Days)

For every motorcycle spill that makes the local papers, there are many more which never get much publicity. How many of you in your time riding have never struggled to keep your bike upright while manoeuvring in a parking area, or had to take a big dab with either foot while negotiating queues of commuter traffic? Not many (if any). Very often in these situations the rider grabs a handful of front brake, shortly followed by the resulting sound of expensive plastic and metal making contact with the ground.

The SAM MD&C Days give you the opportunity to practice the art of riding a motorcycle slowly, and to learn the techniques that will help you do it.

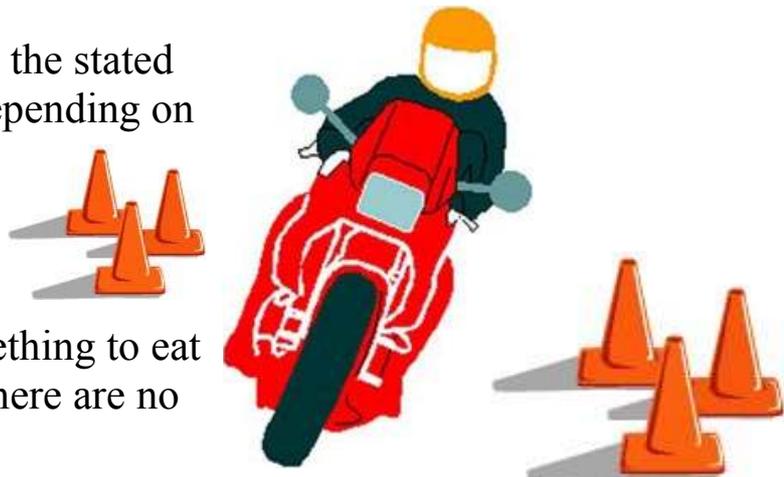
This year the venue will be the playground of Sidegate Primary School, Sidegate Lane, Ipswich. IP4 4JD (Map in the Calendar on the SAM website).

Please contact the Senior Observer to book your place for the date you are interested in attending.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Senior Observer</u>	
Saturday 27th February	13:00	Derek Barker	01473 327555
Sunday 28th March	09:00	Richard Toll	01473 401363
Saturday 24th April	09:00	David Rudland	01473 401362
Thursday 13th May	18:30	Derek Barker	01473 327555
Sunday 27th June	09:00	Bob McGeady	01728 832595
Tuesday 13th July	18:30	Derek Barker	01473 327555
Saturday 18th September	09:00	Chris Jackson	01787 315628
Sunday 17th October	09:00	Derek Barker	01473 327555
Saturday 27th November	13:00	Derek Barker	01473 327555

Each session starts promptly at the stated time and lasts up to 4 hours depending on numbers attending.

Please bring a drink and something to eat as we will have a break and there are no cafés nearby.



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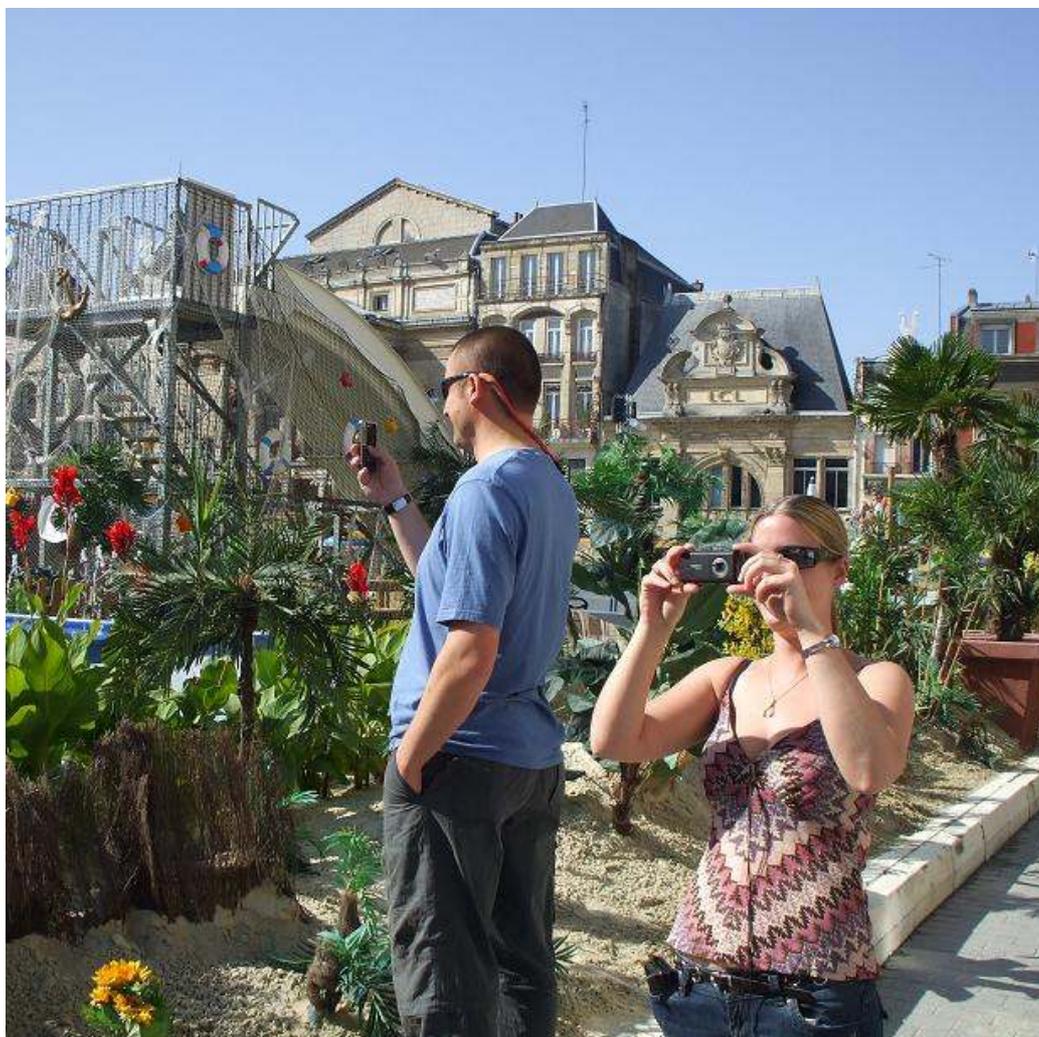
SUPERBYKE



Caption Competition

Come up with funniest caption for this photo tonight and win a bottle of wine. Write your caption on a slip provided and post it in the competition box.

