

Northampton Advanced Motorists

Newsletter

Issue 92

Autumn 2011

Hollowell Steam Rally 2011

The Group took its new look display unit to the 2-day Hollowell Steam Rally on the first weekend of July.



The weather was excellent resulting in a very well attended event. There was a good level of interest in the IAM, both cars and bikes.

The rota was well organised by John Norrie, with 6 sessions of almost 3 people per session over the two days. This allowed time for the helpers to also enjoy the rally. Above is the 'shift changeover' on Saturday, l-r Maggie Lloyd, Roy Franklin, Derek Lob and Roger Loomes. Missing from the photo was Brian Johnson (still ambling over to the unit), and Henny who took the photo! Also manning the stand were Pam Durrant, John Josephs, Ray Blewitt, Alan Brown and David Smith.

Motorway Driving Day 2nd October

Following last year's successful event, the Northampton Advanced Motorists Group (NAM) have again joined up with Northamptonshire Police's Road Policing Unit to run a Motorway Day for members of the public

Observer Meeting 14th November

The quarterly meeting for all Group and Trainee Observers

Date Change October Checkrides 9th October

Please note, the October Checkrides will now be held on 9th October (a week later than normal).

See inside for further details of these events and others your Group is running.



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From the Chair

John Norrie

Group Chairman



As I write this piece the Norrie household has just about recovered from the after effects of the Hollowell Steam Rally. I am fully occupied for that weekend continually collecting the entry money from the three gates into the rally field and “she who must be obeyed” runs the tea tent – a full scale operation if ever I saw one. This year we had the MOC at the field for the weekend. It was dutifully manned by a team of 11 of our number working in shifts. There were a huge number of people at the rally – the take on the gates was £95k! – and there was quite a bit of healthy interest in us and what we do. It remains to be seen, however, just how many new associates this effort yields. In any case, I suspect the exposure will do us no harm in terms of our public profile.

Other events on the horizon include an open day at police headquarters (which will have happened by the time you read this) and a repeat of our motorway day on 2nd October. We will be working with the Police Driver Training Unit for both of these events. If you know anyone who has any problems with using motorways get them to come along.

On a slightly grander scale, there has been quite a bit of activity on the road safety front. Coinciding with the UN Decade of Action on Road Safety 2011 –2020, the IAM has launched its 10 year strategy on road safety which proposes that the road safety industry should aim to reduce annual road deaths in the UK to 1000 by 2020. That would save 1000 lives over that period – I did try hard not to read it as a plan to kill only 1000 people per year!

The Government are also getting in on the act, and have launched their “Strategic Framework for Road Safety”. This was contained in a speech by the transport minister Philip Hammond MP. The essence is an increase in the use of educational events and a lot of freedom at local level. Here are a few extracts:-

“The core principle underpinning our new strategy is that, with limited resources available, we need to target the most dangerous behaviours: focusing police and court time on those who deliberately engage in anti-social and dangerous driving behaviour, while supporting the generally law-abiding motorist to address poor driving skills or lapses of behaviour that could put him or her and other road users at risk.”

“As I’ve said, we want to support basically law-abiding road users to address poor driving skills – to nudge their behaviour in the right direction. That means more educational options for drivers who make genuine mistakes, display poor skills or commit occasional low level offences - to improve their driving, support to develop safer skills and appropriate attitudes to driving. In appropriate cases, low level offenders will be offered a place on a police-approved education course (at their cost) instead of a fixed penalty charges and licence points.”

“We will also continue to build on the recent improvements we’ve made to our driving and motorcycle tests. And we’ll develop a new post-driving test vocational qualification – designed to help newly qualified drivers gain the necessary skills and experience to be safe and responsible road users - and to demonstrate that they have gained those skills to would-be insurers.”

“I also want to correct what I believe has been an overly narrow emphasis on automatically-detected speed-related offences, at the expense of tackling other equally or more risky behaviours such as tailgating, under-taking and weaving.”

“Since 1985 the number of prosecutions for careless driving has plummeted by three-quarters as time-

consuming prosecution through the courts has been deemed a lower priority by police. So we will introduce a new fixed penalty notice for careless driving to help the police to tackle risky behaviour, such as tailgating, that currently tends to go unenforced, in an efficient and effective manner. Freeing up police and court resources to focus on the most dangerous drivers. This will also enable careless driving offenders to be diverted to the new educational courses offered where appropriate to those receiving fixed penalty notices. At the same time, we will increase the level of fixed penalty notices for many road traffic offences from £60 to £80-£100 plus penalty points. The current levels have fallen behind other fixed penalties offences and the lower levels for traffic offences risk trivialising the offences.”

“There is also a significant correlation between uninsured driving and other road traffic offending. While we believe we will now make progress against uninsured drivers – with the introduction of Continuous Insurance Enforcement - we are clear that this is an area that requires further work to arrive at a fully effective package of measures. The rising cost of insurance will surely tempt more and more to take the risk. So we will consider introducing proportionate penalties for uninsured driving, to ensure that the cost of offending is better matched to the cost of insurance, while continuing to work with the insurance industry on measures that help to reduce the cost of motor insurance to make it more affordable over time.”

“Road safety is everybody’s business – we all have a stake in making our highways as safe as they can be. And in spreading our best practice in the UK to the many parts of the world with road safety records that are very far behind. That’s why the UN Decade of Action is so important. It’s also why road safety is a first order issue for me and for this Government. Britain has made great progress down the years in making our roads safer. We want that progress to continue and the Strategic Framework we are publishing today will take that agenda forward. My very clear message today is that we will work with the grain of human nature: encouraging and assisting drivers who occasionally lapse or who suffer from poor skills - the basically law-abiding majority - to become a safe and responsible motorists. We are not against them, we are with them and we will work to help them. But on those who wilfully and recklessly put themselves and others at risk, we will focus the resources of law-enforcement with a new determination.”


I am currently in discussion with our contacts within Northamptonshire Police to see how this new strategy is likely to affect their approach to dealing with motoring offences. Our group represents a significant potential resource in local road safety improvement, and any significant move towards more educational approaches to offending, with more local control, could provide an increased opportunity for us. Particularly at a time when the Northamptonshire Casualty Reduction Partnership has effectively ceased to exist due to changes in funding.

John Norrie

Group Chairman

Test Passes

The following associates have passed their Advanced Motoring test since the last newsletter. Many congratulations to you all.



Steve Gelling
Dee German
David Hunter
Rob Hopper
Steve Kettle

Important Diary Dates

Abington Street, Northampton Publicity day

20th August (date to be confirmed)

Following last year's successful stint in Abington Street (Northampton town centre), the group is planning to repeat the event this year, potentially during August. The Group's display unit will be located on a prime site within the pedestrian area. This all day event is an opportunity to recruit new Associates into the Group and your support in manning the Unit is vital.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Group secretary David Smith

Insight & Track Day, Millbrook Proving Ground – Autumn

Another chance to book a place for an exciting Insight and Track Day at the Millbrook Proving Ground, near Bedford. The cost of the event is approximately £100 per person, and for your money you will get a fantastic day including: a drive round the High Speed Bowl at 120 mph, the famous Alpine track and the Straight mile. The introductory track day is suitable for those who have not been before, and if you have been before there is the potential for an intermediate level track day.

Contact the John Hodges (01327 872953) to register your interest.

