

Gloucestershire Group

Winter
2009/10
Newsletter

Future Events Roundup

Date	Day	Time	Event	See page
10/02/2010	Wednesday	19:30	The Road Safety Partnership - A Talk	page 20
7/03/2010	Sunday	09:00 to 16:00	New motorcycle tutors, class-room session	
21/03/2010	Sunday		Motorcycle tutors (new and existing) - classroom session	
28/03/2010	Sunday		Practical on-the-road session (motorcycle tutors)	
9/05/2010	Sunday	TBA	Slow riding day - Berkeley Power Station	page 5
10/10/2010	Sunday	TBA		

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Welcome & Congratulations

New Car Associates:

- Douglas Birch - Tewkesbury
- Andrew Harvey - Cheltenham
- Darren Bourne - Gloucester
- Ashley Young
- Bourton-On-The-Water
- David Whelan - Winchcombe
- Simon Wardle - Charfield

Car Test/Retest Passes:

- Nigel Potter
tutored by Janty Jones
- Ron Keasley
- Simon Hurley
tutored by Richard Dixon

Advanced Car Qualifications:

- Nigel Potter
approved RoADAR tutor

New Motorcycle Associates:

- Clinton King - Tewkesbury
- Lyn Clarke - Swindon Village
- Gordon Smith - Rodborough
- Graham Shaw - Maugersbury

Motorcycle Test/Retest Passes:

- Paul Courtney
tutored by Dave Brazener
- Paul Sullivan
- Roy Harding

- Steve Williams
tutored by Dave Brazener
- Bill Carter

Advanced Motorcycle Qualifications:

- Paul Molyneaux
Motorcycle Diploma Retest

Chair's Report

by Lorraine Williams

Welcome to the group newsletter for Winter 2009/10. I'm not sure where 2009 has gone but it's been rather too quickly for my liking. In fact, the past three years have flown by and I'm facing a car retest in the far too near future. And I can't believe how many little habits have crept back in. It just goes to show how valuable it is to keep yourself focused on advanced driving and biking so you don't get caught out.

We're hoping to have a couple of talks lined up for members early in 2010 - one from the Road Safety Partnership and one involving an examiner to talk about tutoring. I hope members will come along and support both of these. On page 14 are some notes about the successful and enjoyable group Christmas meal, ably arranged by Mr. Brazener into what has become a popular annual event.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find a short paragraph (and perhaps some photos) of how it all went. There's also a fun crossword (page 13) for those of you who want to pit your wits over a cup of coffee. If it goes down well, perhaps another one will appear in a future edition.

Or maybe one of you will contribute something for the rest of the group to enjoy. That goes for any articles you come across that you think the group would benefit or enjoy reading. All of you are very welcome and encouraged to contribute items, thoughts or comments.

Welcome to all new members and congratulations to those who've successfully passed a test or retest. It's what we're all about. Hope you enjoyed your Christmas and New Year celebrations. 🍷

Newsletter Editor's Notes

by Charles Lyne

Apologies for the Winter Newsletter being so belated. Entirely my fault for being so disorganised over the Christmas period. Like Lorraine, I too have a retest coming up soon, but in my case for the bike, and with far too little practical experience over this cold winter I'm going to need to do a fair bit of revision of both the theory and practice. Roll on those warmer Spring days!

As always there is plenty to read and absorb in this newsletter. I found Chris Gilbert's open letter (page 14) particularly interesting as I have always been taught to steer using push-pull (or pull-push), but have never heard exactly why we should use this method. I tend to be somewhat sceptical of 'dogma', but if given a clearly reasoned argument for doing something in a particular way, I'm much more likely to adopt and keep using that system.

Graham Wilson continues to keep our website up to date with new and interesting links to relevant material appearing regularly, so don't forget to check it out from time to time. And if you have a spare hour or ten to kill, you could try Lorraine's crossword. I reckon she ought to be offering prizes for any successful completions! 🍷

Slow riding event

Tony Dix

On Sunday 25th October 2009, a slow riding skills event was held in the car park of the old Berkeley Labs next to Berkeley Decommissioning Site. This was a new venue which had kindly been agreed to at short notice after British Energy declined our request to use their Gloucester Barnwood car park. This was apparently due to complaints from local residents about use of the car park outside of normal operating hours!





This new venue proved to be an excellent choice as there was much more space in which to set-up the different exercises. The event was held in conjunction with Severn Advanced Motorcyclists (SAM) and Eric Bush deserves a special mention as he brought along his motor home and provided tea and toast during the morning break - what a star!

Despite the odd shower of rain, everyone rose to the challenge of manoeuvring their bikes through the various courses. These consisted of, amongst others, the dreaded snowman, big 'O', 'W' and offset slalom.

All participants had fun and showed a great improvement in both their confidence and abilities throughout the morning. There was even time at the end for the marshals to have a go and show how it should be done!

Feedback from the event was extremely positive and since everyone behaved themselves whilst on site, we are looking to use

this venue again next year to arrange another similar event with some new challenges for anyone wanting to have some fun and improve their slow speed handling and braking skills; so watch out for the announcement and come along and have a go.

Further slow-riding events are planned for the 9th May and the 10th October this year (2010) so if you missed this last one, there's no excuse for getting to another one. 🍵

West Coast America

by Charles Lyne

In the last newsletter I wrote about our very pleasurable driving experiences in New Zealand and briefly mentioned that we also visited the Wild West on our way home.

