



# WRITE LINES

Still, Still  
Under New Management

June 2010



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of the NOTTINGHAM ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

Registered Charity Number 1060035 Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists No 7182

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**H a p p y**



St Swithin's  
Day, if it does  
rain  
Full forty days  
it will remain.  
St Swithin's  
Day, if it be  
fair  
For forty days,  
t'will rain no  
more.

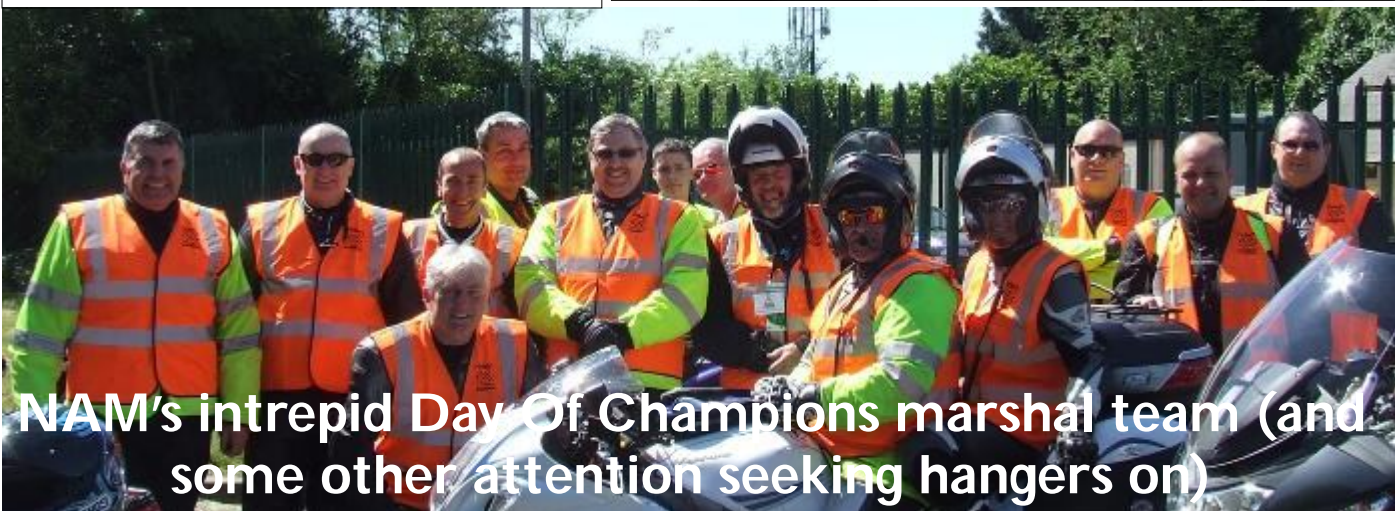
**Apparently!**

**S t S w i t h i n ' s D a y ?**

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Not so much room for me in this this months issue, it's so packed out with good stuff. Trip to Germany (how many pages?), test ride in Spain, new boy on the committee, charity parachute jump (hopefully more on that next month. If not, watch the news!), facts and figures and much more. And let's not forget the Day of Champions, (more on that next month). The burning question I have is "What's going on here then?" → Tony.



NAM's intrepid Day Of Champions marshal team (and some other attention seeking hangers on)

## RECENT TEST PASSES

**Congratulations to  
Mick Booth  
For passing his Advanced test.  
Welcome to the fold!**

### Did You Know?

As riders get older, more become KSI casualties in daylight.

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## THE CHAIRMANS BIT...

Hello again,

I gave my apologies for last month being a little short, but we were off to the Nurburgring the following morning on the 20<sup>th</sup> May. And what a fantastic trip it was too. So I have tried to make up for it this month.

So what have I been up to since the last magazine?

Apart from a long weekend in Germany, I've carried out an observed run on the BC, and attended the Police "bike safe" event at Sheffield arena. I've been to Retford to support a charity bike ride event, and attended two police retina events at Ollerton. So it's been a busy month again as normal for this time of year.

### **Nurburgring 2010 part 1**

It all started off when my cousin called me to ask if I would like to bring a few friends along on a trip to the famous Ring.

I put out an email to various people, some friends and some observers who come to Scotland with me each year from the group.

Some people replied and some didn't. But we ended up with 10 bikes and 12 people saying yes then all the emails started flying around. First the banter, then the unspoken feeling of competition. Initially between some of those attending and then against the track, but once we started watching "You Tube" video's about the Ring, and reading all the warnings about the dangers of the Ring, we started to get more than a little worried about our safety.

To try to help build our confidence, several of us purchased a PS2 we bought a game called "Tourist Trophy" because it has the Nurburgring for you to practice your laps. The only problem I came up against was not being used to the controls, so most of my laps were a wobble around the route, bouncing from Armco to Armco around the course.

As you can imagine this display of bike control did not fill Angela with confidence!

As the weeks went by, I was able to stay on the track between the grass verges, apart from one corner, that I found out later, that most of the others doing the same thing crashed there every lap to. But even with these crashes I still managed lap times of around 11 minutes. Now if I could only manage it on a real bike!

I started planning a number of routes to give us various options in getting from Calais to the Ring, and we decided to split our people into three groups to make flowing through traffic quick and easy, whilst my cousin and friends made their own way over in their group of five bikes. Craig Garland had to pull out shortly before we were due to go due to family problems, so that meant that we only had 9 bikes going, but that made three groups of 3 and that would run nicely. Ian Orgill, Justin Leary and John Measures decided that they would go directly there from getting off the tunnel and try to get some track time on the Friday evening. Whilst the rest of us would take a much less direct route, first south and then east to the Ring.