Motorway Day, Northampton

2nd October

The Group is running another motorway driving day on 2nd October for members of the public. The day will include giving demonstrations and undertaking assessments on the motorway (Northampton M1) from 10:00 hours onwards. To enable this event to be successful, we need as many observers as possible to help. We will be running the day from outside the Mereway Police Station (top of Wotton Hall Drive).

If you are interested in helping on this day, please contact let John Norrie who will provide further details.

MX-5 Owners Club National Rally, Billing Aquadrome, Northampton

18th September 2011

The Group has been invited to have the display unit at the MX-5 Owners Club National Rally that is being held at Billing Aquadrome. The group needs volunteers to help man the stand, to publicise both the Northampton group and advanced driving.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact John Norrie, who will then create a rota.

Check and Assessment Drives

These normally take place on the **first Sunday** of each month at **Midsummer Meadow Car Park**, Bedford Road, Northampton (Near Avon Cosmetics and Becketts Park). Note: alternative venue in exceptional circumstances is the Borough Council offices front car park, Cliftonville. The sessions are **09:30** and **11:00** hours.

4th September 2011	9th October 2011	6th November 2011	4th December 2011
1st January 2012	5th February 2012	4th March 2012	1st April 2012

Appointments for check and assessment drives can be arranged through the Associates Officer, Ian Phillips (nam_secretary@yahoo.co.uk or 07967 651820).

Observer Meeting – Monday 14th November 2011 (19:30)

The next Observer meeting will be held at **Driving School, Wootton Hall Park**, on the date above. These meetings are aimed at keeping observers abreast of changes to the test, techniques etc and are a forum to discuss all things related to motoring/observing.

The next Observer Meeting has been arranged for 12th March 2012.

Skill Days available from IAM HQ

The IAM run a series of circuit based skills days at top UK circuits which are open to both members and non members of the IAM. These days are held for both cars and bikes and provide at least three hours 'on track' time plus theory sessions and personal instruction throughout.

They are not race days but skills days designed to test and improve your planning, speed, smoothness and awareness of the road ahead. You will be amazed at the improvement in your lap times as the day progresses!

The 2011 programme offers our most comprehensive selection of skills days with more dates and more tracks added. IAM skills days are held at famous circuits in the UK and offer drivers and riders the chance to improve their skills using their own vehicles. The venues are carefully chosen to offer a controlled environment with IAM Observer guidance throughout.

Our dedicated days for both drivers and riders are now open to both members and non-members but book early because places are limited. Call 0208 996 9600 or email skillsday@iam.org.uk

Cars	8th August	Mallory Park	£189
	2nd September	Croft (N. Yorks)	£189
	18th October	Silverstone (Stowe)	£189
Bikes	17 th October	Silverstone	£189

5 Minute Interview



Having passed his Test earlier this year, Ray is the newest addition to our Observers, having just qualified as a Group Observer.

He is married to Julie, and has 9½ year old twin sons, Curtis and Richard.

Ray Blewitt
Group Observer

When did you pass your IAM Test and what made you take it?

-) 27th April 2010. I took it for two reasons; to prove to the in-laws that I could actually drive properly, and to take my driving to the next level. I liked driving and wanted to see how I could improve.

What is your occupation?

-) I drive a 7.5 tonne lorry for Tyrolit, delivering grinding wheels up and down the country to companies such as Rolls Royce.

What do you currently drive?

-) A white 1990 Ford Sierra 1.8 LX petrol carburettor.

What would be your dream car?

-) An Aston Martin Vantage. I don't like supercars such as Ferraris and Lamborghinis, they are too much hype. I also fancy a Zakspeed Capri, 1400cc twin cam turbo – they used to race against 2 litre BMWs and wipe the floor with them! Failing that any old school muscle car like a Mustang or Stingray Corvette.

Where do you like to holiday?

-) The East Coast of England and North Wales – we don't go abroad, but keep our money in this county. We have always taken our holidays in the UK, and Julie, my wife, likes Great Yarmouth. We normally stay in Hemsby.

When not observing, how do you relax?

-) I am a Cub Scout leader for the 3rd Daventry Cub

Scouts. Cubs are the 8-10 ½ year olds. We do things such as helping them gain road safety or cycling proficiency badges, a task being an IAM member has set me up well for!

I also like tinkering with my car and my mates' car. I really like older cars, from pre-80s through to vintage.

I did a track day at Silverstone once in a 1983 2.8 Capri. Stupidly I hadn't set the car up (tyre pressures etc) and all was going well until I came to a corner at around 100mph to find a slower car hogging the inside line. I had to go wider and ended up in the dirt doing a four wheel drift thinking "I am going to hit the grass and this is going to hurt" – luckily as I didn't touch the brakes and balanced the accelerator I just managed to clip the kerb and got away with it!

If you won the lottery, what would you spend it on?

-) I would buy a big house with a massive 10 car garage which I would fill with Aston Martins and old Fords. Probably a range of Capri's and Cortina's. I would semi retire, and set up business restoring old Fords. Oh and I would also spend some on the wife and twin sons, Curtis and Richard!

What one tip would you pass on to an associate?

-) My one tip would be keep practising. Anything is achievable in small steps.

Social Networking!

Please note to all social networkers amongst us! IAM Northampton has a dedicated youtube channel, a twitter page and a facebook account. Following the page or adding is really easy and it means you can get up to the minute info and is an excellent way for members to communicate, share driving links and videos.

We desperately need to secure a username for the Facebook page, but cannot until we have 25 people who 'like' it. If you have a facebook account, **please please go and vote for us.**

The links are as follows:

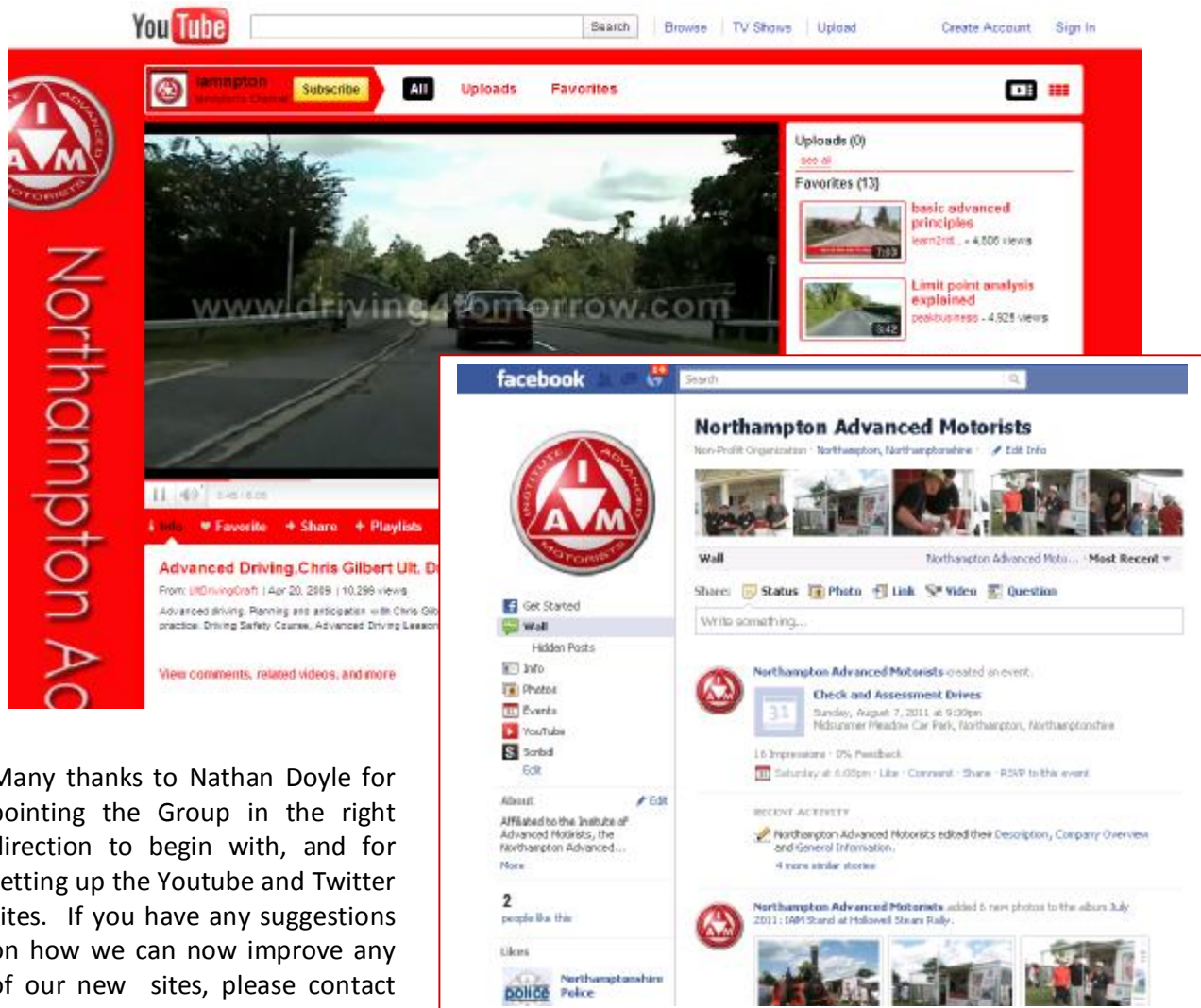
Twitter: twitter.com/iamnpton

Youtube: youtube.com/iamnpton

website address: www.iamnpton.org.uk

Facebook: facebook.com/iamnpton

not yet working, search for Northampton Advanced Motorists



Many thanks to Nathan Doyle for pointing the Group in the right direction to begin with, and for setting up the Youtube and Twitter sites. If you have any suggestions on how we can now improve any of our new sites, please contact any committee member.

'The Career of Earl Howe'

an extract from 'Murder Most Foul...', 1947

Francis Curzon (1824 to 1964) saw action during the First World War, including fighting at Gallipoli. Following the war, he became a conservative MP and inherited the title Earl Howe (5th) in 1929. On his elevation to the House of Lords, he took up motor racing, winning the 24 hour Le Mans in 1931. He co-founded the British Racing Drivers' Club and was President until his death in 1964. The following is extract from 'A Study of the Road Deaths Problem. Murder Most Foul...' Published in 1947.

Special interest attaches to the career of Earl Howe (until 1929 Viscount Curzon), whose regular appearances in the police courts for motor offences provided one of the features of British life in the '20s and to whose name now stands the possibly record total of more than 30 convictions, mostly for speed offences.

Earl Howe is a driver of great skill and daring, as he has demonstrated over a long period on the motor racing track, where in spite of the motor propagandists contention that speed is not dangerous, the achievements of the drivers have always, and rightly, commanded the admiration of the public. Nor has Lord Howe shown himself indifferent to road safety, at least in theory, or in others. It is true that his pronouncements have been extraordinarily confused and contradictory. For example, on one occasion, he declared that only 5 per cent of accidents are caused by excessive speed (5.12.33) and on another that "speed may be-and very often is-an important factor in dangerous driving" (5.5.36). Of pedestrians he has observed that "their recklessness has to be seen to be believed." (21.5.37) and more recently in a House of Lords debate (21.11.45) he expressed the precise view that "the main section of the (road safety) problem is, unfortunately, the recklessness and heedlessness of pedestrians."



Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt his sincerity. He opposed the complete abolition of the speed limit for private cars in 1924-25, and later pointed out the valuable psychological effect of speed limits generally; he was afraid, he said, of the psychological effects of the abolition of speed limits on inexperienced drivers. He has also faithfully contrasted driving in Britain with driving abroad. "One thing that strikes me," he said (2.12.34) "is the extraordinary amount of temper one meets with on British roads. Driving here is chiefly distinguished by the amount of selfishness and lack of imagination among drivers. The standard of driving in this country is not as high as abroad."

But in spite of these good intentions Earl Howe has a deplorable record of road mishaps. How many narrow escapes he has had on the roads only he himself knows, and, no doubt, even he far from fully. But here is a list of his mishaps as reported in the Press:

1925, July: Hit telegraph pole on the Hastings road: thrown out, with passenger.

1927, January: Bad smash on the Brighton road near Lewes, injured.

1928, January: Knocked down a cyclist at Camberley.

1930, August: Narrow escape in Ulster when a bird crashed through his driving screen.

1930, September: Car plunged down an embankment when pulling out to avoid a lorry.

1931, June: Narrow escape at Le Mans when three stray cows "got in his way."
1931 August: Knocked down a boy in Belfast.
1931 September: Car crashed down an embankment at Bagshot,
1932, July: Car left the road at a bend in the Ardennes forest.
1933: January: Ran into a horse and cart at Pesaro: peasant killed.
1933, April, Collided with and injured a cyclist on the Pesaro-Milan road.
1934. December: Car struck a road barrier and fell into a ditch at Bolney, Sussex.

In addition, Earl Howe has been twice sued: unsuccessfully by a pedestrian whom he had, knocked down in the West End (the claim failing because of "negligence by both parties," 1925), and successfully, by a man who was injured when his car collided with a meat truck in West Kensington (1930).

The lessons of all this are, of course, simple enough: they are that no driver, however skilful, can afford to ignore the safety laws, and especially the speed limit, without endangering others besides himself; that these laws must be rigorously enforced, without fear or favour; and finally, that there is an extraordinary gulf in the motoring mind between intention and action. What are we to do with these people with their split minds? As they kill and maim pedestrians they chatter: "We are all pedestrians."

July, 1931 **MOTOR SPORT** 44
THE GRAND PRIX D'ENDURANCE.
VICTORY FOR EARL HOWE AND SIR HENRY BIRKIN ON THE ALFA-ROMEO
BEATING RECORD FOR THE RACE.



Earl Howe at bonnet of his car

Fail to *Plan*, Plan to *Fail*

Associate Classroom/Demo Session

Location: Mereway Police HQ, Northampton.

By **Nathan Doyle**

John Norrie and **Steve Smith**

8:30 'Prompt' (ish) Sunday 22nd May

The meeting commenced with aims and objectives being clearly identified; one area that we would be focusing on was the **Highway Code**, what law is and what is advisory, the differences of signs, hazard markings and a few 'flash tests' on the Highway code which is always a good way to start the day and see if we're all awake!

Examining **limit points** and discussing how this works with John was very well explained, matching velocity to the speed that the limit point moves away, adjusting speed to match the rate that the limit point opens and closes.

Attaining smooth gear changes and *blipping the throttle* was another subject covered, this was an area that was and still is, pretty difficult for me. I would highly recommend a workshop like this for anyone taking their IAM as it's the sort of manoeuvre that needs to be seen and explained. It's getting there for me, but is far from perfect. **Overlapping braking and gear changes** was another area for discussion and again was something that I could experience and see in action on the day.



