

WORCESTER AND HEREFORD ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS



October 2024

EDITORIAL – JIM ROLT

Hi all, this month it's quite a slim tome, your fault I'm afraid for lack of contributions! However, it won't take you long to get through it and I doubt you'll be bored.

As Tony elaborates in [his piece below](#), A tidy number of us gathered at Alex' farm to ride with him to the Crem at Hereford. There were over 30 bikes and an impressive cortege we made, with no incidents and good humour all round.

In this issue Chair Richard finishes off his IPSGA series with... wait for it.. [the Acceleration phase](#). An excellent and well written series that I've been enjoying; perhaps we should put all 5 of them together into a slim booklet?

John Nixon has come up with a very timely [article on heated clothing](#), including a look back to the 50s and 60s, which reminded me of my daily apprentice commute to the BSA factory in Small Heath. Ah, those were the days, Tiger Cub and later, Tiger 100 commute every day of the year, sunshine, rain, or snow.. you can recognise me on group rides by my 30 year old riding gear. They don't make kit like that any more. I do have an up to date helmet though ☺

Nice ride out this morning for breakfast with the pillion wench, all the old odd bikes were out, quite strange..

Some gear for sale too, check it out [here](#)

Keep up to date on the website for the latest events and group rides at <https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/events/>,

And then join in with the gossip, news, and banter at the Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/321150181285607>

Finally don't forget to please contact me with any opinions, ideas, or reports at whamnewsletter@gmail.com, **dont make me beg!** Jim Rolt, Editor



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CHAIR'S NOTES – TONY DAVIS

I was very proud to be a part of the motorcycle escort for Alex Hoyle's funeral in September. Around 30 bikes turned out and it was an impressive sight to see. My Wife Alison was already at the crematorium and said how the sight and sound of the bikes approaching was a fantastic spectacle and a great send off for our Friend Alex. Hearing some of the tributes to Alex from life long friends made me realise just how much of a full life he had lived.



We are now well and truly in the depths of Autumn. Greasy muddy roads mean we need to keep things steady, especially on rural roads, remember, there could well be a mud slick around that blind left hander so the advice to be able to stop in the distance you can see to be clear is more relevant than ever. I've got an interesting story about greasy roads that I'll tell in a later column (when the PTSD has diminished).

In October we return to our normal Wednesday Natter Nights with a talk from Julie at Biketrac. Biketrac supply Thatcham approved tracking systems for vehicles and are one of the leading brands. Julie's obvious goal is to raise the awareness of Biketrac' products her presentation is also a very interesting take on bike security in general. Well worth a trip out on a Wednesday evening, WHAM will even be putting on some food and refreshments. See you there

<https://www.wham-motorcycling.org/event/wham-club-night-group-riding-discussion/>

{This will be on Wednesday 30th October – ED }

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Acceleration

The last article in the series! I am sure there'll be Advanced Rider stalwarts heaving a sigh of relief that we're at the end of me setting out my thoughts as WHAM CO on the individual stages of IPSGA. Yet, you've read them and hopefully enjoyed them.

In all seriousness, I've been trying to pitch these articles at anyone that wants to read them; in the hope that there's something for all to learn from, to think about, to challenge what they do, or to maybe re-align with current best practice. We stay safe by seeing our journeys as riders as just that; with learning and practicing good process and utilising good skills along the way.



One of my realisations along my advanced rider journey is that acceleration can also encompass deceleration. Deceleration, whilst using a balanced throttle with minute changes in the opening and closing of the throttle. The main thrust of that below is Go-go-go! when accelerating but I just wanted to re-confirm that gently using a balanced throttle to scrub a little bit more off before you accelerate out of a hazard, a bend, a change in speed limit is absolutely ok. We ideally aim to reach and maintain a steady speed, yet life and circumstances are reliable in that "stuff happens" and having to roll off briefly whilst maintaining that balanced throttle is not a crime against Advanced riding ☺

Remembering we start our acceleration phase in the right position, at the right speed, and in the right gear, is it a case of just twisting that throttle just as quickly and hard as you can and letting the electronics keep you upright and on-course? Well no; what needs to happen is a smooth (which doesn't have to be slow) transition of weight, and therefore maximum traction, onto the rear wheel and then noting the assessed prevailing road condition (grip, wet/dry, maybe even width of available road space) accelerating up to a point that does not trouble the traction control or wheelie control etc. If you do see flashing amber lights on your dashboard you've probably slightly overcooked it and need to bank that information away to use again in similar circumstances for that particular machine.