John Ritchie took a group consisting of Paul Philips and Andy Beavis, and I was joined by Dave Bryant and John Annable.

John Ritchie found a great looking route from MCN on "You Tube" and I tried to turn it into a Garmin route to get us there. The video was difficult to read and I couldn't make out more than about six locations along its length, so from the middle section, it was a little sketchy.

"Map Source" worked out the missing bits and it looked good. So that was our chosen route.

We travelled down to Folkestone on Thursday to stay overnight before catching the early train to France on the Friday morning.

It turned out that it was the Moto GP weekend at Le Mans, so there were loads of bike catching the tunnel at the same time as we were. Unfortunately when the man at check in asked me if we were all together I said yes. And we were told that we would have to wait almost 2hrs for our crossing. And we were instructed to park in the waiting area for our boarding number to be called.

Once there John Annable pointed out that we should have said we were only in groups of three and we may have been allowed on an earlier train.

That was a good idea and we will have to remember it on the way home in a few days.

We went into the service area to get some cold drinks as it was unusually warm for May, and we needed something cold and some shade while we waited for our train.

We left Paul Philips watching the bikes to save removing all the tank bags etc from them and we went to get him a drink. Angela and I returned to sit with Paul once we had been fleeced for a cold drink, as Angela is a bit of a sun lizard and loves to soak up the rays when she can. As we went outside, we found John Ritchie looking all excited in the car park and trying to rally his group into getting ready.

"What's going on mate? I asked.

"My groups out of here" he told me.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"I've changed my group's tickets and we're on an earlier train" he said.

So I took his ticket off him, to see for myself, and it looked just like mine did.

"Yours is no different to mine" I said, "How are you going to get on an earlier train?"

"We're going to get on the back of another group because I've been told they don't check bike tickets so we should get on ok"

"What about the rest of us?" I asked

"I've been told not to tell anyone" he said.

With that I ran back inside to gather up every one else to do the same, but most had just bought drinks, John A had even just bought a large coffee. But we all rushed back out into the car park to find John R's group had already left.

We quickly dressed and started to try to stash bottles of drink all over the bikes so we could take them with us onto the train. Angela ended up carrying John's coffee around to the next waiting area, with a threat of John having to clean her leathers if she spilt any coffee on them whilst doing so.

When we got there we found John R's group waiting in line with everyone else. And it looked like he had done it.

When the barrier went up the bikers in front of him started to proceed to the train, and as some behind his group were not ready to move our two remaining groups jumped lines and dropped in behind his group. But as John got to the security guard he was told to stop, but reacting quickly he swerved around him and managed to get onto the train with the other people ahead of him.

This was a good plan but unfortunately the other two people in his ride group were stopped just in front of us, and not behind him.

After a few minutes we were also allowed to enter a train and we parked as instructed by one of the tunnel staff. Shortly afterwards we were off on our journey to lands far and wide.

Once we stopped in France we were asked to disembark from the train, and proceed up the ramp onto the A26 and off on our holidays.

But as we rode along the platform we could see John R standing by his bike, at the back of the front half of the train we were on, waiting to get off!

The main problem with that was his two other members of his group were now leader less heading out onto the French roads alone.

How we laughed!! He tried to pull a fast one, and ended up further behind.

**THINK B  KE**

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The hotel in Germany was beautiful, nestled in the bottom a valley at the edge of a very small village of Hohe Acht. Many thanks to John Ritchie for finding this on the internet; it was only 150 euro for two sharing for two nights, and what a great place it was. They breed their own cattle for the restaurant which was reasonably cheap and a lovely decking area outside where you could sit for breakfast in the morning.



The car park was a large area of

rough loose gravel and my cousin's daughter managed to drop her bike on it when they arrived there on day one. She has only been riding for around a year, but her ability and confidence is enormous. They left Hinckley at 3am and travelled all the way to Dover and then to the hotel in Germany in one hit, getting there around 7.30pm at night making the trip 16 1/2hrs. Fortunately she didn't do any damage to the bike, just bruised her ego a little.

### **Ring Day**

Most of the group had an early breakfast, and headed off to the Ring because they were so excited to experience the thrills of the track. But Dave Bryant, John Ritchie and I, were a little reluctant about the Ring, and somehow managed to keep finding something that needed doing to delay the trip to the track.

Eventually we had to put on our helmets and make our way there. Pulling into the car park we quickly found the rest of our group members huddled together taking the p\*\*s out of Paul "the lawn mower" Philips, due to his off road demonstration of bike control as he had replicated almost perfectly my normal route straight across the grass on that one corner I always get wrong on my PS2!!.

He was ok but a little shaken up as he isn't used to grass tracking, and had found the whole experience a little too scary, due to the amount of very fast cars and bikes coming at you from behind.

This didn't encourage Angela to go around the track on the back of our bike, but because I had hidden a pinhole camera in her helmet I needed her to. So after much anguish, we climbed on and headed out onto the track followed by Dave B, and John and Corinne R, bringing up the rear. As we made our way around the track, sections of it were familiar, as I remembered it from the PS2. Normally when you are travelling around at high speed everything is going backwards, but here on the Ring, if you're only riding at 80mph everything is bearing down on you at twice that speed. I kept remembering the various conversations with Ring riders prior to going, and being told of where they have crashed or seen people crash, and I was determined not to follow suit. Before going I had been talking to several people and was advised that I should try not to get into the run off area following a left hand corner, because if someone is on the limit and needs the bit of track I was on, they would take me out. Likewise on the apex of a right hander, if you're on it, you may be in the way if they're cutting the corner. With all these warnings buzzing around in my head I was being very careful.

