



Suffolk Riders



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Chairman's Update



Well another month of wet and windy weekends has passed and I still haven't managed a tutor ride yet this year, but I have been out and about. Many people ask me how I cope with riding in heavy wind. My general response is that I actually quite enjoy it. I think if you are truly relaxed on your bike, and you let the bike take the brunt of the wind, you will

find that the wheels may dance around under you and the bike may stray somewhat from vertical but you don't actually wander far off your line..... A little nudge on one bar or the other may be enough to keep it in check. However – if you're tense in the wind then it's a completely different story. So long as it has good forward momentum, the bike is pretty stable on its own – it's only when you put a rider on it that it may become unstable. Much like riding in a bend or in adverse surface conditions, being relaxed is key to maintaining good smooth control – tenseness, tight grips, rigidity are all traits which will fight against the bike's ability to do the work for you.

It was interesting to read on p94 in April 2020 Ride Magazine (issued in Feb) about John Urry having a day out with Ian Speight – Advanced Rider Training. Much of what was written is aligned with what we do – indeed much can be achieved in a day though I do not believe that giant steps can. In many cases there is so much to cover, so much for the associate to take on board, practice, improve, etc..... but I did enjoy reading the reference to Smoother, Safer, Faster which of course is the crux of our tag-line (Safer, Smoother, Quicker). Number 2 & 3 of his take-aways are also pretty good reminders – maintaining the safety bubble and keeping it smooth. Worth a read if you get the chance.

February Events

GroupNight

was to feature a talk by Darren Wnukoski, from [MCT Suspension](#) but unfortunately, due to a domestic problem, Darren couldn't make it, so Keith Gilbert manfully stepped into the breach and gave us an excellent talk on MCT's history and the move to new premises.

MCT Suspension was born out of Motorcycle Technics, the business started by Darren and Vera Hearn in Bury Street Stowmarket for the servicing, repair and spares for all makes of motorcycles.

On outgrowing the premises in Bury Street the business was moved to the Tomo Business park and during this period Simon and Luke

started as mechanics. It was here that Darren first started suspension set-ups on customers' bikes which were in for servicing.

The second move for Motorcycle Technics was to Station Road, opposite the railway station (now a block of flats). It was here I joined Darren on a part-time basis as a shop assistant. By this time Darren employed 7 staff in full and part-time posts. The suspension side grew quickly and kept Darren employed solely on suspension development.

When developers made Darren an offer for his site he then offered to sell the business to Simon and Luke lock, stock and barrel. The boys then moved into Stowupland and traded as Motorcycle Techniks and MCT Suspension was



MCT's new workshop
Darren and his
Yamaha R1

born. Darren had previous to this bought out the W.P. importers from Louth and all their stock, tooling and computers.

When the bulldozers finally moved in on Station Road Darren had acquired the unit at the Charles Industrial Estate and ask me to join him on a full-time basis. You might call it a labour of love.

The rest is history and the name MCT Suspension is respected by motorcycle magazines and bike forums. No advertising was ever needed as the diary was always full, as it is today at its new home in Wetheringsett.

As an observer, it was intriguing to learn that Darren has kept a record of every bike he has worked on, detailing tests made and results. Also, while working on the

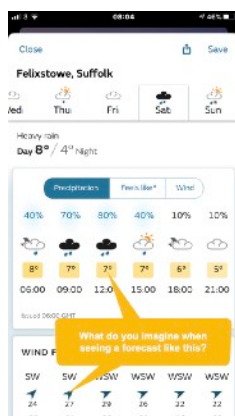


Superbike circuit, a mentor was the six-time champion Shane 'Shakey' Byrne.

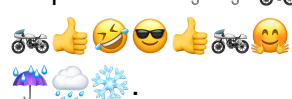
A couple of members – John W's Norton and Colin S's BMW F800 – described their experience with MCT and the improvements they had found with their machines. *KG & Ed.*

Breakfast Run: Andrewsfield - Gt. Dunmow.

