

West Sussex Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter - April 2018



Bike Fit (Part 1 of 3)

Spring is the time of year that most people look at a buying another motorbike and dealers start rubbing their hands; so I thought I would spend a few minutes this month, talking about making sure that the motorcycle you buy 'fits' you and your needs.



The first thing you need to do is decide on how much power do you really need? Time and time again I have seen people fall for the lure of cc's only to find themselves 'over biked'. ('Over biked' normally refers to someone having a motorcycle that is either physically too large for them or having too much power which they can comfortably use.) If you never fully 'nail' the throttle at least once or twice on every ride, then you are probably riding a bike with too much power for you.

Having a bike with too much power often manifests itself with the rider not being very progressive, a distinct lack of corner confidence and using various excuses to cover up the fact that, fundamentally, they are scared.

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Diary for April 2018

Thursday 5th April 2018

This was postponed from Thurs 1st March. Paul Brown from [French Training Tours](#) will be at Dial Post Village Hall tonight at 7.30pm to tell the group about what his company has to offer us. If you've ever fancied riding across Europe, don't have the time (or confidence) to organise something, then this talk is for you.

Sunday 22nd April 2018

WSAM Monthly Meeting & AGM

Today's meeting is the AGM, and has been moved to Sunday 22nd April. The AGM is due to start at 10.00am, promises not only to be interesting but is also guaranteed to be all over by 10.45am, as immediately afterwards there is a ride-out to Newlands Corner.

Please come along if you can and give your support to the committee and volunteers.

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Editor Max Webber

Let's be honest if you're mainly riding one up and in the UK, anything up to 750cc will probably be more than adequate. Kevin Orman's 'other bike' is a Kawasaki ER6 and he's able to keep up with the fastest of riders on the UK roads (well almost ☹).

Weight is another consideration. Why ride around on a 250+kg lump (that's a quarter of a Tonne), when you could easily have something weighing less than 200kg. Not only does the extra weight increase wear and tear on the bike and tyres, it also decreases fuel efficiency, but for me the main detractor is the loss of nimbleness and flickability, not withstanding the extra braking distance in an emergency and, God forbid, if it does fall over.... picking it up.



So now you've decided on the cc, you've not gone for something not too large or too heavy, so now the final decision is getting a bike that suits your riding, and dare I say age. There's an old motorcycle dealer saying that the older the rider gets the more upright the riding position; and if anyone knows me and my riding past that is so, so true. Why buy a sports bike when most of your riding is going to be commuting or touring? Not only do they have a small fuel tank, but quite often if you're approaching 6ft tall, the riding position can be cramped with the bike looking ridiculously small beneath you.

Like it or not, and apologies if the next few words upset anyone, but sports bikes are for the young, and buying a sports bike will neither impress anyone, or increase your attractiveness to other human beings. Sorry!

So please when buying your next bike, don't chose a bike to impress anyone else, or a bike to relive your youth, instead get a bike which suits you and fits your needs too.

WSAM Ride Out Dates

April 22nd — Newlands Corner
Following the AGM at Dial Post Village Hall, Kevin will be leading a ride up to Newlands Corner. The ride will leave at 11.00am sharp, so make sure you are there by 10.45am to hear the briefing, and why not come along to the AGM too.

May 13th — [1066](#) Cafe nr Hastings

June 10th — Brooklands Museum

July 8th — Sammy Millers

August 12th — Redhill Aerodrome Cafe

September 9th — Rye Marina and The Bosuns Bite

October 14th — London Tour

Welcome to WSAM

A warm welcome to the following new members this month.

Philip Evans - Shoreham

Steve Churchill - Worthing

Stephen Baines - Horsham

Peter Knowles - Southwater

Tony Vine - Angmering

This Months Test Passes

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

Ian Hancock (Pass) Obs A Cuthell

Brits in the Basque

You know the way that buses always come at once, well Thursday we have a talk from French Training Tours, and I have just received contact from a chap called Peter Hase who runs a firm called Brits in the Basque. This chap is an IAM National Observer and as the name suggests he runs rides in the Basque territory of Northern Spain and the Pyrenees. See his website [here](#). Obviously we cannot vouch for either the chap or his holidays, but we thought it might be of interest.

