

# CAMunicate



The Newsletter  
of  
Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists

[www.cambsiam.org.uk](http://www.cambsiam.org.uk)

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### **Editorial. Peter Kidney**

Happy New Year to you all.

By now you will have worked out that the thumping in your head and general queasy feeling was due to your New Years Eve celebrations. If you cannot remember the details then maybe that is for the best. Just hope that no one there had a camera. I always tell Catharene that it must have been due to a dodgy pie. That works for me, sometimes. Of course you need to work out where you have been, wherever that was and whether you were with your partner or not before trying out any excuses.

You may have noticed that it's been a bit chilly lately. Has that stopped us? Apparently not. I was clearing the snow off of the car one morning wondering whether I should be going out at all as it was -5°C and a motor bike chugged passed presumably on the way to work. Another member emailed me to say the he was cautiously going along the M6 in his car. There was a strong crosswind adding a big chill factor to the already -6°C temperature. To his surprise he was overtaken by a rider going very quickly. So is this madness or are they real bikers who ride in any conditions all year round?

Properly treated roads do help us to continue to ride at lower temperatures but there will be a limit where these treatments stop working. This will be relative to, for example, the temperature, the time since the treatment was spread and whether the coating had been spread evenly.

Some drivers and riders seem to assume that the councils have managed to treat all roads – they have not! They believe that the council has covered every inch of the surface without missing anything – wrong! Despite the council's best efforts that cannot be true. So why are they taking the chance?

A motorbike used to be my only means of transport and I did my share of riding in all conditions in order to get to work. Those years were the ones where I fell off a lot and had too many visits to the hospital. Since then I vowed to: never have a bike as my only means of transport, to get a lot of training on how to ride vertically and to never to ride when the temperature drops below +4°C. If to some that means I'm not a real biker then that's fine with me.

I cannot think of a good enough reason to ride when the risks are so high. This could be a life or death decision. Keep the bike in the garage, do a bit more polishing and dream of slightly warmer weather when we only have to cope with rain, mud, fallen leaves, potholes and diesel spills.

I hope you find that some of the articles in this edition will make you think twice about your safety. Remember it can happen to us and that is why we continue to train and improve our skills to do our best to make sure that it does not.

## **From the Chairman's Bike. Peter Burge**

Unfortunately the weather has conspired against us over the past month and as a result I have not been out on the bike as much as I would have hoped, and in fact have only managed to clock up miles on a few observed runs since the last issue. However, this does not mean the motorcycle has been forgotten.

Over the past couple of months I have spent a number of hours in the garage undertaking routine servicing along with some larger jobs to unwind the clock on some of the 70k miles that it has covered since leaving the factory. This has included replacing a number of the oil seals on the shafts that leave the engine casings, stripping and cleaning the carbs, installing new carb components including a titanium jet kit and getting them back in balance, cleaning the connectors on the wiring harness, and fitting a new high amp gel battery. The bike now starts and runs smoother than it has in a long time, and pulls far better through the previous dips in the rev range. I clearly should have done some work on the carbs a long time ago! As a reward, Father Christmas has bought me some new tools for the coming year to continue to keep me amused in the garage.

The long winter nights also brought an opportunity for planning my holiday trips for the forthcoming year. Much to Sarah's frustration, I am not committing to anything yet, preferring as always to leave my options open. However, thoughts have turned to getting back up to Scotland and getting out to Harris and Lewis to complete the trip that we had to cut short last

year. Another option may be a return to the continent for another camp and tour trip. However, there is still time to change my mind and come up with other ideas; after all, there is something satisfying about spending evenings consulting maps and the internet for ideas. These are not things that should be rushed in to.

The group had a very successful Christmas Dinner at the beginning of December. As in previous years, the Green Man at Thriplow made us very welcome, and the tried and tested combination of good food, beer and tall stories made for a great evening.

Towards the end of last year we also ran a very well attended First Aid course. There are plans to hold another one on 12<sup>th</sup> March, but with a focus on providing a refresher for those that have previously attended a First Aid course in the past 2-3 years. As with previous courses, we will be subsidising this event as we are keen to assist our observers, ride leaders, and other members of CAM in keeping their First Aid knowledge up to date. As many of you will be aware, we have unfortunately had to cancel some of our Sunday Rides due to the weather, but these will continue on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month. However, please do check the website before heading out as we will post an update if the ride is cancelled. Hopefully we will now have a milder few months and will get a good turnout for these events.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Peter Kidney (your editor) on his recent qualification as a group observer. This reflects both a significant effort on the part of Peter in devoting the time required to reach the necessary standard, and on the part of our senior observer team in delivering the training.

