

CAMunicate



The Newsletter
of
Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists

www.cambsiam.org.uk

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Editorial. Peter Kidney

For those of you who don't know, Christmas is coming soon. Yippee! So book yourselves places on our CAM Christmas Dinner. (*plug no1*) Booking forms can be found at www.cambsiam.org.uk/useful_docs.php. If you live near me Christmas has been coming since early October when our local garden centre started building Santa's Grotto. This is great news. I should be able to buy an Easter Egg any day now.

This time of year brings interesting riding conditions, sometimes great but often cold and wet with the roads having a liberal coating of leaves, mud, gravel and then salt. So it's an even better time to think back about what we have learnt through the IAM and make sure we put it into practise. That of course applies to full members who have passed their test just as much as associates because as we know passing the test is just the beginning.

Learning road skills is in some ways similar to learning skills on the race track. One of the things they drill into you on the track is to concentrate on technique and not to worry about speed. You are specifically told not to try to ride fast because as your technique improves the speed will come naturally. This is true for riding on the road. We tend to talk about "quiet efficiency" or progression rather than speed, but the same thing will happen. In time you will find yourself more confident and comfortably tackling what used to quite awkward twisty roads with ease. Maybe you notice your A to B time has come down quite a bit.

So next time you are out on one of your favourite rides, going through the twisties noticeably faster than you used to and quietly congratulating yourself on your progress. Ask yourself one thing: On that last closed bend that you went around faster than before, would you really have been able to stop within the distance you could see to be clear on your own side of the road?

From the Chairman's Bike. Peter Burge

I'd like to put out a bit of a challenge to you all this month. We all focus on the standard of our motorcycle riding, but how good is your car driving?

This was a question I asked myself a few months back and decided that I was falling short and becoming complacent when behind the wheel. Now the irony was not lost on me that I regularly critique car drivers whilst riding my bike, but when in the car I was at risk of falling into the category of road users that frustrate me most. The answer for me was obvious: Sign up for the IAM car test.

As anticipated I found that I had picked up a number of bad habits over the years, which were frustratingly difficult to shake once hardwired in to my driving style, and I needed to put in to practice IPSGA when in the cosy confines of a car and less in touch with my surroundings. However, the principles of advanced driving are no different to those of advanced riding, there are just different considerations along the way on how best to implement them in the pursuit

of high standards of observation, hazard assessment and machine control. After a series of drives with a helpful and patient observer I had the fundamentals sorted and was ready for the test. I found the test itself hugely rewarding – it was one of those occasions where everything came together on the day, and as you have probably guessed from the fact that I am admitting to having done this, led to a successful pass.

So why am I bothering telling you all this when we are a motorcycle group, not a car group? Well, one of the things that people often ask is “where next?” after passing their motorcycle test. I’d strongly recommend that the IAM car test with our sister car group is worth consideration. Not only does it improve your own driving and make you as analytical within the car as you are on the bike, but it also reduces the chances that you will be the subject of frustration of your fellow motorcyclists when they encounter you in your car!

Winter may now be approaching but CAM still has a full calendar of events, including the First Aid course (now sold out) and our Christmas Dinner on Weds 8th December (spaces still available) (*plug no2*). We will also continue with our usual Sunday Rides on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of every month. These continue even if it is wet or cold, and in fact some of my most memorable rides have been on a clear but crisp winter morning. Having said which, if we have snow or the temperature has dropped so low that there is a serious ice risk we will take the decision to cancel a ride in the interests of safety. So if in doubt, check the website before heading out as we will post an update if the ride is cancelled – otherwise come along and enjoy a ride with some other likeminded motorcyclists.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate David Martindale on his recent qualification as a group observer. This reflects both a significant effort on the part of David in devoting the time required to reach the necessary standard, and on the part of our senior observer team in delivering the training. The ongoing contributions of our observers to the group are gratefully appreciated.

I’ll close by reminding you to please drop me a line if you wish to comment, have any ideas that you think would be good for us to try or if you would like to suggest anything concerning the group or our activities. I can be reached on chairman@cambsiam.org.uk

I hope to see you all very soon – ride safely.