While our American experiences were nowhere near as extensive as New Zealand, nor as much fun, there was still plenty to see and enjoy, though the driving was boring!



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We flew into Los Angeles for a connecting flight on to San Francisco where we intended to hire a car for a one-way trip up to Seattle.

Coming in to land at L.A. emphasised some of the differences we were about to experience between driving in New Zealand, and driving in America.

The tarmac below my window filled the view and so far as I could see there were at least eleven lanes of traffic, and that was just the northerly direction!

Even the biggest bits of the M25 didn't compare with this. Definitely a new challenge.



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In due course we got to San Francisco and found a car hire company with a car that they didn't mind us leaving at Seattle, albeit a rather larger model (hence thirstier) than we'd intended - sorry planet, we really don't make a habit of flying and driving gas-guzzlers!

We found the car without too much difficulty in the car park, and figured out how to start it and where all the important controls were, how to adjust the mirrors, etc. So once I was confident I could control the beast I selected reverse to get out of the parking bay it was in and went to release the handbrake.

Problem one, no obvious handbrake! But it was clearly on as the car was reluctant to move. I think it took me a good five minutes to discover how it worked (set with a foot pedal and released with a hand lever).

Eventually we got out of the multi-storey park and straight into San Francisco's rush-hour traffic. Fortunately, we'd invested in a rented sat-nav to go with the car, so that eased the navigation problems and all I needed to worry about was the wholly different driving style, driving on the wrong side (both the car & the road), trams/trolley buses, different signs, different priorities and a host of other issues.

Somehow or other we got onto an interesting hill typical of those beloved by film directors for car chases, where the significant gradient is punctuated every block by a crossroads with level tarmac.



As far as I could see, the only road users with priority at these crossroads were pedestrians, but as to whether the up/down traffic had priority over the cross-wise traffic was complete guesswork. Fortunately, I didn't hit anyone in these early minutes of discovery.

In due course the sat-nav helped us to get to one of the most famous landmarks in the Bay area, the spectacular Golden Gate Bridge:





Then we headed off north, initially to find a motel for the night, and the following day further north still, heading for Klamath Falls, a logging town in volcano country. With the dashboard display telling us it was 101°F (38.3°C) outside, we were very grateful for the up-market Ford we had with good air conditioning.



By and large, the various motels we tried gave us more or less what we were prepared to pay for: the more expensive ones had a pool, a restaurant for breakfast and nice gardens; the really cheap ones offered a stand-up buffet in the foyer for breakfast and basic (but always clean) rooms.



Leaving Novato just north of SF was where the driving started to get boring, mile after mile of moderately straight freeway and relatively light traffic. There seemed to be no good reason not to set the cruise control, probably like the majority of the rest of the traffic moving north at much the same speed, and enjoy the views.



The roads were, of course, in excellent condition and it was always easy to find a little town or rest area with shade, refreshments and 'facilities' to break the monotony. The rest areas in particular, would provide a welcome break from the monotony, set well back from the road so that the traffic noise was less obtrusive, and generally clean and well kept, much better than most UK lay-bys.



There didn't (on our route at least) seem to be any equivalent to our motorway service stations, but any size town would always have a good choice of eating, drinking and familiar name fuel stations.

In due course we got to Klamath Falls where Barbara's great Uncle Charlie had lived for much of his life after emigrating to Canada/USA in 1906. Uncle Charlie was the only one of Barbara's great aunts/uncles she had never met because he'd never returned to England after leaving north Oxfordshire.



After a day of searching museum and county records, and with much help from the very friendly people of Klamath Falls, we located Uncle Charlie's grave together with Alta, his wife, which was very satisfying after our long trip three quarters of the way around the world.

Moving on north towards Seattle, we couldn't miss the major tourist attraction in the area: Crater Lake. A massive lake about five by six miles in size, it was formed in the basin created when Mt. Mazama blew apart during a volcanic eruption in about 5,700 BC.

At nearly 2,000 feet deep in places, it's the deepest lake in the USA. The rim of the basin forms a natural viewing platform for this spectacular geology, and a road has been built through the difficult terrain right around it.

Because of the height of the caldera's rim at 7-8,000 feet, snow is heavy in the winter and the quantity of snow is such that it rarely melts completely in the summer.

So it was with some surprise that we drove up the twisting mountain roads in bright sunshine and with air temperatures that still warranted the air conditioning and found deep snow either side of the road:



Further up still we found that the majority of the Rim Drive was closed due to the snow, even though it was nearly June. Fortunately though, enough snow had been cleared around Rim Village to give access to the car parks, shop/café and viewing areas.





Apart from the impressive vistas of the lake, the body of water itself is spectacularly blue. This is largely because it is not fed by any rivers or streams, just snow and rain, so it has relatively few dissolved minerals or man-made pollution. The clarity of the water is typically 100 feet or more, unusually good for any inland lake.



Eventually we had to tear ourselves away and head north again. But due to the Rim Drive still being blocked by snow (see above), we had no option but to drive about 15 miles south again to pick Interstate 97.

This did mean that we'd again pass through the tiny settlement of Fort Klamath with its eclectic and very friendly café. We'd stopped there on the way up for a coffee and discovered a ceiling covered with about 1,000 caps and hats belonging to customers from all over the world. Having bought myself a new cap at Rim Village, I followed protocol and politely removed my old cap, whereupon it was swapped for two cups of coffee and a very pleasant chat with the proprietor.

Once back on the interstates, the driving returned to the boring. An overnight stay in Eugene left us about one more day's driving to get to the Seattle area.