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](mailto:chairman@cambsiam.org.uk)

I'd like to wish you all the best for 2011 and I hope to see you all very soon – ride safely.  
Peter Burge, CAM Chairman

## **Test Passes**

Well done to Matt Polaine for passing his IAM test recently. Also thanks to his Observer Ian Beeby for his time and effort.

## **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](mailto:chris.curryer@bt.com)

## A Pause for Thought from your Examiner....

“50:50, Phone a friend or ask the audience”, a catch phrase many of us may be familiar with. When in the context of a TV game show and gambling with someone else’s money, this seems a fairly simple choice, based on your ability and **no one** else’s to answer a question.

What does this have to do with advanced riding you ask?

In my day job it never ceases to amaze me at the attitude of some drivers and riders who hold the above TV concept in high esteem. They enter into a course of conduct whilst riding or driving without any thought for their or anyone else’s safety. They take a risk or gamble when the true outcome cannot be predicted or known.

Imagine the scenario:

A1198 traveling south towards Caxton, you are riding your motorcycle in a spirited fashion approaching the bottom of Lattenbury Hill with a junction on the left. You are positioned to the center of the road. In that junction is a silver Ford Mondeo with a male driver (the only occupant). The car is stationary in the junction mouth, and you are aware that he cannot proceed, not least because of your presence, but because of oncoming traffic in the northbound lane as well, which then clears. You are now the only vehicle our car driver has to “give way” too. You make eye contact with the car driver and continue on your way passing the car driver who is safely still in the mouth of the junction.

Unfortunately, however that wasn’t the true outcome. As you got to within 20 metres of the car, it pulled out sending you crashing over the roof landing on the road beyond. You have just played my TV game show and used the catch phrase above. The question I asked you “Was he looking at you or straight through you?” Your answer being “50:50, phone a friend, ask the audience” there is no way you can know the answer.

Our car driver has a predisposed condition where he has a mental block of seeing narrow approaching objects. This can be said of many drivers, as we are so few on the road (less than 1.5% of road population). At junctions drivers go through a thought process of “car van lorry, car van lorry”. This has been proven and published in various research journals.

The correct answer to this question should be, slow down, be prepared to stop, move and make yourself more visible. In a way you almost want to make the car driver **jump**.

So: Don’t guess, don’t gamble (with your life), think WHAT IF?

It has been an honor to serve as your examiner this year, and it has been another successful year for the group. We all have the collective responsibility to enjoy our motorcycling, share our experience, help and nurture others and be SAFE.

Happy New Year to you all and here’s to another great biking year in 2011.

Simon Burgin.

## Norwich & Norfolk Hospital Speaker Puts Willies into Nervous Bikers!

Our local orthopaedic trauma consultant gave a great presentation at October's monthly meeting of the Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists, which included a few gory shots of smashed up bikers on his operating table. It was well worth it - 25 or so turned up (only 4 of us on bikes... 'Too cold', 'In for service', 'Note from my Mom saying I didn't have to bring it' etc.).

The good doctor spoke from experience – no less than 50% of his time in theatre is spent *repairing motorcyclists*. The main take-home message was: (IAM / RoSPA) training is the only way to prevent us falling into his clutches, also WEAR LEATHERS / protective clothing etc. to avoid gravel rash, primarily because infected, abraded skin is a contra-indication (*a no-no*) to the use of the titanium plates and fixative screws that he needs to stabilise broken bones - resulting in poor prognosis (*outcome*) for the 'shorts and flip-flops' brigade. He hadn't seen enough bikers with BMW / Leatt neck braces / Hit-Air inflatable jackets to give an opinion on their pros / cons...but did point out that anything sharp / blunt in the left lower breast pocket may fracture ribs that then go on to puncture the spleen with nasty results.

Once you've had your RTC the clock starts running on: 'The Golden Hour', during which time it would be awfully good if you can get to a decent A&E department. To reinforce this, the surgeon presented the results of a Canadian study that answered the question: "who has best chance of survival, an RTC casualty treated at the roadside by 1) a Paramedic, 2) a Doctor, or 3) an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT, basically an ambulance driver, with basic life support skills)? Answer: the best outcome was experience by 3, then 1, and then 2. The hypothesis being that the less knowledge the Samaritan has, the more likely they are to 'scoop and run' the casualty to hospital, FAST to get proper treatment. The EMT 'stabilises the airway, checks breathing, loads & goes'. The paramedic reaches for his / her hypodermic, drugs bag and their machine that goes: "beep", buggers around a bit and *then* starts the engine, whilst a doctor reaches for her / his medical litigation insurance policy documents, reads them thoroughly then attempts all sorts of advanced trauma care with a Swiss army knife, a coat hanger and some sticky-backed plastic. Meanwhile, the casualty moves towards The Light.

