

This Edition is **FREE**

THIRD EDITION 2016

# SCOTTISH BIKER



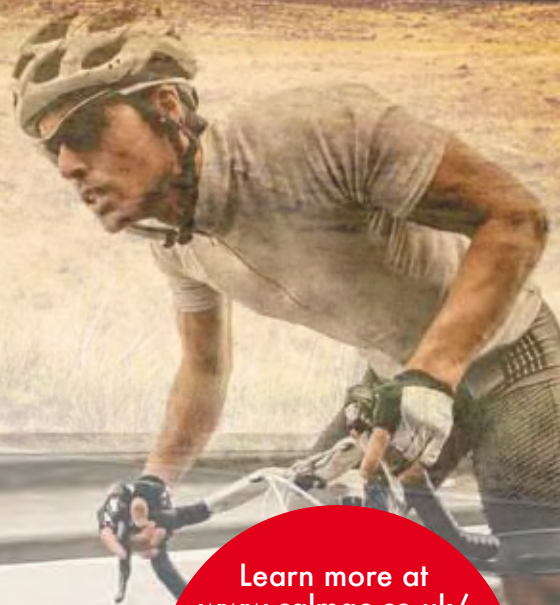
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# CALM ACTIVE

## GET SET... GO

Inject energetic vibes into your life and get outdoors with Caledonian MacBrayne! Scotland's west coast islands and peninsulas offer an abundance of action packed activities and sports allowing you to explore the stunning destinations.



# WELCOME

Welcome to the 3rd Edition of Scottish Biker, things seem to be on the up in the bike world. Bike sales continue to rise and there are loads of new bikes to drool over. And, there is a downward trend overall in road accidents – which has to be good!

I'd like to say a huge thank you to all the dealerships, motorcycle related businesses and advertisers who are supporting Scottish Biker – without your help this publication certainly wouldn't happen.

Please try and support these folks whenever you can, please tell the advertisers that you've seen and read this magazine. We are very lucky that we have a number of forward thinking businesses who can see the 'bigger picture' and want motorcycling to be taken seriously as a recognised means of sustainable transport.

Our thanks (in no particular order) to: Bennetts Insurance, Biker Down, CalMac Ferries, Colin Kay, Digby Brown, Hein Gericke, IAM, Inveraray Inn, June Graham, MotoScotland, Niall McKenzie, North Harbour Motorcycles, Perth Motorcycles, Police Scotland, Ride On Motorcycles, Route 66 Training, Saltire Motorcycles, Strathearn Tyres - Crieff, Victor Devine Motorcycles, West Coast Harley- Davidson, West Safety Camera Unit and to all our other contributors.

*Front Cover image by Stevie Whitelaw, at the 'Rest and Be Thankful' – a Saltire Motorcycles customer "loves the bike and had the best summer ever on it!"*

### Acknowledgements:

Thanks also to all our advertisers, sponsors and contributors who make this publication possible.

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# INTRODUCTION

*Caroline Hay - Road Safety West of Scotland*



On behalf of Road Safety West of Scotland, welcome to the latest edition of Scottish Biker. Now in its third year, Scottish Biker continues to grow from strength to strength.

Without doubt Scotland has gained a reputation as a truly great biking destination. In the West of Scotland, we enjoy a diverse geography from the sweeping and remote routes in Ayrshire to the epic Glen and Coastal Routes of Argyll and Bute, the West of Scotland continues to attract bikers from both near and far.

Arguably one of the great pleasures when riding is the feeling that you are somehow more physically connected to your journey. With this sense of freedom though, comes an acceptance that being so exposed also makes you that bit more vulnerable. As a biker (and still a relatively new one at that) I have come to appreciate that some of our most attractive routes in the West of Scotland are also the most challenging to ride.

We want bikers to come to our part of the world and for their visit to generate memories and experiences which will last a lifetime. Road Safety West of Scotland, through this publication, also aim to highlight the importance of riding responsibly. No matter what our experience level, we should always be prepared to acknowledge that learning is a continual process. After all, our routes are best enjoyed shiny side up!

We hope that you enjoy reading the 2016 edition of Scottish Biker as much as the many contributors have enjoyed pulling it together.

**Caroline Hay**  
Chair of Road Safety West of Scotland Education Training & Publicity Group

# CBT - MY EXPERIENCES

*June Graham*

I seem to be becoming something of a late starter in life – when I was 39 I learnt to ski, and 2 days after my 45th birthday, I was sitting outside 'Ride On Motorcycles' in Hillington, about to embark on my CBT.

To give you a bit of background, I work for Argyll and Bute Council as their Road Safety Officer – a job I thoroughly enjoy mostly because of the people I meet and variety of tasks.

Two years ago I was approached by Ian Stavert, Editor of this mag, with a view to producing a motorcycle publication. Although Argyll and Bute has many, many motorcyclists using our roads each season, I felt that it might be more beneficial to have a cross-boundary approach. After discussions with Colin Kay, Road Safety Officer in North Ayrshire, and Chair of Road Safety West of Scotland at the time, we entered into partnership with Ian and here we are on our 3rd edition.

Let me tell you something about Ian and Colin – they are both experienced bikers, delighted to be involved in this project – and always, and I mean always, happy to offer suggestions on ways that the 3rd member of the team (ie, me) can become more involved. Let's just say that I'd be quite rich if I had £1 for each time CBT has been mentioned – sometimes subtle: "it would be really good to have a non-bikers' perspective", sometimes not: "that company I spoke to have space for a CBT next week"!

The first point of contact at Ride On Motorcycles, a family owned business in their 39th year, is the lovely, chatty Aggie Kruger, who was very keen to put me at my ease. There were supposed to have been 2 other trainees that day but I was quite delighted when they didn't turn up!

Camy (one 'm' only) White, a biker since the age of 19, was my instructor for the day. He sensed my nerves so began by telling me that CBT is aimed at 16 year olds with no experience at all – I can drive and cycle so I already have worthwhile experience. He says it's **compulsory** – in that you have to be here; it's **basic** – in that you have 1 day to learn as much as you can, and that it is **training** – not a test, but constant assessment. The morning will be spent covering equipment and safety, ►





# CBT - MY EXPERIENCES

as well as tackling practical matters like moving off, stopping and other manoeuvres in a coned off area of a car park. If I have control of the bike, we will move onto the road in the afternoon.

The day passes in a flash – it’s very intensive and I am quite impressed by this. I had reservations about only having to have one day’s training before you are able to ride unsupervised but this is the longest lesson I have ever had – on any subject! The mix of theory and practical breaks the day up nicely and Ride On has a handy wee café for lunch. This is busy in the summer and at the weekends – providing a good meeting place for bikers from all across the West.

I struggle most with the controls on the bike – it’s a Honley – constantly talking to myself and reminding myself where everything is. In ski-ing my mantra is usually ‘if I’m not falling, I’m not trying’ – in motorcycling Camy would say it’s going to be ‘if I’m not stalling, I’m not trying’! He found it quite funny that I seemed to want to let the clutch out so quickly each time! I actually enjoyed this part a lot – riding in a straight line, in and out of cones, starting, stopping – it reminds me of my cycling proficiency!

It’s the road bit that posed the most problems. Camy tells me that the DSA stipulate that this part must be 2 hours minimum. We begin in the quieter roads of the

industrial estate. Camy can talk to me through the ear piece in my helmet – it’s just as well that it isn’t 2-way as I am constantly telling myself that I can do this; it’s only 2 hours; look; indicate; clutch; change gear; brake – so much to remember! We stop and I almost freak out when he says that’s 10 minutes up – 10 minutes! I was ready for home but with Ian and Colin in my head, I could not give up!

The afternoon begins to darken and then the rain starts – in hindsight, leaving this until November was not the best idea I’ve ever had. The roads are starting to fill up as Camy pushes me further out of my comfort zone and onto busier roads. I had traffic lights to contend with (yet another stall!), a couple of cars pulling out in front of me, pot holes, some road works and a sneaky wee double roundabout. I had a bit of a mishap turning right into a minor road – there was a bus coming towards me, a car waiting to pull out, and a car behind me. I stall at least twice, making me panic that I am holding everyone up. I overshoot the turn resulting in my bike making contact with the footway. There are pedestrians further along and I am slightly shocked that I could have frightened them. Camy reminds me that our printed Hi-Viz lets everyone know that I am a learner and that most people are happy to give time and space.

We carry on – repeating turns within a built up area and then a chance to get my speed up a bit more - another new skill and more gears to worry about. Camy tells me that my observations and my road position are good and there are times that I actually could say that I was enjoying it. Being from Argyll, I have no idea of where I am – just making the turns that Camy tells me to. At one stage I do recognise where I am – Paisley Road West – at 5pm in rush hour - OMG as my daughter would say!