Our primary destination near Seattle (apart from the airport to fly home) was actually Bainbridge Island, just across the bay from downtown Seattle. Getting there from the south required us to drive over the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. The two suspension bridges that now join the one mile wide body of water replace the infamous Galloping Gertie bridge built in 1940. Its destruction in a moderately gentle wind, when harmonic oscillations built up to such an extent that it fell apart, was filmed and has helped to create safer bridges ever since.

In due course we got to Bremerton and had a day and an evening to visit an old college friend and be shown around Bainbridge Island. Much more interesting roads in this area, very often big and busy, but the smaller ones made the driving far more pleasurable.

And the sat-nav offered its own challenges as well.... while en-route to my friend's place, the system assured us that the best route was up a narrow residential hill. With reservations I followed its advice as far as a cross-roads, but the tiny rutted track it wanted us to take from that point clearly wasn't designed for a freeway cruiser, and even a compact 4x4 jeep may have struggled so it was back to the main road and use a bit of judgement!



The following day we took the Bremerton Car Ferry across the bay to Seattle.

A big, bustling, typical American city. Driving returned to 'challenging' status!

There were undoubtedly many good things to see but the city centre didn't offer the easiest of parking opportunities so we headed out of town for the Aurora Bridge in the Fremont area of Seattle.

It's not exactly world famous but the Aurora Bridge does conceal a rather charming monster! No doubt everyone knows of the Three Billy Goats Gruff, and of course what lives under 'The Bridge'. It is of course a **troll**, and it may well be that most bridges have them, even though they're rarely seen.

Aurora Bridge's troll is not so shy as most though! And it looks somewhat dangerous having grabbed a real VW Beetle off the bridge as a trophy.



And that was more or less where we left our West Coast tour of America. If we went again, I think we'd aim to keep the driving to the more scenic areas and probably fly the greater distances.

Great scenery, nice people, but leave the freeways to the truckers! 🚚



Cars

A topical crossword from Lorraine

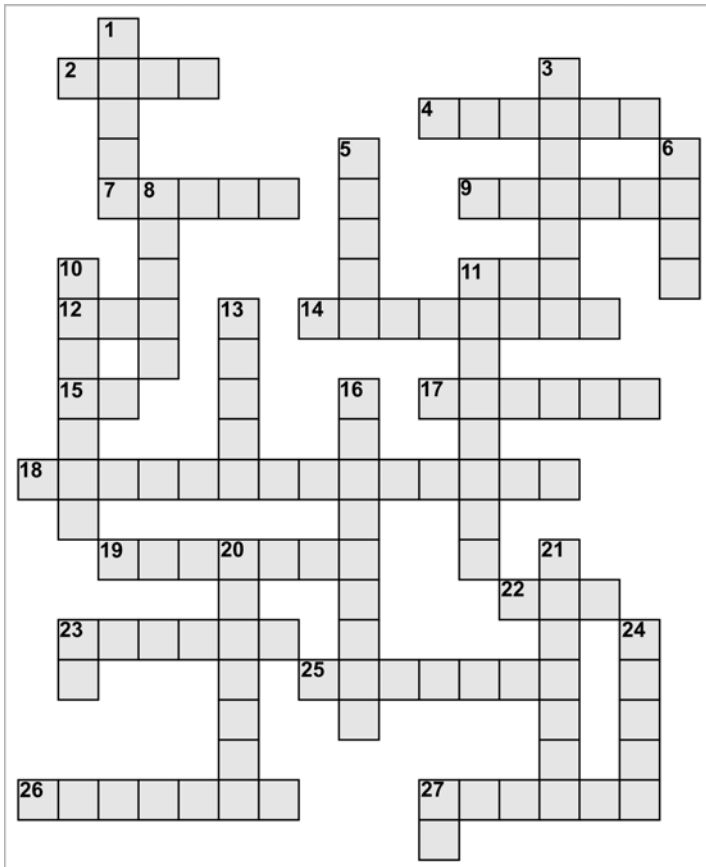
ACROSS

- 2 The mint with a hole
- 4 Shaggy and Thelma's sidekick
- 7 A clever mini
- 9 Creepy Crawlle
- 12 Lonely Italian
- 14 Hates the Roundheads
- 15 IoM
- 17 Roller shoes
- 18 Bubbly amphibian
- 19 Old Master
- 22 Helps with the dishes
- 23 Small boxer
- 25 East German smoker
- 26 The conductor
- 27 Captain's drop

DOWN

- 1 Concentrate
- 3 Hot and sneezy
- 5 Sun, sea and sand
- 6 Orange peel
- 8 Youngster
- 10 Not quite an Olympian
- 11 A sad tweetie
- 13 The future's so bright I gotta wear shades
- 16 Cook's voyage
- 20 Steed and Emma
- 21 She's a bullit
- 23 Constant velocity
- 24 Plonker
- 27 German motorway

Please note that answers could include numerals as well as letters.



Christmas Lunch 2009

Lorraine Williams

On Sunday 6th December, 33 group members/partners met at the Apple Tree, Woodmancote for a very enjoyable Christmas lunch. As always, everyone quickly got into the swing of the occasion, pulling crackers and wearing paper hats, and those joining us for the first time were welcomed by the more seasoned Christmas lunchers.

The pub provided an excellent choice of menu and everyone was soon tucking into their starters, followed by a variety of main courses, traditional turkey for most, through to a vegetarian curry with poppadoms. And those who indulged in the pudding weren't disappointed - fresh cream seemed to accompany every choice.