Good Luck! - One entry per person please.



Judging will be performed by the Editor, with help from the committee and the winning caption will be announced at the end of the evening.

December's caption winner was Dave Wonfor with:

**“That will knock another 10%
off my bike insurance!”**



Please send your photos, electronic or hard copy (which will be returned) to the Editor for selection in next month's edition.

P.S. Please don't send images sourced from publications / the Internet, as they are Copyright protected and SAM can't afford the law suit!

February Breakfast Run

**Sunday 7th February – Beach Cafe, Sizewell Gap,
Sizewell, Leiston,
Suffolk. IP16 4UH
01728 831108**

Ride Coordinator – Dave Arbon (01473 684206)

Meet at Tesco Stowmarket at 9:30 am
[Later start in case of frost]

Leave Stowmarket on the

A1120 to YOXFORD at the junction of

A12 T/L 1/4 ml then T/R onto

B1122 S/P LEISTON, just before Leiston T/L

UNCLASSIFIED S/P SIZEWELL

**This route is only advisory, if not convenient, you
can plan your own route to the Cafe.**

Check all routes with **your Road Map** (and/or see the route on a map by following the links in the Calendar on the SAM website, or the SAM Forum) before setting out, then maybe no one will get lost. Even better, take the route and a road map with you. In the event of unsuitable weather please contact the Ride Coordinator to find out if the planned ride is going ahead.

My IAM Test

by Alan Moreton aged 53 $\frac{3}{4}$

So there I was – Mounted on my GSX1400, slicing through the clear warm air, bright sun glinting off the highly polished fuel tank, flicking through the switchback, gears snicking into place speed controlled to the limit, and road positioning so perfect even Ralph's GPS couldn't have got me any closer!

Then I woke up.

I've flown low level, high G manoeuvres in a F4 Phantom, crash landed in a burning Hercules transport, slept about 15 foot away from an unexploded thousand pounder and pointed out to my missus that she had grey hairs coming through (on her 30th Birthday) yet I have never known such terror as I felt as the days significance slowly dawned upon me.

Oh six hundred sparrows f***. Hours before I needed to be awake – my test isn't until 10:30. Best get up in case the missus misinterprets my early morning alertness as a signal for my interest in things other than motorcycles! I need to be fully rested and alert!

A look out of the window reveals an overcast sky but dry roads. That's because the 35 mph winds – gusting to 45 won't allow the rain drops to land!!! Oh dear!

By 07:30 the bikes tyre pressures have been checked – twice.

By 08:30 I can't wait any longer so I figured I needed to relax, so I thought an hour or two out on the bike might calm me down a little in time for the test. Plus I might get used to the weather – forewarned is forearmed.

On with the urban camo suit –rather optimistically described as 100% waterproof, License, insurance and MOT documents tucked away safely. Helmet with polished visor on. Helmet off - ear plugs in. Helmet back on. Push the Bike out into the open.

Hop on board. Brakes - check. Neutral - check - Tyres - check (again). Panniers locked and loaded check. Ignition on – blast!!! – keys are still hanging on the key ring.

You get the picture.

Eventually I'm rolling, missed a gear – (first time ever). The short A14 run from the A140 to the ASDA turn off was – shall we say entertaining. I was almost getting my knee down but the trouble was I was traveling in a straight line at the time! Best fill her up, only done 30 miles on a full tank, but you can't be too careful can you? Take the long way through Ipswich to Lings but its still only 09:30 when I arrive; cold, and still blowing a gale. Oh goodness what have I done!

Half an hour later a large blue Honda turns up with a large blue man on board. "Mr Moreton I presume" he says and shakes my hand very firmly. I think I managed to break the ice with a witty comment but it probably came out something like a squeaky – "yes sir."

This large imposing chap was in fact Bob Gosden who was to be my IAM examiner and he turned out to be a very nice chap. He immediately told me that he was concerned that the weather was very marginal for the test and suggested that if I was uncomfortable with taking the test that day, he would be happy to rearrange the test for a later date.

I suspect that the look of abject terror that flitted across my face at the thought of going through all of the mornings anguish again, caused him to re-evaluate the situation. He suggested that we could indeed go for it, with the proviso that if he thought it was becoming risky, or if I was unable to demonstrate sufficient skills because of the conditions, we would bail out and reconvene on another day.

I did tell him I was quite nervous in such situations. We had a chat during which he did everything he could to settle my nerves. Bob gave a very thorough briefing which lasted at least fifteen minutes. He described what he was looking for. And what he expected. He was very clear that first and foremost he wanted me to ride safely. I was to treat him as another road user. In fact its no less than my observer wanted to see. He told me that he had never seen a perfect ride, and he didn't expect to see one today – but as long as it was safe we were almost there. He explained that he was looking for me to ride to the system and that my interpretation of the road may be different to his but that didn't make it wrong. Ride my ride and ride it safe was the message that came across clearly. We also went through what I was to do if I lost him, which was just as well as I did on a couple of occasions! Oops!

So toggled back up, orf we jolly well went. I was still a little nervy, but he had done a grand job in settling me down.