A proportion of the class was spent discussing **correct signals** at roundabouts and lane discipline. *(I for one have been experiencing a fair few near misses on two roundabouts that I use daily, the A45 roundabout at Claudius Way Rushden and the one directly after Chown's Mill Roundabout veering on to the A6, again, something that I encounter difficulty with daily and was able to benefit from discussing with John and Steve).*

Discussing **observational links** was a real eye-opener, how something simple like a small sign stating '**Eggs for Sale**' could indicate farm vehicles, mud on the roads and so forth. Road surfaces, drains and so on – all things that we should be keeping an eye on as are **courtesy signals** and the correct use of the horn and 'I am here' flashes as opposed to 'sympathy flashing.'

Signal clutter was really useful topic aiming for **One Manoeuvre, One Signal** is something I shall watch out for. I found that discussing near side, centre, off-side useful and of course, opposite carriageway!

Overtaking was an area that was covered and very much an area that I wanted to explore as my daily overtaking seems very long-winded and somewhat 'cluttered.' Safe overtaking of a vehicle that may be parked awkwardly, every foot you lose decrease by 10 mph (for those of us who are comfortable with feet and inches!) For instance if there is a 3ft gap you could overtake at 30mph (if it is safe to do so), 2

ft gap 20mph and so on.

Elastic principles of overtaking used by Police drivers were also discussed involving keeping a two second rule's worth of distance, coming out on to the opposite side of the road, scanning and angling back in (more of a Thunderflash formation than an oval if that makes sense!) Steve was clear to point out that this is a swift manoeuvre and it's for Police drivers, so not something we would use on the way to work, or coming back from our weekly shopping!

A healthy amount of **The System** was up for discussion **IPSGA** was broken into chunks and discussed, which again was very useful and far more interesting than sitting reading it from our handbooks.

The highlight of the meeting for me was going out in the **Police training cars** and seeing **IPSGA** in motion and having an opportunity to see a commentary in action, discuss and see throttle blipping, power bands and so on, it certainly is something to aim for. Personally speaking, I had to see all of this in action and no amount of reading or active experimentation matched up to being out in the car and hearing and seeing the difference. I picked up no end of really useful tips and for anyone studying for their **IAM** test, I consider the day an invaluable experience.



And what about in action, have I seen any change? I would say yes, I have. Monday morning heading to work as normal, I found myself seeing a fair bit more; noticing that pair of shoes behind a parked van, anticipating vehicles overtaking. Seeing my MPG go up, greater control on bends, and slowing way before the 30mph sign without braking, using observational links, it felt a calmer ride put it that way.

I feel like I got a lot out of this and hopefully can bid farewell to 'Suddenly Club' with the left hand of course and not by flashing! *Eggs for sale?* You had to be there for that one!

Very special thanks to John and Steve for a great session.

Classroom delegates, l-r Nathan Doyle, Ann Lancaster, Paul Sutton, Malcolm Rous



AUTOMATICS

The following article has been reproduced by kind permission of Which? And appeared in Which? magazine, May 2011. Please note: this article cannot be reproduced without the expressed permission of Which?

Today's small and medium cars feature a range of alternatives to the conventional clutch, including continuously variable transmissions (CVTs), clever twin-clutch gearboxes, and the single-clutch automated manual.

CONVENTIONAL AUTO

TYPICAL COST OVER A MANUAL? £1,000 - £1,500

HOW DOES IT SHIFT GEARS? The engine is connected to a torque converter, which allows the engine to rotate, even when the car's wheels are still. There are two 'sun' gears with two 'planet gear' carriers rotating around them, all within a central ring gear. By varying which components rotate, different gear ratios are achieved.

IS IT SMOOTH? Quite – but fewer gears can mean more noticeable 'steps' up and down the range. Usually reliable, but least efficient.

COMMERCIALLY KNOWN AS? Automatic.



Vauxhall Easytronic



BMW electronic gear selector and Steptronic



Metro CVT

SINGLE-CLUTCH AUTOMATED MANUAL

TYPICAL COST OVER A MANUAL? Around £500

HOW DOES IT SHIFT GEARS? Electric motors take the place of the driver's left arm and leg in sifting gears. Often, the driver has easy manual override, by either a lever or steering-wheel paddles.

IS IT SMOOTH? This remains the least smooth auto you can buy. Computers lack the human finesse, so changes can be jerky due to overrun engine drag as the gear changes fail to keep pace with the engine revs

COMMERCIALY KNOWN BRAND NAMES? Citroen SensoDrive, Ford Durashift EST, Honda i-Shift, Renault Quickshift, Toyota Multimode MMT, Volvo Easytronic



Renault Quickshift

CVT/STEPLESS AUTO

TYPICAL COST OVER A MANUAL? Around £1,000

HOW DOES IT SHIFT GEARS? A belt or chain is connected to two pulleys that move in and out such that the belt runs at different heights in its groove. This alters the 'gear' ratio – and, as there aren't fixed 'steps', CVTs have a theoretically infinite gear ratio.

IS IT SMOOTH? As it is stepless, the 'feel' is smooth, but the engine revs rise to optimum-power revs and stay there until the car's speed 'catches' up, so it can feel a bit like a slipping clutch.

COMMERCIALY KNOWN BRAND NAMES? CVT (continuously variable transmission).

TWIN-CLUTCH AUTO

TYPICAL COST OVER A MANUAL? £1,300

HOW DOES IT SHIFT GEARS? Two clutches are connected to a special transmission shaft, with 'inner' and 'outer' parts. Odd-numbered gears use one shaft, and the even ones the other. When, say, second gear is engaged, third is 'pre-selected' by a computer. Changing involves shifting from one clutch to another, via hydraulics.

IS IT SMOOTH? Changing gears is almost seamless. Shifts happen quickly when speeding up and slowing down.

COMMERCIALY KNOWN BRAND NAMES? Ford PowerShift, Porsche PDK, VW Group DSG



Porsche PDK

Men more dangerous than women on the roads

Men are more likely than women to be involved in crashes because of bad driving habits such as driving too fast and drink-driving, according to the IAM's latest research report Licensed to skill: Contributory factors in road accidents.

When comparing men and women, men are nearly twice as likely to be involved in a collision due to being careless, reckless or in a hurry. They are also more likely to crash because of poor behaviour or inexperience.

The main differences highlighted in the report are:

- Careless, reckless or in a hurry is recorded more frequently for men (ten per cent) than women (six per cent).
- Travelling too fast for the conditions is recorded more frequently for men (seven per cent) than women (four per cent).
- Poor driving behaviour or inexperience is recorded more frequently for men (14 per cent) than women (ten per cent).

However recent research by the IAM shows that women and men aren't so different when it comes to driving behaviour and attitudes. Most men and women enjoy driving, and rate themselves to be confident, considerate and safe.

But almost twice as many men as women claim to be "very confident" drivers.



IAM chief executive Simon Best said: "These results show that we need to look at the psychology of male drivers to reduce risky behaviour and over-confidence, but for both sexes accidents could be easily reduced by improving driver skills and lives could be saved. The government is moving towards this by introducing driver training for careless driving offences but all drivers should consider training. Driving is a life-long skill that requires life-long learning."

Is 80 the new 70?

More than 70 per cent of drivers and riders think that the UK motorway speed limit should be increased by at least ten mph according to an IAM poll of over 2000 people.



Not only do people feel that the limit should be higher, almost 60 per cent say they would be more likely to stick to an 80mph limit than they are to the current limit of 70mph.