For those of us that also ride bikes without >140hp, i.e. maybe 50 or 80hp, remember being in the right gear is paramount to making the most progress you can safely make. I don't want to revisit the speed and gear phases here, but if you want to enjoy the natural thrill that an accelerating motorcycle can deliver you'll only experience that on a lower powered machine by meticulously getting speed and gear right.

As a side issue, if you've noticed your traction control intervening more than often what sort of thought process should that trigger?

- Is your assessment of the road surface incorrect?
 - If yes does this mean more caution accelerating is required?
 - If no does it mean your rear tyre is not quite in the condition you thought it was in?

If the answer to either of those sub-bullets is yes, you need to either make some serious amends to your current ride, and/or get some new rubber!

I try to think of common real world items that prevent associates passing rider exams or prevent them achieving the vaunted "F1rst" qualification. As covered above, how you accelerate can affect your scores in many categories, from machine sympathy, to smoothness, to safety, to name three; but what also counts is 'when' you accelerate. We've covered accelerating from a traction point of view, and we should also think specifically about accurate use of the limit point exiting bends, but what about acceleration in a straight line, when you're transitioning into a higher speed limit? When do you accelerate? Seems an easy question to answer yet you'd be surprised how many check rides I've conducted, for associates, for re-tests, and even masters candidates, where the acceleration comes 'to' the new limit rather than 'from' the new limit. We all need to maintain restraint and accelerate 'at' the signed uplift; not before, and not after. After is better than before, but 'at' might get you a first. Doing this will also attract admiration from any Police person that may well be assessing whether to stop you for a little chat. Having the restraint to wait-wait-wait! May well stop you from even finding out there was a plain wrapped Police car behind you.

And lastly, and with all the tedium you would expect from me with my official CO hat on; Please do accelerate to the appropriate speed for the conditions, and the prevailing speed limit. You may well be riding a bike that approaches the acceleration potential of the Starship Enterprise, but that just won't wash if you find yourself up in front of a Magistrate trying to explain why the fun seen accelerating from 30 to 90 into a 60 was "still absolutely safe with my advanced skills Madam"

There's always more technical things to say about all the aspects of IPSGA, but I'm going to leave that there this month in the hope that this has been accessible and enjoyable to read.

Safe riding.

Richard H

Chief Observer

Worcester & Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists



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THE RIDER WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD? - JOHN NIXON

Electric Clothing Review - Waistcoat(s)

Why electric clothing?

When I started riding and 'dem bikes were dodgy and 'dem hedgehogs abundant, the choice of available clothing was, shall we say, simple. Indeed, my first riding garment was a woollen overcoat ludicrously topped with a peaked 'Corker', no gloves, no boots and all underscored with a 'plunger' rear suspension D125cc BSA Bantam. Good God, I was still at school and had b* all money. Note the natty the leg shields, presumably an optional extra that came with the bike. (Neat socks! Ed.)



Author on Bantam, Cheltenham. Year? Prefer not to say. Corker on handlebar.

ffk John Nixon.

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'Corker' Helmet, height of fashion (ish). Source: ebay.co.uk

It's worth bearing in mind that clothing back in the 60's and 70's was not like it is today. Your choice was basically leather for the dry and waxed cotton for the wet, for those that had some money or indulgent parents, which mine so weren't (at that time).

Moving on! In 1971 I started a graphic design house - well, 'garret' is more accurate, and one day I happened to see an ad. in Motorcycle Sport for a waterproof one-piece oversuit that looked totally different to anything else. It was made by Kett Manufacturing Ltd of Harrow Middx in a then utterly new sort of pvc-like material. I bought the suit which packed up nice and small and was a bright orange too. It was a really good product yet I thought the ad. failed to represent it well enough. I wrote to the company's MD and said so. They invited me to go down to Harrow and meet them.

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Source: Gracesguide.co.uk

I'm sorry, I don't have the advertisement for the oversuit. But these give you a feel for the times. These ads being, I suspect, created by the journal(s) and not a design agency. I did acquire a pair of those fur lined boots though. Look at the height of them. It wasn't so long ago they left my wardrobe :-))

The Kett company was a loyal client until 1982 when there was a complicated set of company and brand amalgamations involving Lewis Leathers for whom I did some work for a while.