The Ring rule is that you must watch your mirrors, and if you see a vehicle coming from behind you must indicate right and move right to give it a clear pass. So you often find yourself out of position as you approach the next corner.



Our ride was going ok until we got to "Pauls corner" and we had a number of vehicles some bikes and some cars, bearing down on us at great speed.

So we were all the way over to the right keeping out of harm's way. When a bloke on a Pan European bottled it, grabbed a hand full of front brake, and headed straight for the grass. He managed to pass just in front of me by about 8 feet doing around 30mph. if we had only been that bit further along the track we would have been "T Boned".



That scared Angela to the point that she wanted to get off right there and then. But as we moved further forward I found myself on the apex of the right hand bend and right in the line a cars path.

We completed the first lap, and once through the barrier for the next lap I pulled over so Angela could get off and return to the paddock, whilst I started my second lap alone.

Dave had gone on ahead, and John had pulled off track as he had only paid for one lap. But I must have timed it better than before because I didn't have so many cars coming by on corners and I was able to ride a better line, but to distract me further, I did get three phone calls on the Zumo, and the last one was from my cousin!

The conversation went something like this

*My cousin* "Steve its Mark, where are you?"

*Me* "I am riding around the Ring"

*My cousin* "your phones crap I can't hear what you're saying"

*Me* "I'M RIDING AROUND THE RING" I screamed at him.

*My cousin* "your phones crap I can't hear you, call me back when you get somewhere quite"  
B\*\*\*\*Y mobiles!!

Upon down loading the video footage it looks like I managed a 12min 4sec lap. Not quite the 10 min target we all wanted to achieve, but it was brilliant, and we will return again soon I hope. But this time I'm doing more practice on the "Play Station" first!

Following my laps I rejoined everyone in the car park, and Angela had calmed down and was enjoying the sunshine, and John R had managed to talk the owner of a racing BMW car into taking him around the Ring in his car for 25 Euros.

Well the look on his face when he came back showed that it was well worth the money. As I helped him out of the car I asked if I could have a ride as well, and he said to jump in.

We had three yellow flags where we had to slow to around 30 mph before getting back up to speed. I've never been in anything so fast, that could stop so quickly and turn so tight. When I was able to look at the speedo, I found that we were going 160mph in areas I had been doing 80mph. No wonder they were catching me so quickly in the corners.

All I can say to sum up the experience is WOW, can I go again please?

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Angela then spent four hours wandering around the paddock asking drivers to take her around the track in their cars, and eventually she found the owner of a Porsche GT3RS to agree to take her. We strapped her into the racing seat with a five point harness, to the point that she could barely breathe. With a blip of the throttle, there was a loud rasping roar from the engine and they were off!

A few minutes later and they were back and the grin on her face was massive. As she climbed out of the car she told me that they had completed their lap in 8min 15sec, and that was with 3 yellow flags as well, a whole second quicker than mine.

While she was out on track Paul "the lawn mower" Philips returned from a ride around the area, to see if anyone was still there, and when I told him where Angela was, he looked quite excited.

So when we got her out the car, we asked if he would take Paul as well. Yes for 20 euro's he said, so we greased Paul up to squeeze him into the car, and off they went. And when he returned to the paddock his expression said it all.

#### **Round up**

Well that's all for now. I will tell you more next month.

Once again I look forward to chatting to you all soon. Don't forget to come and say hello at group nights. And if there is anything I can help with please ask, and I will see what I can do.

And to all the existing NAM members, if there is any one you don't recognise at group nights please go over and have a chat with them as it may be their first night and they may like a friendly face to welcome them in.

We have had comments from various group members that some of the more long standing members tend to sit in the same chairs each month, and just talk to their friends, and that they don't put themselves out to welcome new members. If this sounds like you, please make an effort to say hello.

Steve Laughton



# THINK B KE

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## Meet another new Committee Member

Name... Marc Ford  
 Position... General Committee Member  
 Occupation... Electrician  
 Born in 66, world cup year!

I've had an interest in bikes since the day my dad took me to watch a scramble at Norwood, near Hardwick Hall, and I still love the smell of Castrol R from a 2-stroke. From the age of 15 I've had a bike in the garage, and here's the list (good memory eh !)

### 37 Bikes

DT50,FZ50x2,FS1M,RXS100,RD250F,GS550,GS850,KH250,GSX400F,CR250,KH250x2,RD350,LC,350YPVS,GPZ500,FZR400,CBR400,NC30,FZR600R,GSF400,ZXR400,CBR750,KLX250,TRX850,400BROS,TRX850,CBR600FI,CBR1100XX,CRM250AR,XJR1300SP,955i Daytona,CBR1100xx,CB1300,1050ST,XR250,1050ST

3 Triumph's, 6 Suzuki's, 6 Kawasaki's ,11 Yamaha's & 11 Honda's.

Some useful facts of the above 2-wheelers

1 v-twin, 1 v-four, 9 single cylinder, 6 twin cylinders, 6 triples & 14 four cylinders.

