

Editors Ramblings

Well we are still here and up and running although late this month. I am going to blame this on the AGM being six months late so why not the newsletter late by a few days! 😊 two new articles submitted this month from David Creedy and Neil Jewell, fantastic work gents, great to see my begging is taking effect!

Remember we have our Facebook page – please join and contribute on it - Only for club members – any weird names or business names let us know so we can allow you to join the page. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/362204533842150/>

Email me on biker5chef@yahoo.co.uk or 07590596380 for WhatsApp sending pictures or texts or phone!

The Highlander

South Cheshire Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter September 2020



1994 to 2019



Outgoing Word from the Chair!

As you are aware (hopefully!) we have now managed to hold our AGM on the 3rd of this month by Zoom and we managed to have sixteen members participating in this meeting. A few new faces which were nice to see as well.

I have now stepped down from being chair and Dave Cox is your new leader. I would like to thank the committee for their support in this role as without their valuable contributions and hard work this group would not exist.

I would like to thank all the members that have renewed their membership this year increasing our membership total over the last few years, its great to see this especially in these difficult times that being part of making motorcycling safer is still part of your lives.

We will work with current guidelines and will as aloud do our best to give you value for money for your membership with any events that can be arranged. Any ideas will be considered by the committee so get in touch to submit an idea and/or attend a meeting to discuss.

To help with keeping the courses full the committee has agreed that we will subsidise the cost of these this year until further funding can be found for this elsewhere. I am sure the new committee will do their best in sourcing funding for the following year.

A reminder that the mid-week social runs have now stopped as summer is now officially over, but the Sunday runs are still going strong.

Over and Out - Stay safe - Gordon



Presidents Page

Not much has been happening this month on my front, the Spring/Summer course is progressing well, with the Associates starting to develop their new skills.

Dave Lewis took and passed his test this month, so congratulations to Dave and Stephan Yorke took his test and gained a first, so congratulations to Stephan.

With the continued restrictions in place regarding covid 19 I think 2020 will be the year that never was, I was hoping to get up to Scotland for a short break in October, but it seems less likely as there are flare up's everywhere, and 2021 might not be plain sailing, I am hoping to go to Spain next year, but listening to an expert on the radio recently it could take up to four years before normality returns, anyway we shall book the ferry for next year and see what happens.

We will be running the Autumn course, as we have four candidates already, so if you know anyone who would like to join ask them to contact Geoff Highfield.

That is all from me for this month, so to you and your families stay safe, until next month, take care.

Chris Steel.

President.

And Your Committee For This Year Is

President – Chris Steel

Chair – Dave Cox

Vice Chair – Neil Jewell

Secretary – Ian Cunningham

Treasurer – Andy Gralton

Committee Members: –

Phil Buckley, Dave Coomber, Chris Steel, Gordon Low, Geoff Highfield,
Phil Hamilton



Motorcycle Photo's from Yesteryear – Gordon Low



Scotland to
Cornwall two
adults and two
children – who
needs a car!

New Associates: -

Trevor Hampson

Tony Markey

Test Passes: -

Dave Lewis

Stephan Yorke (F1rst)



The Learning Never Stops – *by David Creedy*

I've started the IAM Masters course with Dave Cox as mentor. He is very patient and wise. I'm seeking to achieve conspicuous and consistent application of the IPSGA method. I want to get better at absorbing, processing and conveying information all with the aim of better identifying, avoiding and mitigating hazards. Almost immediately I needed reminding to keep my head up, to look and plan further ahead.

My bike is a 1250RT, cumbersome when stopped but a joy in motion. The electrically operated screen is great to hide behind for a motorway stint but lowered for the lanes, heightens sensation.

I've been riding in all weathers enjoying whatever nature throws my way. The beauty of rain is the absence of flies and cyclists. My favorite rides are in the Trough of Bowland and the Yorkshire Dales. It is the tractor season in the countryside, requiring 100% concentration. Forget all the gizmos, just eyes ahead and have a plan template oven ready. I invariably ride alone but never feel isolated due to the bonhomie among bikers I meet by the wayside – suitably distanced. The ultimate reward, Nirvana: a long and winding road, no traffic and the bike flowing effortlessly and smoothly from bend to bend. A transcendent state worth working and exploring for.