We get back to Ride On and I am pleased to be finished. The weather, the darkness and the busy rush hour traffic have made the last hour quite intense. I do feel that I improved over the course of the day but that I could also do with more off road practice to get used to the bike. I have never ridden a motorbike until today – and only ever been a pillion passenger once.

Camy signs off my certificate – although he admits that there were a couple of times he thought he might not be! He says that it is all about making the most of the training and learning throughout the day – although the real learning starts from today. I am delighted to have completed my CBT – it was a huge learning curve and completely out of my comfort zone at times. The one-to-one instruction was certainly a bonus – I would have been far too worried about keeping the other two participants back. Camy was hugely encouraging all day and if I am to come back for more lessons I would be keen to have him.

I’m not sure where we go from here – perhaps Ian and Colin will come up with something!



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Discounts available for new IAM Skill for Life, or MOTOScotland Level 2, riders who live in Argyll and Bute. Contact road.safety@argyll-bute.gov.uk

# A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



## Philip James

Thirty years or more away from biking, 63 years old, and just retired after a very stressful work period as a Company Representative, I thought it would be a good idea to rekindle my desire to get back on a motorcycle. Yes, a born again biker!

Having a driving licence with a default Full A gave me the opportunity to consider any displacement size motorcycle on the market, and any type/model. Searching the market for insurance was a breeze using a computer, with various premiums from £600 down to £120.

The choice and reviews of motorcycles in today's market was vast. YouTube, magazines and dealers all giving recommendations. It goes on. In the end, I settled for a Maxi Scooter. 300cc. I suppose not everybody's taste, but it suits me. So, what was it like getting back on the road after 30 years away?

direction didn't see me, and it was a near head-on fatality.

What saved me was anticipation. I think this was a classic SMIDSY - Sorry mate I didn't see you!

Yes, I was still rattled, and it brought home to me a recent quote I saw on the internet... *"The majority of motorcyclist fatalities (70%) took place on rural roads, with motorway accidents accounting for only 1% of motorcyclist fatalities and 2% of serious injuries. 69% of all accidents involving injury to a motorcyclist took place at a junction, the vast majority of accidents involved one other vehicle (70%), with the other vehicle involved most likely (79%) to be a car."*

I felt quite vulnerable to begin with. Car drivers, from a biker's perspective, probably similar to a "Newbie" can be an interesting experience especially on busy motorways, city roads, or the open country roads, anywhere.

Time to open the throttle, or easy does it, nice and slow controlling your balance using the rear brake for a bit of stability. It's all great until something goes a bit wrong. That is where the 30 years away kicks in, and sometimes not the way one expects.

Now I'm 67, and I can only advise anybody, regardless of age and experience who returns to biking; to take the time to contact an IAM registered Motorcycle Group and get the training. That's the key to understanding what the anticipation learning curve is, and keeps you safer on the modern roads today.

Last Summer, I was at 60mph going south from Tarbet down the A82 towards Dumbarton and a car turning right towards Duck Bay from the opposite



## CORNERING AND OVERTAKING

*Neil McLeod, Inspector, Road Policing Training, Police Scotland College – Tulliallan, Kincardine*

Regardless of whether you have been involved in a collision or not, I would be confident to say that most if not all of us have had a near miss; a situation where we know we got away with something.

We teach police motorcyclists to concentrate fully, to constantly view the road ahead and to anticipate the way that traffic situations in front of us can develop. This involves taking account of the road surface and layout and the position and movement of other road users. By doing this allows us to plan and anticipate what will happen ahead of us.

Cornering and overtaking are two key areas of riding that we spend a lot of time on. As you may know we use the System of Motorcycle Control as the basis of all of our instruction.

All of our roads have corners or bends so we need to know how to assess them and how to maximise the views. All of our teaching requires observation and we position the bike to maximise the observation opportunities.

Put simply, on the approach to a right hand bend, stay to the left and vice versa (never be to the offside with oncoming vehicles), however that is only part of the story. It is key to look across the bend; see where the road is going next. Almost always there are clues even when you can't see the actual road. Tree lines, a hillside (which means the road cannot go that way) are just two; the key thing is to think beyond the bend in front of you.

If you try to imagine that at the end of every bend is a straight section of road, even if it is only a few centimetres before the next bend. Aim to have your bike set up for the next bend at that straight; this is why you need to know where the road goes beyond the bend in front. Make all of your position changes smoothly. Where you can see through a series of bends keep your bike as upright as possible, on your own side of the road, and set yourself up for the last bend, the one you can't see through.

These techniques are taught to riders but it is entirely possible that you can learn them yourself through practice and self-appraisal. By thinking beyond the bend in front of you and by getting into position (nearside for right handers and offside or central for left handers) at the start of the straight section before the next bend, you will maximise your observation around the bend.

Much is said about the limit point; the point where the verges appear to meet. This only works if you match your speed to the distance you can see and ensure that you can stop before reaching that point.

Overtaking is another key area. We will undoubtedly catch up with other drivers at some point. The first thing to consider is not to rush to get past. Look at the road ahead, as well as considering the oncoming vehicles, look for hazards to the nearside and offside verges and ask yourself "could a vehicle I can't yet see pull out onto the road?" Be especially careful with offside junctions. Drivers intending to turn left often do not look left until they have emerged onto the road. Criticising such a manoeuvre will be of little comfort to a rider lying on a hospital bed. Do not overtake when there is a junction on the offside unless you can be sure no vehicles will emerge from that junction. The same rule applies to nearside junctions, but most of us are already aware of the dangers of vehicles emerging from nearside junctions without seeing us.

Having decided that you will overtake, that there are no hazards nearside or offside, decide where you are likely to return to your own side of the road. Take account of the speed you are doing, the speed you will attain during the overtake, and the length or number of vehicles you will overtake. Once you have identified this point assess whether you can be sure that you can reach this point before any oncoming vehicles could come into conflict with you. Only when you are sure that the overtake can be completed safely should you carry out the manoeuvre. If there is any doubt, hold back, remain patient.

Riding motorcycles is one of the most enjoyable and thrilling modes of transport. By considering the road layout and other road users, you will be able to enjoy riding for a long time.

## A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

*It's not always car drivers – Lindsay*

I can't remember what the weather conditions were like but I don't remember it being wet. I didn't actually have an accident but I did get a very big fright. I was sitting in the outside lane at a large roundabout waiting to turn right and clearly indicating when another rider came up my outside and rode past me. I had been just about to move away when the guy popped up behind me. Not a place I expected to be overtaken. I may not have been riding for long but I have been driving for years - he was definitely in the wrong.



# MY BIKES, MUD & ME

## Donna Rumbold - Inveraray

Riding pillion is great fun, but not half as exhilarating as riding your own motorbike and making your own adventures – whether it's a run out for an hour, a motor biking weekend with friends or a trip of a lifetime - let's face it every trip out on your motorbike is an adventure...there's always a story.

I have been riding motorbikes for a good number of years now. Prior to this I was a pillion for many years but as time went along, I decided I wanted to take the reins and pass my test. I would like to share my biking journey with you.

I currently ride a BMW F650GS (800cc) and an AJP PR3 (240cc) trail bike. However, when I passed my CBT, I started on a Honda Shadow 125cc cruiser – convinced I needed a bike where I could touch the ground with two flat feet. It was during my direct access lessons and playing on trail bikes that I eventually learned you don't need to get two flat feet down! You just need to understand balance and plan a proper touch down point.

When I passed my CBT, I immediately started riding off road to develop and practice the skills of slow speed. I also wanted to have the confidence to ride safely on slippery surfaces like gravel and mud. From that very first day I was hooked – I can still remember everyone eagerly waiting at my first river crossing for me to fall in.....and sometimes I still do!

From there I completed my big bike test, still riding off-road whenever I could. I also



completed some observed training rides with the IAM and attended a Police Bike Safe course.

Boy, that feeling of riding my big bike up the Rest & Be Thankful for the first time, rolling off the ferry in Holland for a tour of Europe, riding the Grossglockner pass in Austria, off-roading in south Spain, or a trip to the shops - it's true what they say, riding a motorbike is about being in the picture rather than looking at the picture. That feeling of being at one with your motorbike with the ever changing smell of the air, the temperature fluctuations, being completely zoned in to the moment and the ever changing environment – it's just magic.

For me though, off-roading is my passion. Although I love road riding and touring, my off-roading skills continue to keep me safe whilst road riding. With that, my husband and I took the plunge in 2013 and opened an off-road motorbike training centre - the first of its kind in Scotland. Should you wish to learn more about our company and how it could improve your road riding skills please visit [www.motoscotland.com](http://www.motoscotland.com)

*Thanks for reading and I wish you a safe & great 2016 biking season! - Donna Rumbold*

# SAFETY CAMERAS



## The inside thinking

I fully appreciate that speed cameras are a contentious issue and there are some who will regard their use as negative however I would like to take this time to explain the reasons behind safety cameras and what we are able to achieve through their use. It is my hope and aim that by sharing this information it will show that the use of cameras on Scotland's roads is entirely positive.

