



Hull & East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists

Autumn 2007

NEWSLETTER

skill with responsibility

Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists
Group Number 4029 Registered Charity Number 1070176
www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam

From the Editor

Praise indeed! Thanks to all contributors to this newsletter which for probably the first time, I feel, has a decent number of varied articles from a good selection of contributors. I hope you enjoy the change!

Our arm of the IAM is a charity essentially supported by the members subscriptions and Skill for Life fees. At group level, group membership fees are our main source of income and are clearly finite, Although we are fairly well off as a group, there is clearly no justification for wasting resources and it is for this reason I would like to ask the recipients of this newsletter if they would be prepared to accept it electronically, probably as an e-mail attachment?

The cost and effort of producing and posting a paper copy is significant and although there is no intention of changing over to an electronic publication totally, those of you who would be happy with an electronic copy - probably as a Adobe.pdf attachment to an e-mail, would be saving time and effort by those copying, folding, stapling, stuffing into envelopes, stamping and posting the publication; would reduce the cost to the group and would be saving the planet in the process!

If you would be prepared to take an electronic copy, please e-mail me at the address below, stating your name (and address, for confirmation) and depending on the numbers, we may proceed. Please, if you wish to continue to receive a paper copy, don't worry - do nothing and that will still happen.

Alan

As you will have seen from earlier editions of the newsletter when I was editor I often mentioned that I had a little help from my rabbit Hunnee, if only that she showed interest in the papers next to me - she had to make her mark by just nibbling the corner!! Sadly, Hunnee had to be put to sleep after a short illness and it goes without saying that she is sadly missed by both myself and Alan.

Tricia

If you would like to make a contribution to the Newsletter, the closing date for the next publication is

Friday 7th December.

You can contact me any way you like, post; phone; e-mail; call round or just hand it over at a meeting.

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Chip and Pin!!

Alan and I were sat having lunch in a restaurant when an elderly lady came into the reception area and said that she was travelling to visit some friends in the area but had broken down - luckily she had managed to get her car into the car park of the restaurant. She had phoned the RAC and they said they would be with her as soon as possible. She asked the receptionist if she could use the phone to get in touch with her friends to say she would be late. The receptionist gave her the phone and left her to it. She didn't appear to be getting anywhere with the telephone after putting in the number several times. From where I was sitting I could see the problem - she was actually typing the telephone number into the chip and pin machine by mistake, expecting this to make the call on the telephone! Just as I was about to stand up and tell her of the problem, the receptionist returned and also realised that the lady was using the chip and pin pad to dial out the number. The lady gave an embarrassed smile but soon got through to her friends.

Tricia

In Defence of Sat Nav

When I bought my new car about three years ago I decided to include Sat Nav as optional extra. At the time my experience of the in-car version was limited but I had been using it at sea for years. Now I would not be without it. There is no doubt in my mind that you should still carry a road atlas in the vehicle and should roughly know your route before starting. But navigating, especially in urban areas that are new to you, is so much easier with Sat Nav. The media recently has been full of stories showing how useless they can be but it seems to me that more than one of these horror stories was not the fault of the equipment but that of the operator. The following pieces indicate what I mean.

Three years ago I went on a skiing trip with Dutch friends. We drove to Switzerland from North Holland over two days. There were three cars in loose convoy with me being a passenger in the second car. Shortly after passing into Switzerland the lead car suddenly indicated that he was leaving the motorway, deviating from our planned route. Stopping shortly thereafter, we were told that the Sat Nav, which was linked to the automatic traffic updates, had indicated that a route change was necessary to avoid a traffic jam just up the motorway. We followed the suggested new route which took us along a small road and through a mountain pass before rejoining the motorway again. Without Sat Nav we would have been sitting in stationary traffic for several hours. Instead we had an interesting journey through very pretty scenery and arrived at the chalet about on time.

About two years ago a chum of mine was getting married and he asked me if I would take him and his partner to the wedding in my car. The ceremony was to take place in a little village about half way between Harrogate and Ripon which we duly found. On the way back I decided to see which way my Sat Nav would take me back to the couple's home near Bedale. I asked for the shortest distance option and all went well until we were just outside Ripon. The suggested route then took me down a minor road, which at first was newly resurfaced. After about one mile and immediately after a sharp right hand bend, the road became unmade and was full of very large potholes. After turning (which was certainly more than 3-point) I regained the more major road and my chum navigated me back to his place. I was not best pleased and when we got back I immediately got out the OS map to check the route. Sure enough this minor road was shown on the map, the latter half being depicted as unmade. It also would have saved about 3-4 miles on the journey. An off-road vehicle would have been able to cope but not an ordinary saloon car. Since I had asked for the shortest route, Sat Nav had given me the shortest route. How was it to know what type of vehicle I was driving!

The old adage "Rubbish in, Rubbish out" springs to mind.

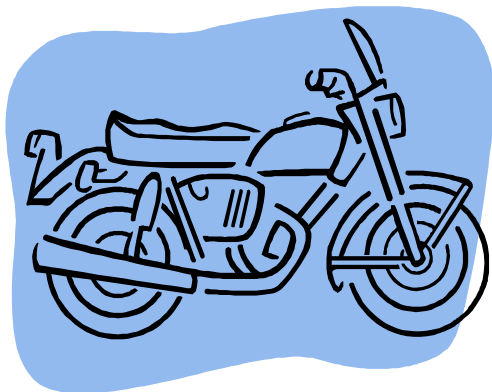
A Secret Museum?

On a hunt for tea and a scone one Sunday, I came across an unusual tea room whilst passing through Little Weighton. I spotted The Miller's Tea Room so popped in.

The entrance to the tea room is the same as the office to the caravan site however, if you carry on down the corridor, you'll come to a room with a collection of old motorcycles.

There are sofas to sit on and admire the classic, restored vehicles and old garage memorabilia. The site itself is on the way out of Little Weighton towards Rowley Manor.

Worth a visit for any motorcycle enthusiast and the scones are good too!



Lesley Cornforth

From One Side to the Other

Having just carried out a *perfect* overtake manoeuvre to the book, a mile or so down the road, I came across a 'hidden dip' sign and it just struck me that really the only time a hidden dip sign is seriously useful is to prevent a driver initiating an overtake manoeuvre when all other indications say go. (I would say that generally I think there are too many road signs presented to drivers which can result in a condition known as cognitive overload - i.e. just too much to take in, as most road signs just reinforce a situation which has many other clues, making the sign redundant but the hidden dip is certainly an exception and is an extremely valuable sign.)

The point is that most drivers, prior to starting an overtake, have full concentration on the oncoming lane to ensure it is free of compromising traffic or other hazards. I hope as advanced drivers, that is only one point of several to be considered prior to an overtake but for the average driver, he will be concentrating on the offside carriageway. The hidden dip sign which I passed, was presented on the nearside and (unless I am less observant than I think!) was not repeated on the offside. This could mean that the average driver may miss this vital sign with potentially disastrous results.

For no additional cost, the highway department could position the sign to the right hand side of the road where, I believe, it would be 'noticed' by more average drivers and may save a crash with all its consequences.

Alan

You Sign! You Sign!

Nelson Mandela is sitting at home watching TV and drinking a beer when he hears a knock at the door.