We set off and did some work within the busy town streets and the traffic, eventually progressing into some urban estate work and out via Tuddenham into the countryside. It was really buffeting and blowing especially through breaks in the hedgerows and trees and the roads had impacted damp leaves at various places across the road, so it was quite difficult to maintain a steady progress. Where possible I upped the pace to what I was comfortable with. I figured that I had nothing to lose. I had all my excuses ready anyway. My first defence was that no one would know. I hadn't mentioned why I needed a day off in the middle of the week to my colleagues so that angle was well covered, and I could blame the weather for the rest!!!

We got stuck behind a lorry for a lot of the open roads. The weather was just too unpredictable to take a chance at overtaking so I held back, but showed an interest at making progress by getting up close and personal and taking a look occasionally. The lorry did eventually turn off a few miles outside of Coddendam so I upped the pace a little just to show willing.

The A14 was a bit naughty. In the sheltered parts I was able to get up to 70 mph once or twice and overtook some traffic, but eased back down as the more open areas got windy, and we pulled off sooner than I expected at the ASDA turn off. Bob later explained that he had seen enough of my Dual carriageway riding style to satisfy himself as to my ability, and that slogging further down the road would have been quite unpleasant and unnecessary.

However, there is no gain without pain! I got to do even more town and urban riding! Having trundled through the Whitton estate and back along the Henley Road onto the outer ring road we mastered the incredibly tight left turn up past the Cemetery. And so eventually back to Lings!

Bob asked me how I thought I had done. I genuinely couldn't think of any glaring errors that I had made. After a few observed rides with Ralph I had begun to self analyze and had become able to recognize my own errors and mistakes, such as my speed creep and my positioning errors.

On this occasion I really couldn't remember any specific error that I had committed. So I said so.

Bob could!

He asked me if the days ride was indicative of my usual riding standard. I thought it was average – I have done better, but I have also done much worse.

At this point he announced that he thought I had shown all the skills required to pass the test especially in view of the weather conditions.

Instant relief!!! No need for the excuses after all! My ego wouldn't be totally shattered today!

Next came the most breathtaking demonstration of memory retention I have ever come across! We had a very thorough de-brief. Bob was able to describe almost bend for bend the entire ride. How fast I was, where I was in the road, what gear I was in, the brown Volvo on an adjacent road - everything. He asked me why I had positioned myself in certain situations and I explained my reasoning. Remember the lorry? He asked me about that. Why didn't I overtake he asked - perhaps I could have got a bit closer? I explained that had I gone for an overtake, the buffeting as you got past the vehicle in those conditions could have led to some exciting moments. He was very pleased with my answer, and agreed that the pace set was entirely appropriate for the weather and so demonstrated a reasonable progression. "If you had actually tried to overtake I'd have failed you straight away" he said!

From memory he suggested that I could have carried out shoulder checks a little more often in town and so gave me a 3 (satisfactory) for rearward observation but he was kind enough to grant me 1 and 2 in the other scores. He thought I was staying out a little too long in left handers but was happy to accept that I had not felt threatened by on coming traffic myself. However this is a point that Ralph has been saying all along. So I need to continue to work on that.

Once the paperwork had been done and a coffee supped we had a chat about acquaintances, helicopters and the world in general, and so went off on our separate ways.

I went to celebrate with a McDonalds Big Mac (the first I've had in years) and went home. I snoozed contentedly on my sofa – right up to the point where the cup of coffee precariously balanced on my chest tipped over.

Oh well - back off cloud nine with a bump.

Alan Moreton

The SAM Observer January 2010

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Social Rides

Please note that it is you, the rider, who is deemed to be in control of the vehicle at all times during an Observed Run and during all other Group activities and that the Committee of Suffolk Advanced Motorcyclist cannot and do not accept any liability whatsoever for any injury to person or damage to vehicle occurring in the course of any rally or other event organised by the Group. Any member attending such an event does so entirely at his or her own risk and must maintain their own insurance to cover any said injury to person or damage to vehicle and must be riding a road legal vehicle, having valid road tax, insurance and MOT certificate (if applicable).

Participants on S.A.M social rides are advised of the Events Committees guidelines as follows:

You will be expected to provide a suitable means of carrying a map / the route

- ✓If possible, have breakdown cover for your machine.
- ✓Be responsible for your own safety
- ✓Rides will commence promptly at the published departure time.
- ✓Have a FULL tank of fuel
- ✓No more than 5 in a group

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Motorcycling Is.....

(for me) the boy through dad's inspiration

In the misty past
A muddy fen
Smoke and noise
With the big boys
Being men
Petroily steed
Hallowed fields
My turn at last
For a blast
Through ditches and grasses and trees
no gloves
Hands ice cold
and trembling.
Cant wait to tell Dad

A soaring thrill
To stay onboard for half a lap
Stuttering into a watery hole
kicking free
A man was born
At 12
To live forever with the bikers beat
And dreams
of ultimate journeys
never ending.

On the road
After an age
Fizzie adventure
Freedom and life
Unbeatable
Young
freedom and life
to bigger machines
of dreams
and Japanese delight

38 years on
A mislaid song
With forgotten tune
understanding the lyrics
through the benefit of years
In youthful spirit
Joined new choir
relearning
To a higher plain
Feels good
Feels very very good
The world is mine again.

Thank you SAM!

Len Chamberlain

SAM Membership Renewal Form 2010

SUFFOLK ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS' GROUP
Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists
Group. No 7219 – SAM is a registered Charity No. 1067800

First Name Surname

Address

Post Code.....

Motorcycle Make..... Model

Phone (Home)..... Work

Mobile

Email address

I enclose my fee for annual renewal for membership type

Full Member £20:00 Associate Member £20:00 Joint Member £23:00
Lapsed £23:00 (delete as appropriate)

IAM Membership No Expiry date

Signature Date

Please make cheques payable to SUFFOLK ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

Data Protection Act:-

I have no objection to the above details being held on computer I understand such information will be kept strictly confidential to relevant officers of the SAM committee.