Test Passes

Well done to the following associates for passing their IAM test recently. Also thanks to their Observers for their time and effort.

Associate

Mark Kennedy
Mark Loone
Heather Cooper
Guyon Pell
John Gibson
Andrew Stannard

Observer

Steve Alsop
Peter Kidney
Peter Allder
Julie D'alessandro
Ian Beeby
Ian Beeby

Observer Contact

If an Associate has not heard from his or her Observer then please use the list in the 'members section' of the CAM website to make contact. Any problems then get in touch with Chris Curryer chris.curryer@bt.com

Three Little Questions. Meg Morris

At every theory session in the Q & A section, three questions arise time after time and I felt this might be a good opportunity to give you a few ideas and thoughts on what the answers might be. Whatever your status in the club, observer or associate have a think about them. You may have something to add....

1. When can I cross a solid white line?

Well according to the Highway code: " 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 10mph (16kmk/h) or less"

Pretty cut and dry you may think but the question always seems to arise with the example of coming up to a level crossing where traffic is waiting for a train to cross. There are some examiners who feel that this traffic has not come to the end of its journey and therefore to filter pass them would be a fail. There are others who feel it is acceptable to filter. My advice would be to consider what advantage you would gain in conjunction with how safe it is. Ask yourself "if I filter to the front of the queue is there room for me to pull in safely without compromising my safety bubble?" If there are only 3 cars in the line, are you really gaining an advantage? If you are on test, maybe you have shown your ability to make progress in other areas and to push to the front may just be seen as aggressive? You should ask your

examiner before you start the test what they would prefer to see. All examiners will ask if you have any questions before you set off – so take advantage of it.

2. Can I break the speed limit when I overtake on test?

We are affiliated with the IAM which is a road safety organisation so the ability to stay within the law both on test and out on rides is of primary importance. However, it is worth remembering that while on the other side of the road our examiner will not be concentrating on his speedometer but on the road ahead. It is also important to be on the opposing carriageway for as little time as possible. But keep your wits about you, as when you return to your side of the road and the overtake is complete, the examiner will be free to check your speed. Excessive speed for the conditions will always be seen as a fault.

3. When should I filter?

Roadcraft offers some very good tips about filtering. If you decide to filter

- Take extreme care
- Keep your speed low
- Always identify a place where you can rejoin the traffic before moving out
- Make yourself visible
- Be ready to brake and use the horn
- Be courteous and avoid conflict.

Watch out for:

- Pedestrians crossing between vehicles
- Vehicles emerging from junctions
- Vehicles changing lanes or u-turning without warning
- Doors opening
- Reflective paint and studs
- Traffic islands
- Other bikes filtering

You should consider filtering when you can safely make progress, not be in breach of any road traffic regulation, not interfere with any other road user and take full consideration of the points listed above. It is inevitably exposing you to danger and so you must decide if that danger can be safely managed and if the benefit you gain is worth the additional risk.

So there you have it, the three most common questions we face regularly. Remember that as advanced riders, you must be **thinking** riders. So each situation is different and you should consider using the System at all times to make your decision.

Any questions or additions – feel free to email me or one of the other Senior Observers.

Bikes Welcome in Bedford's Bus Lanes. Chris Curryer

Bus lanes in the Bedford Borough are to be open to motorcycles for a trial from 16th September 2010. Bedford has four bus lanes in the town centre itself. Designed to reduce congestion around the town centre, the eighteen-month trial will also include bicycles, taxis and private hire vehicles. For many years local Councillor Charles Royden, Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Transport has supported motorcycles using bus lanes. He recently said, "I am delighted we have been able to open our bus lanes to more people whilst ensuring they continue to encourage people to consider more sustainable forms of transport." No doubt this will improve the lives of riders in Bedford and hopefully will inspire those local authorities who are still unsure over allowing motorcycles into their bus lanes.

In addition Bus lane access has been allowed in: Bristol (which has operated a permanent bus lane access since 1996) and Reading (since 1999). Other sites are in: Northern Ireland, Birmingham, Colchester, Derby, Bath, Hull, Swindon, Richmond on Thames, Newcastle on Tyne, Sunderland, Plymouth and the M4 bus lane. Most of London's red routes are now currently being trialled for motorcycle use. So come on Cambridgeshire, though not sure about using the guided busway just yet!

