

West Sussex Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter - November 2017



Don't stop riding in Winter

Just because it's getting a bit cooler and the clocks have gone back, that doesn't mean you should stop riding. The only weather that tends to stop me is ice or snow and more recently storm Brian. Although in my braver (or should that be naive) youth, I would have gone out, viewing the weather as a challenge that needs to be conquered, nowadays I sensibly weigh up the odds. As a good friend of mine used to say about safety "if you seriously have to ask the question, then the answer is probably no!"

However with the evenings now beginning to draw in, the roads present us with new scenarios and although our forward vision is reduced to what is illuminated by our headlights, thankfully 'cats eyes' are there to help.



Cats eyes (or reflective road studs as the Highway Code now calls them) tell us a lot more than just where the centre of the road is. Most of us know that the various colours denote where they are in the carriageway.

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Diary for November 2017

Sunday 12th November 2017

WSAM Monthly Meeting

Today is our monthly gathering at Dial Post Village Hall, RH13 8NJ. The committee (see here for members and AGM minutes) meet at 9.00am for an hour, and then after 10.00am everyone is welcome for tea, coffee, biscuits and a natter.

Thursday 9th November 2017

Following the great success of the first WSAM Nosh Nights, the next one is at the The World's End Pub, Arundel Rd, Patching, Worthing BN13 3UQ on Thurs 9th Nov at 7.30 pm. See their website [here](#). Everyone is welcome, both Observers and Associates alike, (and also partners if you wish). If you are going to be coming along, please email Kev at Kevin.orman@btinternet.com so he has a rough idea of numbers.

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Red for the hard shoulder, green for slip roads, amber for the central reservation on a dual carriageway (& motorway) and white for lane markers..... not forgetting the blue ones too! But are you aware that their spacing also alters depending on the white lines???



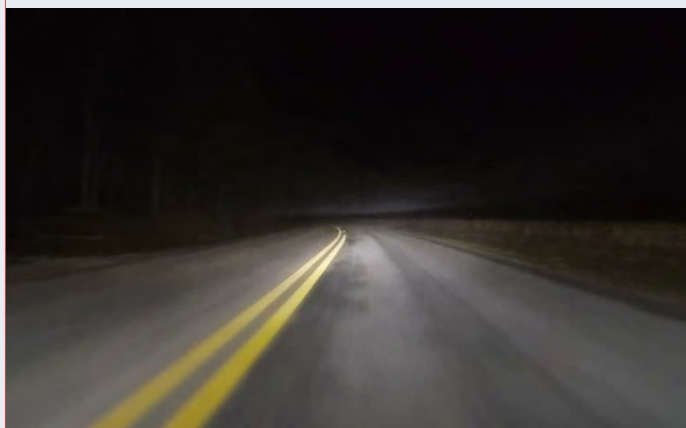
If you take a normal road with centre lines (the short white line with the long gap), the cats eyes are placed in every other gap. If the road has a hazard lines (long white line and short gap), the cats eyes are placed in every gap, therefore twice as many as with the centre lines. But if you have double white lines, then there are twice as many cats eyes as with hazard lines, so 4 times as many as centre lines.

So next time you're riding or driving at night, just have a look at the cats eyes and try and work out what the road designers are trying to tell you.



Not only the more paint the greater the potential danger, but also the more cats eyes the more danger too!

But it's not all bad news as the darkness and the winter months can help our riding too. When we're riding in the daytime, the first time we see an oncoming vehicle is when we have a direct line of sight; but during darkness we can see the oncoming headlight beam a lot earlier, as it illuminates the road ahead of the vehicle. Also, as quite a lot of trees and hedges start to lose their leaves, we can see headlight beams through corners and across fields to give us an even better idea of what is approaching. So please, unless it's dangerous, don't stop riding in the winter months, but carry on riding and improving your skills.



Welcome to WSAM

A warm welcome to the following new member this month.

Bob O'Dell — Sompting

This Months Test Passes

Congratulations to the following people and their Observers for passing their tests.

Jason Mason (Pass) Obs D Sparrow

Bill Rand (Pass) Obs M Muspratt

The King is dead..... Long live the King. Peter Smith gives us an insight into his new bike

Looking back over my choice of bikes over the years, each has three things in common - a large engine, full fairing and luggage. It's not because I'm a keen tourer, although I did ride the Pan down to Cannes in January one year, but (a) I prefer some protection from the wind and weather, and (b) as I use the bike to go to client meetings I need to be able to stow all the gear and go in suited and booted.

I'd no plans to change the bike, but the crash made me think it was sensible to have a look around the market first and make sure I really was buying the best bike for my needs.