After the meal, with everyone groaning from the amount of food eaten, what's becoming another annual event - the raffle - was held.

As Del-boy always said 'everyone's a winner - petty du jour'. A variety of gifts from alcohol, chocolate and ladies' smellies, right through

to Team Kawasaki and MotoGP T-shirts were handed out to all who attended (except the one who snuck off early).

All in all, an enjoyable day with lots of laughter and food. It's nice to see the group come together for this and everyone who attended had only good things to say. If you've not been before, watch out for next year. Extra big thanks go to Dave Brazener for organising the event and to Simon 'just call me David Bailey' Ross for all the photos. 🌟



Pull Push Steering IS the best and safest way.

Chris Gilbert -
President - North Staffs IAM Group
President - South Devon RoADAR
www.driving4tomorrow.com

For more than 21 years I have sat back, kept silent, and have not bothered to comment on Sir John Whitmore's views on steering. Now however, I have come to the conclusion that it is time to speak out and redress the balance on steering methods.



I have become increasingly concerned that drivers and ADIs may have been unsettled of late about their steering technique. Some may have adopted hand over hand steering rather than continue with the trusted pull-push method. This in my view would be a very dangerous step to take, given all the evidence I am about to present to you.

My advice to all drivers and DSA Approved Driving Instructors is under no circumstances venture away from pull-push steering no matter how compelling the argument may seem to be. Pull-push is the safest and best way to turn a motor vehicle steering wheel.

My view is based upon my vast, wide ranging experience in the field of driver training covering some 40 years and a million plus instructional miles on the public highway.

The Evidence

Putting my opinion aside for one moment, I want to deal with proven and undeniable facts. I will provide the evidence and refer you to websites where you can research for yourself the facts, enabling you to form your own opinion.

I will set out the facts on two fronts:-

- a. Air bag Deployment Injuries and
- b. Accurate Smooth Safe Steering.

Air bag Deployment.

Sir John says that in an emergency a driver will always cross their hands because it is the quickest way to steer. That is not true! Drivers who use pull push will continue to use their natural steering technique and have no need to change in an emergency. I will come back to that later but the evidence I have uncovered found that many air bag injuries occurred in non emergency situations at speeds as low as 5 mph.

On many of the latest motor cars, mine included, the air bag will deploy even when the vehicle is stationary, such as side impact

or another driver reversing into the front of the vehicle. Air bag injuries to which I refer can be serious hand and arm injuries. This includes fractured wrists, fingers, thumbs, arms and elbows some have been compound fractures. In some cases resulting in amputation. It will be seen that the evidence points to drivers using hand over hand steering or incorrect steering grip.

One example was an American lady who had her thumb almost torn off as a result of her air bag deploying as she was manoeuvring at 5 mph. Having misjudged her turn into her driveway, her car fender (bumper) hit a wooden post; the air bag deployed injuring her thumb.

American Research and Case History

In the United States of America air bags have been in use far longer than in the UK. It is there that most of the research has been conducted and much evidence has been gathered by The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). It is from US websites that I found disturbing evidence, some very surprising. Please have a look at the following sites:

www.nhtsa.gov/cars/rules/rulings/deactnpr.n21.html

www.airbagonoff.com/new_page_17.htm

www.airbagonoff.com/dr_smock's_research.htm

There is a great deal of evidence on websites involving low speed air bag deployment where in our terms the driver has not been steering correctly. The details are extensive and will take much time to digest.

Air Bag Module Cover

So, how have these injuries come about and can they be avoided?

The answer is quite simply 'Yes, they can be avoided by the driver steering correctly'. Correctly means pull-push or shuffle steering as the Americans call it. It appears most American drivers, other than police drivers, cross their hands when steering. Problems arise



when a driver has their hands or arms over the Airbag Module Cover, situated in the centre of the steering wheel, when the airbag deploys. The driver's hands and arms are thrust upwards by the force of the air bag and impact into the driver's approaching face, and can cause dreadful injuries. These injuries are exacerbated the wearing of a watch, ring or bracelet tearing into the driver's face. When the air bag deploys, it deploys at around 210 mph with a force of around 1200lbs. UK and European air bags deploy with less pressure.

Correct Grip and Steering Action

If the driver is holding the steering wheel correctly and not crossing hands (hand over hand steering), the air bag will deploy safely between the driver's arms causing none of the injuries as described previously. If ever there was a case for not crossing hands or steering hand over hand, then this must be it.

Quarter to three, not ten to two!

The American driving experts are advising drivers to hold the steering wheel lower at quarter to 3 so that the arms are well away from the airbag module cover in the event of its deployment. They recommend steering action by sliding the hands up and down each side of the steering wheel, each hand mirroring the other, neither hand passing the 12 or 6 o'clock positions. In other words they advocate pull-push or shuffle steering, not hand over hand. This equally applies to slow speed manoeuvres, such as parking, for reasons made all too clear by the lady and her thumb. I personally do not like the expression 'shuffle steering' as it conjures thoughts of small bites of hand movement and lots of shuffling. That of course is not the case.

A very interesting site, it is a must look at: 'Driver Airbag Hand Injuries; 10 and 2 is Not the Rule'

Here, you will find sound advice about steering grip and shuffle steering.

Looking back to your driver's education, you will be posed the following questions:-

- Did the instructor teach you to hold the steering wheel at the 10 and 2 o'clock positions?
- Were you taught to use hand over hand steering?
- Do you steer your vehicle with one hand on top of the wheel?