If you do tour through Europe I think the following link will definitely be of interest. It is a blog, written by Peter Hase that was recently printed in Ride magazine about breaking down whilst abroad. See it [here](#).

New kid on the block

We all know how hugely popular the Michelin Road 4 was (is), but not resting on their laurels, and with both Pirelli and Bridgestone snapping at their heels, Michelin have released a new Road 5 sports touring tyre to replace the firm's hugely popular Pilot Road 4.



With the original Pilot Road launched back in 2002, this fifth-generation adaptation boasts both improved performance in the wet and dry, as well as better longevity than the previous Pilot Road 4.

To achieve this, Michelin has developed an all-new tread pattern known as 'Michelin XST Evo technology', which uses a mixture of sipes and wells. These sipes get progressively wider throughout the tyre's lifetime, meaning it can continue to disperse water for longer.

The Road 5 also uses a dual compound on the front and rear, with a harder, longer lasting middle section and softer shoulders of varying rigidity for greater dry weather handling and stability.

The front tyre, known as the '2CT', features two types of all-silica compound – one for the middle 44% and then another for the outer shoulders. At the rear, the 2CT+ is comprised of an all-silica central crown, with the shoulders made of a slicker all-carbon black compound.

However, what I (and I'm sure the other WSAM members would love to know, is what are they like in real life. If you've recently bought a pair, please could you write a little report which I could include letting us know what they are really like.

Sat Navs

Although we all know how good Sat Nav's are at directing us, especially when you're riding through or to unknown places, they should not be used when going out for an Observed ride. When on your Observed ride you don't require them for directions as these will be given by the Observer behind you and you shouldn't need them to let you know the speed limits as your forward observation skills will do that for you. This is especially important where the speed limit on the road have been altered, but the Sat Nav's database has not.

Sat Nav's continued.....

Therefore if your Observer asks you to remove your Sat Nav before a ride and place it in your pocket/pannier/topbox, you now know why. It's always better to remove it as some will automatically power up and also you won't be tempted to have a little look.

As I said they are great tools for navigating, especially when blue-toothed to your helmet, but not for Observed rides.

Steam Powered Hyabusa



No, the Suzuki Hayabusa in the picture hasn't just thrown a piston out of its engine, it is in fact Manxman Chris Wedgwood's steam-powered land speed record attempt bike in action. Yes, steam powered...

The current record of 80.4mph for a steam-powered motorcycle is held by American Bill Barnes and was set in 2014, something Wedgwood more than has in his sights.

Last week his heavily modified Suzuki Hayabusa, which runs a contraflow monotube steam generator that uses kerosene as a fuel to produce 2000psi at 950-degrees Fahrenheit, hit a maximum speed of 72.97mph while testing at Elvington.

But just beating the current record isn't enough for Wedgwood, he is targeting 120mph to put the record well out of the reach of anyone else that fancies giving it a shot. If anyone else is even considering such a feat...

Wedgwood will be making his record attempt at one of the Straightliners World Record Weekends at Elvington. If you fancy watching, or giving your own bike a run, information on Straightliners events can be found by clicking [here](#)

And Finally.....

For this month we have 3 video offerings, I know, I spoil you.

The first, is obviously a set-up, but is not a million miles away from what organized gangs could do. See it [here](#)

You have probably sensed by now I have a keen interest in electric bikes, so it was with a keen eye I saw [this trailer](#) promoting a new Yamaha Trials Bike. They might say it's a concept bike, but it looks production ready to me. Hmm, me thinks a road bike will be following soon.

And for my 3rd video, just sit back and admire the confidence and skill. See that [here](#).

That's all folks.

Max