I like to tinker with bikes, and my garage is kitted out with a full hydraulic workbench and nearly every tool you could want to work on the bike. I always have something to be doing in the garage whether it's for me or a friend. Once I rebuilt a 99 R1 from a frame upwards in an evening (my mate had a RTA and snapped the frame) and it was ready and ridden to a show the next morning.

My current bike is the "Phantom". So called as its colour is Phantom Black, something that looked just so right when I walked into the Triumph dealer and it was sat on a podium with spotlights on it. I loved it but had a graphite grey one at that time. When that was sold I ordered the same bike again, chose to have ABS this time around and in the black. My first Triumph, a 955 Daytona was a bike I couldn't gel with, too firm, too hard on my wrists. These Sprint's came by accident, I was off to test a BMW, but found the dealership closed, so on the return journey I dropped into Triumphworld looking at seeing the Tiger, and was offered a test ride, without even asking. It didn't do anything for me, so on my return the keys were handed over and an offer of a 2nd test ride on a Sprint taken off the showroom sales plot was thrown my way. I wasn't looking to buy another sports tourer, but had the afternoon off so thought "why not"?

After the 1st mile, I knew an ST was going to be my next bike!

Now a year and a half has passed and only two bikes have tempted me away from the 1050, a BMW F800GS trailie (got to be a bumble-bee colour), and the new VFR1200. Both are great bikes for different reasons, but for the time being the "Phantom" is staying in the garage. I can do 200 miles to a tankful, fully loaded for a weeks camping. It's comfy for those non-stop 200 miles, not too hard on my wrists, and came with panniers as a freebie (BMW take note, that's why I didn't buy your GS !)

### **Did you know?**

Most crashes are on single-carriageway A roads, and on minor roads (C and unclassified)



In the 14 months of being a member of NAM, I've done my advanced training in 2009 on the Grey 1050, took my test in November on the "Phantom" with less than 600 miles on the clock. This year I started the Observer Training as I enjoyed the sessions so much last year out with trainees (thanks Gary and Chris). Shanus, Ron, John R, Andy P, and Dave Storey all also had to put up with my endless talking and questions last year, sorry guys, that's just the way I am. You can thank Nick Ireland as he's the one who did such a good job at the HPP event and signed me up for the Skills for Life course.

If we get another family day BBQ this year, don't ask me to cook anything quickly (that was me with the two starving kids!). Last year was a real family day out, set at Sherwood Pines near Edwinstowe. We had bike riding sessions all throughout the day, but of the keeping fit pedalling type. If you didn't go, you missed a really good laid back and relaxing sort of club event, unless you did the bike rides and we missed the wheelbarrow race that saw my wife Van teamed up with Angela. My boys have been so looking forward to another such social event this year, roll on summer.

If you want a good chat about bikes, I'm your man. You'll find me on various bike forums, as well as our own Yahoo site and the good/not so good Facebook. I even manage to get to the odd one or two group nights when work permits. I love camping on the bike, different site every day and some excellent riding in-between. Scotland last year saw me do the best part of 1800 miles in 6 days and every night in the tent with the camp stove alight with some hearty food on the go.

**Fantastic!**

### **Did You Know?**

A bike is stolen every 18 minutes, 75% are stolen from their owner's house.

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## **More fund raising activities, this time Giles Warhust goes....**

Some time ago I heard the following (possibly questionable?) story:

The British Army were training Ghurkhas and told them they were about to go up in a plane to a height of a few thousand feet then jump out.

One of the Ghurkhas queried this asking "Isn't a few thousand feet a bit high up?"

"Well, if you jump from any lower there wont be time for the parachute to open."

"Oh, you're giving us parachutes, that's fine then."



# SKYDIVING

For your 18th birthday because you will never do it when you get older

Well, now its my turn to worry about being far enough above the ground. On the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010 I will be taking part in a sponsored tandem skydive to raise money for Help for Heroes. This of course is not that big a deal, but it is somewhat more interesting when you consider that the event is being arranged by my partners pole dancing teacher and approximately 90 - 95% of the people taking part are pole dancers. In addition to this the event is to be fancy dress. The chief organiser, Emma is jumping dressed as Freddie Mercury and for my part (to be in keeping with the military theme for the day) I will be spending the day dressed as a Victorian Cavalryman. The event is taking place at Langar Airfield and guests are quite welcome. There is a bar (although alcohol is not served until everyone has finished jumping), and there will be a DJ, bar-beque and a canteen on site. The canteen may or may not serve desserts. So if any of you find yourselves at a loose end on the day and fancy a nice little ride out and the opportunity to dispose of some small change please feel free to head down there and support a very worthwhile cause.

Should any of you wish to donate online I have set up a just giving page where you can donate online so if you don't see me in person, or cant make it to the event but would still like to offer some support to Help for Heroes then please follow the below link:

<http://www.justgiving.com/Giles-Warhurst>

I would like to point out that I am funding all the cost of the jump myself so please be assured that by donating you are giving money to Help for Heroes, and not funding my adventures.

And before any of you ask, if the chute fails and it turns out to be a "one way jump" No, you don't get a refund!

<http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>

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### More Observer Training (Tony Bell)

Since my last session, the predicted hours of talking to myself have turned into weeks. The task of getting all the right people in all the right places is not an easy one, as Ian Orgill will surely testify, so it's been 4 glorious weeks of yak, yak, yak every time I got out on my bike. People stare at me at traffic lights like there's something wrong with me talking away to myself. (Someone's left the cell door open!) The only thing to do is act like Secret Squirrel and make like I'm talking about them. A couple have actually checked around for the cop car tailing them.