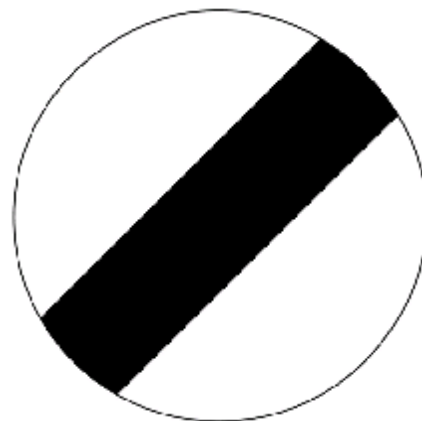


Nearly 60 per cent of people also admitted to travelling above 70 mph when traffic is free-flowing and uncongested, with 20 per cent of those travelling at 80 mph or faster. The survey reflects the latest DfT research of free-flowing motorway speeds, which found that 52 per cent of cars exceeded the 70 mph speed limit and 16 per cent travel at 80 mph or faster.

IAM director of policy and research Neil Greig said: "Even though motorways are the safest roads, increasing the motorway speed limit is a controversial subject. This is why we want to see a trial to test its impact on road safety, fuel consumption and driver behaviour."

"A new 80 miles per hour limit would need to be properly enforced to make sure that it does not become an excuse to drive at 90."

"Shortening journey times for people travelling at quieter times, as transport secretary Philip Hammond suggests, is a good idea, providing it doesn't have a negative effect on safety."



Blues and twos: How to drive to aid the progress of emergency vehicles

Loud sirens and flashing blue lights cause many motorists to panic, mainly because drivers are not routinely taught how to respond to them. Emergency vehicle drivers want you to help them reach the emergency they are trying to get to so that they can deal with it as quickly as possible. Behave calmly, legally, safely and predictably and move out of the way as soon as it is safe to do so.

- 1. Keep calm** – if you hear a siren or see blue lights, turn off your music so you can concentrate, and take a few seconds to plan your next move. Panicking and stopping in the wrong place will just snarl up the traffic and delay the emergency vehicle more.
- 2. Stop** – look for somewhere to pull over, and stop if it's safe, even if the emergency vehicle is on the other side of the road. Consider using your indicators, but only if it won't confuse other road users.
- 3. Stay safe** – avoid pulling onto kerbs, pavements and verges. Verges can hide a multitude of hazards, and moving onto the pavement can put pedestrians at risk.
- 4. Stay legal** – at traffic lights or junctions, emergency drivers will try to find their way around you. If you go through a red light or into a bus lane, unless directed by a police officer to do so, you are breaking the law and could be fined, irrespective of your good intentions.
- 5. Finally** – be aware that there may be more than one emergency vehicle coming. Listen for different sirens, look all around before moving off, and bear in mind you may need to move over again.

Move over for bikers

The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) reminds commuters on two wheels of the host of hazards they must be aware of - not in the least of which is car drivers who, for various reasons, fail to see a motorcycle coming towards them.

This problem is particularly acute at junctions. "Sorry mate I didn't see you" is for too many bikers the last words they hear before they are put in the ambulance. Drivers should check carefully for all oncoming traffic at junctions when emerging.

There are other things that drivers can do to ease the passage of motorcycles, particularly in heavy congestion that in turn will mean a safer journey for everybody.

If stuck in dense traffic, keep checking mirrors for bikes. Bikers should also use their headlights to make them easier to be seen. If a biker is trying to 'filter' - make their way through the traffic by riding slowly between stationary vehicles, or riding on the white line in the middle of the road – car drivers should make a point of creating space for them if they can do so safely. By pulling over slightly, after checking in rear-view mirrors to make sure the path is clear, drivers can make the difference between letting a biker past or adding to the congestion.

Never be tempted to vent frustration with the traffic by getting in the way of a motorcycle on purpose. The traffic won't go any faster and dangerous driving may contribute to a collision which will add to congestion rather than alleviate it.

Northamptonshire WI Driver of the Year

On the evening of Thursday 12th May, a number of intrepid Northamptonshire WI members congregated at Northamptonshire Police HQ. Nervous chatter ensued with comments such as 'it is 30 years since I did an exam', and 'I am sure I won't get any right', until NAM Chairman, John Norrie, opened the session. John gave a brief presentation on the IAM and the Group, before the main business of the evening began, Round 1 of the Northamptonshire WI Driver of the Year.

The first two rounds (Quiz and Manoeuvring Tests) are elimination rounds before the grand final of an observers Drive. This meant it had to be difficult enough to provide a challenge, but not too difficult to defeat morale.

Part A was 24 multiple choice questions, such as 'You may park on the verge or foot path when?' and 'When traffic lights are out of order who has priority?'

This was followed by a section on Types of Road sign, where the contestants had to identify the type (hazard, information, order) of 9 different shapes/colours of road sign. The final part was the identification of 14 everyday road signs. As can be seen from the photo, the contestants soon got over any nerves and enjoyed the experience.



Photo provided by Ness Thomson

Following a short break, John went through the answers and it was very apparent that no-one had got them all correct – in fact there was one road sign that everyone got wrong! A general discussion on different driving issues ensued, with some very interesting points being raised. These included the ability of a child aged 14 to be legally responsible for wearing seat belts through to questions on what to do in different driving scenarios.

The top fourteen contestants were then taken through to the next round, the manoeuvring tests. To make it fair to each individual, VW Group UK Ltd kindly lent us a vehicle for the event (thanks to Ness Thomson for helping us sort this). Steve Smith and John Norrie devised the manoeuvres which, although difficult were not impossible. To make life more interesting, after a long dry stretch the heavens opened and it poured with rain throughout the whole event! Each competitor had to reverse down a slalom of cones, drive both forward and reverse back into a garage, and reverse around left and right corners. Throughout each test, Steve Smith (clad in high visibility waterproofs) walked beside the car and marked each competitor, whilst John Norrie wangled it so he could sit in the passenger seat in the dry and warm! Each of the competitors had a good crack at the course and most fared very well, especially bearing in mind the weather conditions and the fact they were not used to the vehicle.



A soggy briefing session for the first Group

The next round will be the final, where the top competitors are taken on an observed run on a route with pre-defined hazards that they will be marked on. These final drives will take place before the Northamptonshire WI's AGM in October where the winner will be announced.



A contestant reversing into a garage



Reversing down the slalom

Photo: Ness Thomson

Associates Spotlight

When you join the Northampton Advanced Motorist Group as an Associate Member (i.e. a driver that wishes to prepare for and take their test), your training will normally follow the format below.

1. You will have an initial assessment drive, normally at the monthly Sunday checkdrives (1st Sunday in the month, Midsummer Meadows car park, Northampton, 09:30-12:00). An assessment can be arranged outside of the Sunday if necessary.
2. Once you have joined the Group, your observer will invite you to a classroom session including a demonstration drive. Both of these are normally conducted by Steve Smith, a member of Northamptonshire Police's Driving School, who is also our Chief Observer. The classroom session is designed to cover the fundamentals of advanced driving and the demonstration drive will give you an opportunity to see advanced driving in practice. The sessions are held at Police HQ in Northampton (Wootton Hall), and will last approximately 3½ hours. This is completely free and has proved to be of great benefit to new Associates as they develop their new skills.
3. The classroom/demonstration session can be completed at anytime within your training but it is suggested that, where practicable, it is done sooner rather than later to receive maximum benefit to fit in with training module of: – Explain, Demonstrate, Imitate, Practice.
4. You will continue your preparation for the Advanced test, either attending the Sunday morning sessions or using the 1-2-1 scheme, whichever is preferable.
5. Once you are ready for your test, you will be taken on a mock test by one of the senior observers, after which you can apply for the Test.