Future Events, November December

Remember to check the local group website for the latest information on all of the events for November and December.

www.cambsiam.org.uk/events.php

First Aid Course Sat 6th November

As you are probably aware this course is now fully booked but please continue to let us know if you would like to go on one as we hope to repeat the course if demand is high enough.

Observers Meeting Wed 10th November

All Observers and Trainee Observers should try to attend this meeting. (Observers and Trainee Observers only)

Committee Meeting Wed 24th Nov

This is the last Committee meeting scheduled for this year so if you want us to cover any concerns or ideas you have please contact one of the committee members or email the committee chairman at chairman@cabsiam.org.uk

CAM Christmas Dinner Wed 8th Dec

(Plug no 3) Stop delaying fill in the form at www.cambsiam.org.uk/useful_docs.php cough up some dosh and come along.

Event Reports - September October

CAM Maintenance Day 4th September. Peter Kidney

This was an excellent but in some ways a strange day. We started off with Simon Burgin giving us a briefing which included telling us not to worry if we see firearms! (Simon kindly arranged for us to use the vehicle maintenance hanger at Cambridgeshire Constabulary Headquarters in Huntingdon.)

Dave Schindler was responsible for Electrics and had so much set up around his bike it looked like a set from a Hammer House of Horror film but luckily Igor didn't show up.

Steve Alsop was responsible for Cleaning. I'm sure he washed one side of his bike at least six times and then took it home on a trailer to stop it getting dirty.

Our chairman Peter Burge was doing Brakes and from where I was it looked like he managed to do a complete brake overhaul of his own bike.

Sarah Burge was demonstrating Storing for Winter which seemed to consist of a large cardboard box, lots of straw and leaving your bike under the stairs in the quiet.

Me? I was doing Adjustment to Levers and Controls but luckily I hadn't thrown my manual away.

That left Graham Pryke who did such a great job on Chains that we thought we would reproduce it here so that you can all make sure that yours is in great condition and properly adjusted with no snatchiness through the winter months.

A note of caution when using the following guide.

If you find yourself in your garage at the rear of your bike on your knees feeling very confused that may be because you are a BMW owner with a crafty shafty so probably best to skip the next article after all. 😊

Chain & Sprockets. Graham Pryke

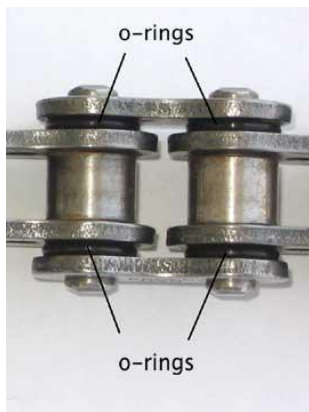
Cleaning the chain.

This is a very important part of the maintenance process which unfortunately not enough people do. The modern day spray wax chain lubricant makes the chain very sticky, which then collects the road grime and dirt. If you then apply another layer of the chain lubricant over the last one it will trap in that dirt and start becoming a grinding paste which is only going to accelerate the wear of the chain.

Start by getting your bike onto its centre stand, or paddock stand or even a wheel spinner if either of the first two is not available. Alternatively you will have to push the bike forwards & backwards which will require more space.

Cleaning the chain & sprockets thoroughly involves using a chain cleaner (*Motul make a very good one*), or alternatively use plenty of WD40 or similar. After spraying the cleaner over the chain, (*I normally do about 6" at a time to prevent the cleaner from drying*), scrub the chain with a nylon brush (*an old tooth brush is ideal*) to loosen the dirt then use the cleaner spray to rinse away the loosened dirt & grime, and don't forget to clean the rear sprocket too (*Do not use a wire brush as this will damage the sealing rings*). Next I tend to use an old flannel face cloth folded, (*but any rag will do, although it is not recommended to use paper towel*), to dry off the cleaner from all sides of the chain by turning the rear wheel by hand so that the chain is going away from the sprocket to avoid getting your fingers caught, (*Do not attempt this with the engine idling in first gear!*)

For best results, I try to leave the chain overnight for the cleaner to completely dry off before applying the lubricant. (*Warning, it is easy to accidentally spray the cleaner over the rear brake disc, so once finished make sure you clean the brake disc with an appropriate brake cleaner before riding the bike*).