When he opens it, he is confronted by a little Chinese man clutching a clipboard and yelling, "You Sign! You Sign!" Behind him is an enormous truck full of car exhausts. Nelson is standing there in complete amazement when the Chinese man starts to yell louder, "You Sign! You Sign!" Nelson says to him, "Look, you've obviously got the wrong man" and shuts the door in his face.

The next day he hears a knock at the door again. When he opens it, the little Chinese man is back with a huge truck of brake pads. He thrusts his clipboard under Nelson's nose yelling, "You Sign! You Sign!" Mr Mandela is getting a bit hacked off by now so he pushes the little Chinese man back shouting, "Look, go away! You've got the wrong man. I don't want them!" Then he slams the door in his face again.

The following day, Nelson is resting and late in the afternoon he hears a knock on the door again. On opening the door, there is the same little Chinese man thrusting a clipboard under his nose shouting, "You Sign! You Sign!" Behind him are *two very large* trucks full of car parts.

This time Nelson loses his temper completely. He picks up the little man by his shirt front and yells at him, "Look. I don't want these! Do you understand? You must have the wrong name!"

Who do you want to give these to?"

The little Chinese man looks very puzzled, consults his clipboard and says, (get your best Chinese accent ready,) "You not Nissan Main Deala?"

RHT

Group Meetings

The Group monthly meeting continue to take place at the Salvation Army Church at the corner of Icehouse Road and Adelaide Street in Hull city centre every second Monday in the month.

For those of you who might like to attend the next meeting, the Group web site at www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam gives a MultiMap location.

In keeping with the Committee's desire to make the meetings as informal and interesting as possible the routine business is usually kept to a minimum and the rest of the evening given over to topical discussion and a guest speaker.

The meetings are open to all; Members, Associates or just anyone who is interested in discovering how to improve their own driving skills so please invite a guest or two.

Chief Observer Column

We say an advanced driver should be able to drive up to the speed limit when traffic, road and weather conditions allow. I deliberately use the phrase 'should be able' because this does not mean you always have to. If you are not concerned how long it takes to reach your destination, are out for a scenic drive or perhaps wanting to drive to maximum economy then by all means drive at a lower speed. However you should not impede other drivers who want to drive up to the speed limit.

I should point out that any reference to driving 'fast' means driving up to the speed limit, in a progressive manner but not exceeding it.

However the art of driving fast is knowing when to drive slowly.

I read in an article on advanced driving, that Bryan Lunn, a very much respected past IAM Chief Examiner, when hearing 'blues and twos' would look out of his office window, which overlooked a complex road junction with traffic lights and pedestrian crossings. He would always know if it was a class one or a class two police driver at the wheel, because a class one driver always slowed down more. However good a driver an associate is when they join the group for guidance, in preparation for the IAM test, I can guarantee their ability to make driving plans will improve considerably because they will be looking much further ahead at the end of the course than when they started and they will be driving slower, in some situations, because they will have seen more potential hazards. As an observer it is always very satisfying when something you have predicted actually occurs. This happened to me while giving guidance to an associate while going through South Cave, where I advised reducing speed to well below the limit and selecting a lower gear, because parked vehicles on the nearside did not have a clear view of us as the road is curving to the left. Yes, a car did pull out causing the associate to have to brake but because of our correct speed it only entailed gentle braking whereas at the speed they were previously travelling would have meant almost an emergency stop.

The distance between your vehicle and the one in front is, of course, related to your speed. The rule we are taught is a gap of two seconds but at this distance, if someone in front carries out an emergency stop you will almost certainly also have to carry one out. Police driving schools recommend three to four seconds which allows you to see much further ahead and pull up comfortably, if the vehicle in front suddenly stops. You should always be able to stop the vehicle un-dramatically.

Ivor Nicholson

Chief Observer

Who's Who in the Group

**This page has been removed to protect the privacy
of individual members.**

Data Protection Act

Members names and addresses are kept on a computer held by the Membership Secretary for the sole purpose of mailing group related correspondence and will not be made available to other organisations or individuals.

Technology!!!!!!

As most of us probably realise schools are now closed for the Summer holidays. Ergo, the chances of any kids being at school are pretty unlikely - unless you have been unlucky enough to get six week detention! So why are the traffic patrol signals still flashing at the usual school time? Surely this makes a nonsense of having them. I think this is one reason people become blasé and don't take notice of signs because of the imposition of irrelevant restrictions and notices. The meaning here is pointless if the signs are flashing when schools are not in session. With all the technology around today, I would have thought the signs could be automatically turned off for school holidays.

This leads onto the next point. The roads near the schools where I live are now daubed with various colours of paint and boxes - the idea is to keep an area clear around the school. All well and good if in the name of road safety but often, it's the mums, who say they want to keep their children safe, who are they very people who park nearest to the painted lines and boxes and clog up all the junctions, just so that they are as near as possible to pick up little 'Brittany'. You shouldn't have one rule for one and a different rule (or a blind eye) for another. If the Authority respond to public (or government) pressure to improve road safety and bring in the things needed to achieve that e.g. multi-coloured roads, please obey the signs. In effect, the mums are the ones breaking the law and more likely to contribute to putting poor 'Brittany' in hospital.

(I would just like to add that the 'green and pleasant land' most of us sang about in school assembly, is rapidly turning into a 'yellow and cross-hatched' one. I do doubt the effectiveness of garishly coloured lines and road surfaces when a single, simple road sign should suffice. The road users who obey the rules will do so regardless of the grandeur of the display and the ones who offend will continue to offend so nothing changes but the place looks a whole lot better as a result. - Editor)

Travelling home the other day, I had the misfortune of seeing a badger which had been knocked down on the road. When it was safe to do so I contacted the police as it was the weekend and thought the council may not be on hand to deal with the problem. I used the police non-emergency number. (0845 60 60 222 for those who don't know or can't remember what it is.) I knew that a colleague had been following me on the journey and the next time I saw them, mentioned the badger. "Oh yes, I saw it but didn't do any-

thing about it as it was obviously dead.” Yes, that is as may be but I felt that the badger deserved better than to be run over time and time again but also I was looking out for other motorists as someone driving on auto-pilot would not only be shocked by hitting the large, dead animal but it could possibly cause another accident.

May be this is another aspect of the advanced motorists thinking ahead and taking into account other road users. I felt very sad for the badger but I hope I may have helped others not to be distressed by the sight of the dead badger and may have eliminated the cause a potentially serious incident.

Incidentally, I would say I find it slightly annoying when you do contact the police to pass on information, they ask for so much information about you. Does it really matter what my occupation is, for example? I remember one time ringing them and the guy asked me if I thought the police helicopter needed to be deployed! - surely not my decision? Perhaps someone knows the answer to this one. Also, I would expect the caller's number to be displayed on their telephone system so why do they ask for it again? Surely the incident you are reporting is the most important thing?

And finally, during the serious flooding in the south of the country, I was amazed to see a police van attending an emergency and with lights flashing and sirens sounding, drove straight into a flooded road which was several feet deep in water and then seemed surprised when the vehicle stopped! The officers then got out of the vehicle and started to push! Where is the sense in that as they presumably didn't get to the emergency. A boat would have probably been more appropriate. The other thing which seemed contradictory, was the fact that the earlier news bulletin said that police had issued a warning saying that if you did not need to travel then do not do so. Perhaps they should heed their own warnings!