I believe the questions are thought provoking.

Hypothetically, if a driver had been taught hand over hand steering or an incorrect steering hold, would this make the instructor culpable in the event of that driver sustaining a serious injury following air bag deployment? I am certain, given the American culture for suing, this would be the case. I just wonder - could that ever happen here in the UK?

To Conclude Airbag Injuries

In their report on airbag injuries the NHTSA state and I quote. 'Passengers and drivers are safer with an airbag than without. Never the less, the current number of deaths and serious injuries attributed to air bag deployment in low speed crashes is disturbing. A large number of arm injuries have been attributed to air bag deployment, both in low and high speed crashes'. You will find that report on the NHTSA site.

It is my opinion that steering hand position and crossing arms over the Air Bag Module Cover are the cause of the vast majority, if not all, of the arm and hand injuries during airbag deployment in the United States. There is no doubt many such incidents occur here in the UK.

Back to Sir John's comment that in an emergency a driver will cross their hands to steer quickly. That may be true of the reactionary driver driving with their eyes on 'dipped' rather than 'main beam'. They suffer with the

'suddenly syndrome' when many things become urgent and they may very well find they have to steer quickly.

The secret of good driving is driving with a high visual horizon, incorporating good vision scans positioning correctly and thereby adjusting road speed so a situation, even a hint of one, does not develop into a full blown emergency. These are the fundamentals upon which Roadcraft was conceived.

Now we must realise how dangerous it is to cross hands on the steering wheel, above all in the event of an emergency. You do not need to cross your hands to steer quickly. Pull-push will always deal with given emergencies and has the added advantage of being able to easily reverse the steering direction without getting the arms tangled up.

My Experience

I taught hundreds of learner drivers between 1964 and 1972 and whilst serving as a police sergeant, class 1 staff instructor, at the Metropolitan Police Motor Driving School Hendon I taught 999 driving, LGV, PCV, skid pan and high performance advanced pursuit driving. In 1991 I became a DSA PCV/LGV Delegated Driving Examiner and as an ADI I have never held a grade lower than 6.

I feel my experience of training to the very highest level on the public highway is far more relevant experience to judge steering method than Sir John's experience on a race track.

A Million Plus Instructional Miles

During my twenty two years at Hendon I travelled over a million instructional miles, all over the country, by day and night, in all weather conditions. Driving and instructing in a selection of motor cars from V8 Rovers to the BMW M3. Under an Act of Parliament I have driven and trained at speeds of more than twice the National Speed Limit. The public road environment is far more hazard-

ous than driving around a track where marshals are employed track side to wave yellow flags in the event of impending danger.



Yet during that time I never had a collision, never caused one, never left the road, never had a lock up or even activated the ABS. I repeat; a million miles of safe, collision free driving, much of it, well above the National Speed Limit. I owe that achievement to Roadcraft and pull-push method of steering.

DSA - Roadcraft

The DSA driving technique is not that dissimilar to Roadcraft driving at speeds up to 70 MPH. Unless there is a commentary being given, and then the wording would give it away. A DSA Examiner would find it very difficult to recognise DSA or Roadcraft driving.

Pull Push - Accurate & Very Safe.

During all my instructional life I have never found pull-push steering wanting in any way whatsoever, both on the public highway or on the skid pan. Sir John has said pull-push is potentially dangerous. Given the working environment that the emergency workers in particular endure, there is no evidence to suggest this to be the case.

Hair Raising Moments

My steering experiences during 22 years of employment at Hendon are opposed to Sir John's view. I admit I did have a number of hair raising experiences travelling at high speed on slippery roads but only when a student deviated from the pull- push method. This often unsettled the balance of the car causing the student to stiffen, grip the wheel tighter and make the situation worse. I found pull-push to be far more accurate and a smoother action than hand over hand steering. It is often said 'if it looks right, it is right. Pull-push looks right. Hand over hand looks very awkward and clumsy.



Sir John's Opportunity

In 1989-93 I was a member of the Home Office Working Party investigating driving techniques for possible changes to and entry into Roadcraft. We opened ourselves up to change and invited all driving experts to have their input.

To give an example: Mr K Bamford, a Physics School Master from a Yorkshire Grammar School wrote in and told us there was no such thing as centrifugal force acting upon a car in a bend. We bowed to his better knowledge and changed Roadcraft.

We invited Sir John Whitmore to Hendon to discuss his views on steering. We gave him the opportunity to convince us hand over hand was better than pull-push. We were open to suggestion, looking to make positive change where necessary, particularly if Sir John's theories were proven correct.

I spent the day with Sir John along with Mr Colin Urqhart the Chief Civilian Instructor at the time. We spent most of the morning discussing Roadcraft and steering. We then gave Sir John the opportunity to demonstrate his steering technique on the skid pan. All I am prepared to say is Sir John was unable to

display his preferred method of steering to any advantage. The skid pan instructor using pull-push had far better control than Sir John. At the start of the day we were open to suggestion, by its end we were left unimpressed, in no way convinced, that hand over hand steering was better or the equal of pull-push. Sir John stated he had no issues with Roadcraft, other than those around steering concepts. His demonstration had only served us to differ.

Police Steering in the United States.