As you'll know all too well the motorcyclist is one of the most vulnerable road users and in 2014 we saw an increase in the number of motorcyclists who were injured in road crashes. Of those casualties, 44% occurred on rural roads which would suggest this was due to a higher average speed. Road users travelling at an inappropriate speed kills hundreds of people a year in Scotland and drivers and riders who exceed speed limits are involved in more crashes that kill and injure more people, than those who do not exceed the speed limit.

It is for this very reason that speed cameras are an effective tool in making Scotland's roads safer. At this point, I would like to say that cameras are not placed to "catch you out" they are sited where they are because it has been deemed necessary following careful consideration. There are strict criteria to be met for selection of safety camera sites, which include: a personal injury and crash history plus evidence of prevalent speeding and there being no viable alternative road engineering solutions available. Roads authorities and police must also agree that speed enforcement by safety camera is

practical at the location and is likely to be effective in reducing casualties. These rules ensure that cameras are placed where they are likely to have the biggest impact on reducing the amount of casualties on Scotland's roads.

For example, a site within our programme, and also a popular route for motorcyclists, is the A701 St Ann's, Johnstonebridge in Dumfries & Galloway and is subject to a 60 mph speed limit for cars and motorcycles. Prior to the camera site being installed there had been a fatality and several other crashes. However, since implementation of the site, statistics show that from 2013-2015 the average speed has dropped by 17.4% and we are pleased to report that there have been no fatalities and crashes have reduced by up to 83%. These figures give a clear indication that by placing safety cameras at the right locations we can help save lives and prevent crashes.

I hope that by giving an insight into what we do and what is important to us that it shows that speed cameras are there to encourage road users to think about their speed and to deter people from going over the speed limit. We are not there to ruin your day; we are there to keep you and other road users safe.

For more information about safety cameras please visit:

<http://www.transport.gov.scot/road/scottish-safety-camera-programme>

*Enjoy a safe ride! - Safety Cameras Scotland*

# COLIN ALEXANDER

## Police Biker



My motorcycling career started off fairly different to most others in that I am police taught from start to finish. I have only ever ridden a bike using the system of motorcycle control (more about what that means to me later).

I started off, like most others, gaining my CBT qualification however unlike most motorcyclists my CBT was with a police motorcycle instructor. I didn't get into motorcycling until later, not because I was having a mid-life crisis but more a natural progression in my career path.

I completed my direct access, again through the police. This is exactly the same course that any member of the public would sit, albeit with an instructor with different experiences.

Having passed my test, I then went and did what most other people would do and bought a bike. An ultra-reliable Honda CBR 600. Although I am an advanced car driving instructor with the police, I very quickly realised that this bike had rapid acceleration and far quicker than any car I had ever driven. Just as quick as the bikes rapid acceleration, I also realised that although I was experienced driving cars I was a complete novice on bikes. It was really at this point I realised how vulnerable I was and that everything I had been taught, and was teaching, as a car driving instructor really mattered but also how important speed, acceleration and stopping distances are and all link together.

After gaining some general riding experience, I completed a 2-week standard motorcycle course. This taught me how to ride to the system of motorcycle control, but more than that it introduced me to correct positioning and proper machine control. Having completed this course, it then changed the way that I rode my own machine. System riding is not just the way I ride a bike when I'm at work, but the way I ride my bike every day, all the time.

Having developed more experience and practise I then completed a 3-week advanced motorcycle course at the Police Scotland College – Tulliallan. This

3-week course continues from the techniques taught on the standard course, however as the weeks' progress you are taught how to make safe swift progress using the machines full potential. Positioning and identifying actual and potential hazards are drilled into you from the start with more progress added as you improve.

After completion of these courses I still felt vulnerable but more aware of my abilities and confident in making brisk progress.

I was fortunate enough to perform very well and later attended a gruelling 6-week instructors course. This involved various theory exams and presentations as well as a demonstration ride and several assessments involving teaching at basic, standard and advanced levels. It also taught me how to look for and correct mistakes that students make while riding. This ultimately continued to make me a better rider with lots more experience.

After several years I transferred to the Motorcycle Unit in the West of Scotland where I used these skills on a daily basis, not only on patrol, but while making swift progress attending calls which demanded an immediate emergency response. You need to use the skills you have been taught much more on a bike than in a car while attending these sorts of calls. You only have one set of eyes on a bike and can't rely on a colleague in the passenger seat to help you. You need to apply the system of motorcycle control instinctively without thinking about it while you are riding. It must become second nature.

I continued to build on these skills and later qualified as a Security Escort motorcyclist. This gave me different skills when escorting VIPs and other High Risk Persons through busy cities. Again, although using situational awareness and having to continually consider finding routes through traffic for the convoy, ultimately riding the bike resorted back to system riding.

Riding to the system in simple terms effectively means identifying an actual or potential hazard, deciding what to do, changing position, adjusting your speed to the circumstances and making sure you're in the correct gear for the speed and doing this over and over throughout the ride. Riding is tiring and that's why you should keep yourself mentally fit, have the appropriate rest and also stay properly hydrated.

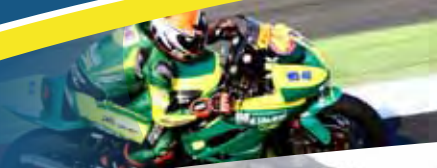
I have been lucky enough to attend several off road motorcycle courses and while they are very worthwhile and give you handling skills that can be transferred to the road they do not change or teach you attitude to safety. Only you can teach yourself that through your own or others experiences. Every time you ride and have a near miss it should be taken as an opportunity to learn and reassess your riding. You should be asking yourself 'What could I have done differently?' Even if it wasn't your fault you should ask yourself 'How could I have avoided that?'

We are at our most dangerous when we believe we know it all and cannot be taught new techniques. I am still learning.

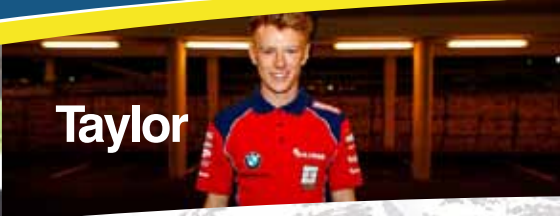


# 5 MINUTES WITH THE MACKENZIE'S

Tarran



Taylor



Niall



<p><b>Which race around the world would you really love to enter?</b></p>	<p>It's a hard one, definitely a race in the World Championship either at WSBK or MotoGP</p>	<p>I'd love to do the Suzuka 8 hour or the Daytona 200. They're both quite iconic and I think they'd be a lot of fun.</p>	<p>Phillip Island Classic event</p>
<p><b>Who was / is your biggest inspiration?</b></p>	<p>My biggest inspiration has got to be Valentino Rossi or Marc Marquez! (Which is funny as those two hate each other!)</p>	<p>Valentino Rossi</p>	<p>No question, my Dad. He hopped on a boat to India as a young engineer with no great plan and then had an incredible 23-year adventure.</p>
<p><b>Do you enjoy road riding?</b></p>	<p>No, I have my CBT licence but I don't ride</p>	<p>Yes, I have my full licence but I don't do enough!</p>	<p>Very much but honestly have never ridden fast, I'd rather take in the scenery especially when it's the West Coast of Scotland</p>
<p><b>Now that the dust has settled, looking back what are your thoughts about the 2015 season? Hi's and lo's.</b></p>	<p>My hi's were probably winning 4 races and especially winning my first at Knockhill! My biggest Lo was crashing out on the very first lap at Cadwell Park which sort of cost me any chance of winning the championship.</p>	<p>The 2015 season has been pretty tough for me, I was plagued with mechanical problems but seeing my brother win a few races this year has been a highlight for me</p>	<p>My highs are when my boys are having fun and staying safe when racing...the bonuses are when they are running up front and also when Vale wins! Lows... Most of Taylor's season!</p>
<p><b>Who in your opinion is the best emerging British talent at the moment?</b></p>	<p>Me of course! – Ha ha, I would say Rory Skinner. He is very young but is already getting podiums in the Moto GP Red Bull Rookies Cup at just 13 years old!</p>	<p>My brother is on his way, as is Rory Skinner.</p>	<p>Young Tarran is up there and Rory Skinner is special.</p>
<p><b>In any class, who's the best of the best?</b></p>	<p>Valentino Rossi</p>	<p>It has to be Valentino Rossi.</p>	<p>100% Valentino Rossi. No one else comes close.</p>
<p><b>Who's the best rider in the family?</b></p>	<p>Me!</p>	<p>By law I'm faster than my younger brother, no little brother is allowed to be faster than their older brother and Dad seems really fast in the 80s and 90's but that's about it. So I guess its me.</p>	<p>The Daddy!</p>

## BACK TO BEING A BEGINNER AGAIN

For a JOGLE to Remember - *Carla McKenzie (with a little help from Paul Blezard).*



In 1980 I was 16 years old. My dad, a Class One police motorcyclist with the Thames Valley Police Force, finally succumbed to my constant pestering to allow me to learn to ride a motorcycle. Ever the copper, there was of course a proviso that I must attend training, so I found myself swiftly dispatched to the local RAC/ACU course. While learning to ride on one of the scheme's Suzuki AP50s, the key elements of road safety were drilled into my rebellious teenage mind along with a comprehensive introduction to motorcycle maintenance. My heart's desire was Yamaha's latest dream machine (a blue RD 200) and I got one on my 17th birthday. Some weeks later, I passed the RAC/ACU test, which, for those who don't remember it, was a lot tougher than the Department of Transport motorcycle test of the time. It was a bit of a family moment as the same RAC/ACU instructors had trained my mother some sixteen years earlier. A few weeks later I passed the traditional 'ride around the block' DoT test and got my full motorcycle licence.