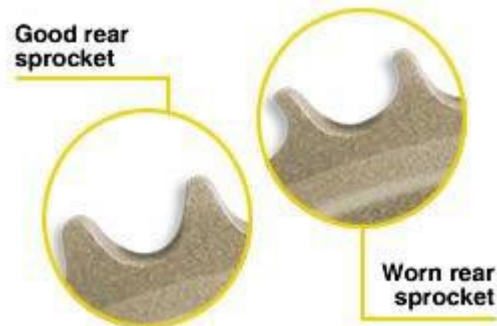
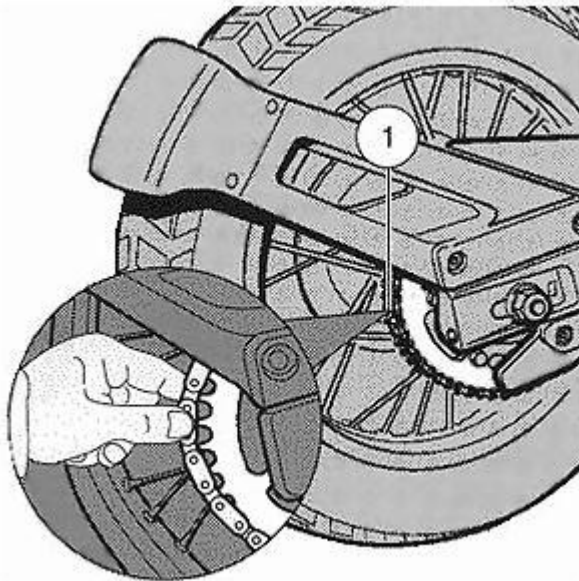


Checking for wear.

Even with the best maintenance, your chain & sprockets will eventually wear out. This can be detected in various ways and now that you have a clean chain, now is a good time to inspect it. Some crucial things to check for are:

- Excessive noise from the chain.
- Tight spot/slack spot differences too great or tight links.
- With the chain tensioned correctly, pull the chain at the 3'oclock position and if more than half of the sprockets tooth becomes visible, then it is time to replace.
- Check the link plates and rollers for signs of excessive wear/damage.
- Look at the rear sprocket and if you see the teeth are starting to hook over at the end like a crest of a wave, then it is time to replace.
- Always replace the chain & sprockets together as a set and don't waste money on cheap chain sets. They will not last. Budget at least £140 for the full replacement set.

- NEVER use bicycle type chain links. Motorcycle chain is riveted together. There are tools on the market to help dismantling and assembling the chains but if you are not confident in using them, take your bike to a trained motorcycle mechanic.



Adjusting the chain slack.

It is important to maintain the correct amount of slack in the chain, which should be checked about every 500-700 miles (*depending upon conditions*). Usually it is not necessary to adjust the chain tension every time unless it has been stressed a lot since the previous inspection.

To measure the chain slack: find the midpoint between the two sprockets and rotate the rear wheel to find the tightest spot. (*Always adjust the chain to the tightest spot*). Holding the chain down to its lowest point, align a tape measure between two links then push the chain up to its highest point and measure the amount of slack. Refer to your bikes owner's manual for the specified range of movement. (*Slack is better than too tight!*).

To adjust the chain slack: If your chain adjusters have locknuts, then loosen these whilst holding the main adjuster in position, then loosen the rear axle nut, (*but not too far that the wheel is loose and moves around*) and any other nut/bolt required, for example the brake calliper. Now carefully move the adjuster 1/8th of a turn each side (*to take out excess slack you need to move the rear wheel backwards*) and re-check the chain slack. By adjusting each side the same amount you will preserve any wheel alignment that a dealer/mechanic has previously set. Once the chain slack is within the manufactures tolerance, tighten the rear axle nut to the correct torque setting (*this can be found in the owner's manual*) with a torque wrench whilst keeping the rear wheel pushed forward, (*re-check the chain tension again as sometimes the adjusters can move when tightening the axle nut*). Once you are satisfied tighten any other nuts/bolts and finally tighten the lock nuts of the chain adjusters. Install a new cotter pin or lock tab for the axle nut if required.