In 1986 I visited the Los Angeles Police Driver Training Facility, then situated at Pomona to compare police driver training methods. There, I met Sergeant William

Smith Jr. Bill told me that due to a high number of police collisions, attributed to hand over hand steering The LAPD had, in 1971, implemented a change of steering method to what he called shuffle steering. It soon became apparent to me that shuffle steering was their name for our pull-push. This change of steering had reduced the number collisions significantly and as a result shuffle steering was implemented throughout California, including The Sheriffs Dept, Highway Patrol and State Troopers.

Bill has now retired from the LAPD and he now works for a company who train police officers in pursuit driving on a simulator. Bill writes pursuit scenarios and also travels throughout the whole of the U.S. training police drivers. I decided a few days ago to contact Bill to ask him what was happening now in the US with regards to pull-push or shuffle steering. Here is his reply.

'Hi Chris, LAPD was teaching shuffle steering when I took over the Unit in 1971. All academies in California (38+) teach shuffle steering. In my travels throughout the USA I find all police departments indicate they teach a shuffle or pull push as you call it. It is almost nationwide. We now realise how dangerous it is to cross hands on the steering wheel, even in an emergency.'

Bill also said he would be quite happy to travel to the UK to discuss steering with Sir John, at Sir John's expense of course.

Conclusion

I believe I have proven the case for pull-push steering even without consideration to the air bag problem. I also believe there is overwhelming evidence from the US that at low speeds and even in non urgent situations, air bag deployment when the arms are over the Airbag Module Cover can have serious or even fatal consequences. I think the case for pull-push is even stronger than previously, but I am not surprised by that.



I additionally feel, given all this undeniable evidence, ADIs MUST always teach pull push steering, and never allow a pupil to steer hand over hand under any circumstances. Consideration must also be given to implementing a change from 10-2 to a quarter to three (dependent upon the specific car's steering wheel configuration), thus preventing arms being positioned over the Air Bag Module Cover.

Under Health and Safety, an ADI can then never be accused of teaching unsafe steering practices and resulting injuries will be minimal if not wholly prevented. 🌟

Why reduce the speed limit to 50mph on rural roads?

forwarded by Nigel Murray
from the
Advanced Driving UK website¹

Advanced-Driving.co.uk - the UK's most popular website for safe road driving, condemns the recent Government guidance to Councils to reduce the speed limit on many rural roads to 50mph.

Why? Because it's not roads that are dangerous but poorly trained drivers. Lowering speed limits is an easy but ill-conceived and ultimately ineffective solution to tackling casualties. The wrong thinking also has no end. Why 50mph? Why not 40mph, or even 30mph?

The authorities know that most casualties occur below the posted speed limit on a given road. Trying to reduce casualties with speed

limits alone would, therefore, need them to be set and rigidly enforced at levels that interfere with reasonable mobility.

Official figures also show that 'exceeding the speed limit' is reported by the Police as a contributing factor in only 7% of accidents for drivers aged 17-19, and less than 2% for drivers aged over 25 who form the majority of road-users. Declaring more of our safe driving to be illegal is a weak and unthinking step for genuine road safety.

There is considerable concern over the ongoing proliferation of the Speed Kills campaign. This policy is continuing to create a population of drivers who do not know how to determine what a safe speed is for a given road or situation.

For more than a decade, Speed Kills has been teaching people, including millions of new drivers, that just keeping to the speed limit will keep them safe. This is a dangerous form of 'zombie' driving, meaning people focus much more on their speedometer as an indicator for safety, rather than the real hazards going on around them.

Advanced-Driving.co.uk is passionate about good safe driving, and believes that setting speed limits too low works against safety. It causes frustration in the average, responsible driver and focuses the driver's mind on an arbitrary number (the limit) rather than encouraging good judgement of the speed which is safe for the conditions.

Sometimes even 30mph can be too fast for a rural road, whereas 60mph may be appropriate if the conditions are right for that road. Safety will always depend more on the circumstances than the posted limit.

The Government should be providing better driver training to stop the decline in driving ability. There are simple and teachable skills that would make drivers more aware of risk, give better control of hazards and improve

1. <http://www.advanced-driving.co.uk> is a website set-up in 2004 dedicated to Advanced Driving and promoting education to new and younger drivers. The site received over 1.8 million visitors during 2009 interested in further driver training, information on advanced driving, the advanced test, skills and techniques and counts among its members many highly-trained and experienced drivers from the emergency services, the advanced driving instruction field and civilian advanced driving organisations.



the ability to select a correct and safe speed, yet these skills are not being taught.

It is also not only 'young drivers' who are let down by their training and the over-emphasis on speed. Crash figures show that ALL 'new drivers' irrespective of age have high crash rates - until they start to overcome for themselves the shortcomings in what they have been taught. Clearly, new drivers improve with experience, but this should not excuse inadequate training for learner drivers from day one.

Advanced-Driving.co.uk calls on the Government to abandon the simplistic and distracting focus on 'speed', and use the next decade to concentrate on tackling the fundamental failures in driver training to really improve road safety in the UK. 🌟

Your Last Newsletter?

Richard Dixon

- Membership Secretary

If you haven't paid your subscription, due in June (those who joined from January 2009 will continue to next June) this will be your last newsletter. A cheque for £10, payable to 'RoSPA ADAR Glos Group', should be rushed to The Treasurer at:

The Treasurer, Conifers, Long Newton, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, GL8 8RH

If you are not sure whether or not you have paid, please check with our treasurer, Lawrence Moss who can be contacted on 01666 503262 email:

treasurer@glos-roadar.org.uk

The Road Safety Partnership - A Talk

from Richard Dixon

10 February 2010

A reminder about this talk which has been arranged for the 10th February at the Civil Service Sports and Social Club, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham, GL51 9SL.