The next structured part of the training was classroom based. A sunny morning sat outside learning about "What makes a good observer, How to do an introductory brief, Route selection, Road position, Slow riding" and loads more I probably forgot at the time. After 2 1/2 hrs my head was pounding trying to take it all in. There's only so much room in my head so it's as well that the session finished with an easy ride through town onto a familiar route to Southwell, with a stop for slow riding practice then swapping over for the route back and a debrief.

That done it was time to practice for the next session, a 30 ish mile route each as observer and associate. Fortunately my section as observer was on fairly familiar roads near my home so every chance I got during that week (being a dole-ite at the time) I was out there practicing.

Another bright, sunny day was ordered for this exercise and duly delivered. We started with a short reminder of what we had to do then on with the briefing followed by an observed run to Melton and a de-brief. All very easy from my point of view (as the associate) but then the batten was passed to me.

Anyone who has every tried to eat Alum will know exactly how I felt! The words just don't come out with a mouth that dry but to my great relief, I did better than I expected.

The instructions for the next session were to create a 50 mile route with stops, demonstrate slow riding and do all the briefings/de-briefings from the start.

# O.M.G!

Find out how I went on next month.

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## John Measures gets a HONDA VFR1200F Test Ride

You can imagine my surprise when Fiona Cole, the PR Communications Manager for Honda (UK) telephoned me to ask if I would like to go on the launch of the long awaited and much hyped VFR1200F...in Spain!!! The last time I did a test ride was off road on a cold wet day in Doncaster. Within a few days, along with ten of the UK's best riders from the top motorcycle magazines, we arrived at Malaga airport on a lovely sunny afternoon and were then transferred to the beautiful hotel in Loja, a short distance away. We were also accompanied by the lucky competition winner, Hristo.

That evening we were given a presentation by Yosuke Hasegawa (the overall project leader), and Teofilo Plaza (the design project leader). We also saw for the first time, the VFR "in the flesh" together with some of the accessories including the touring panniers. The euphoria was short lived when we were advised that the weather forecast for the following day was rain. I guess that the weather is one thing Honda has no control over. I had looked at the forecast before leaving the UK and took my waterproofs, just in case. Why is it that you don't feel any better when you are told that the weather has been brilliant up until that time? We were then told that the roads were slippery even when dry due to the surface dressing being worn but would be treacherous when wet. We were asked to ride carefully as they only had limited spares and several days to go.

Just to make us Brits feel at home and as promised, the next day was miserable and wet. Our steeds were waiting, all highly polished and ready to go. We set off in formation on roads that would be challenging even for Torville and Dean. At one point I was following Benjamin of Fast Bikes who had an almighty fishtail. I spoke to him later and he said that he was in sixth gear on a constant throttle yet the back end broke away, nothing to do with the bike but such were the road conditions.

So why am I going on about the appalling weather, is it just to have a moan? Well yes partly but also to say that in those conditions, I really could not get the most out of the bike. Like a thoroughbred race horse, the VFR wanted to show conditions simply did not allow me to explore the full potential of the bike. Not being too daunted and other than a couple of twitches from both the front and the back, I found the bike to be surprisingly stable. I was able to use the torque without any major dramas even when the speed increased. Throughout the day, both the VFR and I placed our trust in each other to get us home safely.

At the first stop, a sea of red Honda shirts appeared from nowhere and washed the bikes. Now I can really get used to that. At the second stop, they realised that they were on a hiding to nothing and left the bikes in a mucky state. Who can blame them!

The roads after lunch were absolutely stunning. I understand the route is regularly used for bike launches and can see why. It is a mountain road that twists and turns. On the left is a sheer drop and on the right is the rock face. So there was no room for mistakes, or indeed loss of grip...and throughout the bike behaved impeccably. Chris Moss was telling me the night before, that on one launch, he smashed into the rock face resulting in a short stay at the local hospital. These thoughts soon disappeared as I was really enjoying the ride.

More importantly what was the all new bike really like:-

**Styling** – I am aware that there has been some criticism but you really need to see it as photos do not do it justice. The front has been designed in a layer style for stability, to maximise air flow to the engine and to keep the riders legs cool on the move. The tank blends into the fairing in a seamless line. Goodness knows how it is removed as I could not see any fixings. It looks futuristic and has a distinctive "X" looks from the front. I was sceptical at first but it is growing on me. I particularly like the hi-vis lights in-built into the wing mirrors which also house the indicators. The back end looks more like a sports bike than a tourer, so forget about any under seat storage. I am also surprised that it doesn't come with a hugger as standard. After a short distance, the back of my legs were filthy, so a pillion legs would be even worse. A front fender would also not go amiss. You have three colours to choose from; Candy Prominence Red; Seal Silver Metallic; and Pearl Sunbeam White. Honda is also launching a VFR clothing range. (Imagine that. Matching Shaun the Sheep outfits. See last month.TB)

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**Engine** – it is definitely a VFR that has been on steroids. The configuration of the engine layout and narrower cylinder heads allows for a slim waist. This brings down the seat height and although it is 815mm, it seems much less. I understand that there is even a slimmer seat to give a little more leg length whilst maintaining the ergonomics of the rider and bike. The standard seat allows my 5'6" height to adequately reach the floor. The engine note is unmistakably a VFR. When going through a tunnel, the group sounded like a squadron of Lancaster bombers, so much so that I had to drop it down a gear to get even more of a thrill. No need to think about an aftermarket can as the standard one does just fine. In traffic at about 2000 revs in 2nd gear, it seemed to bottom out a little and 1st gear was too jittery, so I had to slip the clutch to keep things smooth. The engine is responsive but spin it above 4k and it comes alive all the way to the limiter. It is an engine that is not frightened of being revved. It has plenty of torque and the engine braking was a godsend in the slippery conditions. Torque is 129Nm/8750 whereas the current VFR800 is 80Nm/8750. The Pan is 125Nm/6000. There is no V-Tec as on the 800 model so now you have smooth delivery all the way to the stop. The power is delivered by a throttle by wire system giving precise control.