Tricia

Is this the Number Plate you always promised yourself ?

H10 PJA is for sale on Retention Document.

Please contact Robert H. Thomson at the monthly meeting.

Or telephone 01482 - 844 764 with your offer.

H10 PJA

RHT

Floods

Raging toothache and an urgent dentist's appointment forced me to drive at the height of the downpour on that fateful Monday of the Hull floods. The round journey was about 14 miles, which would normally take about 45 minutes. It took about 110 minutes but mercifully no mishaps. The chaos was amazing, dozens of cars abandoned on the central reservation of Kingston Road from Willerby to Calvert Lane and elsewhere. I had driven in most conditions since the appalling pea-soup smogs in the 1950s but I had never encountered such flooding and swirling streams on the roads. Yet it was obvious that many drivers failed to use their common sense. Trying to get through deeper pools by accelerating, not only produced huge forward and sideways sprays, obscuring vision of other cars but also drove jets of water into their own engines which quickly ceased to work. Hence the queues of non-functioning vehicles on the central reservations and at the roadsides. Few drivers respected the distance needed between them and the vehicle in front. I quickly found certain measures essential:

- I calculated that the 2-second rule might be more appropriately 12 or more seconds in conditions where brake pads and discs were likely to be almost useless because of dense layers of water.
- Repeated braking to clear the brakes of water.
- Air conditioning on full blast to clear windows and to aid vision.
- Keep going where possible.

Yet nose to tail they were even in traffic moving at 5 to 10 mph and, over 30 mph where the pools were less threatening. Floods are likely to happen again. Some good advice from IAM Chief Examiner Peter Rodger may be handy for associates and others:

"If the journey is unavoidable, motorists should take extra precautions when dealing with severe surface conditions. Torrential rain brings with it visibility problems as the car mists up in moments, just when you need maximum visibility.

- 1) Don't go in if it's obviously too deep: consider an alternative route.
- 2) If you have to drive through water try to drive in the highest section of the road and don't set off if a vehicle is travelling in the opposite direction. Leave time and space for each other, so you don't swamp someone else.
- 3) Drive only fast enough to create a small bow wave in front of the vehicle - driving at speed may be dangerous to other vehicles or pedestrians.
- 4) Keep going once you have started - make sure you have a clear run, put the car into first gear, keep the revs high and set off. Don't go in if you can't see a way out on the other side.
- 5) Under no circumstances take your foot even slightly off the accelerator, as this will allow water to travel up the exhaust pipe. As you go

through the water, slip the clutch if you can. After you come out, dry brakes gently before you need them - the best way is to lightly apply the brake as you drive along for a few seconds. this is particularly important if your car has drum brakes.

- 6) At the other side, keep moving, continue to rev the engine to clear any water from the exhaust."

JMS Pearce

My Experience in a Skid Car

I was fortunate to receive as a birthday gift from my friends a voucher for a skid control taster course at Manby Motorplex, near Louth. It was something I had wanted to do for some time and although I had watched videos and knew the theory of controlling a skid, I felt sure the real thing would be something completely different – and I was right.

I was accompanied by some of my friends, including Ivor. On approaching the clubhouse, it has a somewhat neglected appearance but a warm welcome awaited us, including coffee and biscuits. Three complimentary tickets are provided for each paying customer so guests can watch the proceedings and also be given the opportunity to ride as passengers in certain vehicles, i.e. juggernaut lorries.

As we looked out from the clubhouse window, Ivor was pleasantly surprised to see that the course was to take place using a skid car, not a vehicle on a skidpan, as he would have expected. As I was unsure of the difference, Ivor then explained to me that the skid car was so much superior to a skidpan. The skid car can be any rear wheel drive vehicle, in this case a Mercedes, which is mounted on a framework protruding about two feet from the side of the car. At each corner of the frame is attached a hydraulic unit, to which is fixed a castor wheel (something like a shopping trolley). From inside the car, the instructor can electronically adjust the hydraulic units, which lift the vehicle off the road by a varying degree to simulate difference slippery conditions.

Guests were also invited to sit in on the briefing session, which was both interesting and informative, and everyone was encouraged to be involved in the discussion. The course instructor was both professional and friendly.

It was a cold day in August, with a strong wind blowing across the Lincolnshire Wolds, but thankfully dry. I was sharing the session with a father and son, and the three of us tentatively made our way across the airfield to the Mercedes saloon. In true gentlemanly fashion, I was ushered into the driving seat ahead of them. Ivor had booked a session to drive a juggernaut but I was too occupied to notice whether he carried out any handbrake turns. No doubt he will be putting pen to paper on his driving skills.



The first test was to drive through the slalom, missing the cones, of course, which was made more difficult because of the width of the four extra wheels on the car. I was encouraged to go faster and then was advised that the car was now set up for slippery conditions.. No prizes for guessing what happened next. At only 25 m.p.h. the car spun round like a fairground ride but I was immediately asked to drive in a straight line and then control the car when it skidded at the end of the road. This time I improved and prevented the car from doing a complete spin. Each of us took a turn at this procedure, and sitting in the back of the car was even scarier. Although it was in no way competitive, there was only three seconds difference in the timing of this run between the three drivers.

The next session involved driving at speed (which never exceeded around 25 m.p.h. but seemed like 60 m.p.h.) towards cones, which represented a stop sign at a major road. Opposite these, were three cones with smiley faces, which were supposed to be children standing on the opposite pavement. When the instructor thumped the dashboard, we had to brake violently, swerve to miss the children and keep control of the vehicle. I was thrilled to be successful, not even nudging any of the cones.

A lot of time was then spent on tuition on both understeer and oversteer. We all found the understeer to be the most difficult to control but by the end of the session, we had improved. It was not until the vehicle was spinning out of control that I realised how important it was to have ones thumbs in the correct position. We were told of the injuries incurred, including broken

thumbs, when the steering wheel suddenly whizzes round and thumbs are in the way.

Because of my pull/push method of steering, I was not able to respond as quickly and feel what the wheels were doing, and the instructor recommended that in the case of a skid, the hands can cross over and I found that it was certainly easier to control the steering wheel with this method.



At the end of the hour's session, I had thoroughly enjoyed myself and believe I had learnt a lot. It is a sobering thought to realise that at only 25 m.p.h., circumstances can arise that can make a car so easily spin out of control. We all look ahead for possible hazards, but a patch of oil hidden round a bend is something we cannot predict.

Back in the clubhouse, feeling exhausted but exhilarated, I was presented with a certificate, which summarised my capabilities and weaknesses. The most complimentary words were "great smooth lines" which referred to my driving though the slalom, but as I had recently reached a milestone birthday, I prefer to think the instructor was talking about me!!

Manby Motorplex offers a wonderful way of having fun, and at the same time, receiving expert tuition in car control. Their website is www.manbymotorplex.com. and telephone number 01507 668119.

Jo Cross

Readers Letters

Speeding Bus Lane

Following our other recent correspondence I was interested to read the piece headed 'Speeding Bus Lane' which appeared in your Summer 2007 magazine.