Signature Date

Please remember membership runs from January to January

Membership Secretary
Beverley Rudland
36 Sherborne Ave
Ipswich
IP4 3DR



www.csensedt.co.uk

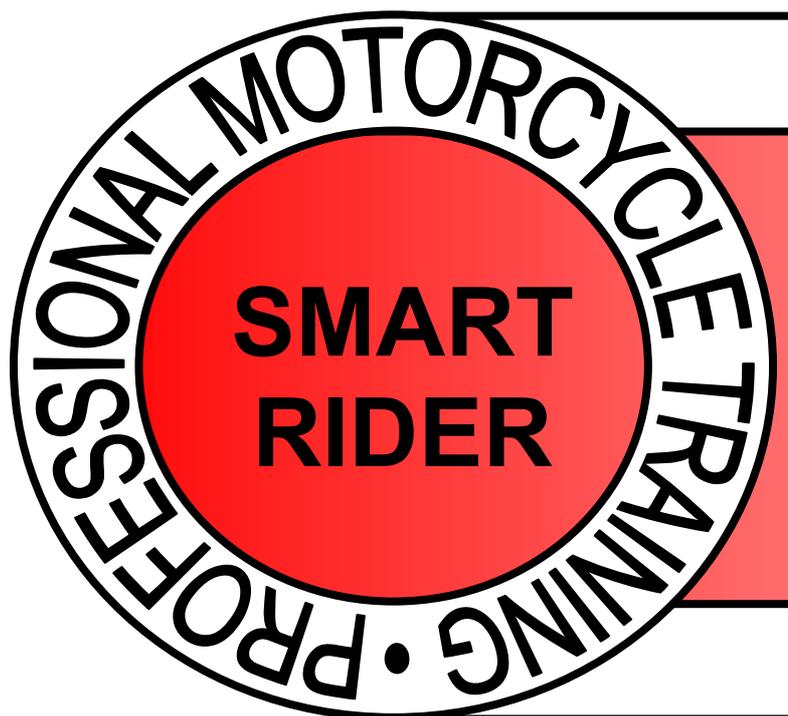
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on 07748 195179



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07763 018027 or 01440 786928
www.smartrider.co.uk



SAM has two online shops where you can purchase garments and gifts with the SAM logo on them. In both cases you can save on postage costs by getting together with other SAM members and combining your purchases.



The first shop is with a company called Spreadshirt. All the items in this shop use one of three types of “printing”. With the flock or flex “printing” the logo is cut from a sheet of material and then applied to the item. Flock is similar to a fine felt, and flex is a plastic/nylon type material. For the digitally printed items the logo is printed on to a special transfer sheet and then applied to the item.

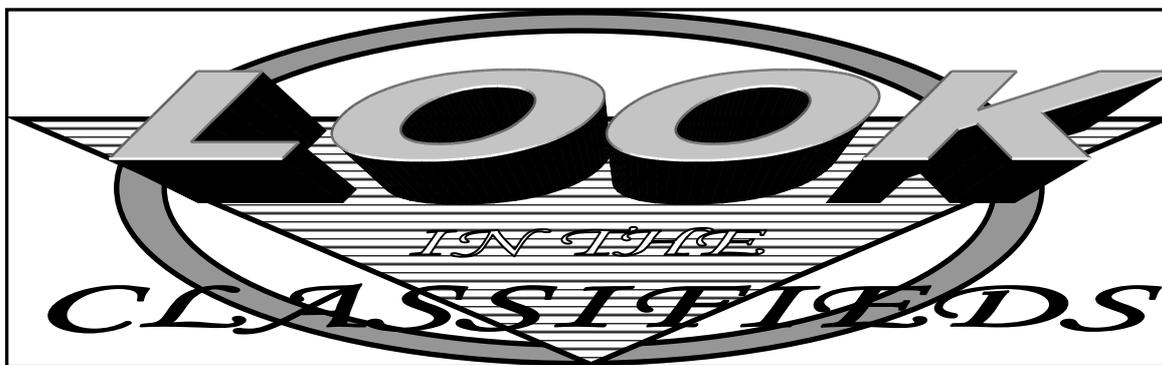


The second shop is with a company called SewPersonal. All the items in this shop have the SAM logo embroidered on them in a choice of Green, Silver or Gold. *NB. The initial prices you see displayed within the shop do NOT include the cost of the logo. This will be added once you select your colour option.*



You can visit either shop online via SAM’s website

<http://www.suffolk-advanced-motorcyclists.com/sam-shop.html>



For Sale and Wanted

You can also post your sales and view items wanted on the SAM Forum under 'BUY & SELL' - 'For Sale and Wanted'.

Just visit the SAM website and follow 'Extras' – 'SAM Forum'.

<http://www.suffolk-advanced-motorcyclists.com/>

FOR SALE - FieldSheer Textile Motorcycle Jacket. Size 44 chest. Red/Black with full armour. Good condition. £25.

Call 01394 270044 or 07941 686156

FOR SALE – Brand New (only worn for twenty minutes) Nolan N43 Open Faced Helmet with visor. Platinum Silver. Size XS. Accept £100.00

Call 01728 688343 eves / weekends

FOR SALE – Alpine Star motorcycle boots, short version, waterproof, fitted with sliders and heel protection and ankle brace, size 46 (UK 12). £30 ono

Call 01473 401714 (eve) or 07983 480425 for more details.

FOR SALE – Brilliant Learner LegaBike, Yamaha YBR 125cc, 56 plate (06), only 3,339 miles, six months road tax, no MOT required (yet) and 50-60 MPG.

In good condition, £1,300

Call 01473 401714 (eve) or 07983 480425 for more details.