**Chassis** – Excellent and gives good feedback. Even when things got out of shape, there were no heart stopping moments and the bike simply came back into line as though nothing had happened. Wheelbase is 1545mm; the VFR800 is 1460mm and the Pan is 1490mm, yet the bike deceptively looks smaller. The front suspension has adjustable preload and the rear swingarm has a pro-link rear shock with adjustable rebound damping. I would have liked to have seen an electrically adjustable system operated from a switch on the handlebars, so it could be fine tuned when on the move.

**Pro-Arm Shaft Drive** – The sports shaft works very much like a chain drive. It is direct and does not have any lag. It is a new system and works very well...and of course, easy to maintain.

**Brakes** – Combined linked braking with new six piston callipers at the front and two at the back. I didn't use the front brake except in a straight line and even then, very cautiously. The front brake seemed to have good feel but on that day, discretion was the better part of valour and most was done with the rear brake and engine. The slipper clutch worked well and didn't cause any loss of traction to the rear wheel when changing down.

**Handling** - Steering was precise although not as fast as a full on sports bike but not as slow as my Blackbird. I thought it carried its weight quite well. Kerb weight is 267kg whereas the current VFR800 is 244kg and the Pan is 324kg. Considering the torque comparisons, this isn't bad at all. Reach to the bars was fine unlike the Blackbird where many owners have fitted bar risers. The seat is relatively comfortable and wind protection is adequate at normal speeds but can get a bit blustery when on the move. Honda offers a three position wind deflector to combat this as an accessory, rather than a taller screen. I will mention as well that Honda has developed a Cat1 Thatcham approved alarm that can also be purchased at an extra cost.

**Instrument panel and switch gear** – All as it should be. It has a digital speedometer, an ambient temperature read-out and a very useful gear indicator. The directional indicator switch is below the horn rather than the other way round. I quite liked this as the thumb naturally falls onto it. You can also have heated grips at an additional cost. It apparently heats the fingers more than the palm and has a slimmer grip handle. There is a fuel bar indicator but as usual, it reads full for most of the time and then drops quickly. With only an 18.5L tank capacity, keep an eye on the trip counter!

**Sports-Tourer** – The current VFR800 has a tank capacity of 22L; the Pan has 29L and my Blackbird has 24L. Why has Honda put such a small tank range on a bike that is supposed to be a tourer? The fuel consumption realistically is about 38/39mpg which I would surmise with a pillion and full luggage will give a range of about 150miles...not enough for a tourer, in my opinion. Indeed, one rider who took a slight detour ran out of fuel and had to be rescued. This brings me onto the luggage. The designers have concentrated on maintaining aerodynamics and stability. Even the back rack has a design called a "Yodo". The plate moves horizontally by a few millimetres, so when the bike corners, the plate moves and then follows the pitch of the bike thus spreading the weight when cornering. The panniers are easy to fit using integral locating points on the bike, so when removed, there is no racking which can detract from the sports looks of the bike.

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The VFR panniers and top-box gives a combined luggage capacity of 89L (panniers 29L, top-box 31L) whereas my Blackbird has 124L; a difference of 35L which can make all the difference when touring, not to mention carrying a tent and other camping equipment. The VFR will have the option of a tank-bag but there are security issues when leaving the bike for a coffee break. When travelling abroad and going out from the hotel for the day, it is nice to be able to stow the riding gear in the panniers and walk around in comfort. The VFR is capable of long distance travel although with the top-box, the rider and pillion are relatively close together. My wife likes a little more room on the seat and even with a 52L top-box, she has this space. As a sports bike, it is capable of keeping up with most bikes in the same category but it is not a full on sports bike. Can it hack it on the track? I am not sure. Having said that, it is a consummate road bike with good roll-on power giving effortless rideability.

In summary, as with all Sports-Tourers, there is some trade-off and compromise. The VFR1200F is a well built bike that will become a classic of its day. It will, without doubt, have all current VFR owners reaching for their cheque books and is an admirable addition to the VFR range. The current VFR800 V-Tec is to remain in production. I do have two major concerns and that is the tank range and luggage capacity, particularly with two-up. I therefore wonder where this leaves the Blackbird owner who doesn't want to go to a pan. I think it is worth a test ride and you can make your own minds up. It certainly has that grin factor and like a stick of rock, has Honda written all the way through. It is well engineered and the sound that comes from the exhaust is so addictive. Honda has just announced that the VFR1200F will be available at their dealers from Valentine's weekend in February 2010, with a three year warranty at a price of £11,596. The first V4 road going bike was launched in 1982 as the VFR750. To put it simply, as the 6th generation VFR and nearly 30 years on, it carries on the excellent tradition of the VFR lineage and will continue to enthral Honda owners for many years to come.