Fast-forward 35 years and I was a beginner all over again. I'd ridden a host of motorcycles in the UK, Europe and the USA, in all weathers, but I'd never done any trail riding and I'd set myself a daunting task: to ride from John O'Groats to Land's End via as many green lanes as possible – a 'JOGLE' with a difference. I had 5 months of practice and training, most of it with local Wiltshire members of the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF), during which I rode 10 different trail bikes and suffered 22 crashes. It was hard!

Then, on July 6th 2015, I set off with 4 companions from the top of Scotland, on the adventure of a lifetime. It was a long and winding 1800 mile ride to Land's End (about twice the mileage of the most direct route by road). My fellow riders were two members of my local TRF, Andrew Byatt and James Higgs, motorcycle journalist Paul Blezard, and Ben Clews of CCM Motorcycles. James, Andrew and I would complete the whole journey while Paul did the opening Scottish and closing West Country sections. Ben left us after

two days, returning to CCM's Lancashire headquarters to complete some repairs on the spare bike.

The purpose of the challenge was to raise money for the Dougie Dalzell Memorial Trust (DDMT) to fund trips for our wounded soldiers to ride Route 66 on the back of Harley-Davidsons in the USA. I had previously taken part in 4 of these journeys. Dougie, a Guards officer, lost his life in Afghanistan in an IED incident on his 27th birthday. He was posthumously awarded the Military Cross.

Five months was not a long time to plan and train for this adventure. With no experience in the world of motorcycle trail riding, I had no idea that access to green lanes would be much more of a challenge in Scotland than in England and Wales due to the different laws. Many people said that it would be virtually impossible to get permission to ride trails in Scotland. Undeterred, I set about using my network of contacts, with which we made two great breakthroughs. Firstly, I'd done a weekend's training with Clive Rumbold of MOTOScotland on the Argyll Estate, near Inveraray and this led to the Daily Record running a feature article in their motoring section and the publicity was a god-send. Secondly, one of Dougie Dalzell's lance corporals heard of my plight, and through the Guards network we were able to gain access to some Scottish estates in the far north. The Right Honourable Patrick Sinclair (better known as Patch), a former London dispatch rider, also opened his estate gates, as well as those of his brother, Lord Thurso. Patch also guided us across the RSPB reserves to Forsinard, a rare treat.

As we left John O'Groats I felt an enormous sense of relief to be finally on my way. The build up period had been very tense indeed. I also made a point of not thinking about any of the negative possibilities. One thing you learn fast in the land of off road riding is to visualise yourself through a problem; there is a heck of a lot of 'mind over matter' in this activity.

Our route through Scotland involved, by necessity, some tarmac riding, but we tried to keep to minor roads as much as possible and some of them were very minor indeed, like the narrow ribbon of tarmac that leads up the Strath of Kildonan to Glen Loth and Lothbeg, on the coast.

- Day One:**  
John O'Groats to Evanton (near Dingwall)
- Day Two:**  
Evanton to Foyers (on Loch Ness)
- Day Three:**  
Foyers to Murthly (north of Perth)
- Day Four:**  
Murthly to Haltwhistle

One of the many highlights of the trip through Scotland was day 3, when we sought out the narrow entrance to General Wade's 18th century military road through the Corrieyairack Pass, which runs between Fort Augustus and Laggan, one of the most incredible motorcycle journeys I have ever had the pleasure of completing. My lack of skills resulted in a couple of 'offs' on this trail – the standard of riding required to get up, over and through all the natural obstacles we encountered, without mishap, requires a long apprenticeship. ▶





Route 66 Tour



Scottish Border

The bruises were soon forgotten as the extraordinary views grabbed my attention.

There were some really tough challenges as we progressed from the Lake District down into Wales and then across the Severn and on into the West Country but after 16 days and 1800 miles we finally arrived at Land's End on July 22nd, having raised over £12,000 for the cause. The relief and feeling of complete elation is hard to convey in words, but I can say this: 35 years on from my first

motorcycle training with the RAC/ACU, I am as passionate about all forms of motorcycles as I ever was, and am proud to have added some basic proficiency in trail riding to my Advanced Riding IAM certificates. I've still got plenty more to learn though!

There is much more, in both words and pictures, about the training for, and the JOGLE journey itself, at

[www.jogler.wordpress.com](http://www.jogler.wordpress.com)

## CATCH UP FROM ALAN GREENHILL

### *IAM Skills for Life* - Prize winner in 2015 Scottish Biker Competition

A trip to The Green Welly led to a copy of this magazine making its way to my house and completing the survey led to the IAM Skills for Life freebie. This was presented and a photo taken just before Christmas last year which allowed me to get ready for the course.



Said preparation plans included 1) grow a beard 2) buy a Hi-Viz vest 3) buy a BMW 4) try and find the clear visor that had come with my crash helmet. Alas the beard was never going to be, my bikes red and visible enough, didn't get a BMW and never found the visor.

The actual course began when I was contacted by the thoroughly pleasant and patient Lindsay Pyall who was to spend a great deal of time following, advising and offering guidance before my actual test.

Any expectations of pottering around in a dull and pedestrian manner were soon put to bed when he took us to some local twisties and encouraged me to 'make progress'. This reassured me that I might actually enjoy this IAM lark.

Thereafter, followed a number of runs with the ever observant Lindsay, who whilst quick to praise my riding, would always have a suggestion or an observation that allowed me to think about and reflect upon how I rode, and to let me incorporate these into my riding.

I used to indicate automatically...now I think 'do I need to?' My positioning for a junction changed. A ride behind Lindsay showed I wasn't using as much of the road as I potentially could on a corner. Right foot down at a standstill took a bit of getting used to after years of covering the back brake but now is instinctive and makes sense. Little things that added together make for an overall difference.

We established a relaxed routine of meeting up, having a quick blether before heading off for the observed run, stopping for some pointers and feedback before the return trip and another recap. Always with the emphasis on actually enjoying being on a bike and the ride as well as of riding well.

The learning continued throughout the rides (I even mastered the fact that the national speed limit sign doesn't mean 'Go Like F\*\*k!!') - town riding, country roads, a bit of motorway and some slow manoeuvres; surprisingly very often in pretty good conditions given the less than wonderful summer.

The day of the test itself found me slightly nervous but my thoughts were if I can ride as I do and have done when out with Lindsay then all should be fine. Fortunately it was, and after the assessment by Lee - who firstly put me at my ease and afterwards gave me some good pointers and feedback - I'm happy to report I passed.

In many ways this was for me the icing on the cake, I've picked up enough tips, enough pointers and rethought aspects of my riding to make the course itself of sufficient value to recommend it. It was never boring, never routine and one of those times where the learning can be enjoyable!

And the IAM even do trackdays.

# MOTOScotland

## An old boys review!

As a Road Safety Officer and driver trainer I am a person who believes every day is a learning day. I started riding bikes at age 13, off-road of course! As soon as I turned 16, I was out on the SS50 5 speed Honda, and a good few other bikes of all genres and still ride today.

Most rider improvement courses for bikes involve road riding based on roadcraft, and are great for developing the correct position, speed and gear for the road situation at that time. I wanted to find out how I could experience a different style of riding but it would still transfer to improving my road riding skills. As a Road Safety Officer I also needed to find out how this could potentially help reduce rider casualties on our roads.

I recently had the pleasure of attending a MOTOScotland training course, my aim being to look at a different approach to rider development. Based in Inveraray, MOTOScotland have access to the Duke of Argyll's beautiful estate, which provides many different terrains and challenges to develop your riding skills. The training levels range from complete newbie to level 3 for those who have been before and return to further advance their skills. They also have 1 and 2 day treks which allow you to put into practice all you have learned.



## The Training

The training for my course started off with driving licence checks, completing the official forms and then getting changed into our riding gear, all of which was supplied by MOTOScotland. A full safety briefing followed, and then out to our bikes to learn about them. They were AJP 240/250cc with different wheel sizes and specifications, and two 650 GS's again both slightly different specifications.