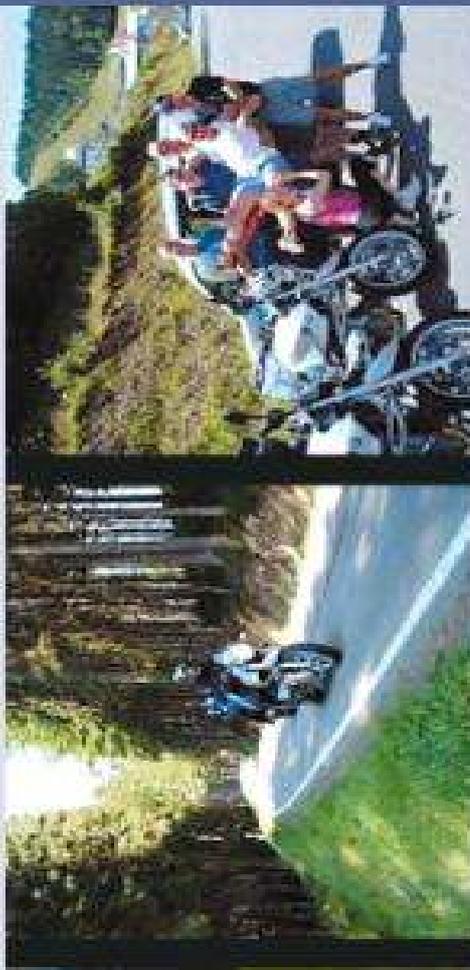
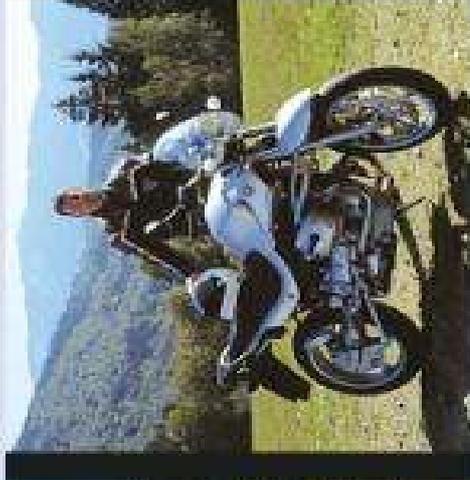


Send your classified items to the Editor, contact details on page 3.

Price for non-member classifieds is £5

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Oradour 2009

Day 5 & 6

Day 5 – Chauvigny to Brezolles – Tuesday 5th May

As opposed to travelling by car, the experience of travelling by motorcycle is much more complete with the sights and sounds of the local countryside and towns, the smell of freshly cut grass, rapeseed, cooking food on entering a village or a town, a bakery, smells of yeast from a brewery, tempered on a few occasions by less favourable smells, the camaraderie, meeting local people and sampling local food and drink...

France as a whole is much more biker aware. You only have to park your bike in a group within a town square, and within a few minutes, people come over, generally admire the bikes, and ask you where you're from and where you're heading. The conversation may start on the lines "Jail une Africa Twin" and usually in French! Quite often whilst riding through towns and villages, old people and children wave at you from the kerbside. On the open road, other bikers travelling the opposite way wave with their left hands. This results in a Mexican wave when you pass a group of riders travelling the opposite way. The other signal is your leg. If a car in front indicates and pulls over to the right to let you overtake, it's common courtesy to wave a right leg having passed them. The only problem is British credit and debit cards aren't always recognised at filling stations off the main Autoroutes. Sometimes a French car driver spots your plight and offers payment using their card in exchange for cash. Sometimes it's a bank holiday though and the fuel has simply run out...

Confidence levels much improved, I spent some time riding with both groups. That evening, for some strange reason, Keith and Maureen had lost my menu choice, so I made up one myself.... I reckon this was a deliberate ploy to see how coherent my French was after a few drinks. A repeat performance on the craic front. By then I didn't really care who got there first or whether I would get handed a phone with someone asking for an explanation the other end!

I had quite a few more drinks that evening and have a vague recollection of being encouraged and managing to stand up and say a few words of thanks to the group. Whilst I cannot recall precisely what came out of my mouth or how coherent it was, it ended in applause. I have a vague recollection Keith may have said "Sit down Neil, you've had one too many!" A few others took up

the challenge with some notable speeches. Another truly memorable evening. Off to bed for the night.

Day 6 – Brezolles to Calais – Wednesday 6th May

After breakfast, my French skills again became useful helping a few people pay their bills as English wasn't spoken that much if indeed at all! Paul Newman visited a local garage to have his chain adjusted to the furthest possible setting. The chain was extremely loose and was clearly on its way out. Would it survive the return trip to Calais and Ipswich? Easily!

I started off riding at the back of Keith's group with David and Linda (BMW GS1200) forming the sweeper. At the final roundabout before the Autoroute, I lost the sweeper, this is impossible, had they simply turned on blast mode? I waited a few minutes then decided they must have gone onto the autoroute, then gradually picked up speed. What took me completely by surprise was a lorry soon after joining the Autoroute. It seemed to have a mind of its own. Naturally I'd thought of our own lorries governed to speeds up to 60 mph and after the customary shoulder check pulled over to overtake. Instead, I was faced with a sight of a lorry literally thundering away in front of me as I watched in disbelief as my speedo went up from 60 to 75mph! At 75mph, the buffeting was enormous, and as a result, I pulled back further behind the lorry to increase the distance. I subsequently discovered the blast from the lorry had literally torn into shreds one of the plastic covers over the panniers! I then reminded myself that French lorries are non-governed! Carrying along the autoroute with this lorry still in front, I caught up with Keith and Maureen Gilbert with Bill Dunham and Tony Argent close by. We picked up speed, and Bill obviously keen to overtake the lorry blasted in front of me. This is where the extra torque with larger motors pays off, there's less to play with on a 650 at the higher speeds. Eventually the lorry slowed down on a long uphill section sufficiently for the buffeting to decrease to a more manageable level, and Tony and I managed the overtake. Tony remained behind me for the remainder of the run to Calais, seeming happy to travel at a more relaxed pace. Was it the view, was he tired or was he low on fuel? I decided to keep him in my mirrors, so we continued in tandem towards Calais, the others by then way into the distance.