Making a running commentary has proved helpful to me, especially on the M6 when a nanosecond lapse could mean curtains. The last-minute shoulder check before changing lane has saved me from being plastered across the front of white vans and 4WD tanks on numerous occasions. I have progressed from actions by rote to actions by need.

Most of all, I have learned that a good rider is one who gets home safely without spoiling anybody's day.

David Creedy,

15 Aug 2020



Another 1250RT ready
for more miles!

My First Ever Trackday – Oulton Park 17/06/2020 – by Neil Jewell

So, after getting on a motorbike for the first time ever some 39 years ago. I thought it was about time I did my first ever track day.

A track day is an organised event that enables you to (really) explore the limits of yourself and your machine in a somewhat controlled environment. It is something I have been thinking about doing for literally years. Never really having the time or money to actually book one. That's what I kept telling myself, in truth I was probably scared of looking like a plonker wobbling around the track and ending up in the gravel trap or crashing.

Enough was finally enough and I decided to bite the bullet as a twitter follower (who I had never met) said they had just booked their first ever one. So, I rushed to the no limits track days website and booked on the same day.

There are many types of track day, so a bit of research is required especially if like me this was to be your first. This one was a 3-group format, Novice, Intermediate and Expert. You decide yourself which group you book into, as this was my first one, I was more than happy with Novice.

The booking process was very simple and straightforward. Cost is around the same price as a rear tyre and as I haven't been using them up much this year I could justify the expense. However, that wasn't the end of the costs. You must have 2 piece leathers that zip together all the way round or a 1 piece suit – I didn't have either, so after a fruitless eBay search, Twitter came to the rescue again and another follower sold me his bespoke set of Scott leathers. They were only slightly snug and very good for £100.

I considered track day insurance but looking into that it doesn't really exist. What does exist is a separate policy that covers you for loss of earnings, ideal if you are self-employed or have no sick pay. But that is around £80 a month so not an option or my 1 off track day. The other policy is a broken bone policy that you can take out for individual days which is really aimed at getting you back home from abroad if you are on a foreign track day. So, neither is what I wanted, which was basically a new bike if I binned mine. When I put it like that it's no wonder that cover doesn't exist and IAM Surety doesn't cover track days unless it's an IAM skills day event. So, in the end I just told myself, don't crash.



Well the toe slider was needed and that mirror is not far away too!



My First Ever Trackday – Oulton Park 17/06/2020 – by Neil Jewell

Getting to Oulton Park is easy enough, it's off one of our observed ride routes. I'd loaded panniers with all the essentials, gaffer tape, zip ties and bananas, strapped a foldable chair and brolly to the bike and I was all set. I arrived at 07:30 as the gates opened and had made arrangements to meet a few internet strangers there.

As I pulled into the paddock the sudden realisation that I was totally out of my comfort zone crept through my body. It was drizzling. There were huge vans everywhere, sets of racing slicks and full wets stacked up, generators humming away plugged in to tyre warmers. As I looked around I couldn't see one other bike that had a) ridden there and b) had a number plate and c) didn't have a full MotoGP backup van. As I was contemplating a feet up U-turn and scarper I was being waved at by an internet twitter stranger.

They say never meet strangers off the internet, but with 5 minutes they had organised a gazebo and a cup of coffee for me. I was introduced to friends of friends who had camped overnight and bagged a Pit garage. They all laughed, in a polite way, when I said the GTR is going to do a few laps. What a great welcome, proved that bikers are just ace people all round and was ready to sign in and then wait for the first session.

Tannoy announcements kept proceedings ticking over nicely, Expert group out first then inters then Novice. 20-minute sessions each. As one finished the others are ready in pit lane waiting to go. NoLimitsTrackdays run a well organised day. So at 09:30 I geared up and made my way through the paddock to my first ever track day session. We had been told that this would consist of 2 laps following a marshal then return to pit lane then go again for the remainder of the session.



Definitely needs a new
tyre now



My First Ever Trackday – Oulton Park 17/06/2020 – by Neil Jewell

OK. Nerves. Lots of track dedicated bikes lining up. Lots of slick tyres. Lots of “I am in the novice group aren’t I” doubts. Line up towards the back of the group because I don’t want to hold anyone up.

The initial pace was easy enough, ahhh sighting laps, learning the track, yep, I can cope with this. We pulled into the pits again and after a quick nod to check we are all OK we were waved out again. I was telling myself not to crash and to take it easy and not get the red mist. I was being sensible. I really was.