Wheel alignment.

Despite being often reported as inaccurate, the alignment marks on the swing arm are not a million miles out and are more than adequate for road riding. If the rear wheel is running out of line this can often be seen with wear to the chain and sprocket where you are looking for one side of the sprocket to show a worn shiny edge where the chain is running slightly to one side. Rather than looking at aligning the rear wheel with the front wheel, it may be better to simply check that the chain is running in-line with the front and rear sprockets. This can be achieved by removing the chain guard and squinting down the chain, or if you fancy a more hi-tec way of doing it, you can buy a laser chain alignment tool.



Lubricating the chain.

Although 'O', 'X' & 'Z' ring chains have sealed-in lubricant, it is still necessary to lubricate the outer surface of the chain. This helps keep the sealing rings from drying out and cracking and also protects the links from corrosion as well as providing a lubricant for the contact points between chain & sprocket.

With the chain clean and dry, and the extension nozzle fitted, spin the rear wheel, (this is often done with the engine idling in first gear, but be careful), and apply a coat of the chain lubricant between the plates moving across the chain. Once you have applied the lubricant top and bottom, take care in applying it to the sides, be careful not to spray the lubricant over other parts of the bike like the rear brake. Excess lubricant can be easily wiped off the wheel with WD40. However use brake cleaner when cleaning the brake disc!

Alternative lubricants.

Not everyone uses the wax spray lubricant. Some bike mechanics I have spoken to use a gear oil like EP80/90. For those who do lots of miles in all weathers, like couriers, commuters & tourers, the Scottoiler is a popular choice. This system applies an oil based lubricant automatically over the chain which lubricates (*and helps to clean*) the chain as you ride.

Free Assessment Day 12th September 2010. Chris Curryer

Thank you to all our Observers who gave up their time to help out with this event held recently at BT Exchange in Long Road. We had 10 potential bikers turn up to try us out and three people signed up on the day. We had support from Bikesafe with their marketing trailer and they got a lot of interest in their bike safe courses being run next year. We plan to run another 2 assessment days next year so if you have any non IAM biking friends then perhaps it would be worth mentioning to them in good time.

All Day Ride to Aldeburgh Sun 19th Sept. Andy Stone

This all day ride is always led by Janet Pinion and I am told is always popular so as the day approached I was surprised that only about five of us were booked to go. However, when I arrived at Tesco car park on the day I found around ten or twelve bikes parked and ready to go. Many of the bikes were carrying pillions which made us quite a crowd. We meandered our way down to the east coast occasionally crossing the A14 and passing through famous villages such as Lavenham with its Tudor houses and thatched roofs, (there were other roofs as well!) We had a two hour stay in Aldeburgh and I enjoyed fish and chips, ice cream and a couple of cigars which is of course a staple Yorkshire diet (I was sick on the way back!) I have to be honest and say that I enjoyed the day very much. The weather was grey but remained dry until we arrived back in Ely. The ride itself was kept at a nice pace and we all kept up and set a good example in the name of the IAM. We arrived back in Ely I think around four thirty so it was not too long a day for the older members (*Speak for yourself – Ed!*) and I can recommend the whole experience to you all for next year so pop it in your diaries.

Bikesafe Evening 21st Sept. Chris Curryer

The Police and Cambridgeshire County Council run a mainly theory course aimed at getting local bikers into improve their riding skills. The course is presented by Simon Burgin, who many of us know as he is also our IAM examiner. We are invited on the last night of three sessions to give a short talk on the IAM and what we can offer in terms of advanced riding to riders who want to take the next step. Last month Peter Burge and I went along. We had a lot of interest and gave out Skill for Life leaflets and some information about CAM events and activities to encourage people to sign up.