The road signage to the ferry port was very clearly marked. Following some deft lane changes to avoid being diverted onto other autoroutes or the busy town centre, we rolled into the ferryport to check in at the Sea France terminal. David dismounted and admitted the Deuville didn't have a fuel gauge! He was simply taking it easy to conserve what fuel he thought he had! He'd only

recently traded his Yamaha 600 Diversion in for the Deauville and was finding his way with the fuel consumption. Riding at a steady 65 mph he'd already worked out he was getting around 60mpg and the tank range was around 200 miles. At speeds of 70 mph and above, this decreased to around 45 mpg. On the boat, I found out Paul and Lynn had got onto the autoroute in front of me and blasted onto Calais! The atmosphere was relaxed but I got the feeling from a few, including Karl Hale, they weren't looking forward to the end of the trip. "You'll find riding in England a real let down after this and you'll wish you were back in France".

I recall Keith and Ray mentioning some bad tempered check-in officials at Calais, but this one seemed quite the opposite. "What's the bike you're riding, is it a V-Strom". Reply - "Yes". "What size engine?" Reply - "650" "I looked at them but decided by buy a 1250 Bandit instead. Great bike, I'm very happy with it. Where did you get to in France?" Response - "Brezolles, Chauvigny, Oradour Sur Glane". Did you enjoy the trip?" Response - "Yes". Then handing me back my passport "Well have a nice day, the bikers are in lane C14".

Again the crossing was smooth but visibility not as good as the outbound trip. On arriving in Dover, I filled up at the local petrol station then carried on the A20 in a gaggle following David Wood, Harry Hill, Bill Dunham and Dave Arbon. This time I felt the need to make progress and after a while on the A20, including avoiding an errant Audi driver, decided to lead the convoy up the A12. For a while they stayed with me, but then started receding into the distance behind. I was obviously still riding at French speed limits. Just short of Ipswich, I saw a single headlight gradually catching up with me, who was that? At the A12/A14 roundabout it turned out to be Harry on his BMW. A salutary wave between us as I headed up the A14 and he continued into town.

It had definitely been a great trip. Riding your motorcycle as much as possible is the best way to improve your riding. With this trip, there is the added benefit of riding in groups, which requires a different approach to solo riding. Some people may find this difficult as you have to adapt to the rider in front and behind, and its a different experience riding behind the leader as opposed to in the middle and the back. Despite the red light experience, Paul and Lynn commented my riding had improved immeasurably during the trip. Also the camaraderie and craic in the evenings made the trip all the more worthwhile. And I found you can tour quite happily on a 650cc motorcycle!



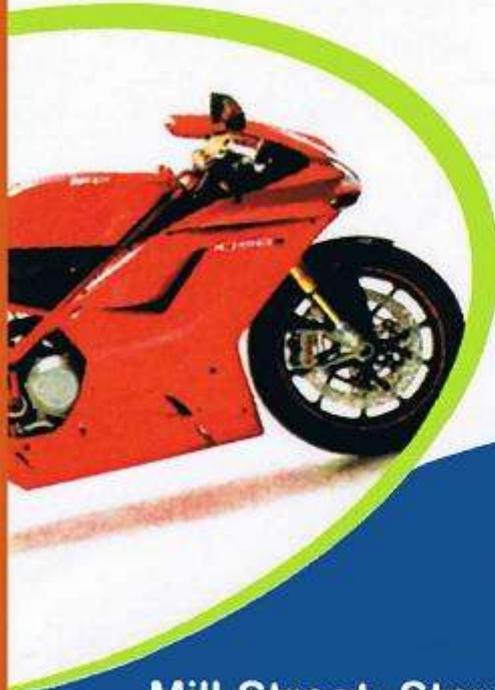
Ray Wotherspoon and Keith relaxing at the SAM bar!

Special thanks to Keith, Ray, Maureen and Silvia for organising the trip and all the riders for making it a truly memorable experience. Also to Ray for assisting with local rideouts and all others I haven't mentioned. No doubt the BBC would conclude by saying this trip was "truly making the unmissable unmissable!"

List of riders and machines: Keith and Maureen Gilbert (BMW R1200 GS); Paul and Lynne Stockings (BMW R1200 GS); Ray and Shirley Spreadbury (BMW R1150 GS Adventure); Harry King (BMW R1200 GS); Chris and Susan Smith (Triumph 1050 Tiger); Karl and Sara Hale (KTM 990 Adventure); Paul and Deirdre Siddaway (Suzuki Bandit 1250 and Kawasaki ER6F); Dave Angless and Lynda Skelton (Harley Davidson Dynaglide and Electraglide); David Wood (Yamaha 900 Diversion); Dave Arbon (Honda VFR 800 V-tec); Martin Barrell (Suzuki M800); Andrew Foulger (Triumph ST1050 Sprint); Bill Dunham (Kawasaki GTR 1000); Tony Argent (Honda Deauville 650); Paul Newman (Kawasaki ZZR 600); and Neil Morley (Suzuki DL650).

Neil Morley

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Ed's Soapbox

A Happy New Year to you all and welcome to this the first edition of 2010.

Thanks to Alan Moreton for the graphic account of his experience of the IAM Test, to Neil Morley for the final instalment of his Oradour 2009 series of articles and to Len Chamberlain for his inspired poetry.