The moral: ask them if they know what they are doing, and if they say: "Yes", knock them unconscious with your broken femur and phone for a cab.

Trauma surgeons have learned quite a few lessons from Iraq war battlefield medics and natural catastrophes:-

Nowadays they don't repair all fractures immediately on admission following a RTC - they will leave us for 5 days before they set our bones to firstly allow the body's inflammatory response to the trauma to subside - giving a much better prognosis. Also, surgeons used to amputate limbs that had lost their sensory nerve capabilities (*went numb*) on the grounds that even if you could walk out of hospital, the lack of feeling in the feet/hand would lead to further injuries when you later tried to dance on hot coals or juggled with lit blowlamps. Surprisingly (?!), they don't do this now because....yes you guessed it, battlefield casualties, who didn't have immediate amputation and had to put up with loss of nerve sensation, until they reached

Blighty, RECOVERED THE SENSATION IN THEIR FEET / HANDS WITHIN A FEW WEEKS! I can feel a few calls to: 'Injury Lawyers 4 You' coming on.

Compartment Syndrome...yuk! In the old days, if a limb was trapping you for a long time in a car or a girder was pinning you down after the earthquake, the rescuers would fight to get you out, chatting to you and giving you cups of tea, but as soon as they lifted the girder/steering wheel/motorbike off your leg, you pegged out. Why? Compartment Syndrome - your leg had 'died' through blood/oxygen starvation and had filled with the toxins of putrefaction (*rotted*) - as soon as the crimping element (read: girder) is removed, Whoosh, the toxins flood your body and it's goodnight Vienna, even before you can put your cuppa and fag down. The new order is to cut the limb off *before you move the girder*, whilst the cuppa is still there to be enjoyed. Nice. Beware jolly firemen bearing tea, fags and chainsaws.

Also another nugget from the jovial trauma specialist...mobile phones (or more specifically MMS) have revolutionised his job, since the ambulance crews take mobile phone pics of the accident scene (interior of the car etc.) and send them on ahead so that the trauma team can prepare the necessary stuff in advance (he showed a particularly gored-up interior of a car, post-casualty extraction (could it have been a Toyota with brake-failure?) and just from that image the audience was able to chip in with a catalogue of the likely injuries, gaily shouting out:- "Cracked pelvis! Lacerated face! Broken legs! Chest injuries! Suspected C-spine fracture!", just like the pros.

Oh and another grim gem...he said that when they see a particular type of smashed biker's pelvis, all the trauma team joyously peel: "Another BMW R1200C pilot, who likes his femoral arteries 'shaken, stirred and slashed'!" Apparently, the combination of a low seat with the 'nut cracker-shaped tank' of this iconic, James Bond steed, tends to have its own 'Licence to Kill'. Finally, he wrong-footed us all by asking us how many pints of blood he orders-up, whilst he's waiting for the hapless Bond-wannabe to arrive on his slab: "2 pints! 4 pints! 6 pints?", we gamely opined. "No, Mr Bond", he said, as dryly as a Martini cocktail, "You'll need about 50 pints before we can fully make his severed leg arteries blood-tight". *'R1200C for sale, one very careful owner'*.

Lots of audience questions were answered and some £25 titanium screws and bones circulated with black humour all 'round. The four of us 'real' bikers shared a taxi home ('Too cold', 'Wouldn't start' etc.).

Whilst you're waiting for your turn to take something out of the NHS, why not make an advance pre-payment here: [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk), [www.respondersuk.org](http://www.respondersuk.org) or [www.eastanglianairambulance.org.uk](http://www.eastanglianairambulance.org.uk)

© David Draper, 2010, Honorary CAM Member and NAM Observer, currently awaiting erosion on the Norfolk coast.

## **National Rally. David Parnell**

If you haven't heard of, or participated in, the National Rally – or, to give it its full title, The National Road Rally – read on; it may be just what you need to get you out and about next summer exploring new roads and all for a good cause. There is no racing allowed and usually dashing around at speed leads to errors which slow you down rather than result in any benefit.

I was prompted to write this note because the date of the 2011 rally is now known – 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011 so those with a full diary can plan ahead.