Clive, our trainer, and the owner of MOTOScotland, re-educated me on how to mount/ dismount a bike, and after a spot of breakdancing, which demonstrated the correct techniques required to balance the bike from both sitting and standing, and using weight transfer to assist with the steering.

Our first ride to a training area allowed us to get a feel for riding on knobbies and power delivery of the AJP. At the training area there were various exercises to complete. If you drop your own bike, as well as damaging the pristine paintwork, it can be a challenge to get it upright again. Cue BMW onto its side. After completing the safety switch offs, you don't want to be caught by a spinning rear wheel, correct positioning and standing at the handle bars allowed for a smooth lift upright with no injuries to my back.

Riding standing up, we completed slaloms at very low speed and then a specific circle exercise, which was a great way to find the limit of balance at such a low speed, but more importantly the head up and look where you want to go worked well. It is amazing how it all works when you get it right.

Riders have their own favourite brake they use when riding, some are rear, and some are front, some both. Using engine braking, your third brake, would probably be a rare occasion, although advanced riders will be more familiar with its use. Our first challenge was to fully lock up the rear wheel at a nice low speed and then gradually increasing speed until an induced fish tail skid of 20+ metres. Then came the front wheel lockups, using two fingers only on the lever squeezing until it locks, then releasing and going through the stages of braking feeling a twitch or a more violent slip and catching it before being ejected.

After lunch, it was onto practice riding on the estate through many different roads, tracks, grass, mud and water, putting all our training into practice. ►



Throughout the day you have free reign to jump on any bike you fancy, and I was now using the BMW. A lot heavier and, for the road section, a comfier seat but who needs a seat when off roading! This really brought everything together - the balance, the HEADUP, the engine braking and using that front brake where before you probably didn't. It was also a good work out. A few hours later and time to end with a coffee and buns and a full debrief with my other four riding partners. Everyone agreed that our skills have all been improved and our riding on the road would benefit.

## Conclusion

Firstly, this training is great fun, but more importantly has a massive benefit for any rider on any style of bike. The training is delivered in a well-paced friendly manner, with talk through, then demonstration and then practice. Encouragement is constant and even when you messed up, the feedback provided allows you to think about it and then to practice it, and you want to practice it because it is infectious. For more experienced riders, observations are raised upwards and outwards, allowing decisions to be made in good time, and the correct speed and position on the road or track can be achieved.

The ability to adjust body position on the bike enables a greatly improved balance between rider and bike and improving confidence to deal with any situation as it arrives. For new riders, having the chance to learn extra techniques which will also improve their confidence, balance, and also gain invaluable experience how to deal with any emergency situation in a calm controlled manner, especially under firm braking. With rider casualties unfortunately increasing, this training can provide calmness under pressure and instil another level of skill that might just stop that hard pull on the front brake on a left hand bend.

Looking from a personal point of view, I learned a whole new bag of tricks, but the biggest improvement for my riding was in the braking exercises. Having the opportunity to brake to the maximum, induce a skid, especially on the front wheel, feel the bikes reaction and go from 'Oh My God', to ease off the brake in a calm controlled manner and still maintain full control was invaluable and transferrable. Of course, none of this would be carried out on the public road, which is where a training course like this is incomparable to a road riding course, but the skill levels are heightened and every bit as important. I believe the training offered by MOTOScotland can greatly improve any riders skills, whether experienced or a novice rider, and would recommend taking a course to improve your skills and have fun!

*Colin T Kay.  
Road Safety Officer*

# RON McKAY

## A personal road trip

After a 2-day trip to the Isle of Skye, both days nil rain, having gone from Dumbarton via A82, Loch Lomond, Glencoe, Fort William and across on the Mallaig Ferry to Skye. , My return journey took me over the Skye Bridge to Kyle of Lochalsh, where I parted company with my brother and his wife as they headed home to the Shetland Islands on their respective bikes.



I headed down the A87 to Invergarry on roads that must have been made for bikes with stunning views from high above lochs and glens, travelling at a leisurely pace enjoying the ride stopping to take a picture of Eilean Donan Castle .

On to Invergarry, down (A82) Loch Lochy to Spean Bridge, then a stop at Fort William for fuel and a cup of coffee before heading over the Ballachulish Bridge down through Glencoe to The Green Welly, then home via Crianlarich and Loch Lomond, arriving at Dumbarton a little tired but safe and and glad to have a motorcycle to enjoy the beautiful scenery of Scotland.

# SPIKES TRIP TO JOG

## A personal road trip

Myself, Garry Logan, Keith MacAllister, Brian Lynch and Jamie Dow. We travelled from Irvine to Inverness and then on to Wick, where we camped for the night. The next day we rode on to Ullapool via John O'Groats - camping at Ullapool. The following day we headed to Fort William where we camped again at the bottom of Ben Nevis before heading home 831 miles later.



# HARLEY-DAVIDSON

Harley-Davidson® is the most iconic motorcycle company in the world and it's changing all the time. West Coast aim to deliver what other brands and dealers can't – an experience. The earlier we can invite others into our community, the longer they have to experience a lifestyle like no other.



Let us introduce the West Coast Harley-Davidson® Kickstarter programme. A simple bundle deal where you can pay for your bike licence and a Harley-Davidson® all in one affordable monthly payment – sounds good, doesn't it? That's because it is! Throughout this programme, we have welcomed many new faces into our dealership and have been with them every step of their journey, from no licence to fully fledged biker. We're proud to say that we've had many success stories and they just keep on coming. You may think this programme is reserved for younger generations, but that is not the case. There are a vast number of mature enthusiasts that now have the time to come into the world of biking – and quite right too!

You can combine our Kickstarter deal with any model in the range, however the most popular package deals have been taken with the Sportster® Iron™ and new model, Street 750™.

## Your Licence - Direct Access Scheme (600cc)

West Coast Harley-Davidson work with and recommend a number of local riding schools, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with us and we will be happy to advise. If you live a little further afield or would prefer to choose your own riding school, no problem. We can easily combine the amount onto your Kickstarter package – all we need is a quotation from your chosen training school.

## More about training:

If you are over 24 then you can take the Direct Access Scheme and have a full unrestricted licence. This means you take the exact same motorcycle test as the restricted licence A2 except using a larger machine (600cc). You can do this at 21 years old provided you have held your A2 licence for 2 years.

If you wish to have a full unrestricted licence without having to comply with the 50BHP probation period and you are over 24 then you can take the Direct Access Scheme. (You can do this at 21 after 2 years pass on A2) This means you take the exact same motorcycle test as the restricted licence (A2) except using a larger machine. To qualify the machine power must exceed 40KW.



With the DAS course you must first complete CBT then pass the motorcycle theory test before attempting the practical test.

## Cool rides:

Iron 883™ - Agile, light and as dark as they come, the Iron 883™ is a back alley bruiser designed for minimalist fans. It's raw, stripped down, and a thoroughbred Harley® with an aggressive riding position designed for the city streets. Its engine, rocker covers, front forks, cast aluminium wheels, chopped fenders and drag style bars are all black. The Iron 883™ also features keyless ignition - cool, huh?

Street 750™ - A machine built to give traffic a beating in plenty of Dark Custom™ style. But beneath this urban warrior lurks a liquid-cooled 750cc Revolution X™ V-Twin engine. Blacked out to the bone. With blacked out pipes to match. A suspension tuned for quick handling in any urban environment. Get behind the café racer windscreen and go. Consider the traffic whipped.

You can find out more information and contact us via our website ([www.westcoastharley.com](http://www.westcoastharley.com)) or if you're close by, pop into our dealership (147-151 North Street, Glasgow, G3 7DA) for a chat and a coffee to discuss your requirements. Alternatively, you can call us on **0333 240 5888** – we're happy to help! Look forward to seeing you soon.



# ACHNASHELLOCH MOTO X

## Lochgilthead

With 3 sons' mad keen on motocross riding, Stewart and Yvonne Campbell knew it made sense to develop their farm land at Achnashelloch, just north of Lochgilthead in Argyll, into a motocross track. Stewart himself was the first person with a prosthetic arm to ride for Scotland in the British Championships so he was keen for the boys to follow in his footsteps.



Photo taken by: West Coast Photos

The track has been open to the public for 6 years now and will host the Twin Shock Championships in April and September this year. The Campbell's are keen to host these big events – although they won't be there themselves as their own boys are going to be riding in the British Championships on the same weekends – but are equally happy when local youngsters take to the track. The youngest riders are aged from 6 up and people in the biking community are always keen to pass on jerseys, boots etc. which helps keep the cost down for parents. Stewart and his son Douglas (20) are both qualified through the Scottish Auto Cycle Union to coach from beginner to competition.