The article does not say whether an East Yorkshire bus was the one involved in York but given our relatively low level of activity in the city I suspect (and hope!) that it was not one of our buses which exceeded the 30mph speed limit. Clearly there is no excuse for a bus using priority measures to exceed any speed limit or indeed violate any other traffic regulations.

This article also refers to buses making progress by 'speeding' from village to village yet having to wait at each stop to maintain the scheduled departure times. Scheduling bus timetables is a very difficult procedure as journey times can vary so much from day to day and even from hour to hour, and often depend on traffic and weather conditions, as well as passenger numbers.

It is almost impossible to construct a timetable which a bus driver can easily maintain without either speeding (within legal limits) or 'going slow' at all times. Really the best any bus company can do is try and set out an average journey time and apply that to an even headway timetable throughout the day, which we believe is more convenient for the public.

Again however, nothing would excuse a driver exceeding a speed limit and we at East Yorkshire would certainly hope that an experienced driver would try and adjust his speed between villages to try and avoid long waits at the village bus stops, which we know can be frustrating for passengers.

Peter Shipp

Chairman and Chief Executive EYMS Group Limited

As the writer of the original article, may I thank Mr Shipp for firstly reading my piece and secondly for taking the time to reply to our newsletter with his point of view.

You are absolutely correct in your assumption that it was not an East Yorkshire Motor Services vehicle that exceeded the 30 mph speed limit in York. Having read the article about the East Yorkshire Motor Services talk you gave to the group, I would expect you, as a company, would react to reports of bus drivers failing to adhere to traffic regulations and indeed have demonstrated this in your reply.

I was interested to read Mr Shipp's comments on timetable production. Although the bus service I used was provided by East Yorkshire Motor Services, as a member of the public, I must confess I have given little thought to subjects like varying traffic and weather conditions when preparing bus timetables. I must acknowledge the difficulties in publishing a schedule capable of being adhered to under (almost) any circumstances and am pleased that the timetables produced by East Yorkshire Motor Services err on the side of safety by allowing ad-

equated time for the driver to achieve scheduled stops on time. As it happened, on the day I travelled to York, the traffic conditions were fairly light and the driver was able to make good progress between villages resulting in a wait at each stop, which was the point of the article. If the conditions had not been so good and the progress made by the bus had been so slow as to arrive at stops late, it is likely I would have written an article damning the bus service for not adhering to the published timetable! So thank you for your enlightening reply. As with most things like this, they are more complicated than they at first appear.

Tricia

Great Navigational Scatter/Orienteering Event

I would like to congratulate Angie, Paul and Andrew for organising the Great Navigational Scatter/Orienteering Event on 5th August. My friends and I had a wonderful afternoon and all commented on how much effort must have been involved. The clues themselves were a work of art, some of which we still have not deciphered. We enjoyed the challenge of working out the various routes and driving around the East Riding countryside on such a lovely sunny day. I hope they will think about arranging another similar event. For those of you who could not take part, you missed a lot of fun.

Jo Cross

We would like to join Jo in her congratulations to Angie, Paul and Andrew. The event was attended by enough people to make the event worthwhile but perhaps suffered a little because the weather that day was particularly good. Maybe rather than sit in a car on such a hot day, people preferred a lazy day out in the open enjoying the sunshine. Who knows?

Considerable effort goes into organising an event like that and such effort deserves praise but the best reward for the organisers is if people attend and get involved. Thanks to all that joined in. We're sure you found it as enjoyable as we did.

Tricia & Alan

Disclaimer

This newsletter is a forum for Members, Associates and friends of the Kingston Upon Hull and East Riding Group of Advanced Motorists and all are cordially invited to submit articles for inclusion. It should be noted however that a contributor must accept full responsibility and liability for the factual accuracy of any article they submit. Readers should note that an article is likely to reflect the views of the contributor, and its inclusion does not imply endorsement by the IAM, any other individual or organisation unless specifically stated. The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or reject any submitted contribution.

If You're Going To Do It, Do It BIG

In this edition you will see an article by Jo Cross on her session, with a skid car, at Manby Motorplex. I was one of the friends who accompanied her, as spectators, having contributed, with them, to the cost as a birthday present.

I did not want to travel to Manby without doing something, so contacted the Motorplex to see what else was on offer. The 3/4 hour 1-to-1 Juggernaut Driving Experience appealed to me the most, so a booking was made to coincide with Jo's session.

On arriving, as well as seeing the Mercedes Skid Car also, in all its splendour, was a forty-foot Juggernaut. Although my booked time was the same as Jo's the instructor was happy for me to sit in, with the other spectators, on the briefing for the people who were going to 'skid'. This proved to be very informative and the 'skid' instructor impressed me with his enthusiasm and wish not only for the participants to enjoy themselves but to gain experience in car control.

Then it was my turn, having climbed into the cab my instructor, Chris, gave a briefing including the safety talk. Two of my lady spectator friends also accompanied me, sitting on the 'bed' behind the driver. You cannot beat having backseat drivers with you!! The first part of the session was using the full 16 gears – certainly the most difficult part with Chris talking me through each gear change. In normal traffic conditions all the gears would not be used – the skill of the driver is knowing which to use in a particular circumstance.

To those of you, like myself, not familiar with the working of a 16-speed gearbox I will briefly explain how it operates. The gear lever operates in a conventional way as any 4 speed box with reverse, but it incorporates a collar which can be rotated through 45 degrees or slide up. First gear is selected as normal before setting off, then the collar is rotated and the clutch operated to engage a gear ratio half way between first and second. Then, having returned the collar back, using the clutch, the gear lever is moved to the second gear position. Again the collar is moved as before, and the clutch operated to give a gear ratio half way between second and third. These procedures are repeated until the vehicle is in fourth (high) ratio. Those good at maths will have worked out we are now in eighth gear – with the gear level in the fourth position. Next the collar is slid upwards and, using the clutch, the gear lever is moved to position one. Moving the collar has brought into operation a high ratio gearbox and by repeating the previously described procedures the eight gears can again be selected – so we now have used 16 gear ratios. As the lorry was not loaded, for normal driving on the airfield, the high ratios were used but I had to remember to slide the collar down before selecting reverse.



Selecting reverse was very important, as one of the main reasons for wanting to drive the Juggernaut was to still see if I could reverse an articulated vehicle. I use the word 'still' because nearly fifty years ago, during National Service, one of my jobs was towing aircraft and reversing them into hangers etc. Also in 1977 I successfully passed my HGV One test, which entailed reversing exercises. I must confess, at first, I did not inform Chris of my passed experience, in case things went wrong, just saying I had an idea what to do when reversing. Fortunately things went well, without any 'jack knifing'. Perhaps, like riding a bicycle, once you have mastered the technique it stays with you (even if not perfectly).

The rest of the session was taken up with various exercises including going round a smallish roundabout twice – without putting any wheels on it.

I can fully recommend the experience to anyone wanting to enlarge their own driving experience.