I really wanted to love the Triumph Trophy, but we just didn't gel. I spent a couple of hours on the last of Honda's mighty Pan Europeans, the ST1300, but compared to its much older 1100cc sibling it had absolutely no character. It was also heavy to filter, plus its reputation for developing a high speed wobble was concerning.

No Yamaha dealer had an FJ1300 available for a road test, and I don't actually like the 'sit up and beg' riding positions of semi-off roaders, so to an extent it was Hobson's choice that found me picking up an identical 1200RT to replace the lost one. It's even in the same colour scheme, yet what a revelation it has turned out to be.

Considering the new one is just two years' younger than the predecessor, and there has been little apparent change in the model since, it feels like a whole new bike. Andy

Steele at Chandlers, who incidentally will always do a great deal for WSAM members, tells me they have done some tweaking to the mechanicals to deal with Euro compliance, but either way the result is outstanding.

There was nothing wrong with the old one, but getting off my interim ST1100 onto this one, was like getting out of a Morris Minor and into a Ferrari. It goes, stops and corners brilliantly, and the clutch-less gearshift is as smooth as a knife through butter.

During the preparations for BikeFest South, Kevin Orman and I took a trip through the local lanes, and I was mightily impressed by the RT's ability to keep up with Kevin's Multistrada. Admittedly when you are making progress under those conditions you do realise that a big bike like this needs some careful handling, but with good observation and planning, it's more than up for the job!



With enough luggage to swallow up my helmet, boots and fully armoured Halvarssons riding gear, it ticks all the usability boxes. It's also a cracker for filtering on those London rush hour trips. It's incredibly stable, right down to 2mph, and with enough presence that you rarely get missed by other road users.

If it has one fault it's probably mine. As we all get older and the years of exercise and injury start to show up in dodgy joints, hauling a big bike around when you're parking in tight bays gets less easy. If only it had a reverse gear...

Highly recommended!

(If any other members have thoughts about a bike, equipment, or anything biking related that may be of interest to other WSAM members, please send it in)

Volkswagen board says Ducati not for sale. (Phew –Ed)

Persistent opposition from labour groups has put the brakes on the sale of Ducati by Volkswagen AG, a union spokesperson has told Bloomberg.

Regional head of FIOM CIGL union, Bruno Papignani told Bloomberg: "Ducati's CEO told workers that the VW supervisory board decided to halt the sale process. IG Metall sustained and helped Ducati workers in their request to remain inside the VW group which should keep investing in our company."

Rumours circulated in June this year that [Harley-Davidson were preparing a bid to takeover Ducati](#) after hiring Goldman Sachs to work on the deal. Earlier this year, in August, a report from Reuters claimed Volkswagen's supervisory board, which is made up of an equal split between corporate management and workforce representatives, saw no reason to sell.



And on the subject of Ducati, they have their big reveal this weekend at 8.00pm (9.00pm CET) of their 2018 range of bikes. I for one will be watching with interest to see if 2018 or 2019 will be the launch of the new Multistrada range. See their website [here](#).

Tyre report — update

I've often wondered if the tread pattern on the Maxxis Diamonds was all show and no substance, I can indeed confirm that they do have some substance and they do make a difference to the handling of the Versys, unfortunately it's not an improvement!



I originally started to think my rear shock was faulty, it's done 35k miles with me in the saddle so it's not had an easy life, and when lent over the bike feels like it is weaving or squirming, it's not too disconcerting, but it is noticeable!

As these tyres have worn it's become even more pronounced and powering out of corners it feels like I'm Rossi, with my backend sliding all over the place, in reality it's not, but that's how bad it feels.

I've tried a few changes to the shock settings and tyre pressure, but it doesn't make any real difference. Also the diamond pattern has worn strangely and when you run your hand over the pattern you can really feel the bumps or ridges, they must peak by a good few millimetres.

The other area that these tyres are poor is the wear rate, I've only covered 3,000 miles and they are really looking like they will need changing soon, strangely they've not squared off and appear to have worn fairly evenly, but they are about 500 miles from being swapped out due to tread depth

So what's good about them, well they're cheap, but I've run reasonably priced tyres before, but unless they were giving them away, I would not consider them. I really wanted to like them, they grip well under braking and are stable in a straight line, they also didn't need balancing which is a testament to Maxxis 's quality control, but ultimately I can't recommend them due to the poor mileage and the odd weaving went leant over as the tyres wear. Maybe Maxxis sportier rubber, the aptly named Supermaxx Sport is the way to go...?



And Finally.....

There's no magic here, but the seemingly impossible, suddenly becomes possible and by the look of it quite common. Let's see if anyone at WSAM can handle a motorbike quite as well? See the video [here](#).

And for this month's second offering, a big thank you to Dave Sparrow for sending in the link. The question is, who do you think will win...??? See the clip [here](#).

That's all folks.

Max