It will be given by Garry Handley from the County Council Road Safety Department, on behalf of the Road Safety Partnership. Garry will be presenting the very latest driving training service for Gloucestershire - The Speed Awareness Course.

Start time is 7:30pm for a 7:45pm start. Please show your support for this event and come along to find out about the RSP and how its work benefits you and your safety on the road. As always, refreshments will be available. 🌟

Sun, Sea, Bikes and Beaches.

Gary Cook - October 4th.

We departed Seven Springs at 9.30am, bright sunny day, on the A435 to Cirencester collecting our editor along the way. Headed towards Chippenham A429, stopped at the Little Chef for coffee/chat/loos.

A350 to Shaftesbury, gathered the group before entering Shaftesbury so that we enjoined the 'W' together which starts the very scenic B3081. We stopped at the nostalgic Compton Abbas Aerodrome to look at the old biplanes coming in for lunch, also the classic motorcycles in the car park, comfort break really. On to the B3081, more views of Dorset, we stopped for fuel as we entered Verwood.

After a brief about the next part of the journey, we headed into Ringwood, finding the B3347 towards Christchurch, then using A35 we headed into our lunch stop of Mudeford Quay, cafe/pub & wet-fish shop.



We enjoyed various choices on the menu while looking onto the busy harbour with a backdrop of The Needles, Isle of Wight.

Started the return home into the New Forest briefly using the A35 Lyndhurst road, turning on to a single track through the lovely autumn coloured woods.

Burley Street appeared, so did queuing traffic trying to get past an array of animals in the road (New Forest ponies, donkeys, sheep & pigs!). On to the busy A31 for three miles before gathering the group, so that we could enter the single track to the Rufus Stone, up across the bracken plains of the New Forest towards the A36 into Salisbury.

A quiet ring road quickly assisted us in finding the A338 north to a darkening Tidworth, the café now closed, we use Subway, for coffee and their loo. Saying our goodbyes we head in different directions after Marlborough. Some of us enjoying the 'back road' from Marlborough to Cirencester.

My thanks go to Ann & Phil as back marker, also to all the attendees for the splendid day we all enjoyed together. 🌟

Riding Tips - Pillion

forwarded by Dave Brazener
from the California Superbike School

When you take a pillion passenger on the back of your bike then you need to bear in mind one key word - *smooth*.

When you turn the bike into the corner, don't try and pitch it onto your knee in the blink of an eye as you may find your pillion grabbing you so hard it hurts! Make your turn-in smooth.

Getting started on the throttle smoother and more progressively, the easier the roll on the better it will be for the pillion. If you pin it (get aggressive with the throttle), expect your pillion to lurch backwards putting more weight behind the rear wheel spindle and making the front end of the bike feel light and "loose" in the corner. Of course, if you do this on the straight then you will wheelie!

When you are braking apply pressure to the lever smoother and earlier than normal. The more warning your pillion has the better they can brace themselves against the forthcoming forces and prevent you having to lock your arms solid to hold them back as they try and climb over your shoulders when the forks compress with the additional weight transfer. Smoother braking also stops your pillion from smashing into the back of your crash helmet.

There is nothing worse for your pillion than you riding like a complete idiot, thinking you are going fast whilst your pillion is being thrown about all over the place. It can make your bike seriously unstable. If it's the first time for the pillion then slow it all down. Ride well within yourself and agree with the pillion on a couple of signals to keep the speed manageable for them.



For example, a squeeze on the left arm could mean slow down a little. A tap on the right leg means you can up the pace a little more. The same goes for you and an experienced pillion. If you get your doors blown off by another rider and you want to play tap the pillion on the left knee to let them know you are going to up the game. But be prepared for and respect a sudden squeeze on the left arm from your pillion who isn't quite so keen for you to prove a point.

But above all else - Be *smooth* with your control actions:

- Turning
- Accelerating
- Braking
- Changing gears

But that's not the whole deal is it? You also need the pillion to do some work too, so pillions, this next bit is for you.

If a rider refers to you as a sack of spuds take it from me that that is one of the best compliments you can get as a passenger on a bike. It rates as highly as "I didn't know he/she was there".

Your job as a pillion is to give the rider and the bike as little additional work to do as possible. The extra weight (you), which is slung up high and behind the rear wheel spindle will cause the bike to feel very different for the rider and the more unstable you are the harder it will be for the rider to keep everything smooth and under control, i.e. stable.

Some bikes are more suitable for a pillion, most modern sports bike are not really ideal because:

- The foot pegs are too high and close to the seat.
- The seat is too narrow and too far back.
- There are no grab rails

All three of these things make it very difficult for you, the pillion, to keep yourself secure and locked in place under cornering, acceleration and braking.

On older bikes and non sports bikes a grab rail does help and the rear seat was an integral part of the same seat and therefore you could grab hold of the rider more easily or use the grab rail more easily.

On a sports bike the simple act of trying to hold the rider is no easy task. You have to lean a long way forward and you end up looking like a rucksack on their back rather than a person who is out to enjoy the ride.

The key is all about using your inner thigh muscles and where you place your hands. Each time the rider accelerates grip them tightly with your knees. This alone should be enough to stop your legs ending up under their armpits if the rider accelerates too hard. If the rider is really gunning it then one hand on the tailpiece will also help to keep you on board.