Ivor Nicholson

Passing HGVs on Motorways

On a motorway read the road ahead to limit the time you have to spend along side any HGV. Two main points to help minimise making yourself a possible HGV target, the first to travel at the maximum safe speed or at

least keep with the flow of traffic as HGVs are governed to around 56mph. The second is by making your driving plan. By planning your move(s) ahead and taking in all the information, including behind and along side, you can indicate your intention to in advance to maintain progress and not being held back should you get boxed in behind the vehicle. If your changing lanes don't forget to then match your speed with those in that lane.

Adam Wilson

Wilberforce Strikes Again

A thank you goes to Gary Porter who helped me sort out my Dads car insurance. My Dad had received a quote which was well in excess of what he should have been paying for his car insurance as included in this quote were 'products' such as a breakdown recovery service which, in some instances, he had obtained separately or were bundled in with his bank account. So to be fair to the insurance company they were covering fully but he did not need all the trimmings. Gary soon sorted out the finer details and reduced the insurance premium by a figure in excess of £100. Obviously my Dad was well pleased with this result and he would like to thank Gary and his staff for being so efficient and making him welcome at his office.

Thanks again Gary, a pleasure to do business with you.

Tricia

Tricia's Top Tips

On many occasions you cannot get matching hair accessories for those all important outfits, so what I have found is that if you have an outfit and want some colour matching ribbons in your hair - simply cut off the excess hanging loops inside the garment and you will find that you have a perfect match. I did this recently for a wedding outfit and it looked fine. All you need to hold the ribbon or decoration you have made for your hair is a plain hair clip perhaps silver or gold and build your design from there - it really looks impressive to get it matching and it doesn't cost much either just a little time and patience putting it together.

Has anyone got any other useful tips on any subject which they would like to share with other members of the group I would appreciate some tips from ladies too - it does not have to be motoring related!!

Tricia

(A bit woosey but I'll go along with it - Ed. Apart from that, none of my dresses have hanging loops inside. I wonder where they've gone to?)

Thanks from Geoff

I was pleased to receive from Geoff Beecroft, a letter mentioning his pleasure in getting his Summer Newsletter but in it he expressed his disappointment that more than 13 of the 20 none-routine pages had been written by either Tricia or me.

Although there are a few 'regulars' who contribute on a more-or-less quarterly basis, there are many others who could but don't. Are you one of those? No - not one of those, one of those.

Although Tricia and I are reasonably happy to contribute, the present situation will not continue indefinitely without more input from the membership. So, yet again, please think about writing something yourself.

Geoff's piece in this edition reads:

As I left the church car park after the July meeting, an interesting talk about the testing of motorcyclists, I crossed Great Thornton Street to enter the one way Hobart Street. I was first disconcerted, and then horrified by the motor cycle coming out of Hobart Street.

It carried three riders, none with crash hats and all under fourteen years of age.

Ask the Expert

If you have any tricky, Ivor type 'Ask the Expert' questions, please use our website at www.sentinel38.karoo.net/iam and access the Readers Forum or write to me or speak to me or hand me a note or telephone me and leave a message or speak to one of the committee or speak to Ivor but please ask someone, as none of the above have yet developed telepathy and we cannot read your mind.

Alan

Previously on 'Ask the Expert.com' ...

Alan: The national speed limit sign should be interpreted differently depending on the class of road to which it applies. On a motorway, for a car, the limit is 70 mph. On an A class, single carriageway road, the limit is 60 mph but on an A class stretch of dual carriageway, the sign should be interpreted as 70 mph. It occurs infrequently but how would the sign be interpreted on a dual carriageway B class (or unclassified) road? 60 or 70 mph?

Speaking with Ivor about this both he and I agree that it is 70mph as the only qualification is the fact the road is dual carriageway.

A response was posted on our website from a reader in London - thank you very much.

Jaabir: I would say 70 Mph simply because the distinction is between single and dual carriageway. My understanding is that if there is a median, 70mph national, if there isn't, 60mph national. I was at my local IAM meeting (North-East London and Essex) group that I observe for and this was brought up by a serving police officer. That's my view.

JonC: If the dual carriageway has a barrier separating the carriageways, then the speed limit is 70mph. With no barrier then the limit is 60mph (for cars of course!)

(If Jaabir and JonC can take the trouble to reply, surely someone from our group can take the trouble?)

Alan

The Continuing Saga of 'Ask the Expert'

Recently there have been roadworks just north west of Bishop Burton on the A1079 and the speed limit was reduced to 30 mph - legally enforceable with the correct signage. The restriction was clearly necessary at working times but at other times, a 30 mph limit was pedestrian and using this road almost daily, I was overtaken within the 30 mph zone many, many times.

I am uncertain whether or not I am right to stick to the 30 mph limit as the limit legally remains in force for many miles after the end of the roadworks.

Is it reasonable to consider the 'Roadworks - End' sign as an instruction that the 30mph limit has been lifted (as I do) or does the speed limit only legally change when the next speed sign (other limit or national sign) is reached?

Tricia

How long is a road sign advising of a new road condition new? Talk about a riddle me ree - no wonder the poor motorists can easily be confused. Was it a week, two weeks or 5 years ago that the sign was in fact new.

I am still bemused by the information sign that reports 105 casualties over the past 2 years has not changed over the last 5 years despite the (pointless?) reduction in speed limits on the road from Woodmansey to Dunswell.

Tricia

Congratulations Are In Order ...

Congratulations to our Vice President, Stuart Donald, for being invited to attend the Police Senior Command Course. As only 17 people were successful last year at the assessment centre, Stuart is delighted and feels honoured to be representing Humberside Police.

The Great Navigational Scatter Event

Sunday 5th August turned out to be the hot, bright day of summer but despite the weather, a respectable number of participants turned out to support Angie, Paul and Andrew in their Great Navigational Scatter Event.



The trio had produced an 'ingenious' (well that's an alternative word my thesaurus came up with for most of the other descriptions I had in mind!) set of question defining destinations round and about the East Riding countryside.

Unlike the traditional 'Treasure Hunt' which attracted much criticism because it usually involved all the participants heading off in the same direction, following the same set of clues and although not a race as such, each had time on their minds. The scatter element results from there being no specific route as the participants determine their own route based on the points value of chosen destination - generally more distant ones attracting higher point value. The clues are, generally, deciphered at the start of the event, staggering start times and as the routes are established by the contestants in order to maximise the number of points collected, the event is similar to the treasure hunt only in the facts that it involves travelling round

the countryside and having a bit of fun in the process. Oh and in the terminal destination which can only be a nearby hostelry.

It was with some reluctance Tricia and I withdrew from the event as, due to extreme working hours and our gen-



eral mental fatigue, it was likely as a result of the 'discussions' in evolving a route, there was likely to have been a murder - and then the this article would not have been written.

All of the participants I have spoken to thoroughly enjoyed the event and I know some of the clues have yet to be cracked!

Well done and sincere thanks to the organisers!

Alan

Riverside Motors - Our August Speaker

For the August meeting, Robert had arranged for an old colleague, Lee Fothergill of Riverside Motors our local Volvo dealer, to give a presentation to the group about the history of Volvo and the frequently innovative develop-



ments the company has introduced over the many years of their existence.