When the email went out reminding members of the upcoming Breakfast Run, I duly sent off my notice to Neville G., keen to be on the first run of the year. However, the night before, when checking the Met. Office forecast, it looked similar to this one.



My assumption was heavy rain and strong gusting winds; I'm sure anyone would. Being a fair-weather rider, I dashed off an email asking if Neville was going ahead. What a silly question. I won't repeat the reply, but the emojis encapsulates his response:->



Leaving Felixstowe at about 8:50, no rain but definitely blustery, wondering how many



would turn up, they must have seen the same forecast. Turning into the Bury St. Edmunds Tesco carpark by the petrol station, there were half-a-dozen members standing around chatting. Oh ye of little faith. The route chosen had some lovely twists and bends, passing through chocolate box picture villages, and was reasonably clear apart from a few places with damp leaves. Of course, the satnavs gave different turns, but Neville was our intrepid leader, so we followed. Still no rain, dirty spray splattered the visor, but not enough to try to wipe with a glove.



We traipsed into Andrewsfield Milli-Bar, adjacent to the control-tower, where several families enjoying 'full English', at £6.50 for large - excellent value. Neville's poached egg on toast produced a few comments.



The walls are regaled with pictures USAF memorabilia and there was a flight simulator of

sorts. One picture that caught my imagination had the words "Flak Bait" surrounded by explosions. I wondered if the plane that bore its name was a pathfinder, and whether the crew managed to return to the USA.

While we were indulging in chat and food, through the window we could see the rain coming in great sheets, being blown almost horizontal. Nice and warm inside. So the forecast was right, just the timing out a bit. Perhaps the bikes would be a bit cleaner. I doubt I would have gone if it had been like that at 8:50, but I know Neville would have!



The party broke up about 11:30, the rain had fizzled out, some going home, some going onward for tea in Sudbury.



Arriving home relatively dry, but pretty dirty, I followed Keith G's advice from last month and hosed the bike down and sprayed with FS365. Nice day, thanks Neville.

PS At club night I mentioned to Neville about the crap on my visor. He told me his was perfectly clear because he used a windshield deflector - so I'll give that a go. Ed.



March Events.

Important.

Please note that the latest information on future events can be found on the club website's [Events page](#). You should always check there before attending any event.

Group Training Ride 15th March

Join us on the 15th for our first GTR of 2020, to ride from Beacon Hill lorry park to the [Urban Jungle Café](#), Beccles.

The training team will be there to welcome you at Beacon Hill lorry park, 0930hrs."

It is important for members to click on the blue link -> [The Training Ride Team](#) ASAP, to email if you intend to join the ride.

Please meet, fuelled up by 0930

The waypoints in pdf and a gpx file can be found on the Club's website at **No. 37** on the [Routes & Waypoints page](#) (this is a scrolling page), and the Club's [Calendar Page](#).



Group Night 23rd March.

We have Andy Stroulger from [Essex Firebike](#) to tell us of their activities. Many club members have attended this free 'machine handling' course and



rate it very highly and Karen P wrote a review in the [4th Issue](#) of the newsletter. IMHO this is a must for every Associate aspiring to advance their skill set.



Member's Forum

Glen Mures - what's he up to?

Have you ever done that, meet someone after a number of years, then when the face is before your eyes all the memories come back? That's what I had when I met Glen Mures at the [Whistlestop Café](#) in Woodbridge. The smile, impish comes to mind, was exactly the same. The first time I met Glen was my introductory assessment ride in 2015: he said he could remember the bike, but not the ride (thank goodness). He may have come to a couple of club evenings, but the next, and last, time was a club ride to RAF Scampton to see the [Dambusters Heritage Centre](#) and Guy Gibson's office. I was with another couple of associates and we soon found ourselves at the back of the group doing our very best to keep up – one even gave up!