**John Measures**



### Did You Know?

The first toothbrush was invented in China in 1498, made from hog bristles with a bone handle.

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**Suzuki GS500 (Naked) Excellent Condition  
First Reg. 2003, Only 13500 Miles,  
Full service history, Tax to 30-06-2010, New MOT,  
New GIVI Flow Quality Top Box, New Rear Tyre  
£1200 ONO.**

**Contact Malcolm on 0115 9268235**

## For Sale

Shark Grand Urban Flip Helmet, in white, size small, 10 mths old, worn only 6 times. These cost £240 new.

Sold (without the Autocom Headset) for a reasonable offer. Call John Ritchie on 0115 9551826 or 07901556960.



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## Contributory accident factors: vehicles by vehicle type, Great Britain, 2008

Figures provided by the DfT via Ryan Walker.

Contributory factor attributed to motorcycle	50cc and under		51 -125 cc		126-500cc		Over 500cc		All motorcycles	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Failed to look properly	407	12	714	14	365	15	1,402	18	2,888	15
Loss of control	605	18	892	17	329	13	1,005	13	2,831	15
Failed to judge other person's path or speed	380	11	566	11	259	10	905	12	2,110	11
Careless, reckless or in a hurry	789	24	667	13	127	5	182	2	1,765	9
Poor turn or manoeuvre	316	9	520	10	206	8	636	8	1,678	9
Learner or inexperienced driver/rider	272	8	415	8	185	7	805	10	1,677	9
Travelling too fast for conditions	369	11	513	10	183	7	462	6	1,527	8
Slippery road (due to weather)	183	5	318	6	153	6	587	7	1,241	7
Sudden braking	187	6	288	6	136	5	534	7	1,145	6
Exceeding speed limit	69	2	188	4	121	5	561	7	939	5
Following too close	140	4	208	4	87	4	290	4	725	4
Aggressive driving	71	2	117	2	77	3	323	4	588	3
<b>Total motorcycles involved in accidents</b>	<b>3,336</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,224</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,476</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,845</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,881</b>	<b>100</b>

Includes only accidents where a police officer attended the scene and in which a contributory factor was reported.

Includes only the most frequently reported contributory factors for each engine size category

A vehicle involved in an accident may have more than one contributory factor assigned to it. Therefore columns may not add up to the total.

**Source: Road Accident Statistics, DfT**

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More crazy photos and Jokes.....as always, the Editor and Committee do not intend to cause any offence by any photographs or jokes.....



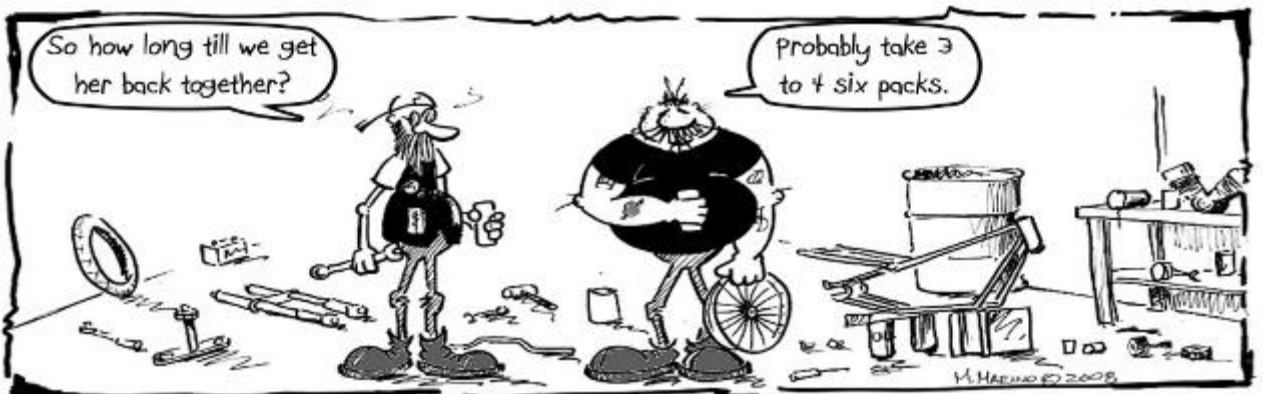
We know who ate all the pies!



Only Bikers understand why dogs love to stick their heads out car windows.



Surrender?  
Me? How?



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## Associate Co-Coordinator by Nick Ireland

Chris Peat	Final Required
Dean Meakin	initial required
Brian Gurnett	initial required
Kirsty Boss	On Hold
Larry O'Toole	On Hold
Naill Moore	On Hold
Rupert Phillips	On Hold
Ken Martin	one 2 one
Martin Foster	one 2 one
Terry Anderson	one 2 one
Adrian Richardson	one 2 one/Block Course
Mark Flint	one 2 one/Block Course
John Anderson	one 2 one/Block Course
Karen Elliott	one 2 one/Block Course
Paul Atkins	one 2 one/Block Course
Roy Peabody	one 2 one/Block Course
Gabriel Rey	one 2 one/Block Course
Steve Austin	one 2 one/Block Course
Richard Jordan	one 2 one/Block Course
Gareth Maslin	one 2 one/Block Course
Steve Bailey	one 2 one/Block Course
Jamie Pendrill	one 2 one/Block Course
Dylan Thorley	one 2 one/Block Course
Mark Habgood	one 2 one/Block Course
Mick Croft	one 2 one/Block Course
Richard Walker	one 2 one/Block Course
Dan Mason	one 2 one/Block Course
Kev Naylor	one 2 one/Block Course
Tony Welch	one 2 one/Block Course
Lindsey Trueman	one 2 one/Block Course



### Firstly the serious stuff:

If you are listed as Test Ready and haven't had confirmation from the IAM that they have received your test application **you most probably haven't sent it in!**

You can either complete one on line or download a form from the IAM site at: [www.iam.org.uk/iammembers/IAM+Test+Booking+Form](http://www.iam.org.uk/iammembers/IAM+Test+Booking+Form)

Those listed as "Initial Required" may well have had it before this edition.