(Note: the above is also open to existing IAM Group members who would like to refresh their skills and/or see how training is now carried for new Associates)

Sunday Morning Check-drive and Assessment Sessions

These normally take place on the **first Sunday** of each month at **Midsummer Meadow Car Park**, Bedford Road, Northampton (Near Avon Cosmetics and Becketts Park). Note: alternative venue in exceptional circumstances is the Borough Council offices, Cliftonville. On checking in you will be allocated an observer who will then take you out on your observed drive. You will receive a series of these sessions, usually one each month, until your driving has reached the required standard in order for you to pass the IAM driving test

The sessions are **09:30** and **11:00** hours on these following dates: **(2011) 5th 4th September, 9th October, 6th November, 4th December, (2012) 1st January, 5th February, 5th March, 1st April, 6th May and 3rd June.** Appointments for check and assessment drives can be arranged through the Associates Officer, Ian Phillips (nam_secretary@yahoo.co.uk or 07967 651820).

1-2-1 Scheme

The Group also offers a one-to-one scheme, where an associate member is paired with an observer. Checkdrives can then take place at mutually convenient times, for example on a Friday evening or Saturday morning. This scheme provides consistency as your observer will take you for all your checkdrives until you reach test standard. It also offers the opportunity to consolidate your training into a shorter timespan. For further information please contact Peter Davey on 01604 753405 or nn5pete@virginmedia.com.

ROGUES GALLERY



Steam engine passing the IAM stand at Hollowell



Derek Lobb, Roger Loomes sharing tea with his friends



Derek sharing his tea with our MOC!!

with Chairman John Norrie who was 'working' for Hollowell Steam Fair during the weekend, but did supply us with tea and coffee!



Working hard(!) at the Sunday morning check drives (l-r Ann Lancaster, Pam Durrant, Roy Franklin, Brian Johnson)

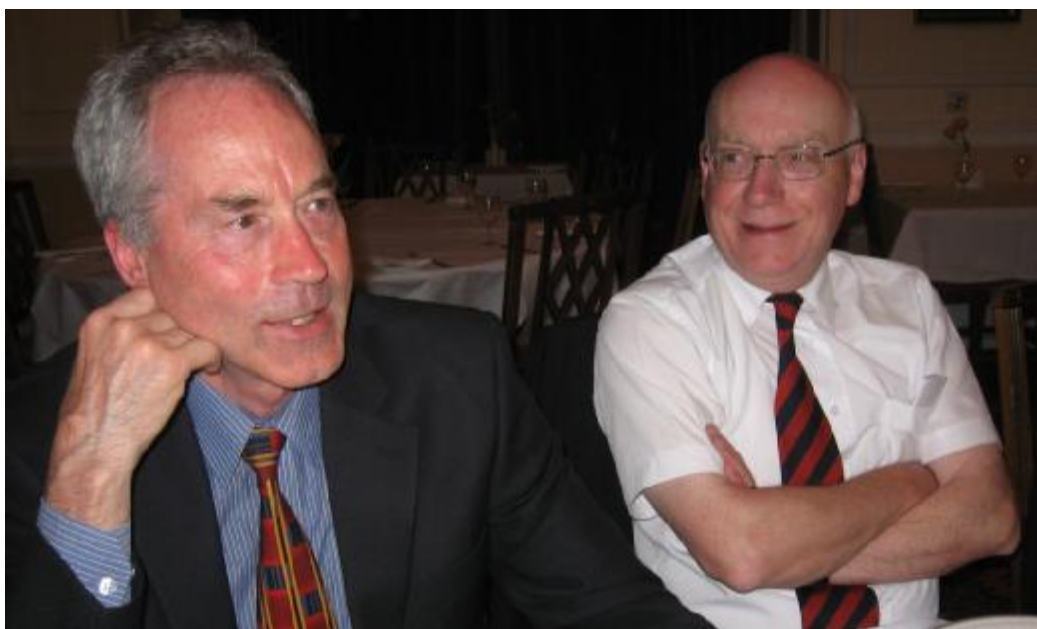
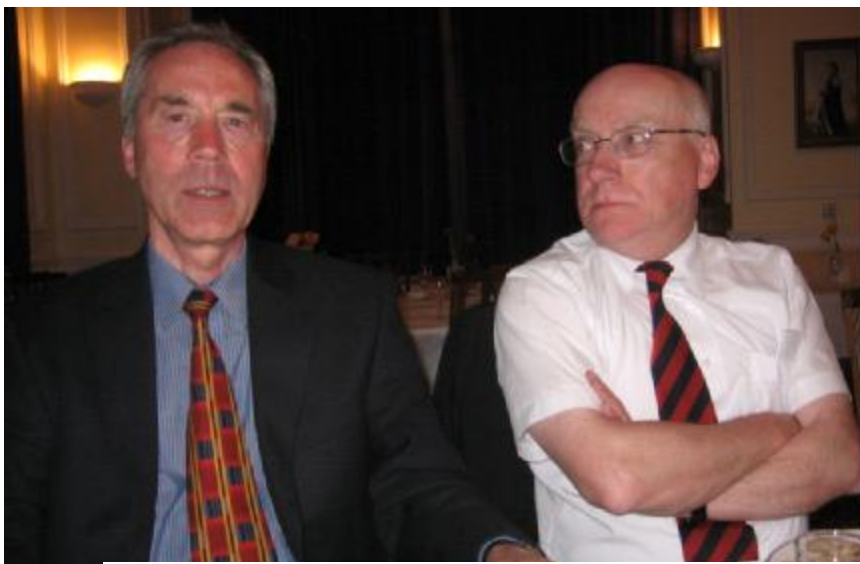


Sunday at Hollowell
with Alan Brown and
David Smith
(Photo Colin Tarry)

Caption Competition

The following sequence of pictures was taken at the recent Group Annual Dinner, and shows the new Chairman (John Norrie) with outgoing Chairman (John Hodges).

The question is, **what has made John Hodges laugh?** Answers to the Newsletter Editor.



Calling ALL Observers

As well as the monthly Sunday morning check drive session, the Group runs a One-One scheme where an Associate is paired up with an Observer and they undertake checkdrives at mutually convenient times.

Due to high demand, the Group desperately needs more observers on the One-One scheme. If you are interested, please contact Peter Davey.

FROM EAST KIRKBY *by John Hodges*

I'd been looking forward to this trip to the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby for months. BJ had organised a vintage bus to take us all there in style. I'd been able to negotiate special discounted rates for our NAM members to attend the special World War II weekend, including flying displays, on the Bank Holiday Monday, 30th May 2011.

Unfortunately the weatherman hadn't read the script for the day and it basically poured with rain all day!!

Nevertheless, our intrepid party made it safely on the 1968 ex-Northampton Corporation double-decker and we parked up near the Control Tower. The Control Tower was "operational" as visitors could watch the ladies call in by radio the returning "bombers" after a raid – no doubt just as it would really have been on many a dull and drizzly day in the 1940s.



"NX611, Start your engines!"

Photo: John Hodges

I managed to take a few photos of their taxi-ing Lancaster bomber "Just Jane" around the airfield – but sadly all flying was cancelled because of the low cloud and sodden grass runways. Shame. Lunch was nice, though.