During the 70's decade, Kett started selling some 'Chilli' electric heated waistcoats, leggings and socks. I still have them (40+ years old if a day) and the waistcoat still works! Not wanting my wife Chris to miss out when on the pillion of the Gold Wing 1500, I bought two of them and I seldom left home without the magic heated waistcoat. The leggings and socks I found less useful.

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Powder Blue GL1500 Gold Wing with daughter number two adding the human touch.

ffk John Nixon

Let's step forward to the 21st century and to Macna kit, the subject of this article. I now have a Macna Heated Waistcoat, Jacket and Gloves. I'll review the Waistcoat here because I bought that first. Macna kit is available from Motolegends but they didn't and still don't, stock the Waistcoat, so I bought it from Louis the German company, now with a UK online presence <https://www.louis-moto.co.uk>

A search today on the site fails to show the product so I contacted them and they advised me it should be back in stock around this Christmas time.

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Macna Waistcoat.



Kett Chilli Waistcoat

ffk John Nixon

My take is that the Waistcoat is the most versatile of electric garments because you can wear it under pretty tight-fitting clothing, like say a leather jacket, and being sleeveless it's so easy to put on with no bulk at the elbows etc.

Nothing's changed. I only ever leave home without the Macna if the temperature is certain to be 20 degrees C or above for the duration of my ride. Call me a skinny wretch (thank you Paul Lumley) and you'll get why I feel the cold long before you, perhaps more comfortably upholstered beings, do.

Up until I sold the R1200R last year 2023, I used the Kett product on the solo and the Macna on the outfit. That's because, being powered by the bike's battery, there's 'permanent' and differing connection leads to supply the power and you don't want to be moving that just to avoid purchasing a second garment. Hence investing in Macna.

What's good about it? It's light and comfortable to wear, it has heating elements right up to the neck and it has 4 heating levels. It has Bluetooth to connect to your phone via an app which enables you to select the heat level remotely and turn it off if you choose. Especially handy if you have a phone holder on the bars. It's way hot enough and does the job perfectly. Packs up nice and small, so even if you don't wear it as a mid-layer, it's easy to carry on the bike and convenient should the chill get to you. Personally, I haven't been cold on a bike since the 1970's, entirely thanks to electricity. Prior to that, riding up and down from Cheltenham home to Liverpool Uni twixt 1966-69, I used all sorts including newspaper stuffed inside the Belstaff. Mind you, the roads were empty, better surfaces, no 60 limit and the Venom was a brilliant bike in it's time, followed by a succession of Triton 650's.

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Macna App (see 'Vest')



The 'not hyper accessible' on/off/setting Button

What's not to like? Unlike the Kett product, which had a knob controller 'box' inline on the power cable, the Macna has a button (see pic) on the right chest. When connected to the on-bike power source, you press and hold the button for 4 secs and it turns the garment on, press again for next heat level and so on. It also needs an additional connector lead for some bizarre reason to connect to the bike's 'permanent' power lead. Not ideal, as I lost it after a lunch stop near Ludlow and had to buy another last month.

The irritation I find is that I tog up in the house (as you do), zip up the jacket, slip on a hi-vis and make sure I'm comfortable around the neck area, then ear plugs in, helmet on, glasses on ('No Fog' applied), grab gloves, go to bike, clip phone in the holder, sit on bike, connect power lead and here's the rub! To activate it, I try to locate and press the button, having to feel through the vis and jacket to turn it on and also to connect to the app. Too frustrating, can't feel the **** thing. So now I unzip the hi-vis (you don't wear one so that's one less layer of aggro for you - and I wouldn't either if my helmet wasn't grey), probably disturb the jacket neck closure, unzip the jacket a few inches, poke ungloved hand inside, locate button and turn on. Then zip it all up again. Hassle!

So there you have it - Macna wise. Why Macna? It seemed, at the time, to be less expensive than the likes of Keis and Gerbing etc. and I liked the idea of the control app on the handlebar.

In conclusion, I don't think it matters which brand you buy and there's a host of Chinese 'alternatives' as well, but don't blame me if a 'knock off' fails prematurely or scorches your nipples.

Recommend Macna? - that's up to you but I certainly recommend a heated waistcoat for all year round use in the UK.

So having started on Macna, it made sense to investigate heated gloves and the jacket. Next time. See you then.

John Nixon

GEAR FOR SALE



RST Boots, great condition, breathable & Waterproof £25

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J&S Leather Jeans 38/short leg, £25

For more detail on either ring Sally on 07967 284751