Glen had kept up his subscription to the club, but seemed to have disappeared from the RoSPA scene. Wondering what he was up to, I decided to try to find out and asked if we could meet. I also knew that he was a good friend of Keith Gilbert so asked Keith to join us.

Back to my story of our first meeting. After that introductory ride, we ended up at my house, and over a cup of tea I recall Glen telling me that he had recently returned to riding after being 'T-boned' in an accident that had hospitalised him – not something you want to hear after returning to a bike

from a 40-year layoff. When his wife, Lucy, came to visit him for the first time in hospital, he asked if the next time she came, would she bring a copy of MCN and a pack of wine gums. That humorous line stuck in my memory ever since; I think I might have given up riding altogether.

By way of recuperation after the accident Glen returned to an old pastime - kayaking; and in 2019 did his first 360° roll at sea! Obviously that was not enough and Glen decided to train for a triathlon, the Olympic Standard version of 1.5km open water swim, a 40km bike ride and a 10km run. His time 3:20min - *I checked the average time is 3:00, amazing*. Between visits to the NHS and work as a driver-instructor. Glen saw an advert to join the police doing the same job for both bikes and cars. He signed up and undertook their training, enabling him to teach to pursuit standard (following suspects and reporting position). Update – he has passed their advanced programme and will go on to teach to that standard. The job, based at Martlesham, and uncertain hours, with the inevitable consequence of not being able to tutor for Suffolk Riders. *But will he come back?*

Over breakfast Keith and Glen were reminiscing about the beginnings of what is now Suffolk Riders and I took notes. I found it fascinating. I'm sure there are better qualified members out there who could write a history of Suffolk Riders (*there's a hint there Ray - Ed*), but, in the meantime, here is my potted version of that early period from what I gleaned.

Glen was commuting to Bristol, doing approximately 50k miles/year, he decided that he needed training to help manage his risk on the roads, and Lucy was IAM car-trained in 2002, so he joined IAM as an associate in 2002 and passed at his second attempt: by 2003, training to become a tutor. But there was some dissatisfaction with IAM

with its simple pass/fail and no grade, average riders were equivalent to skilled riders. Along with a few like minded members Glen joined [ROADAR](#) in Bury St. Edmunds. Sometime around 2010-11 there was a decision made to form a separate group, still under the ROADAR umbrella nearer Ipswich and the first meeting was held at Sproughton Wild Man (recently closed) with Ray Spreadbury, Keith Gilbert, Glen, Martin Andrew and Steve Shortis attending. Mike Roberts, a SAM member, created a website with a grant of £500. Ray was the first chairman followed by Glen in 2012. With a further grant from the [Copdock Classic Motorcycle Club](#) of £600 they decided to split from ROADAR. When Glen informed RODAR at their AGM of the decision, there was some animosity with complaints of dirty tricks. The deed was done and the standalone group known as the Suffolk RoSPA Advanced Motorcyclist met at the Limes Hotel in 2012. Recruits were gathered from SAM/IAM and the Copdock Bike Show.

So will Glen return to Suffolk Riders? The impression I had is that he would like to, given some more free time, which might come if he could work part-time. However, he would prefer to keep to the social side of the club, as training is his day job. Keith pressed him on what bike would that be on. Currently on a 2009 Yamaha 660 Ténéré, so the twin would be a welcome upgrade if it can be passed by the finance committee! Methinks there's a little work to do in that regard; in my experience brownie points are not easy to come by - and very quickly lost. *Ed.*