The Rally is about setting challenges of planning, then navigation and of course bike riding. There are two rallies in one; Daytime Rally, which starts at 2pm on the Saturday and ends at midnight the same day(!) and the full National Rally, which starts at 2pm Saturday but ends at 10am on the Sunday. Personally I prefer to go to sleep at night, a slave to convention I know, and hence I have only ever done the Daytime Rally, which I will explain below. However, for those more hardy souls or insomniacs there is the option of going further and hence being able to congratulate yourself on an even greater accomplishment.

A brief word on the 2pm to 10am rally – what you do in terms of planning, navigating and riding is the same as the Daytime Rally apart from: having to do more of it and requiring all participants to finish at one particular point. If you are up to it you can also ride a particular set of challenges, mostly I believe relating to bike handling skills but a few questions of a biking nature may be thrown in too, to go in for the Platinum Challenge. You get Gold if you 'only' complete the 2am to 10am and Silver is the highest award for the 2pm to midnight rally.

From now on I'll describe the Daytime Rally. But beware, I understand there are a few changes this year designed to improve the rally so some of my experience may be out of date. You submit your entry fee – can be done on-line either as a sole rider or, if you are doing it with friends, you can enter as a team. The merit of a team should become clear later. Entries close a few weeks before the rally so don't leave it too late. About a fortnight before the rally you get a pack of information with a map in it which looks like it has been designed by a demented spider – a web of lines joined at nodes each of which has a number in it. Each node is a manned station where you can check-in to get your card stamped. There is a 'nominal' distance between each node which is written alongside each line. The challenge is to find a route which is as close to 275 miles (if it is the same as previous years) and takes in as many nodes as possible. This is where you need the time to work out just how to meet the challenge. At this stage the team approach can be a great help – you can make the tea while someone else works it out and then you have someone beside yourself to blame when it goes wrong. You are not allowed to pass through the same node twice and generally you want to start/end in your own part of the country. The obvious 'best route' usually seems to be the one that leaves you at Land's End at midnight. With a bit of hunting you can usually find a suitable route.

Once you have your route you need to check that the node is open when you are likely to be there. This is more of an issue for the 2pm to 10am than it is for the Daytime folk. Each station has a description which tells you: where it is, when it is open, what it offers e.g.

refreshments, rest area, toilets and says if there is a petrol station nearby. Then you need to plan your route. There are usually major roads which could be used but that would be boring so the challenge then is to find an 'interesting' route between stations which are usually 20 to 25 miles apart. No-one worries if you take the long way and do 50 miles but you must consider how much time you have to complete the planned route. If you have a team then dividing the navigation on the day between the various members is always an opportunity to cement camaraderie or alternatively fall amongst yourselves bickering and swearing never to trust anyone every again. If you are riding alone you have only yourself to blame.

On the day you turn up at the first node to check in and get given a card to be stamped as you progress round your route. All the preparation is possible before the 2pm starting gun but you are required not to 'start' before 2pm. On my first rally I was bemused to see the mass start but, unlike anything I had seen before, everyone went off in different directions! This is the beauty of it. There may be hundreds on the rally but every node is a potential starting place so there are no phalanxes of bikes dashing about but you will realise you might be getting close to a node by seeing more bikes but all going different ways. Carry the location of each node with you – some are not easy to find.

Once at a station get your card signed and logged in to the control sheet. You are required to stop for a rest after so long and it is a good idea to do so where there is a cup of tea or suchlike on hand. As I noted above it is not a race and there is no merit in making it one. The person on the vintage Triumph is in exactly the same competitive position as the one on the Hayabusa (assuming neither breaks down!). You might have one or two stations to do after 10pm at which time it is dusk at rally-time-of-year. It will probably be more dependent on whether you have gone miles off track rather than how fast you have been riding. At the final station ensure your card gets signed as well as stamped and make your way home to await the verdict. Did you get the maximum possible number of stamps within the allotted time and the right 'nominal' mileage? If so you get a 'silver' award to display to all your friends. I suspect it is not made entirely of Element 47 of the Periodic Table, indeed I fear it contains none at all but it is bright and shiny and besides:

- Mencap is a bit richer
- You have had a thoroughly enjoyable day riding your bike on roads which under other circumstances you would never have ventured upon
- (if you have done it as part of a team) you have confirmed everything you ever thought about your fellow team members.

I can heartily recommend it – follow up on [www.nationalroadrally.co.uk](http://www.nationalroadrally.co.uk)

## Useful Information

### Group Contact

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

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