That was the first fact that struck me - how old and well established the company was having been born out of the still present and thriving bearing company SKF, in 1927. It was in this year the brand of Volvo was launched and with it the produc-

tion of the OV4 'Jakob' and the slogan 'Volvo for Life' - that double edged tag-line promoting both the sales aspect of wishing to retain a customer throughout their driving lives and the desire to preserve that life in the event of a crash. The slogan is still very much alive today as can be seen from Lee's introductory slide.

He explained some of the structure of the Volvo organisation and mentioned design facilities in its home country of Sweden, Spain and California with 57% of the production taking place in Belgium and (for the mathematicians amongst you,) the remaining 43% in Sweden although the company has assembly plants around the world.

The early days of Volvo relied heavily on the taxi cab and it was in the 1930's and through into the 40's with the production of the TR671 and TR672 vehicles that the company established itself with the commitment to safety which started and continues to be one of the most significant and unchanging philosophies of any company I can think of. These cars were chassis built but regarded the driver as central to the design whereas up to around that time, the car had probably been an engineering consideration which happened to carry people and needed one of the to drive it. Typical of

the vehicles of the day and much longer afterwards, the Volvo had a split screen and sported a single wiper.

The 1950's brought developments, based on the earlier taxis and called the P444 Transport. Around this time and in the following years, the company introduced many innovative features like aerodynamics and the three point seat belt. The design of the vehicle was now being influenced by safety considerations and crush injuries caused to the driver's chest in a front end impact were addressed by the development of a collapsible steering column which would deflect and compress to avoid the intrusion of the steering wheel into the driver's sitting space.

The 1960's saw the P1800 on show for the first time at the Brussels Motor Show. This (even now) visually stunning car, was a two door coupé probably known to most British TV viewers as that driven by 'The Saint', Simon Templar when Roger Moore had a few less wrinkles and a lot less money but he did get a P1600 for his personal use and a great deal of exposure from the series.

The same decade saw the introduction of the 144 - the boring box on wheels. Safe but boring then and boring now. This car saw the introduction of crash padding, again a safety driven development along with diagonal struts in the floor pan and side impact bars for added protection which was quite useful as purchasers of this car could write it off after realising what they had bought, survive and live to buy one of the 1970's Volvos.

This decade saw the introduction of the 340 with its CVT gearbox (which if I remember correctly, was the old Daffodil, later Daf produced continually variable transmission. This was a wedge belt drive with a lay-gear for reverse and a simple gear lever with the advertising line, 'forwards for forwards, back for back'. What was quite alarming was that the car's maximum forward speed could also be reached in reverse - ideal for the 'J' turn!). Further developments was the introduction of Lambda sond, a catalytic converter and integrated, better protected fuel tank.

The 1980's introduced the 440, 740 and 960 models and the introduction of my (almost) all time design hate - the high level brake light. (Good during the day but why don't they dim them when the car lights are put on to prevent ridiculous dazzle for the poor driver behind when sat in a queue at night. Oh, I forgot, Volvo lights are always on - that's my prime time design hate!)

The 1990's and beyond saw the introduction of side air bags and curtains and with an eye to the environment, bi-fuel and end of life recycling (to the tune of 95%). Developments continue like passive braking and other electronic safety enhancements. I'm sure we have not heard the last of Volvo developments.

Thanks Lee for an informative talk about your innovative product and its producers.

Alan

Overtaking - The Right Way To Do It

If there is one skill that is misunderstood, badly practised and which frightens and intimidates drivers more than anything else, it's overtaking.

This doesn't have to be the case - there's no big mystery to overtaking and when it's carried out correctly, it's no more dangerous than any other manoeuvre that we carry out whilst driving. For some reason, however, the general motoring public (bless 'em) seem to view overtaking as a potentially disastrous move only carried out by idiotic johnny-boy-racers. You only have to see the reactions I sometimes get from other drivers when I've carried out perfectly safe overtakes, to realise how many people have an unnecessary aversion to overtaking. If I had a pound for every time someone had suggested a method for putting vinegar on my chips after an overtake, I wouldn't be driving around in an 8 year-old car. And don't they know the bottle works the other way up?

This 'overtakaphobia' seems to be a particularly English problem too. I've driven in France, Italy, and extensively in Scotland where I've found the locals far more inclined to assist you in overtaking by moving nearside or giving a helpful indicator when it's safe to go.

I'm of the opinion that this particular phobia stems from two sources - the unnecessarily over-pressed 'speed kills' message and the fact that no-one is ever taught how to overtake properly (unless they take further driver training, and unfortunately, that's only a very small percentage of drivers at the moment).

Now, I can't do much about the first point, other than to say that excessive speed is only a small factor in accident causes, particularly when compared with driver error but I'm afraid I'm powerless to change the government's stance on speeding so I can't help there.

What I can do however, is give you a few pointers on how to overtake safely and efficiently, with maximum control and minimum fuss. So here goes...

The Following Position

'Oh no Reg - not that old chestnut again.'

Bear with me - I know the following position is a much discussed topic but it's a vital element in safe overtaking and it's where the majority of overtakes start from. There are two main reasons for this - it's far enough back to give you a good view of the road ahead and it's far enough forward to allow you to quickly move into the overtake if it's on.

If you sit two seconds behind the car in front (slightly more if it's a larger vehicle), then it won't be filling too much of your field of vision - you'll still have a reasonably good view of the road in front of that car. If you move

your car sideways at the appropriate times, you can vastly improve your view of the road ahead but the key is knowing when and where to move your car.

How many times have you seen drivers looking for an overtake by moving their head to the right to improve their view? In most cars, you can only really move your head by a maximum of about a foot, so the improvement in view by moving a foot to the right is fairly minuscule. It's much better practise to move the whole car, as the distance you can potentially move the car sideways is much greater and so, subsequently is the improvement in your view.

So, where should you be moving to? That depends entirely on what the road is doing.

Lets start with a straight piece of road as that's the easiest. Move your car towards the centre line whilst in your following position and look into the distance. If it's safe to do so, you can then move your car across the centre-lines, over towards the offside of the road. This offside move is very alien to some people but believe me, it's by far the best way to see if the road ahead is clear. The amount of sideways movement can vary from having your off-side wheels on the white line, to straddling the white line, to moving completely over to the offside of the road, dependent on the available view. Don't get sucked into the old right and wrong side of the road stuff - unless white lines dictate otherwise, it's perfectly acceptable to use the full width of the road if it's safe to do so.

The most common mistake people make when moving offside for a look is this...

They look with their right foot.

To expand on that, people confuse the move offside with the start of an overtake, and, even if they know that they're just trying to improve their view, they accompany the offside move with a slight inadvertent squeeze on the accelerator. They look with their right foot. This is a problem if the overtake isn't on because when they move back to the nearside, the inevitable result of looking with your right foot is that you close up your following position to less than 2 seconds. Do this several times and without realising it, you can end up very intimately involved with the car in front, if you get my meaning.

So the sideways move should be just that - a sideways move for a look and not accompanied with a forwards move.

On a left hand bend, the series of moves required to obtain the optimum view start with a move to the nearside to obtain a view of the bend down the left-hand side of the car in front. Once you've got that nearside view, it can be improved as you get closer to the corner, by moving the car offside. There's no prescriptive distance that you should move offside - just move enough to improve that view down the left-hand side of the car, without going so far that you end up blocking it.