None of the Campbell's are licensed for the road but Stewart is adamant that all skills learnt on the track are transferrable to the road – dealing with changes in terrain, controlling slips, and of course, observation. Stewart is keen to do his CBT this year through the NABD (National Association for Bikers with a Disability).

His own boys, Douglas (20), Lewis (17) and Harris (14), travel to Tain – an 8-hour round trip – for winter practice on a dry, shore track next to the air base. Last year they raced in Scotland, Ireland and England – including the illustrious Weston Super Mare Beach Race. Harris rides a KTM 85, while Lewis and Douglas have KTM250 4 strokes – all from Drysdale Motorcycles in Perth (another long trip for spares!).

Stewart and Yvonne love to see their own track being used and hope that Douglas will push on with its development in the future. They like nothing better than a field full of bikes and people enjoying themselves.

If you'd like to find out more, or fancy a crack at the track, give Stewart or Yvonne a call on **(01546) 606852**

I ride at a more steady pace without ringing the bike's neck. My awareness has increased ten-fold and my confidence in the rain is so much better

My observation skills have increased which, in turn, gives me a much smoother ride

I feel very much safer and in control on the bike. It has also given me the confidence to do some long distance touring

I have more time to react, manoeuvre and see in any given situation

I'm sure it has made me a more decisive and smoother rider, it has also enhanced my overall safety

**There are as many reasons to take an advanced riding test as there are riders...**

**But only one place to come – the IAM**

The IAM's Skill for Life advanced riding course not only prepares you for the advanced test; it will also make you a better rider - on your own terms.

Through a series of observed rides, the course covers all five phases of advanced riding (IPSGA); Information, Position, Speed, Gear and Acceleration - giving you the skills and knowledge to remain in control, whatever the road (and weather) might throw at you.

**Sign up now and save £15 on our Skill for Life advanced riding course**

Skill for Life usually costs £149 but right now, you'll pay just **£134** - all in. This includes the advanced test fee, a copy of our 'How to be a better rider' handbook and one year's IAM membership.

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**It's a great investment in your safety and enjoyment as a rider. Just ask the experts...**



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# NORTH HARBOUR

North Harbour Motorcycles is situated in the coastal town of Ayr. It is Ayrshire's Premium Honda Dealership, established in 1983. Our light, modern showroom is positioned on the waterfront and in the past year has undergone a change in management.

Our staff have a combined knowledge of over 140 years in the motorcycle trade, most of which have been attained with North Harbour.

Motorcycle sales are Scott's domain. We stock a comprehensive selection of new Honda motorcycles in addition to our used bike range. Scott is well versed in all the latest deals available from Honda. His love of motorcycles is matched by a high level of customer care. Scott will work hard to get the best deal and package to suit you. You can contact Scott on [sales@north-harbour.co.uk](mailto:sales@north-harbour.co.uk) or **01292 281933**

The well stocked clothing department is managed by Val. Brands stocked include Arai, AGV, Nolan, HJC and LS2 helmets. RST, Rukka, Oxford, Alpinestars and Wolf are just some of the clothing brands we stock. You can get Val on [clothing@north-harbour.co.uk](mailto:clothing@north-harbour.co.uk) or **01292 281933**

Parts are run by Richard, who is extremely knowledgeable on Honda parts and is indeed a past finalist of Honda's prestigious Parts Person of the Year award at both national and international level. His knowledge is not confined to Honda parts as we can supply parts, accessories and tyres for all Japanese marques. Richard's email address is [parts@north-harbour.co.uk](mailto:parts@north-harbour.co.uk) or **01292 281933**

Our workshop is run by Stephen who is a fully qualified motorcycle mechanic, as well as being a Honda trained technician and MOT tester. If you have a problem, get in touch with Stephen, as nothing is too much bother.

We are all kept in order by our general manager Andy, who is also our other MOT tester, Salesman, Partsman, in fact he's our chief cook and bottle washer!

If you fancy a day out to the coast, why not pay us a visit? If you are not in the market for anything just now, you are welcome to drop in for a coffee and a chat. In the winter months we offer free homemade soup on a Saturday with a crusty roll.

We look forward to seeing you. Keep an eye on our web site ([www.motorcycllesscotland.co.uk](http://www.motorcycllesscotland.co.uk)) or facebook page for upcoming events.

# VICTOR DEVINE

Victor Devine & Co Ltd are Scotland's longest established Honda motorcycle dealer established in 1970. However the company goes back much further, and was originally a BSA, Triumph and Norton dealer back in the 1950s and 1960s.

At Victor Devine & Co we retail new and used Honda bikes as well as all other makes and models of used motorcycles from our custom built motorcycle showroom at 58-60 Hydepark Street Glasgow (G3 8BW).

We have a large Parts department and a massive Clothing and Accessories department which carries a vast range of brands and items, far too many to list. Any parts we don't have in stock can usually be delivered within 24 hours.

Many motorcycle companies have come and gone over the years but Victor Devine's has remained a motorcycle foundation dealer and will be around for many years to come. We must be doing something right since we have a huge customer bank and many of our customers have been with us since the beginning. This doesn't mean we will become complacent since we also understand that it's not just your purchases which are important, it's the level of service provided.

At Victor Devine's we like to look after our customers and offer the most competitive deals we can, so if you're looking for a low rate finance deal on your dream bike or clothing with affordable monthly payments give us a call and we'll see what we can do. Many people don't realise that you can now finance items like helmets and clothing without buying a bike through select dealers, us being one of them.

Our motorcycle service and M.O.T. department is fully equipped with the latest technology and has three full time Honda approved technicians who have been with us for many years, what they don't know about Honda motorcycles isn't worth knowing. So if you want your bike to receive the very best attention at an affordable price give them a call on 0141-225-8130 or go to our web site ([www.victordevine.com](http://www.victordevine.com)) and book online, to make things easy we also do servicing and repairs on a Saturday.

2016 is shaping up to be a great year for Victor Devine Honda with many new models like the new Africa Twin, the new 2016 NC750 range and the new 2016 500 range to name just a few. So why not come and see us or look us up on Facebook or at [www.victordevine.com](http://www.victordevine.com)

Victor Devine Honda really is the one stop shop for everything motorcycling. We are located close to the SECC and the legendary Finnieston Crane 58-60 Hydepark Street Glasgow (G3 8BW). 0141-225-8100, [www.victordevine.com](http://www.victordevine.com)

# COLLISION INVESTIGATION

## 'Is the road open yet?'

*Constable John Baillie, Collision Investigation Oversight Unit, West.*

Scotland has some of the most scenic drives to be found anywhere in the world and I wouldn't want it any other way. Living in a rural area, we often take this for granted. Car and Motorcycle magazines tell their readers about them, how good they are for testing the handling of a vehicle and how quiet the roads can be. Then it all goes wrong. A collision occurs and the road is blocked. Where's the detour?

Where a road traffic collision has occurred, particularly where it has resulted in death or serious injury, it is the duty of the police to investigate the matter and that is where our specialist team come in. It is imperative that The Police Service of Scotland conducts all investigations methodically and with consideration to the gravity of the incident. Certain road traffic offences can result in imprisonment up to 14 years so all investigation must be thorough, fair and accurate. The west of Scotland has access to around 36 Road Policing Forensic Investigators who are Road Patrol Officers first and foremost but have undergone the additional specialist training. We deploy two investigators to a scene and they have a range of specialist equipment that goes with them.

The pressure of the job is considerable. We have the public, senior management as well as the Roads Authority, and even politicians enquiring as to how long the road will be closed. That is not our priority - doing the investigation in a thorough, professional manner is.

Collisions do not just happen, they were caused by something. It is our job as the investigators, wherever possible, to find the cause, and ultimately these findings may be used to help

reduce collision numbers. With that in mind, our job is to gather all the available evidence from the locus and interpret it. We are rarely the first officers on scene and usually the fire service and ambulance staff will have been there before us. Their job involves saving lives and that rightly takes priority to preserving evidence. Once that is done the collision investigators take control of the scene and examine it in detail. Even the smallest gouge or scrape mark on the road can help to position the vehicles and reconstruct the sequence of events that led to the collision. We only get one shot at finding the vital evidence as once the vehicles are recovered, the road is swept and the road reopened, anything we have missed is gone.

Having examined the scene we then start to record the evidence. This will involve photographs as well as using the specialist GPS surveying equipment, laser scanners or even good old fashioned tape measures. Road layout, signage and a check of the grip available from the road surface is also checked.

The investigators will then produce a report where applicable, scale drawings of the incident or even an animated reconstruction. This is presented to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service for their information and the findings can also be discussed with the family of the deceased.

It has often been suggested that we should just arrive, photograph a locus, survey or scan it, clear the roadway and then do the enquiry back at the office. This, they say, would open the road quicker. That is true but where is our evidence? How can we work out what actually happened? I truly hope you never have to suffer the loss of someone in a collision but the next time your journey is delayed, or you are diverted due to a road closure, remember this is someone's family and they are about to get the shocking news. Do they deserve to have a proper enquiry done and be told why or how this happened? Of course they do.