I didn’t get overtaken at all on that first session. I loved every second of it. IPSGA works perfectly on the track. The hardest thing was not doing shoulder checks into corners.

The trackday does have a good rule, it’s not a race and you must not overtake anyone as they are tipping in to their corner. This was upheld throughout the day and nobody did which made being on track feel actually quite relaxed.

Being on the track is great. Absolutely squeezing every ounce of performance out of your machine is something that you simply can’t do on the road and certainly not for a sustained 20 minutes. Squeezing the brakes harder than you ever dreamed of. Winding the throttle on so hard that you leave black lines in your wake. Cornering with so much lean angle that footpegs are scraping on the deck. And best of all, overtaking race bikes. It’s brilliant.

I’ve put together some video of the day’s sessions. I recorded a live voice over on session 1, 4 and 7 so apologies for the swears when my bike wasn’t going as quick as I wanted it to.

Sessions 1-7 are available to watch on YouTube here <https://youtu.be/X3LYv1f3HW0>

If you are thinking about doing one then do it. Road riding confidence is hugely improved just by knowing what your bike can actually do if you really, really want it to.



Where's your Associate?

By Neil Jewell



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 3rd part

Kerala and Tamil Nadu, February 2008

By six o' clock it was raining heavily. Everything seemed damp and there was no hot water. I ordered a room heater, but it didn't arrive until after dinner and it was not until morning that any beneficial effect was felt.

I woke at 6.30 to a nice warm room and the day looking promising. There was hot water for showers, too. In the local market sellers were largely squatting or sitting cross-legged and were happy to be photographed. Unfortunately, they posed for the camera so it was difficult to get a natural shot. Fish was being descaled, definned, beheaded, betailed, gutted and sliced into portions with a rusty curved knife similar to the one used to slice open coconuts

Shortly before 3 o' clock it rained heavily with the lane outside my room becoming a stream. In the room the sheets had been changed for more unaired ones, so I stripped back the bedding while the fan heater warmed the room – until the power cut put an end to that until morning.

Back in the mountains during another refreshment stop I photographed a little girl having her anklet removed. She was bare footed, of course, and had the most gorgeous smile. Her pretty mother was not only happy for me to photograph her girl, but wanted me to shoot her too, standing next to another woman. Then followed a group family shot. An address was carefully written out. I hope the photos arrived.

Busses don't have glazed windows, only bars which are probably to stop fare dodgers climbing inside - they have to sit on the roof. Youths hang through the bars to wave and shout. As vehicles' signalling systems are unreliable, drivers make brief hand signals which are taken up by passengers in the back. We continued through tea and cardamom plantations to the Camellia Haven, Vandanmedu (Thekkady). The hotel is set in a cardamom plantation bordering on a tea plantation and has quite extensive grounds with several cabin, including one tree house, dotted around. It also had a welcome pool. By 6.45 the birds had stopped singing and the insects start their sounds.