Under braking you will also need to grip with those thigh muscles and also place your hands on your knees and lock your arms to brace your upper body against the braking forces. I have seen some passengers who place their hands on the fuel tank to brace. There is nothing wrong with this other than it makes the rider feel a little nervous as you are close to the groin and your arms are under the rider's armpits reducing the control they have over the handlebars.

Finally, gripping with the knees helps you to keep in line with the bike and rider when you go around a corner. Remember, you will not fall off the inside just because the bike is leaning, centrifugal force will push you into the seat and keep you aboard. Sitting up in the turn makes the bike run wide and can make the rider very angry/nervous/run wide/crash! ☆

Potholes?

Report them to the council here:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8611>



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Keep warm & smart

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The group now has a range of very good quality 'T' shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces for sale to members. All have a smart (but discreet) contrasting RoADAR logo with our URL (internet address) underneath.

The logo on the black garments is in gold, or black on the light grey garments.

The prices are:

Grey T-Shirts	£10.00
Grey Polos	£12.00
Black Sweatshirts	£15.00
Black Fleeces	£17.50

They are available in small, medium, large, XL and XXL.

If you're interested, please contact Phil Baker, our clothing coordinator (motorcycle section) see page 28 (back page). 

The 'T' shirt (with optional large logo):



The sweatshirt:



The polo shirt



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Medical Considerations for Driving

by Charles Lyne

Janty Jones recently sent me a PDF document from the DVLA (via Shire Hall) entitled "At a glance Guide to the current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive". It's a comprehensive 54 page document aimed at medical practitioners, but intelligible to a lay person if knowledgeable about a particular condition that might affect oneself or a close relative.

If you have any query about whether or not a particular medical condition, then this should provide an answer in most cases (though it's not necessarily the first place to look). If this of interest, it can be downloaded from the DVLA website at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/medical/ata glance.aspx>

For more general queries about medical fitness to drive, the following page is a better starting point:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/medical.aspx> 

On Becoming a Tutor

by Janty Jones/Andy Curtis

Our successful group is fast out-growing the number of tutors needed to keep up with the number of new associates we're getting, as well as checking existing members for re-tests. If you're a full member of the group, have passed the car test at silver or gold, have good people skills, and are keen to promote safe driving, that's pretty much the requirement to be a tutor.

The following is an outline of the practical assessment of approved tutor candidates:

Stage 1 A refresher drive by the candidate with an advanced tutor, to re-assess level of ability; still at silver or gold level. A written self-assessment provided by the Candidate after the drive to assess their level of self awareness and to gauge how well they had listened to the verbal debriefs.

Stage 2 The candidate to observe for an existing approved tutor (kind volunteer). The route to be determined by the advanced tutor who will sit in the back of the vehicle and also observe the volunteer driver. At the end of the drive the candidate will be required to write an assessment of the driver and submit it to the advanced tutor for comparison. Feedback will be constructive.


Stage 3 The candidate will be tasked with a particular subject on which to give a short teaching session the advanced tutor at a pre-determined level, e.g. to a new associate or to someone just about to take their test. The candidate will be given two or three days notice to prepare the topic. This should include theory and techniques plus appropriate knowledge of the Highway Code and Roadcraft for the topic allocated.

Teaching methods and techniques are entirely down to the candidate. This may be in a stationary vehicle. The candidate may be asked to give a short instructional drive illustrating the topic.

Stage 4 It is hoped that each candidate will be able to be allocated their own new associate for this stage, when the fun can begin. The advanced tutors may sit in on some drives if it is deemed appropriate.

Stage 5 The car tutor will start tutoring, establish a relationship with his/her associate and refer back to his/her advanced tutor as a back seat driver, comfort zone and therefore maintain a standard of tutoring for the group.

This last stage is not required before a new tutor can start tutoring. It is a precaution available to our local group. It is also available to all existing tutors who may have ongoing questions.

If you're interested, please contact Lorraine Williams in the first instance. 

The Committee:

(Click on underlined names to send e-mail)

Chair:

[Lorraine Williams](#) . . . 01242 514694

Secretary:

[Nigel Potter](#) 01905 350403

Treasurer:

[Lawrence Moss](#) . . . 01666 503262

Membership Secretary:

[Richard Dixon](#) 01452 547263

Newsletter Editor:

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Car Section (vacant):

[Lorraine Williams](#) . . . 01242 514694

Motorcycle Section:

[Geoff Brown](#) 07989 493879

Training Officer (vacant):

Police Liaison:

[Simon Ross](#)

Support Committee:

[Andrew Parker](#) 01242 673183

[Phil Baker](#). 01452 421559

The committee members work on behalf of the whole group. They are always pleased to receive your comments and ideas on any subject. Please give your views (complimentary or otherwise) to any committee member and they will be relayed to, and discussed by, the relevant people.

The newsletter editor is always pleased to consider any articles for publication, which may be of interest to the group. Most document formats can be handled, and email is usually the easiest and quickest way of sending text (and photos). If using a document editing program such as Microsoft Word, please do not embed digital photos, but send them separately, preferably as an exact copy of the camera original without any reduction in resolution (as sometimes offered by email programs). Closing dates for items for publication are the end of the month prior to publication, i.e. end of February, May, August & November.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, the committee, the RoADAR Gloucestershire Group, or RoSPA. Neither the editor, the group or RoSPA accept any legal responsibility for any of the contents published.

Group website: www.glos-roadar.org.uk