Glen Mures & Keith Gilbert

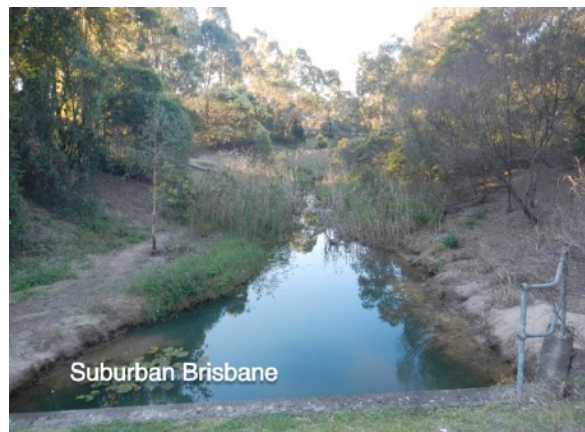
A trip to Australia during 4-18 August 2012 - Mike Anthony

I like riding bikes and a plan evolved in January to fly to Australia from Dubai, hire a BMW and drive about 3500km in a two week period. So this is the story. Actually before I begin, there were several false starts as others, initially keen, dropped out for one reason or another and at one point I had determined to go back to South Africa instead. However an email advertisement put out by Chris Morony (who is an Ozzie and organises the BMW riders in Dubai) found Robin Jones, who organises the BMW riders in Abu Dhabi. We chatted over the phone, met in a pub and decided to go for it. Robin sorted the airfares and the bike hire whilst I dreamt up the route. I saw that there were mountains inland from the coast and there were some wriggly looking roads going east-west so the basic plan was traverse as many of these roads as possible centred to the north and the south of Brisbane.

So we set off on 3 August from terminal 3 in Dubai for a 14 hour flight to Brisbane. Fortunately Robin had pulled some strings and had arranged emergency exit row seats – essential for anyone who is six foot tall or more. Arriving an hour early at dawn on the next day we waited in vain with other passengers for the arrival of the duty free bottles that had been taken from us at the boarding gate. Eventually the airline staff admitted that the bottles had not made the flight and we had to come back tomorrow! (The saga to retrieve a bottle of whiskey from a customs warehouse somewhere in Brisbane is on-going.) The feared processes of the Australian customs that we have seen on the TV series did not happen and we passed through to the outer part of the terminal. There our nostrils were assailed by the smell of bacon so we ordered a sarnie and this set the tone for breakfast for the rest of the trip. (Decent bacon is very hard to come by in the UAE). Next was a taxi to the hotel on the south east side of the city some 23km away. The Garmin Zumo woke up eventually which was just as well as the taxi driver had no clue where to go. The hotel was very good about the early check-in and we got our heads down for 4 hours to try and cope with the sleep deprivation and the 10 hours time difference. The hotel had been deliberately chosen to be near to where we had to pick up the bikes so in the late afternoon we walked round and

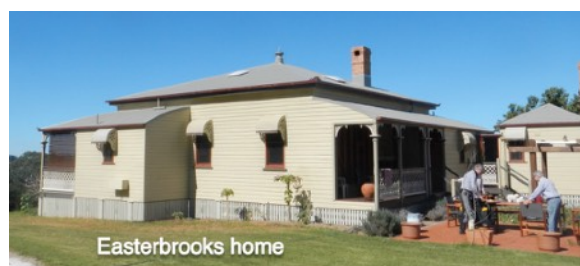
checked them out and spent a pleasant time with Chris and Joe who were issuing the machines to us on behalf of [Bikescape in Sydney](#). Robin hired a R1200GS and I an F800GS.

The next morning we took a taxi to the bikes and loaded up the machines leaving behind our cases. There were very colourful and noisy [lorikeets](#) flying around, also many magpies. The trees and the grasses all looked a little different, this was suburban Brisbane.