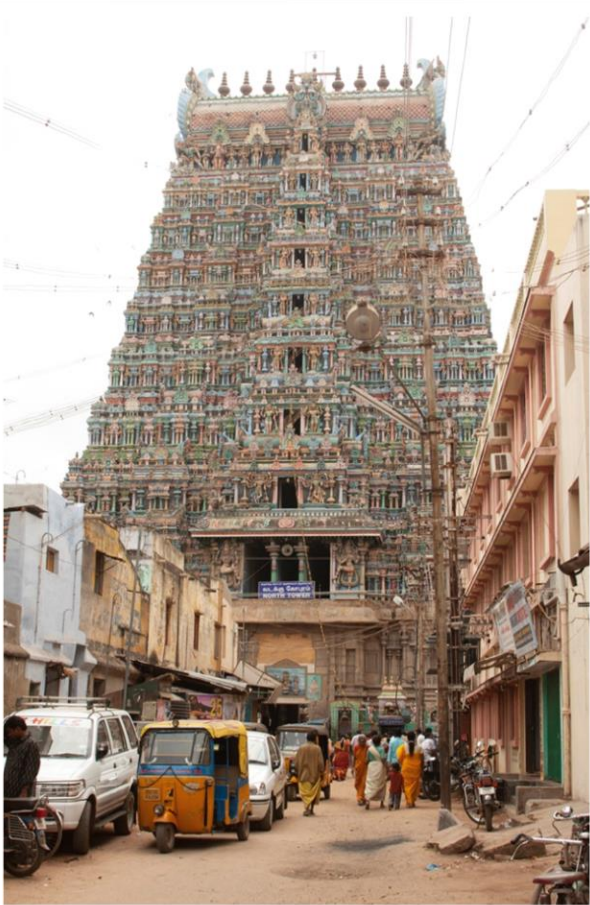
Removing an Anklet



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 3rd part

On the next day we rode badly potholed mountain roads to be greeted with marigold garlands when we arrived at the very posh Mahout Cardamom Hotel. I walked into Thekkady town and bought a CD of sitar music, later to find that it had been recorded in Germany. After dinner, which was finished off with a cardamom soufflé, there was a display of Indian classical dancing. The 'woman' dancer was almost certainly a man.

In the morning a jeep took a couple of us to the rangers' office at the Periyar Tiger Reserve. We first donned bootees between our boots and socks and tied above the calves. These were dusted with tobacco powder to ward off leeches. It was not long before we saw deer and boar buffalo and elephant. They were among the trees and in the dim light the contrast was poor. One of the rangers carried a Lee Enfield .303, although I don't suppose it would have been much use against a charging elephant. He said that in his eight years there he'd never spotted a tiger. A steep escarpment at about 1150 m elevation afforded splendid views over a fertile valley and the road to Madurai. A little further along, rustling in the grass indicated bison but I didn't see any.



Madurai Temple and Carving



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 3rd part

Some of the walk involved crashing through undergrowth and down a steep slope.

Towards the end we got the best and closest views of boar. One was grazing in a glade and although aware of my presence took little notice. Later a family trotted through the woods quite close. One guide shooed them away. 'They're dangerous!' he said. More deer and monkeys (grey macaques?) and black monkeys were to be seen but again, in too much shade for a decent photo.

On the following day we rode back to Quilon for our last night in India. Away from the tourist hotspots of Goa and the Golden Triangle (Delhi, Agra and Jaipur) Indians are generally friendly and keen to be photographed. Moreover, where tourists are rare there are few beggars. Driving is another matter. The moment an Indian gets behind the wheel he trusts to his gods rather than any sense of self-preservation. The only rule seems to be *The bigger you are, the more right of way you have*. Cuisine in this semi-tropical region contains plenty of fruit, pineapple and bananas in particular, as well as coconut, and fish. Kerala has large Christian and Muslim populations as well as Hindus, so there's plenty of meat on the menu.

Market Street



Above the Clouds at
Kodaikanal



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 3rd part



Coconut Seller

Rural Transport



Club Events

MONTHLY CLUB NITE

Last Thursday of the month at the Hawk Inn in Haslington by Crewe.

Our own version of Conversation Street, I'm sure there will be plenty of discussion and maybe some of it repeatable too! 8pm onwards all welcome.



CANX

Group Events

Sunday Ride Outs - Now On with max 6 per group and Social Distancing in play - it's 9am from Costa Coffee at the Grand Junction Retail Park - CREWE - arrive early with a full tank of fuel. Usually 150-200 miles but if you want to do a shorter one, we will not take offence at you turning back early.

Wednesday Evening Ride Outs – Now finished till next year

Other Events of a two-wheeled nature

6th September – BSB - Silverstone

4-6th September – WSB – Aragon – Spain

11-13th September – Oliver's Mount Gold Cup – Scarborough

13th September – Darley Moor Racing – Derbyshire

13th September – MotoGP – Misano – Italy

18-20th September – BSB – Catalunya – Spain

20th September – MotoGP – Misano – Italy

27th September – MotoGP – Barcelona - Spain



Piston Points Trophy - Reminder

Back in the day we commissioned this from Crewe Honda so we can reward members for contributing time or effort towards social activities, newsletter articles, attending club runs etc. Points are weighted towards the newsletter so 10 points for a full article and 2 points for each photo published, 2 points for responding to an article. Attending a club run will get 1 point – so lots available throughout the year there. Arranging a social event is 10 points attending one 2 points. Dave Coomber is letting me know who is out on rides so I can count these. If anyone is out on a ride without Dave let me know the date and who was out.



That's all this month

Hope you all get out on your bikes to give us some more stories

The Highlander