# STANDARD DIVERSION ROUTES



When the decision is taken to close a road the initial closure will be implemented by Police officers at the locus. The Road Operator is immediately informed. If it is a trunk road this will be Transport Scotland. The operating company for that area will then attend and place a hard closure utilising cones, signs and barriers. They will also implement the diversion route to be taken.

Trunk roads have standard diversion routes which can accommodate all classes of vehicles. These allow traffic to progress unhindered and are capable of carrying large volumes of vehicles.

In Argyll and Bute trunk road closures can cause serious disruption to local communities due to a lack of suitable diversions. Diversions can be 60 miles long and take 90 minutes to navigate. This leads to many drivers choosing to ignore diversion signs and self-diverting onto roads which are unable to support their class of vehicle or cope with large traffic volumes. Drivers with good local knowledge of the road network will try to use alternative roads to avoid the standard diversion route. Unfortunately

problems occur when other drivers have the same thought! This leads to severe congestion on these roads with them often being too narrow to cope with large vehicles.

The A814 between Whistlefield roundabout and Arrochar is one such road. On 8 August 2015 the A82 at Inverbeg was closed and the standard diversion route implemented. The A814 became so congested that drivers were stuck in tailbacks for 5 hours! Police motorcyclists were unable to ride to the pinch points and had to make their way on foot. A rare sight!

We have a limited number of Roads Policing officers to call upon to deal with serious and fatal road collisions. If they have to be despatched to deal with congestion issues off the standard diversion routes it impacts on the officers dealing with the collision and invariably leads to the road being closed for longer.

Traffic Scotland tweet the standard diversion route when a closure is in place and along with Transport Scotland will display it on their website. By using a standard diversion route you will get to your destination safely and probably quicker than using a non-standard diversion.

*PC Eddie McElhinney  
Police Scotland  
Roads Policing*



# RIDE ON



RIDE ON Motorcycles is a family run business since 1977 where they opened a small Honda dealership in the south side of Glasgow. They quickly outgrew this and moved to a larger premises taking on Yamaha in 1986 and leaving Honda in 1994.

Over the years they have included Motorcycle Training (CBT to DAS), service and MOT Centre, a large clothing and accessories department and on-line store.

In 2015 looking to upgrade their premises they are now based at Hillington, Glasgow (just off M8 near Braehead) and keep in stock over 140 quality used bikes (all makes and models). They brought with them the Service, MOT, Training, Clothing and now a Bikers Café.

With regular Open Days and organised Track Days at Knockhill, Ride-On is a One Stop Shop for bikers of all ages and abilities.

All Ride-On staff are long standing bikers and are filled with knowledge and passion for the industry.

For more details, follow them on Facebook and Twitter, check out the website for full details and get added to the mailing list. [www.rideonmotorcycles.co.uk](http://www.rideonmotorcycles.co.uk)

RIDE ON Motorcycles are the leading motorcycle training facility in the West of Scotland.

With numerous years of experience providing quality tuition for both Novice and Experienced riders alike. You would be hard pushed to find a better more enjoyable service as many of our trainees found out.

We are the closest training school to the DVSA Test Centre, giving trainees the advantage of getting familiar with the local area and the roads surrounding the test centre. Module 1 training is conducted at the Shieldhall Test centre where the actual Mod 1 test is sat.



The training school is open 7 days a week allowing for flexible course structure.

## What do I need to get started?

You must hold a current (provisional) driving licence with provisional motorcycle entitlement (category A) on it and be able to read a number plate at 20 metres.

## Do I need any equipment?

No, all our courses include equipment hire (helmets, gloves and waterproofs), all that we ask is that trainees wear strong footwear and suitable heavy, warm, clothing.

## What is Compulsory Basic Training?

This is one days' worth of training that teaches the basics of motorcycling. Designed for a complete novice, it will teach you the basics of how to ride safely on the road.

## What will my instructor be like?

All our instructors are professional and Driving Standards Agency approved, with many years' experience.

## What sort of bikes will I be riding?

We currently use Kymco Pulsar 125's and Yamaha XJ6's. We also have automatic 50cc scooters in the fleet. All bikes are regularly replaced for new.

## Will I need to sit a theory test?

This is not currently required for CBT, although we advise that trainees have at the very least a basic understanding of the Highway Code. A motorcycle theory test must be passed should you wish to gain a full motorcycle licence.

## Is Insurance included?

Our CBT courses include full, comprehensive insurance. All courses include Third Party insurance with an upgrade to Fully Comprehensive available at an additional fee. This will be offered at the start of any course.

## How will I know which course will best suit my needs?

If you have done a CBT with us, then we will be able to give you an indication of what your requirements might be to get you to test standard. If you did a CBT elsewhere, then an assessment lesson will determine the best course to suit your needs.

## How will my course be structured?

We offer training 7 days a week allowing you to confine lessons to weekends if you wish, or take them through the week. The only exception to this is the test date as these are determined by availability at the DSA Test Centre.

## What does the Motorcycle Test involve?

**Module 1:** This test is conducted by the DSA on a special pad at the test centre and incorporates slow control manoeuvres and avoidance manoeuvres. You must pass this before sitting Module 2.

**Module 2:** This test is a forty-minute road ride; this again is conducted by the DSA.

## How will I prepare for the Module 1 test?

All of our courses include additional practise at the test centre in preparation for the Module 1 test. This allows trainees to see and use the pad they will be sitting their test on, including the use of the speed measuring equipment.



### Compulsory Basic Training (16\* and over)

This is a legal requirement before riding on the road. Our Instructors will train you in a safe off road area, with the final 2-hour session on the road. Once successfully completed a CBT Certificate will be issued which allows you to ride a 125cc\* on the road for 2 years with L Plates. \* 50cc moped at 16.

### If you are 17 – 18

Pass a test on a 125cc machine, gain a 125 Licence (A1), ride on this for a minimum of 2 years, or, upon turning 19 if wishing to ride a bigger bike, move on to the step below.

### If you are 19 – 23

Pass a test on a Restricted 600cc machine (between 33bhp and 44bhp) and gain a licence which allows you to ride a bike of up to 46.6 bhp (A2). Ride on this for a minimum of 2 years or upon turning 24, if wishing, move on to the step below

### If you are 24 or over, or have served a minimum of 2 years on an A2 licence.

You can do a Direct Access where you sit a test on an unrestricted 600cc (53.6bhp) and gain a full unrestricted licence (A) -allowing you to ride any bike of any size.



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# STRATHEARN



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"Hi Jim (and the lads) I couldn't return to Ireland and not follow up to express my sincerest thanks for your help last week. The simple truth is that my holiday in Scotland would have not been as good without the kindness of the team at Strathearn Tyres to hang around late on a Friday evening to meet the tow truck and replace the back tyre on the ZX10. Maybe this is something that you just do as part of your service but to be honest there are not that many who go out of their way like that. The simple option was to tell me to come back the next day and arrange to get the bike there somehow. Look, I found people are pretty quick to give out when things are not right and less likely to drop a mail and simply say thanks when they receive a wonderful service with no hassle, no moaning, you guys just got it done. This is just one more reason why we are coming back to Scotland, planning has already started. Thanks again Derek"

Derek - June 2014





Since opening the doors in 2006 Edinburgh based Saltire Motorcycles Ltd have endured and expanded through the tough times, and now in buoyant times they find themselves expanding once again with the launch of a significant new venture.

Thanks largely to the support of unmatched customer loyalty Saltire have grown from strength to strength over the last decade, continually adding services and goods into their offerings so as to match the wants and needs of the motorcycling community throughout Scotland and the North of England.

When Saltire opened the doors in March 2006 they did so as ambassadors for the Suzuki brand in Edinburgh and the Lothian's, and with only 5 employees they scooped up award after award year after year. However they were soon to outgrow the 4,500sq/ft unit and found themselves relocating to the current 15,000sq/ft site at 553 Gorgie Road. This extra space gave room for a meteoric expansion that now houses showrooms for new Suzuki's, new Yamaha's and over 200 pre-owned bikes.

The immaculate showroom is complimented tremendously by an extensive array of motorcycling equipment, rider safety gear, casual clothing, collectables and virtually everything you could ever want as an avid biker. Further to this Saltire have their own in-house rider training school, offering everything from CBT training to advanced lessons. Saltire also offer motorcycle hire, offering anything from an RV125 right through to an Indian Roadmaster and hire packages to suit the needs of the individual. And no motorcycle shop is complete without an extensive workshop to service the needs of the everyday biker, they offer service packages to suit all budgets, repairs of all varieties and MOT testing to virtually any make and model.

Above all of this Saltire's MD Calum Murray was proud to boast about their finest asset, 30 committed and enthusiastic employees who collectively have encyclopaedic knowledge and experience of the motorcycle and service industries.