If anyone is considering joining ELAM at Folembray this year, it comes highly recommended from me. Last year's trip was my first track day and I learned a great deal about my bikes and my personal limits. The ELAM provide excellent track based tuition, scheduled sessions, and a strict (no interpretation) overtaking procedure and cater for all riding abilities. If you'd like to know a little more about my experience, see Ed's Soapbox in the September 2009 edition.

Here is some photographic evidence of the extent I pushed my Hornet's capabilities and my personal limits.



Rear Tyre !



Front Tyre !!



My Personal Limit in the Bar !!!

As well as being a very sociable trip and with all joking aside, the skills you'll learn on the track are all (except the higher speeds) directly relatable to and will benefit your road riding.

Cheers
Steve

P.S. If you'd like to help save the group on the printing and postage costs of your monthly 'hard copy' of the 'SAM Observer' by opting to receive an email notification instead, then please give me your email details on group night or send me an email.

Pioneer Bike Show Brighton

For the 3rd year running I'm organising a ride-out to the Pioneer Bike Show (motorcycles and tricycles manufactured before 1915!) at Brighton on the 14th March (Mothering Sunday), leaving Copdock Tesco at 08:30, arriving at Brighton sea front at approximately 11:30, traffic dependent.

Anyone wishing to come along please contact me on: 07774 853241

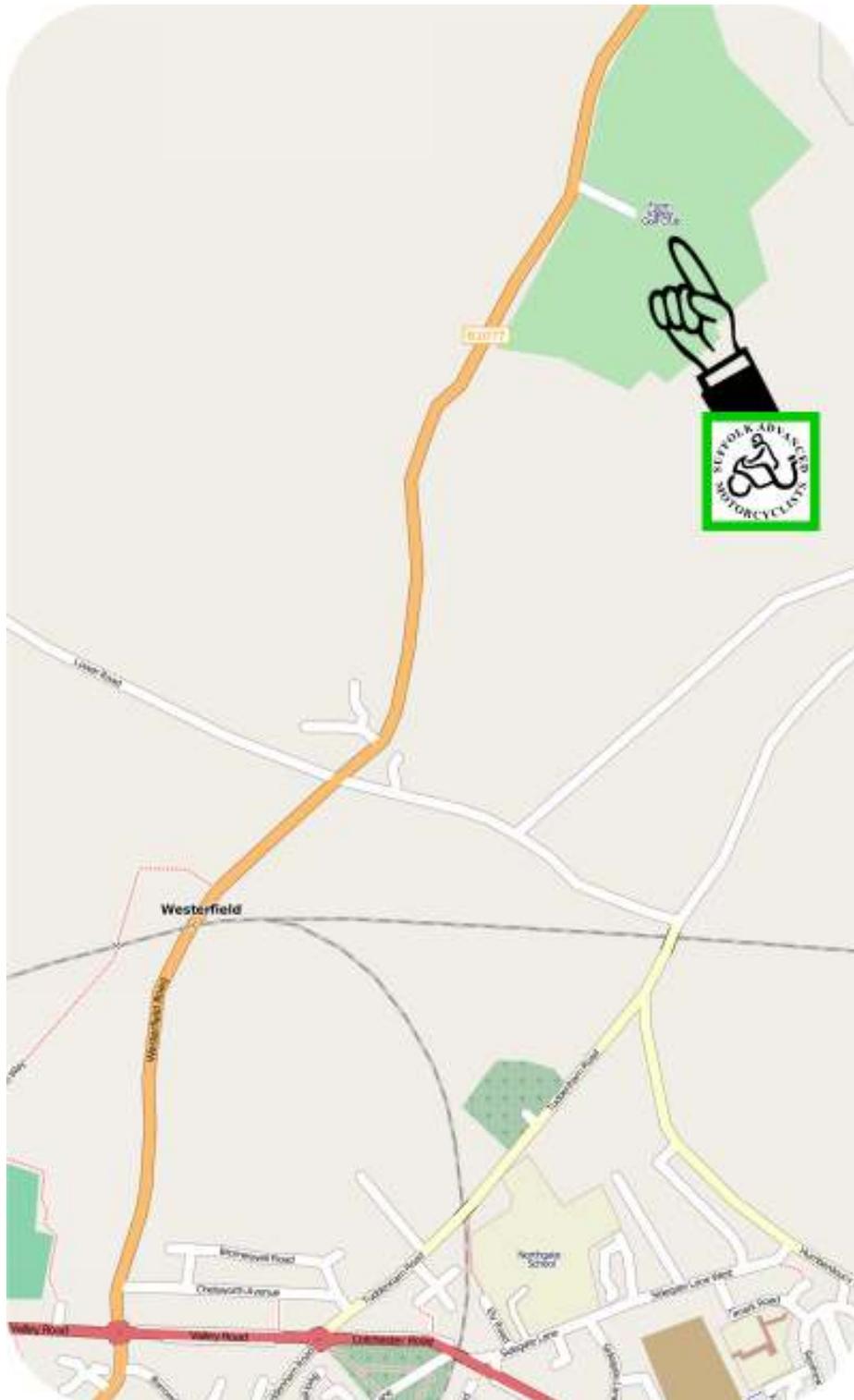
Tom Coomber

The SAM Observer January 2010

Our Venue

Group Nights start at 7:30 pm on the third Tuesday of every month at The Valley Restaurant, Fynn Valley Golf Club, Winesham. IP6 9JA

All facilities, including bar and restaurant are available from 6pm.



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Observer Associate Charter

Purpose

The purpose of the Charter is to make clear the definition of what is expected in Observer / Associate relationship.

The Observers

Have made the effort to train, not only for the IAM test but have taken part in extensive Observer training to become Observers for the group. They are a valuable asset to the group and give of their time freely, except for a small contribution from the associates for their expenses. Observers attend regular refresher training sessions with Senior Observers, support theory nights and Riding Dexterity days.