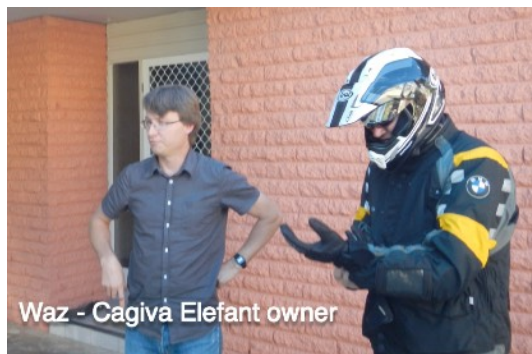


Things that we noticed in the hotel bar were the “pokie” machines (one arm bandits and there was a whole room full of them) and a betting area at the end of the bar with TVs showing dog and horse racing. It seems that the Ozzies put all their vices in one building. Outside was a drive-in bottle store, was a common feature of the trip.

We set off heading south and then to mount Tamborine where there were twisty bits through forests to meet the parents of my project engineer from the Dubai job-site. The Easterbrooks are now retired and live in an old school house that was originally standing in Brisbane but is now re-erected in a country plot on top



of the mountain. Descending the mountain to the east we crossed over the Pacific highway and found Waz in Benowa, who is a journalist but is also a [Cagiva Elephant](#) owner. He is active on the forum for these machines so as we were almost passing his door we looked him up. A pleasant hour or so was spent with this man and his family.



We carried on southwards turning into the countryside again at Robina and then thrashing through forests and farmland until Kyogle and



then finally to Casino. The trip said 285km so we checked into [a hotel](#).

I recorded my first impressions of the F800GS as "handling and braking are superb, engine a bit flat and lacking in torque below 3000rpm". The national speed limit is generally 100kph and in 6th gear the bike was running at 4200rpm so the throttle response was quite perky even in top gear. Changing down to 5th and opening the tap unleashed the 85bhp and warp factor speed was rapidly attained. That night we checked out the [RSM Club](#) and discovered that pints were not available, only schooners which

are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pint. Ozzie beer – well, it is Ozzie beer. They serve it so cold that it burns the back of your throat. But we found that Tooheys Old was a reasonably acceptable drink. The hotel was one of the original buildings all built from timber with a wide veranda at the first floor level outside of the rooms which overlooked the street. Outside was a roundabout and in the centre a war memorial. Robin was



studying this and discovered that it related to those fallen during the Boer war of 1899-1904 which we found surprising.

Next day, after breakfast in a local café was the Bruxner highway heading west generally running through farmland about 130m. Mid-morning we saw a sign for a biker rest house and whilst trying to find this went off down a side road. The rest house was not there although the road looked very interesting. Regretfully we were not insured for off-road work so we turned around and then stumbled on a village: relatively modern houses and roads with kerbs, but with much dilapidation, wrecked cars and aborigines sitting on old sofas watching the world go by. Mmmm!

[Drake](#) was the next stop, a small village on the main highway. The pub next to the road proclaimed that it was biker friendly so we went in for a look. Inside we found a collection of Honda road-race machines and a gold plated Harley Davidson.



There was lots of other weird stuff and we



chatted to the publican. A hillbilly type came in a purchased a pack of beer and he looked so authentic that we just had to have his picture.

To be cont'd: through the 'tablelands'.

View from the pillion. *Maureen Gilbert.*

It was in 1976 that we first ventured to Spain with our daughters then 7 and 9. Not on two wheels though but by train from Romford to Liverpool street, then train from Victoria to Dover, Sealink ferry to Calais train to Paris then onward night train to Irun in Spain where we were picked up by coach for onward journey to San Sebastian in Northern Spain. As Keith worked for British Railways it was a railway arranged holiday and all the participants were railway people. A good holiday and introduction to Spain.

Fast forward 16 years and we were again visiting northern Spain but this time on 2 wheels and it took the same amount of time to get there as it did by train. Overnight from Portsmouth to Le Harve then one night stay at Bellin, the next afternoon we were at Cavadonga on a campsite with friends we were meeting there. We kept to northern



Spain that holiday too but now we have covered almost the whole of Spain, last year being our 16th time.