I've just read that back and it sounds complicated, so I'll try to simplify it...

Approaching the corner, move nearside and look nearside. As you get into the corner, move offside, but keep looking nearside.

There - that's better!

As you round the bend, you'll get a brief view of the road ahead as it straightens up and if it appears clear, this view can then be confirmed with a move further offside, the outcome of which will finalise your decision as to whether to go or not.

For right-hand bends, the process is to initially move offside on the approach to the bend and then, on entering the bend, to move as far nearside as it's safe to go. This move nearside should be accompanied with a slight closing of the following position to about 1 1/2 seconds (the only time I advocate getting closer than 2 seconds) and you should then obtain a good view down the offside of the car in front. As you round the bend, from this position, you'll obtain a good, early view of the road as the bend straightens and if it's safe, you should be able to get out into the overtake nice and early - often whilst still negotiating the bend.

Again, that reads quite complicated, so I'll simplify it...

Approaching the corner, move offside and look offside, and then on entering the corner, move nearside, close up, and look offside.

Don't forget, though, that if the overtake isn't on from the right-hander, you should drop back to a 2-second following position.

So, that's how to move your car around from the following position to obtain a good view but what else is there to consider?

Other considerations

This list could go on and on and I'm in no doubt that I'll miss some things, but here goes...

Are there any junctions or entrances to the right? If there are, the car you're intending to overtake could possibly turn right or something could emerge from the junction and come towards you. If you can get your overtake in well before you get to the junction, then fine but if not, you should wait until you can see that nothing is going to emerge and you're happy that the car in front isn't going to turn right.

Is there a faster moving vehicle behind that could overtake you? Organ-donors are notorious for this, as nothing's faster than their Tamajaki 900RSR is it? Your sideways movement looking for a view should be a good visual clue that you're looking for an overtake but motorcyclists aren't usually too bothered about the complexities of overtaking - breath in and wind it on is the normal motorcyclist's overtaking technique, so us drivers have to compensate for them. A mirror-check is a vital part of the overall planning process for an overtake. Don't go if you're about to be overtaken yourself. And with that in mind...

Is the vehicle you're looking to overtake also looking to overtake? Do the movements of the vehicle suggest they're also looking for the opportunity to go? An un-trained driver will follow the next vehicle quite closely and their decision to overtake will generally be made much later than a more advanced driver. They usually accompany this with an inability to check their mirrors before overtaking, which means that whilst you may have decided that it's safe to go and started overtaking, their later decision making could mean that they move out and accelerate just as you're passing them, which isn't good.

Trust me - it's really not good.

What is the performance potential of your car? This may be an obvious one but it's always something to consider. My plans for overtaking in my M3 differ considerably from my plans for overtaking in the MX-5. It's actually a good exercise to learn how to overtake in a slow car, as the planning required for overtaking is much more intense than if you drive a fast car.

Have I got somewhere to land? Landing space is essential, as you shouldn't be forcing other cars to slow down or alter their position just to allow you to overtake. If the car in front is a tailgater but they're not actually overtaking, then your plan should always be to overtake both vehicles rather than to take one and force in between them. If you're overtaking in a line of vehicles, it's much nicer to use acceleration sense to slot into your chosen gap than to over-accelerate and then come in under braking.

Is there a vehicle that you can't see which is currently out of view but travelling towards you? I use organ-donors as an example for this one too, as they're the fastestthingontheroad (TM). Imagine that there's a motorcyclist travelling at full chat towards you but currently out of view. Can you complete your overtake before coming into conflict with them? If you can, then all well and good, but if you can't, then wait. This is another example of when a good imagination is important to an advanced driver.

Have you selected the correct gear? Gear selection is critical when overtaking. You need a gear which will give you the correct degree of acceleration when you start to go but not one which is so low that you'll need an up-change halfway through the overtake. I prefer to have both my hands on the wheel whilst overtaking, thank you very much. That correct gear selection should also be considered when you're in the following position. The entry to corners should be accompanied by a change to a flexible gear in anticipation of an overtaking opportunity. If it turns out the overtake isn't on, then you should change back up again and wait for the next one.

Do I have an alternative plan? If things go badly wrong, what are you going to do? Can you brake and get back in behind the vehicle? Is there somewhere else you can go to avoid a collision? Did you put clean underpants on this morning?

As I said, this isn't an exhaustive list - take each overtake as it comes and consider every possible scenario as part of your planned approach.

Completing the overtake

In my mind, once you've weighed everything up and decided to go, that's it - the overtake is done and dusted and mentally you should be moving on to the next hazard. Physically, you'll be accelerating and completing the overtake but mentally you should be waaay ahead of that and well into the planning stage for your next manoeuvre, whether it be another overtake, a corner, a roundabout or any one of the other million things we have to deal with as drivers.

The overtake should be completed with a minimum of fuss and should be started with a move offside, which should not be accompanied by any acceleration. This is very important, as you shouldn't be getting any closer to the vehicle in front than 2 seconds (or 1 1/2 on a right-hand bend). Once you're out, then you should accelerate to pass the vehicle.

You should aim to come back nearside leaving at least a 2 second gap between the overtaken vehicle and yourself. I find that the easiest way to get this right is to wait until you have a full view of the overtaken vehicle in your centre mirror before moving back to the nearside.

Of course, we know that information changes all the time and once you're out on the overtake, you might decide that there is another one on. Mentally assess each overtake individually, taking account of all the points above and if it's on, stay out and continue to overtake. My record was a memorable 18-vehicle overtake on a single-carriageway A road, carried out in perfect safety by one of my students.

Remain calm and level-headed when planning overtakes and never base any of your decisions on anger or aggression or on the fact that you're late - this will affect your ability to make a rational decision and could introduce the one thing that you should always try to keep out of driving - an element of risk.

This article was taken from <http://www.pistonheads.com/gassing/topic.asp?t=365511&f=154&h=0> and is reproduced with kind permission of the author who is understood to be a serving Police Traffic Instructor at Hendon.

Adam Wilson

My First Long, Uphill Drive

It took me a long time to decide to take the Advanced Driving Test and to be honest, I only did it to shut Ian up and so I could do a 'Mrs Bucket' on him!

Since that time, I have gained confidence and only recently I drove a three and a half tonne truck to Whitby. I must say I still have some bad habits and will have to ask someone to take me out for another drive to point them out and correct them.

Since being a member of the IAM, I have driven off road, had a go on a fork lift truck, driven a 3 ½ tonne truck twice and twice had a go at winning the driving competitions. (Well, here's hoping!) I really can't wait to see what I can get to drive next!

Here's the story of my trip to Whitby in a truck!

Not long after passing my driving test, my family drove to the lovely Whitby. My dad asked me to drive back. That doesn't sound so bad but I normally fall asleep when I am a passenger in a car otherwise I get very sick so I didn't notice the hills as we drove there. We were travelling in my dad's car - a two litre Ford, which I wasn't used to. I had passed my test in a little Rover. Although I had driven the car around the roads near our home, this was my first ever big trip! I was nervous to begin with, with my dad sat in the passenger seat but I soon settled down.