The Associates

- Are expected to have an equal commitment with the goal being the IAM test.
- Are to be available for regular observed rides ideally every two weeks with at least 100 practice miles being covered in that period. Continuity cannot be maintained with regular gaps of three weeks or more or no miles between observed rides.
- Must agree the dates of the next runs at the debriefing and must practice any improvement recommendations between the runs.
- Will where possible attend a riding Dexterity Day to improve their slow speed manoeuvres and control.
- Must make an effort to study the theory by reading Pass your Advanced Motorcycle Test and the Highway Code plus attend club Theory Nights when possible.
- Cancellation of a planned run due to poor weather conditions will be at the discretion of the Observer. If after a period of one month, an Observer has not heard from the Associate it will be assumed that interest has been lost and the Associate will be placed back at the bottom of the waiting list.
- When the Observer feels the associate is riding consistently at the test standard a Cross check will be arranged with a Senior Observer.
- The Observer will give as much help and encouragement as possible but the onus is on the associate to endeavour.

Events Diary

- Tuesday 19th January Group Night – TT Racer Alex George
Fynn Valley Golf Club 7:30 pm
- Thursday 21st January Roadcraft Theory Night
Overtaking
Fynn Valley Golf Club 7:30 pm
- Sunday 7th February Breakfast Run – Beach Cafe, Sizewell Gap,
Sizewell, Leiston,
Suffolk. IP16 4UH
- Tuesday 16th February Group Night – AGM
Fynn Valley Golf Club 7:30 pm
- Thursday 18th February Roadcraft Theory Night
Observation, Planning and Positioning
Fynn Valley Golf Club 7:30 pm

Membership Fees for 2010

Full Member £20.00

Associate £139 - Skills for Life

Includes the current issue of “How to be a Better Rider” and your IAM Test fee for new members.

Expenses to Observer for observed rides is £10.00

Joint Full Members £23.00

Membership entitles you to 1 Newsletter per couple and to attend monthly Group meetings which will encompass both riding and safety techniques, speaker on interesting and varied subject, Group rides at weekends and evenings and the fellowship of like-minded people.

Please support us by renewing and helping the Group to flourish in the cause of safer motorcycling.

come on down we've got a lot to offer

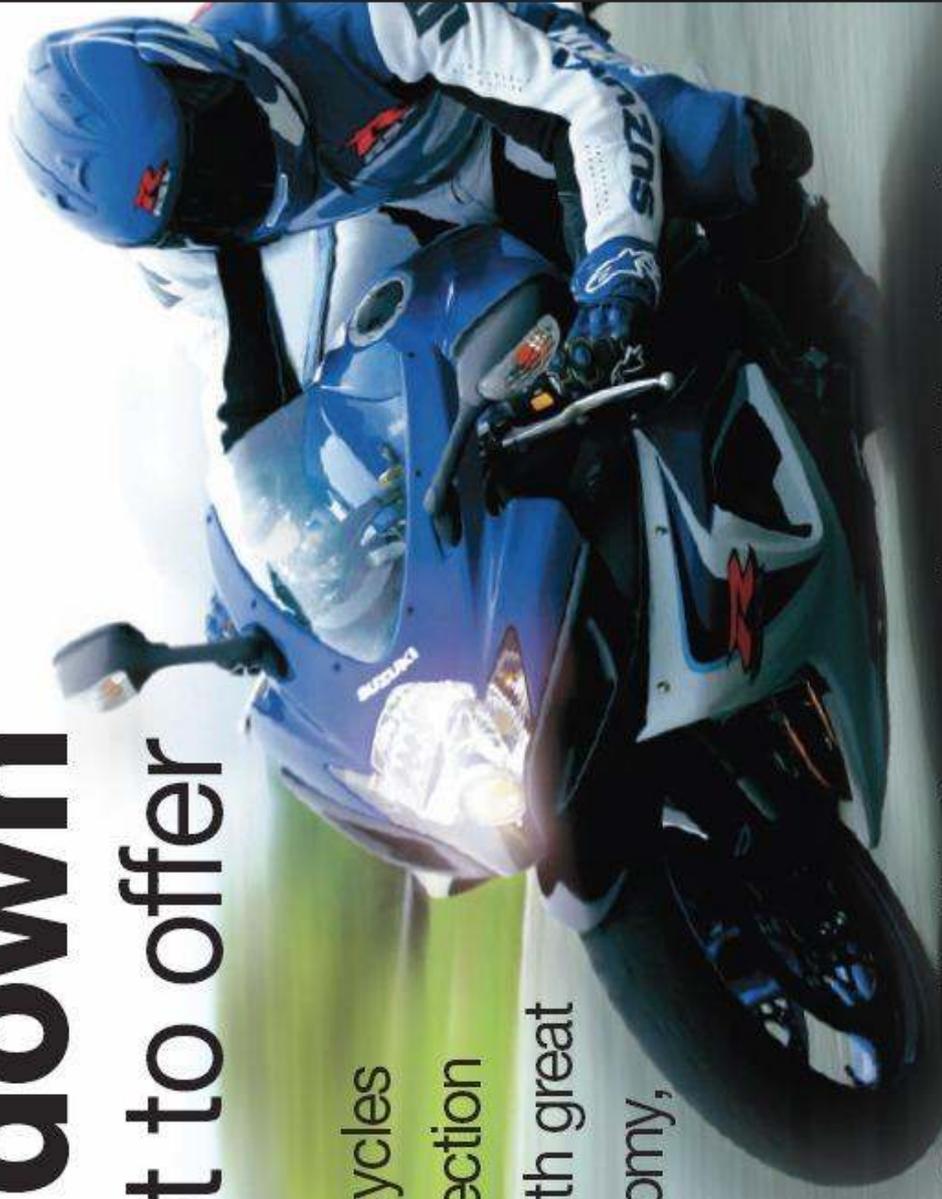
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