However, even an operation of this magnitude can be improved upon.

With the recent introduction of Indian, Victory and Norton motorcycles to their profile, Murray felt that the style of trading was very different from that of modern Japanese machinery. The sharp, crisp racing edge that is synonymous with Japanese engineering and marketing is very different from the hardy, old school feel that accompanies the American and British brands, and so "Alba Customs" was born out of Saltire.

Having been housed for the last year in-store alongside the Suzuki's and Yamaha's, Alba's time has come, as on the 24th of April this year Alba Customs will be opening its doors to the public in the warehouse unit situated above the current Saltire site. The acquisition of the new 25,000sq/ft warehouse has once more offered a myriad of opportunity to Saltire motorcycles Ltd.

Murray stated "the vision is to create an entire motorcycling village, and given the space we've got to play with, I hope we can create something quite unique. It's not only Alba Customs that will be opening up here, we're rehusing and expanding the entire aftersales operation, virtually trebling the size of the workshops. We've also applied to use a third of the building for indoor rider training, which will be a god send on those more inclement days. To complement the entire village experience, we've invited 2 other local businesses to do their thing from units we've created, one being a tattoo studio the other being a barbers. And to top it all off, we're opening the Gasoline Alley Café and Grill. It's going to be utterly awesome"

With such a diverse range of services, all carefully bike-based and very much part of the motorcycling scene, covering a floor space of 44,000sq/ft, Saltire and Alba will essentially be offering a previously unseen mix of both the traditional and modern aspect of biking. It's an exciting and ambitious development which has already created a dozen new jobs for the industry in Scotland with the potential of more to come.



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# BIKER DOWN

## North Lanarkshire

Motherwell Community Fire Station played host to the first-ever Biker Down courses to run in Scotland, with 56 people taking part in the 3-hour events over 4 days in May, June and July.

The initiative has been introduced by Firefighter and motorcyclist John Branney who believes that when an accident does happen, the actions of those first on scene can be the difference between life and death.

Biker Down goes beyond telling people about the consequences of things going wrong and actually offers them the chance to learn practical skills that could be crucial if they come across an emergency. Designed by bikers for bikers, the course focuses on three key areas: Accident scene management, first aid for motorcyclists and the science of being seen.

The four pilot courses, run at Motherwell Community Fire Station, were delivered to members of the IAM, student motorcycle maintenance mechanics from New Lanarkshire College, solo riders and members of several motorcycle clubs.

As many bikers ride in pairs or in groups, it is often the case that the first person on scene following a

collision involving a motorcycle will be a fellow biker. Training motorcyclists in how to deal with a casualty can save lives and Biker Down courses include ways of keeping the scene safe, first aid appropriate to common types of injury and the issues of safely removing a helmet.

A recent attendee, Iain Currie, had reason to use the knowledge gained after attending a session in June. Iain had been out with friends on a run when one of them was hit by a bus. When Iain reached his friend he was face down but still breathing. He subsequently stopped breathing, requiring Iain and his friends to turn him over, remove the helmet and start CPR. Thanks to the skills they learned on the day they were able to do this in a calm manner.

The advice for motorcyclists is always to anticipate the actions of others, make sure they can slow down and safely stop if the unexpected happens and to position their bike in the safest place to maximise their visibility.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Scottish Biker Down can email [w.bikerdownscotland@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:w.bikerdownscotland@firescotland.gov.uk) or visit our Facebook page 'Biker Down Scotland'.

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# ROUTE 66



## Advanced Riding Skills

Riding skill is much more than just getting from point A to B. Does your bike feel almost weightless the moment it starts to move? Do you find it easy to manoeuvre at slow speeds? What about manoeuvring or turning around in a limited space, are you confident? Or when carrying a passenger, or fully loaded with luggage? Most importantly, are you ready to deal with the unexpected? Such as avoiding sudden debris on the road, entering a curve too fast, or making a sudden swerve or split-second maximum braking application to avoid a crisis? Are you sure you can ride it out of a bad situation? The fact is, most riders cannot control their motorcycles with the level of skill required to perform these critical tasks.

Learn to understand and respond to the feedback from your motorcycle. Use the controls in the optimal way to make riding effortless. Understand the capabilities and limitations of your motorcycle. Slow speed control, tight turns, assertive counter-steering and emergency collision avoidance techniques are all covered. We see riders on all bikes, from touring, cruiser and adventure bikes to sport touring and sport bikes. You'll grin from ear to ear when you learn what you are capable of doing on your motorcycle.

Route 66 advanced road courses will take your riding standard to as high a level as you want to go and allow you to enhance your machine control skills in a safe and non-threatening environment.

We don't fit you into our courses, we fit the course around you, making sure you get exactly the right training for your needs. So whether you have been riding for a lifetime or you're just starting out, we can help you

gain confidence and the skills to get the most from your bike and stay safe.

Route 66 Training is a company run by motorcyclists, the fact that we have police qualified traffic motorcyclists is rather less important. Route 66 deliver the very best of the advanced training, and are proud partners of Police Scotland advanced training.

## Advanced Training - What's involved?

Having established an understanding of your riding background and experience, we start by giving you an initial briefing covering riding theory and skill development. The rest of your lesson is spent on the road. All areas of your riding will be addressed, cornering, overtaking and the safe use of speed will be covered in depth. The course will enable you to cope with all types of roads and traffic conditions. Our intention is for you to get the very best from your motorcycle and at the same time increasing your safety margins. Your goal is to achieve an advanced riding technique, demonstrating confidence, accuracy, safety and a smooth polished ride at every speed. You will get regular feedback from your Route 66 instructor on the areas on which you need to concentrate on, and advice on how to improve your performance even further.

For further information on bookings, contact [www.route66training.com](http://www.route66training.com) or call **01698 326632**



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# GETTING LEGAL ADVICE WHEN YOU NEED IT SHOULDN'T BE A GAMBLE

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 Paul

#### Excellent result

*I was taken off my motorbike by a coach and had no witnesses. Digby Brown built up a case based on carefully sourced and structured evidence. They identified witnesses, obtained a report from a bike accident expert, obtained medical reports on my injuries and accountant reports on my loss of income. The 3rd party insurers continually denied liability but when presented with DB's case they settled in full a week before going to court. I cannot thank the staff of DB enough for their professionalism, their advice, their hard work on my behalf and their continual willingness to help me. I would recommend them unreservedly! \**

 Ian

#### Justice was done!

*Can't recommend Digby Brown enough! I was fully compensated for accident I had on my motorbike. Thanks for your help and perseverance! \**

\* Independent reviews posted by clients on Trustpilot - [www.trustpilot.com](http://www.trustpilot.com)

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# On the road again...

As the days start getting longer, we start thinking about getting the bike out of the garage and back on the road.

Hours will be spent by many of you making sure the bike is roadworthy. For some there is nothing better than stripping and rebuilding the bike ahead of the first run of the season. For others, there is the joy of a trip to the dealership for a once over before hitting the roads.

There were **820 serious motorcycle accidents in Scotland in 2014** with 39% attributed to events at junctions. 'Failure to look properly' was the most common cause of all accidents on all road types. As we emerge from months of hibernation from riding and start clocking up the miles once again, it is worthwhile bearing a few things in mind.

Getting back on the road again is not as easy as riding a bike. You may not be as road fit as you were after a summer of riding last year. It can take time to get back in shape. March is traditionally the month with the highest incident of motorcycle accidents. Many are due to rider error. The roads can still be icy or damp under trees and you should be aware of build up of grit and other winter debris. Left handers can catch you out, particularly when it's cold and you are out of practice.

Advanced training helps make you a better and safer rider, and can increase the enjoyment you get. It can also save you money on your insurance as some companies see you as less of a risk if you have completed further training.

Other road users may not be expecting to see you. They may not specifically be looking out for bikes. Be very wary of cars turning right across your path, or pulling out of junctions.

When you're putting in big miles, especially in remote areas, it's a good idea to give friends and family an idea of where you'll end up and when you'll be checking in. This will give your family some reassurance, and if you're alone it will allow someone to raise the alarm for you in the event something goes wrong.

Remember to always make sure your emergency contact and medical information is easily visible when you're out and about. Carry your contact details in an easily accessible and waterproof place, like the map section of a tank bag or rucksack.

In the event that the worst happens, and you are involved in an accident that wasn't your fault, make sure you take specialist legal advice. There can be a big difference between the services offered by law firms, so make sure you take time to choose a lawyer who can meet your needs and understands bikes and bikers. Motorcycle accidents are often traumatic and it can be an emotionally difficult time for you and your family. At Digby Brown, we appreciate that the claims process can be a daunting prospect and we make sure that we support our clients to get them the help they need.

**Contact Lianda Barnes, specialist  
solicitor in Motorcycle Law:**

**01382 205925**  
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