After ten years, my memory is a bit foggy now but I remember I did panic on one of the hills and stalled the car and although my dad said it wasn't my fault when we got back to Willerby, the clutch wasn't working!

Since then, I have avoided Whitby like the plague so when my boss told me I had to make a delivery to Whitby, I panicked. The drive going there was all right (because I knew I could return through Scarborough) but I did have a long queue behind as I negotiated the hills. When I arrived at the delivery address, I was told this was not the right delivery point and that I should turn around and go back up the hill. The first two hills were 40 mph and I managed them both well but the third was 20 mph and I almost stalled the van as I finally arrived at the correct place. Another driver told me that I looked so stressed he thought my head was about to explode!

Having successfully driven to Whitby in a three tonne truck, it makes me wonder why I have avoided it for so long. I can certainly do it in my little Micra! I will be going to Whitby really soon!

Liz Phillips

What is Going On?

Following on from an article I started some weeks ago about the road-works near to Bishop Burton - I am amazed to find that things go from bad to worse - the traffic lights are generally not there yet the sign states that they are and now to confuse drivers even more there is yet another sign saying new road layout ahead - when there isn't because the road is far from completed. Also there is another new sign pointing to Bishop Burton being at the next entrance and this also is wrong as it is fenced off and there certainly is no access - there is no wonder motorists get confused and probably adds to

the reason why most people become somewhat blazé about the whole thing!!

Tricia

Achievements

Regretfully, this section is a bit light this quarter and it reflects the generally low numbers of associates involved with the group at this time. However, this in no way reduces the significance of those that have recently received awards and certificates.



Robert Sherwood is photographed above with his Observer, John Pearce at the July meeting having been presented earlier with his Advanced Test Certificate. Congratulations to Robert and many thanks to John for guiding him to Advanced standard.

Also at the July meeting, the group were delighted to present Eileen Found (photographed over,) with a bouquet of flowers and a certificate to confirm her status as an Honorary Life Member of the Group.

I know Eileen was most touched by the gesture and was still talking about it at the August meeting!

Congratulations Eileen. A well deserved award!



At the August meeting, a certificate was presented by one of our Vice-Presidents, Stuart Donald, to Sharon Rogerson and she was photographed with Stuart in the absence of her observer Dave Allum.

September produced no new members although there are still a few preparing for the test.



Delivering the 2008 Motor Cycle Test

The speaker at the July meeting was Ian McDonald who, at very short notice, gave us a talk about the forthcoming revisions to the UK motorcycle test. As the title states, the new test will come into being in October 2008 to comply with European legislation; the aims of which are to improve standards of safety for motorcyclists and moped riders.

Calling the 2008 test a revision is probably a bit of an understatement as there has and will continue to be significant investment in producing a whole new infrastructure incorporating five new managers which were Department of Transport funded some 13 months ago and a set of purpose built test centres. Twenty of these multi purpose test centres had already been built by March this year with another 50 to follow, to a standard layout, throughout the UK and will incorporate an off-road area where some elements of the test can be undertaken away from any dangers associated with the use of the public highway.

The off-road area is a rather high tech surfaced, private area some 100 metres by 70 metres and is laid out, again to a standard plan, with a route designed to incorporate the manoeuvres to be tested. Slow speed slalom, U turn areas and areas to examine braking and other aspects of bike control are all incorporated and can be attempted safely, away from the hazards

present when, up to now, emergency stops were carried out on the public highway.

This is however, only one aspect of the comprehensive test taking up perhaps 15 to 20 minutes. The rest of the test is done on the highways as it always has



(and should) and consists of 38 to 40 minutes on the road incorporating all the 'normal' features one would expect on a driving competence test including some riding up to the national speed limit.

There has been some discussion as to whether motorcycle training organisations should or will be given access to the test centre off road areas, as there are precious few alternative areas available to the public of this size suitable for a motorcyclist to practise the associated manoeuvres in safety and without disturbing any local residents, As I understand it, at this time, no decision has yet been made but it would certainly be advantageous to the rider although administration could become problematic and there would as always, have to be some consideration to charge for the use of the facility as I would expect surface maintenance would become an issue.

Thanks to Ian for firstly standing in at short notice and secondly for presenting members with an interesting insight to the new 2008 test.

Alan

Scarey or What?

Sitting at a BBQ some weeks ago in the pouring rain there was a debate about the health of motorists i.e. should there be certain things which should prevent a motorists from getting behind the wheel. One person commented that they knew someone who had to start his car engine whilst he stood outside the car as he was too large and his body covered the ignition key slot. Once in the car he could only drive using one hand as he did not have

enough room to manoeuvre the other arm! How can someone using one hand be in control?

Another person commented that they knew a neighbour who went out for a drink and drove back home which is a scary thought to think that there is a drink driver on the road but when he had an accident under the influence of drink, he stated to the police that the reason he had had the accident was he drove home regularly from the pub the only thing that had caused the problem was that a car which did not normally park on the road had done so and the drink driver had driven into it!!

Tricia

Health and Safety at Work Act

Nelson: "Order the signal, Hardy."

Hardy: "Aye, aye sir."

Nelson: "Hold on, that's not what I dictated to Flagg. What's the meaning of this?"

Hardy: "Sorry sir?"

Nelson (reading aloud): "' England expects every person to do his or her duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability.' - What gobbledegook is this?"

Hardy: "Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting ' England ' past the censors, lest it be considered racist."

Nelson: "Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

Hardy: "Sorry sir. All naval vessels have now been designated smoke-free working environments."

Nelson: "In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the mainbrace to steel the men before battle."

Hardy: "The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. It's part of the Government's policy on binge drinking."

Nelson: "Good heavens, Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it full speed ahead."

Hardy: "I think you'll find that there's a 4 knot speed limit in this stretch of water."

Nelson: "Damn it man! We are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest please."

Hardy: "That won't be possible, sir."

Nelson: "What?"

Hardy: "Health and Safety have closed the crow's nest, sir. No harness; and they said that rope ladders don't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until a proper scaffolding can be erected."

Nelson: "Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy."

Hardy: "He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the foredeck Admiral."

Nelson: "Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

Hardy: "Health and safety again, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled."

Nelson: "Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of admiral by playing the disability card."

Hardy: "Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

Nelson: "Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

Hardy: "A couple of problems there too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without hard hats. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt - haven't you seen the adverts?"

Nelson: "I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

Hardy: "The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral."

Nelson: "What? This is mutiny!"

Hardy: "It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There's a couple of legal-aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

Nelson: "Then how are we to sink the French and the Spanish?"

Hardy: "Actually, sir, we're not."

Nelson: "We're not?"

Hardy: "No, sir. The French and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

Nelson: "But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil."

Hardy: "I wouldn't let the ship's diversity co-ordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on disciplinary report."

Nelson: "You must consider every man an enemy, who speaks ill of your King."

Hardy: "Not any more, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest; it's the rules. It could save your life"

Nelson: "Don't tell me - health and safety. Whatever happened to rum, sodomy and the lash?"

Hardy: "As I explained, sir, rum is off the menu! And there's a ban on corporal punishment."

Nelson: "What about sodomy?"

Hardy: "I believe that is now legal, sir."

Nelson: "In that case..... kiss me, Hardy."

Adam Wilson



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