Curry Night, 28th Oct. Meg Morris

We met with full wallets and empty bladders at The Anchor in central Cambridge. After an impressive ride brief during which the importance of drinking quality beer and meeting new members was highlighted, we set off (*using the IPSGA System, Imbibe Pints while Slowly Getting Addled. Ed!*). We were delighted to be joined by a non BMW riding, non beard wearing new member returning from 'oop Noorrth' who despite being surrounded by

packing boxes still managed to get out and socialise with us. He was even seen chatting with a fellow Ducati rider!

The India House was our second stop. The line of sight method was used and we all made it safely into the warm, welcoming environment of one of Cambridge's leading eating establishments.

There were some indicators used unnecessarily which did lead to some confusion in the beer order. However, onion bhajis were almost literally thrown with gay abandon, wine quaffed, tikka's scooped and a thoroughly good time had by all. If you missed CAM's latest social night – why not join us for the Christmas dinner. Don't just read the gossip, be part of it!



Observers Observations. Steve Bradshaw

Riding Multi-Lane Roads

Following on from David Parnell's useful article in the previous issue of Camunicate, about entering motorways and dual carriageways, I'd like to explore some of the advanced riding techniques that we can use to keep ourselves safe and to hasten our progress while riding Multi-Lane roads.

Statistically motorways are the safest roads in the country. That's great but if there is an accident, it tends to be a big one and will often be a multi vehicle affair which could have dire consequences for any motorcyclist who is involved. Common occurrences are rear end collisions (usually multi vehicle) and side swipes which are mostly caused by left hand drive goods vehicles changing lanes and not seeing other vehicles which are alongside them. Multi-Lane side swipe accidents are particularly devastating as they often involve overturning heavy goods vehicles which tend to make a mess of everything.

To avoid being involved in these situations ourselves we can think carefully about how we can apply the System of Motorcycle Control to riding on a Multi-Lane road.

In theory, it should be really easy: the traffic is all going in one direction, the signs giving directions to other roads and locations are given at least a mile before the slip road, we get a reminder half a mile later and another, final sign, at 300 metres. So, if it's that easy, why do so many people leave it so late before finally heading for the slip road and why do some drivers and riders travel so close to the vehicle in front?

There are probably many answers but all of them relate to poor observation, a lack of anticipation, planning and, often, just a little selfishness.

Now, I know that members of CAM are among the very best riders and work hard to keep their riding skills at a very high level but there are a few things that we could all do to improve safety, mainly for ourselves, while riding our bikes on dual carriageways and motorways.

Taking things from the slip road entry onto the carriageway; it's always good plan to take a few moments to assess the situation: become familiar with what's happening around you, and check the relative speed and intentions of the other traffic, before committing yourself to a rapid move into the overtaking lane that might see you riding alongside heavy goods vehicles, caravans and the like, while jockeying for position in a queue of overtaking hopefuls at 50mph.

By all means get yourself into the overtaking lane when you feel the time is right but try not to do it by forcing others to slow down or swerve and, particularly, don't pull out only to find yourself closer than 2 seconds (in good conditions) to the vehicle in front. Be patient; wait to ease into the safe gap when it becomes available. Incidentally, it's a really good idea to think about using the white marker posts at the side of motorways to maintain a safe following distance. These posts are 100metres apart so it's easier to judge your following distance

without having to watch the vehicle in front pass a sign or similar and then count to yourself to check the time gap.

Under no circumstances should you put yourself into danger by gradually creeping past large vehicles. It's much safer to dominate the lane that you intend to use to overtake, by positioning your motorcycle more or less centrally, and wait until a large enough clear space develops in front which allows you to pass the whole vehicle and yet still maintain a safe following distance from the vehicle in front. It is preferable to move over slightly, to an offside position, while actually carrying out the overtake as this can improve the drivers view of you or, at least, attract attention when you are beginning to pass. Remember that non UK vehicles are left hand drive so the driver will not have the same view as that which is available in a 'normal' UK vehicle.

Don't take a chance. It's not worth the risk for the sake of a few seconds spent waiting and refining your plans.