Still, a decent-sized crowd of enthusiastic visitors made the effort to be at the airfield that day about 25 miles east of Lincoln and I really would recommend a visit in better weather. Lots to see inside the wartime hangars and static exhibits outside. The most memorable thing is of course the old “Lanc” starting her engines one by one, taxi-ing off her mark and getting the engines up to take off revs. An impressive sound picture. Similar, I’m sure to what my father must have regularly heard all those years ago from the 4-engined Halifax bombers at RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire when he was based there as a young airman in the 1940s, a sound once heard, you’ll never forget.



“Engines up to take-off revs, Skipper!”

Photo: John Hodges



Time to crew up

Photo: John Hodges



The day's Transport

Photo: Derek Lobb

Observer Focus

Current Observers

Chief Observer:	Steve Smith	Deputy Chief Observer:	Peter Davey
Senior Observers:	Alan Brown John Hodges	Graham Ward Brian Johnson	Derek Lobb John Norrie
Observers:			
Ray Blewitt	Roy Franklin	Roger Loomes	Wayne St John
John Church	Mike Habieb	Sanjay Mehta	Dusan Torbica
Rene Crevel	John Josephs	Mark Osbourne	Peter Turner
Pam Durrant	Alan Joynes	David Smith	Graham Wallace

If you are interested in becoming an observer, contact Steve Smith.

Observer Meeting – Monday 14th November 2011 (19:30)

The next Observer meeting will be held at **Driving School, Wootton Hall Park**, on the date above. These meetings are aimed at keeping observers abreast of changes to the test, techniques etc and are a forum to discuss all things related to motoring/observing.

The following Observer Meeting has been arranged for 12th March 2012.

Membership and Test Details

New members 'Skill for Life' - £139

Includes:

- The IAM publication "How to be an Advanced Driver"
- the Advanced Driving Test fee
- guidance from the Group observers to reach test standard
- First year's membership to the IAM (on passing the advanced test)
- First year's membership to a local Group, including all observed drives

Group Membership

Annual subscription renewable on 1st February each year by both Associate and Full members of the group (where Associates have joined via the *Skill for Life* package after October, this will not be due until the following February).

Individual - **£10**

Joint (two people living at same address) - **£17**

Enquiries and membership renewals should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, **Pam Durrant**. All cheques made payable to 'Northampton Advanced Motorists Group'.

The System of Car Control - Hints

Phase 1 – Information

The Associate Classroom sessions are endowed with hints and tips covering all aspects of advanced driving. On this basis I again invited myself to attend a session in May, and sat very quietly (for me!) at the back of the room with Brian Johnson, whilst three Associates (Paul Sutton, Malcolm Rous and Nathan Doyle) and our new Treasurer Ann Lancaster were at the front. The following are just a few on the topic of Information (the first phase of the System of car Control). There are also a couple of snippets on other skills such as signalling, braking etc!



Mirrors

Link mirrors, for example if you are turning left, use your left mirror and the central one before moving to the left, and before moving to the right, use both your right hand mirror and the central one.

Scanning

When driving, you need to look as far ahead as possible the scan back in towards your bonnet, then use the mirror to check behind. This should be continuous.

Road signs

These should be 100 metres from the hazard; however this is not always possible depending upon the hazard's location.

Where multiple signs are on one post, they should be read from top to bottom as this is the order in which the hazards should be; however some local authorities have not always been consistent to this rule.

50 pence steering

When steering round a corner, the steering should be smooth and consistent in one movement, rather than the 50p steering where you are continually adjusting the steering throughout the corner.

Ice

ABS could shut down if you stand on the brakes when driving on ice, due to ABS thinking the vehicle is stationary as the wheels have stopped turning.



Signals

Courtesy Signals - Use the left hand, it is natural as this is the hand that often is removed from the steering wheel to change gear. It also enables the other driver to see it more clearly (a right hand may get hidden behind the windscreen pillar).

Signal Clutter, i.e. leaving a signal on for multiple hazards, e.g. moving over to the right for a right hand turn should have two right hand signals with a gap between them (one for the changing of position, and one for the actual turn).

Positioning

When looking to over take parked vehicles, if you have 3 ft width clearance, you can pass at 30 mph, however at 2ft this goes down to 20 mph. For every foot gap you loose, you should loose 10 mph. This is the zone of relative safety.

Observation links

If you drive towards a hand bend, and there is a solid hedge on the right, look to see what the hedge looks like. If it is neatly trimmed with a nice neat top, then it is probably for a house - so anticipate vehicles turning in/out around the bend. If it is neatly trimmed up to about 4 meters, then it is likely that HGVs have trimmed the hedge, so beware of oncoming HGVs.



Henny Cameron

Quiz Page

The Autumn Coffee Time Quiz

This time, it is absolutely nothing to do with motoring.

1. How many years in prison did the 12 members of the Great Train Robbery gang get between them in 1964?
2. Excluding resigning, how many different moves does a player have the choice of at the start of a game of chess?
3. How many muscles does a cat have in each ear?
4. How many times are the words `Love Shack` mentioned in the B-52s hit of the same name?
5. As at January 1st, 2000, how many Popes have been assassinated?
6. How many successive pots must a snooker player make to score a 147 break?
7. In a game of scrabble, how many points would you score for putting down the word QUIPPED and assuming the P was placed on a Double Letter square?
8. What is the sum of Forrest Gump's I.Q and the speed (in mph) that the car in `Back To The Future` has to reach in order to travel in time?
9. What is the number of yards in a mile, divided by the number of fluid ounces in a pint, add to that the number of pounds in a hundredweight, and divide the answer by the number of inches in a hand?
10. How many years between Alexander Graham Bell inventing the telephone and Apple launching the first iPhone in the US?
11. Which sport uses a piece of equipment that must be exactly 9 foot long and 5 foot wide?
12. In horse racing, which three racecourses stage the five English `classics`?
13. In which sport are there defensive positions called prime, tierce and octave?
14. Which Dutchman won the men's singles title at Wimbledon in 1996?
15. Why did Matthew Simmons hit the headlines in 1995?
16. FINA is the governing body of which sport?
17. Where is the world's oldest motorcycle race held?
18. What do you get if you multiply the number of hoops used in a game of croquet by the number of shots under par an albatross is in golf?
19. How many faults does a competitor get if their horse refuses a fence in show jumping?
20. How is soccer superstar Ricardo Izcson dos Santos Leite better known?

The Autumn Coffee Time Quiz answers

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----------------|----------|--|------------------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 20. | 19. | 18. | 17. | 16. | 15. | 14. | 13. | 12. | 11. | 10. | 9. | 8. | 7. | 6. | 5. | 4. | 3. | 2. | 1. |
| Kaka | 3 | 18 | The Isle of Man | Swimming | He was the Crystal Palace fan who Eric Cantona attacked after being sent off | Richard Krajicek | Fencing | Doncaster, Epsom, Newmarket | Table Tennis | 131 | 50 | 163 | 74 | 36 | 26 | 40 | 32 | 20 | 307 |

Many thanks to my work colleague Sheila Dickins for supplying these questions!

Fresh Crackdown on Uninsured Drivers from IAM HQ

Under the new Continuous Insurance Enforcement law – which will affect all motorists from June 20 – it is an offence to keep an uninsured vehicle, rather than just to drive when uninsured. No150a

A national advertising campaign will be launched by the Motor Insurers' Bureau to raise awareness of the law.

Vehicles with a valid Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN) will not be required to be insured.