We do have an affinity with Spain as you may have gathered. The people we have met have always been warm and welcoming and some places we have been back to many times. Our favourite accommodation is [Casa Guilla](#) and we have visited there 9

times. This is in a hill top village, Santa Engracia which is about 10 kms from Tresp. Take a look on the internet you will see many photos and understand why we loved it so much. Sadly Richard and Sandra Loder who owned Casa Guilla retired some time back and



it is now a boutique hotel, completely different to when we stayed so for us the rustic charm has gone. Saying that there are lots of other casas in Spain just as good. A casa is a bed and breakfast not necessarily a hotel and these are the sort of places we like to stop in where the owner greets you, shows you to your room and possibly waits on table at dinner. They usually have a wealth of information about a local area and places to visit. We have lots of favourite places now where we have stayed more than once. One in particular is Paza Paradela at A Pobra de Trives. The owner is Manuel and when we stopped there in October he told us he was thinking of retiring next year but now considered us as friends and there would always be a bed for us so hopefully that won't be our last time of staying there.

So Spain or not Spain. If you are not confident enough to get on that Brittany ferry to either Bilbao or Santander by yourself there are plenty of tour companies to guide you. BUT and here's the but: when you arrive in Spain, just before disembarking, the captain will generally give you the weather forecast and should it be raining in the Pyrenees and that's

where the tour company is taking you – then that's where you go. We have pre-booked our first night's accommodation, especially when with others and we require more than one room, but generally we ride to wherever the weather is and find somewhere to stop. Unlike France Spain has a different culture with their midday siesta and eat later, usually around 8.30 - 9.00pm, so it's not that important to be in your room that early. Of course, if you are in an interesting town or city it's always good to have enough time for sightseeing, especially if you are only staying one night.

How to get there? If you decide to ride through France to get to Spain rather than catching a night ferry getting in early morning, I would estimate at least two nights for a comfortable journey on roads nicer than autoroutes. If you add your ferry crossing plus accommodation, food en route, petrol and wear and tear on the bike cost wise the ferry from Portsmouth is probably a good option. We have tried various days and times but now we favour the 10.30pm Sunday crossing which gets you into Bilbao at around 8.00am on Tuesday giving you a nice long day to get a wherever you have

chosen. The cost of a return crossing with a two berth internal cabin is approximately £520. Cost of meals can be as much or as little as you want to pay. Brittany Ferries have an excellent a la carte restaurant but also a self-service and a bistro.

Spain is a large country with many variances. We have made the mistake in the past by trying to cover too much ground in the time we were there: it's best to slow it down a bit and really see the place. What it does have is magnificent cities such as Salamanca, Toledo, Segovia, Madrid. What it doesn't have is as many pretty little villages like France but there are lots of small hilltop towns that are well worth visiting, also lots of walled towns. Also the roads are quiet and wonderful to ride, even as a pillion.

Should you decide to give it a go and need some advice/guidance I would only be too pleased to show you our photobooks of places we have been and loved, the list is endless.

The photo is of Coca Castle, not far from Salamanca, and well worth a guided tour (in English, we were the only ones on the guided tour).



Coca Castle - near Salamanca

The Last Laugh Word

Thanks to this month's contributors; the usual crew who can be relied on. So why not you? How about letting us know if we are doing the right thing? We'd really love an email telling us what you think – no holds barred – or ask a question. So much better to include what readers want instead of me thinking what you would like; and no doubt I will get stale after a while – guaranteed. I'll make it easy, just click the [link](#) and type away. Next month's editor will be [Chris Austin](#); you can write directly to him or to me and I'll forward it on.

One last item, a [new page](#) has been added to the website to advertise Club Night on the 27th April, when we will be regaled with tales hardship and joy by Gordon G May, entitled 'Overland to Vietnam.' Gordon is a prolific traveller and writer. I'm half-way through his book on the subject; fascinating & eminently readable (I hope to get it signed). Take a [look](#) and tell your friends. If this proves a success then who knows what the Events Group could come up with for dark and wet evenings. *Ed.*