As you approach slip roads think about taking a look at the flow of traffic which will be coming onto the road you are using. Consider if it's worth moving out to the next lane to allow other traffic to enter from the slip road without delaying them or causing them to adjust their speed. If you are planning to do this then make sure that you carry out the planning stage of the System very carefully because it would be pointless to change your position to assist one road user while causing last minute problems for another road user. Use the System properly and consider all the information available before making a rushed decision.

Lane positioning for a motorcyclists is much more important than you might think too. Think about the speed at which you might be travelling: 70mph = 102 feet per second. The truth is that many other road users will be travelling at nearer to 90mph or maybe a bit more and this is equal to about 130 feet per second.

Why then do we see riders stubbornly sticking to the offside riding position, failing to apply their advanced riding techniques and knowledge, when using a slightly off centre position (of your own lane) might be much safer, involve less need to move away from the danger posed by the proximity of other vehicles overtaking you and yet still afford a good deal of space for us to ride in a staggered formation as a group?

Try it and you'll see what I mean.

In addition check out the dark band, left by HGV's. You can see it on the nearside lane on all Multi-Lane roads, and try positioning yourself just to the right of this 'marker' in normal riding. This position should keep you safe from road debris, which often ends up right in the centre of the lane as it run over by other vehicles, and you will soon realise that other vehicles, which overtake you, are much further away, making you safer, and your view of the road surface ahead, unless you are getting too close to large vehicles, is very good.

Of course, there will be times, when the road turns sharply or while negotiating some slip roads, when we will use the fluidity of the Motorcycle System of Control to position our

machine to the left or to the right to gain a better view of the road ahead, but, in general, the slightly off centre position for Multi-Lane roads is a good one to have in the bank.

Useful Information

Group Contact

If you require information for a friend about the Group's activities or have other queries please contact:

Phil Duffy
Club Secretary
PO Box 1159, Comberton
Cambridge, CB23 7WH

secretary@camsiam.org.uk

Tall Tales. Peter Kidney

Well you bashful readers this will be the last Tall Tales unless one of you breaks rank and spills the beans on those embarrassing things you get up to (motorcycling related only please). Remember we only print your name once so confidentiality is assured.

As we are coming up to the first aid course I will end with a few tenuous health related tips.

If you have an accident, don't expect sympathy.

I was doing some essential maintenance once and managed to cut my hand rather badly. When I saw the blood I realised straight away that this was even worse than a man cold. Up the garden path I went, arm raised and blood running freely. Luckily as I went into the kitchen there was my wife (a Theatre Sister) who looked very concerned. I knew that my troubles would be in good hands as on another occasion when I had cut myself she did a really good job of stitching me up, without an anaesthetic, in fact she seemed to enjoy it. Immediately my wife sprang into action and came rushing towards me grabbing a clean tea towel along the way. But then it all went wrong. Instead of caring for my injuries I was roughly pushed out of the door back into the garden. The last thing I saw as the door closed was my wife kneeling on her previously clean floor mopping up the blood with the tea towel. It seems her concern was not for me but the mess I was making in the kitchen!

You can love your bike too much

A friend was mad on Yamahas, He loved his bike so much that he continued to ride with his leg in plaster from an previous motorcycle accident. Not surprisingly he then had another accident while still in plaster from the first. This time things were a lot more serious and he

was scheduled for an emergency operation. While he was lying in bed waiting for his op' for some reason he decided it would be a good idea to tease out the bit of paper in the hospital identity band around his wrist. He turned it over and wrote YAMAHA on the back and re inserted it into the wrist band which now proudly had the name of his favourite bike on it in big capital letters. Later he was taken down for his emergency operation but there was a problem. They were expecting my friend but now had the wrong man a Mr Yamaha. He by now was fast asleep dreaming of his bike as the pre-med had taken effect. The operation had to be cancelled because they could not confirm the identity of the patient. When they brought him round he found out that the staff were none too happy and for some reason didn't share his love of Yamahas.

Accidents are not always bad

Why? Hospitals are a good place to meet girlfriends. At least two of my three wives were nurses who I met during prolonged stays, one in Epping Hospital the other in Harlow Hospital. Both stays were due to motorcycle accidents. (Sorry ladies, no experience of boyfriends.)

P.S. This is not a recommendation.