Road Safety Minister Mike Penning said:

"Uninsured drivers are a danger on our roads, killing 160 and injuring a further 23,000 people each year, and they cost honest motorists £500 million in extra premiums. That is why we are introducing this tough new law which will leave uninsured drivers with nowhere to hide.

"Our message is clear – get insured or face a fine, court action or seeing your car seized and destroyed."



Ashton West, Chief Executive at the Motor Insurers' Bureau, said:

"The change in law is a stepping up of enforcement activity, so that not only those vehicles driven without insurance will be caught. Now the registered keeper must make sure that their vehicle is insured all the time.

"In order to make sure everyone is aware of the new scheme, a national awareness campaign will be shown on satellite and terrestrial TV channels.

"Around four percent of vehicles have no motor insurance at any given time, and this needs to change so that is why this new enforcement approach is so important."

Under the new system:



The DVLA will work in partnership with the Motor Insurers' Bureau to identify uninsured vehicles.

Motorists will receive a letter telling them that their vehicle appears to be uninsured and warning them that they will be fined unless they take action.

If the keeper fails to insure the vehicle they will be given a £100 fine.

If the vehicle remains uninsured - regardless of whether the fine is paid – further action will be taken. If the vehicle is on public land it could then be clamped, seized and destroyed. Alternatively court action could be taken, with the offender facing a fine of up to £1,000.

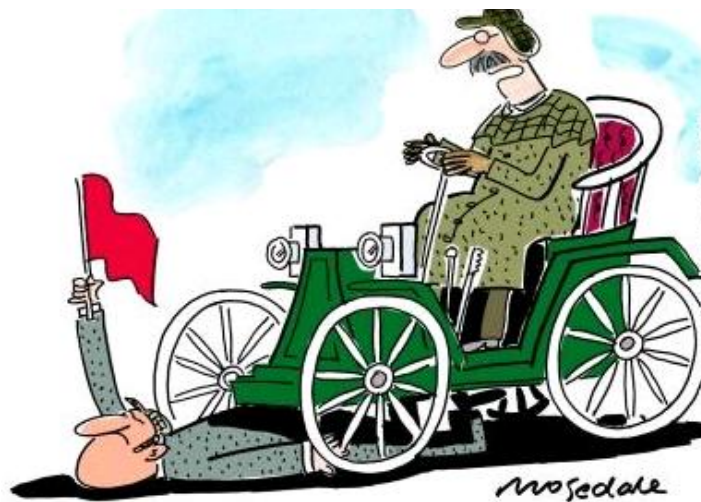
Seized vehicles would only be released when the keeper provided evidence that the registered keeper is no longer committing an offence of having no insurance and the person proposing to drive the vehicle away is insured to do so.

Vehicles with a valid Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN) will not be required to be insured.



Photo (c) The Guardian

The new law will run alongside the existing offence of using a vehicle with no insurance, which is enforced by the police. The police seize 180,000 vehicles each year for this offence, and offenders also face a £200 fixed penalty or a court fine of up to £5,000 and possible disqualification. The DVLA's records will be compared regularly with the Motor Insurance Database (MID) and this process will identify registered keepers of vehicles that appear to have no insurance. All drivers can check their vehicle is recorded on the MID for free - visit www.askMID.com.



'Bad luck Grigson...another year and the first motor insurance policy would've been available.'

How did this happen?



"They obviously didn't go to Our Police Driving Training Unit"
Submitted by Colin Tarry



Parking in Jordon (accidentplanet.com)

The Annual Dinner in Pictures

Held in May, the Group's annual dinner was again a great success – good food, great company! The only slight disappointment was the low attendance, about 20 of us in total (including Brian's guest – the Mayor!). Because of this we are thinking of doing something different next year (instead of a formal sit down meal). If you have any suggestions, please contact John Norrie.



Northampton Advanced Motorists

www.iamnpton.org.uk

Affiliated to **The Institute of Advanced Motorists**

President : Inspector Nigel Rickaby, Roads Policing Unit, Operations Dept, Northamptonshire Police

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Highway Codes for Sale : £2-00

Got the new Highway Code yet? No? Well the Group is selling the new Highway Codes at just £2-00 (RRP £2-50). Available at the checkdrives.

Videos, CDs and DVDs available for Loan

The group holds a number of motoring titles available for loan, including

- ⑨ **Ultimate Driving Craft.** An excellent DVD by Chris Gilbert, ex Metropolitan Police driving instructor, and instructor to the Royal Family. It includes how to build up a commentary, observation skills and many advanced driving tips – *100 mins*
- ⑨ **Roadcraft:** Complements the police Roadcraft driving manual. Follows candidates on an advanced driving course at the Metropolitan Police driving school (Hendon). – *90 mins*
- ⑨ **Advanced Driving – What’s Involved** (IAM Video). Explanation of how advanced driving techniques involve concentration, observation, anticipation, planning and the system of car control – *10 mins*
- ⑨ **Safe Motorway driving.** Covers all aspects of motorway driving from planning, observation, breakdowns and personal safety to correct overtaking procedures and driving in adverse weather conditions. By following the advice given drivers will be better able to respond to incidents and conditions that may confront them on the motorway – *35 mins*
- ⑨ **Advanced Driving.** The system of car control. A video made by the Herefordshire Group of the IAM to assist in advanced driver training.
- ⑨ **Test Drive.** Some good examples of situations met while taking the advanced driving test together with some useful advice and demonstration by David Ovenden, ex-Deputy Chief Examiner – *30 mins*
- ⑨ **You can save lives too.** A practical guide to emergency first aid, and what can and should be done at the scene of an accident.
- ⑨ **You only live once** (IAM). Promotes the idea of raising driving standards to the IAM’s level without losing the enjoyment that motoring can still provide.
- ⑨ **Your licence to drive** (CDROM – computer software). An interactive test of driving knowledge and hazard awareness.

A returnable deposit of £20 is required. See Maggie Lloyd at the checkdrives.

Miscellaneous Matters

The Group

The Institute of Advanced Motorists was formed in 1956 and exists to encourage higher driving standards by offering an advanced driving test. This test can be taken in a car, motorcycle or in various commercial vehicles.

As well as being a charity, Northampton Advanced Motorists is affiliated to the Institute as a local IAM Group and offers guidance and advice to help candidates prepare for the IAM's advanced driving test – guidance which normally takes the form of observed drives in a candidate's own vehicle.

The group is pleased to arrange assessment drives for those interested in having an impartial appraisal of their driving skills with a view to taking the advanced driving test. Assessment drives are available without charge or further obligation.

Information about the IAM advanced driving test and local group activities is obtainable from the Group Secretary, David Smith.

Newsletter

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Northampton Advanced Motorists or The Institute of Advanced Motorists unless so stated. All photos, unless stated, courtesy of the Newsletter Editor.

Data Protection

Members are advised that membership details are held on computer for the sole purpose of producing labels for distributing the group's newsletter and preparing the membership list. Any member not wishing to have individual details held in this way should advise the Group Secretary in writing.

Newsletter Articles

Contributions are always welcome. The subject matter does not need to be motoring related, and can be humorous, serious etc.

The deadline for the next newsletter is **14th November 2011** (publish date 1st December 2011), but don't worry, any articles received after that date will be held over to the next newsletter.

For Hire: Red Gazebo - £20 per day

The Group has a red gazebo for hire. Less than 12 months old, it was used briefly at Checkdrives while the Group was waiting delivery of the new MOC. It is in very good condition, and is available for a very reasonable £20 per day. Further details, contact Ian Phillips.