### Test Ready:

I will do my very best to get a refresher sorted for people whose test is imminent and haven't been out for a while but the new associates will take priority. **You need to either ring or email me.**

### Observers:

Please remember to let me know each time you take an associate out.

### Associates:

You must practice between runs, at least **90** miles, that way you should be up to test standard by run 5.

Remember that your mileage from the last training run is noted on your sheet so **GET ON YOUR BIKE...!!**

### Test Passes

Congratulations to **Mick Booth, Dave Cope** and **Sean Leese**

And finally keep busy but most importantly **Keep Safe.**

There is always someone out there who will hurt you.

**Nick Ireland**

**Associate Coordinator and Senior Observer**

**Nick Ireland - Associate Coordinator & Senior Observer**

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# Retford College of Vehicle Technology

Tel: 01777 862886

[www.rettech.co.uk](http://www.rettech.co.uk)

Raffle prizes kindly donated Dave Bryant (Director of Retford College of Vehicle of Technology)

### Retford College of Vehicle Technology.

Who run courses in : Vehicle Fast Fit, Vehicle Repair and Maintenance, Motorcycle Maintenance, Auto Electrical

## Nottingham Advanced Motorcyclists on

# facebook

*Alan Godfrey (Nottinghamshire Fundraiser)*

*Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance*

*Email:- [agodfrey.airamb@btconnect.com](mailto:agodfrey.airamb@btconnect.com)*

*[www.lnaact.org.uk](http://www.lnaact.org.uk)*

## *Air ambulance is also on Facebook*



Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance

### ***This is a quote from Steve Laughton the Chairman of NAM.***

*“I had an interesting conversation the other weekend about not riding like the advanced rider when going for a play! I went to great trouble to explain that if the speed increases that everything else should continue to be done in the order of the 5 point system. After all this was invented by the police to get from A-B as safely and quickly as they can. We have to work within the speed limits but everything else is based on their methods. And if you're speed increases then your observations need to be even sharper and more systematic than they are at 60mph.”*

*Remember this and how true it is.....*

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## **GROUP NIGHTS**

**When:** Last Wednesday of the month,

**Time:** 8:00pm.

**Where:** Black Lion Pub,  
Main Rd, Radcliffe on Trent,  
Nottinghamshire.

**Postcode:**  
NG12 2FD

**GROUP NIGHTS**—The only month we do not meet is December, and our AGM is held in March.

These nights are for meeting new/old members, prospective members and friends alike, We usually have guest speakers (when available) and we hear what is happening the group.

There's time for a general chit chat and we also use the evenings for informal question and answers, as every now and then someone has a burning question or two that may not have a straight forward answer, so we pool our collective minds together and sometimes have a good old fashioned debate.

**The group nights are open to everyone, so please do come along and if you have friends or colleagues who are interested bring them along too!**

**Newsletters:** This and previous newsletters can be viewed and downloaded from our web site [www.nottsam.org.uk](http://www.nottsam.org.uk) - just follow the link for "Magazines".



## **Nottingham Advanced Motorcyclists Clothing**

NEW PRICES—SEE NEXT PAGE  
SOME ITEMS CHEAPER!!!!!!

The clothing comes various colours with the NAM logo on the chest (pictured) and various items are available in sizes that range from XS to 5XL.

**NAM clothing now available in any colour you like..... Even pink!!!**

### **HOW TO GET YOUR CLOTHING**

There is an Order Form on the Yahoo site.  
(Don't forget the colour, size and quantity)

Please contact a committee member or alternatively please e-mail your completed order form to...

[nam.clothing@ntlworld.com](mailto:nam.clothing@ntlworld.com)

**Please make cheques payable to "Nottingham Advanced Motorcyclists."**



# Nottingham Advanced Motorcyclists Committee 2010-2011



**Steve Laughton**  
Chairman



**Paul Thompson**  
Secretary



**Mark Ellis**  
Treasurer



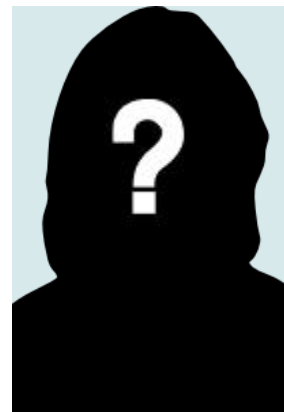
**John Annable**  
Ride Outs



**Nick Ireland**  
Associate Co-ordinator



**Dave Bryant**  
Senior Observer



**Social Events**



**Clothing Rep**



**John Measures**  
Membership Secretary



**Angela Laughton**  
Air Amb Fund Raiser



**Marc Ford**  
General Member



**Tony Bell**  
Newsletter Editor

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